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**A DEMONSTRATION OF THE  
ERRORS OF A LATE BOOK  
[A DEFENSE OF THE LORD'S SUPPER]**

*by William Law*

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# A DEMONSTRATION

of the

Gross and Fundamental Errors

Of a late book, called

*A Plain Account of the Nature and End of the  
Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, etc.*

Wherein also the nature and extent of the redemption of all mankind by Jesus Christ is stated and explained; and the pretenses of the Deists, for a religion of natural reason instead of it, are examined to the bottom. The whole humbly, earnestly, and affectionately addressed to all orders of men, and more especially to all the younger clergy.

by

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SAGE Software

Albany, Oregon

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# DEMONSTRATION

## OF THE

### ERRORS OF A LATE BOOK.

**M**y design (worthy reader) is not to lay before you all the errors and false reasonings of this author throughout his whole treatise. This would lead you into too much wrangle, and the multiplicity of things disputed, would take your eye from the chief point in question, and so make the matter less edifying to you.

Many therefore of his lesser mistakes I shall pass over, and only endeavor to discover such gross and fundamental errors, as may justly pass for an entire confutation of his whole book.

The foundation on which he proceeds, and the principal matters of his discourse, are not only notoriously against the truth of the sacrament, but plainly destructive of the principal doctrines of the Christian religion.

And if this key of knowledge, put into your hands by this author, is accepted by you, you will not only lose all the right knowledge of this sacrament, but be rendered a blind, deaf, and even dead reader of all the other doctrines of scripture. For the way he points out to find the truth of the doctrine of the sacrament, is the only way to lose the truth of all the most important parts of the gospel.

Who this nameless author is, neither concerns the truth, nor you, nor me, and therefore I leave that matter as he has left it.

He begins with giving us this account of the principles on which he proceeds.

I have endeavored to establish and explain the true nature, end, and effect of the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. And this in such a manner, that all who are concerned may, I hope, be led into the right way of judging about

it. (Page 5) To this I have endeavored to guide them, by directing and confining their attention to all that is said about this duty, by those who alone had any authority to declare the nature of it: Neither on the one hand diminishing, nor on the other augmenting, what is declared by them to belong to it. If therefore the manner in which I have chosen to treat this subject, should appear to some to stand in need of any apology; this is the only one I can persuade myself to make, that I have no authority to add to the words of Christ and his apostles upon this subject; nor to put any meaning or interpretation upon these words, but what is agreeable to the common rules of speaking in like cases, and to the declared design of the institution itself. (Page 6) — All who (in the apostle's phrase) love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity, and who desire to be no wiser about his appointments, than he himself was; and are content to expect no more from his institution than he himself put into it, will join with me at least in the one only method of examining into the nature and extent of it. (Page 7)

Here he has given us a short, but full account of the principles upon which he proceeds, which I shall reduce into the following propositions.

First, that the nature, end, and effects of the holy sacrament can only be so far known, and apprehended by us, as the bare words of Christ in the institution of the sacrament, related by the apostles and evangelists, have made them known to us.

Secondly, that no other meaning or interpretation is to be put upon these words, but what is agreeable to the common rules of speaking on the like occasions.

Thirdly, that this examination into the meaning of the words, according to the common rules of speaking on the like occasions, is the one only method of knowing what is meant by them.

Fourthly, that this knowledge thus acquired from such a consideration of the words, is all the knowledge that we can have of the nature, end, and effects of this holy sacrament.

Everyone must see that these propositions are fairly taken from his own words, and that they are the foundation of his whole discourse. He builds upon them as upon so many axioms, or first principles; and all he says

from the beginning to the end of his treatise, is founded upon the supposed incontestable truth of them.

Here therefore let me desire you to fix your eye, for here I will place the merits of the cause with him: If this foundation cannot be shaken, I will dispute nothing that he has built upon it.

But then let it be observed, that if these propositions are proved to be absolutely false, and most evidently repugnant to the repeated letter, constant spirit, and whole tenor of scripture, then all this whole treatise, from the beginning to the end, so far as he proceeds upon his own avowed principles, is mere fiction and fable, a castle in the air.

I shall therefore in the plainest manner show the falseness of these propositions, and that they are so far from being what he takes them to be, viz., the only means of arriving at the fullness of scripture truths, that whoever entertains them as truths, and abides by them in his search after scripture truths, is, and must be, so long as he continues in that sentiment and practice, stone-blind to all the mysteries of the kingdom of God, as related in scripture.

And that, if it were anyone's desire to do exactly what our blessed Lord charges upon the Pharisees and lawyer, "that they shut up the kingdom of heaven, took away the key of knowledge, entered not in themselves, and those that were entering in, they hindered": were this the deepest desire of anyone's heart, the one only effectual way of doing it, must be the way that this author has taken in this treatise. For, it shall also be made appear, that these principles of his are that very veil which the apostle says was upon the hearts of the Jews; and that the scriptures have never been useless to, misunderstood, or rejected by any people of any age, but for this reason, because their hearts were blinded and hardened by this very method of knowing scripture truths, which he proposes to us. All the characters of "stiff-necked, hardened, blind, carnal, and uncircumcised in heart and spirit," which are in the scriptures given to unbelieving Jews, are only so many various ways of describing that state of heart, which these very principles had produced in them.

Had they thought of any other method of knowing their messiah, but that of the bare letter of scripture, interpreted according to the common rules of speaking, the greatest occasion of their infidelity had been removed.

But to begin in my proposed method. The holy sacrament was instituted in these words: “And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat, this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it: for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins.” Matthew 26:26. In St. Luke the words of institution are: “And he took the bread, and gave thanks, and brake it, and gave it unto them, saying, This is my body which is given for you: this do in remembrance of me. Likewise also the cup after supper, saying, This cup is the New Testament in my blood, which is shed for you.” Luke 22:19.

Let us now apply the doctrine contained in the forementioned propositions to these words of the institution of the sacrament. According to the doctrine of those propositions, the one only method of understanding what is meant by these words of the institution, is to consider and interpret them “according to the common rules of speaking in like cases.” But, pray sir, where must a man look for a like case? Does the world afford us any case like it? Have the speaker, or the things spoken, any things in common life that are alike to either of them? How vain it is therefore to refer us to the common rules of speaking on the like cases, when the whole world affords us neither any person like him that spoke, nor any thing, or case, like the things and case here spoken of.

The scripture saith, “He spake the word, and they were made; he commanded, and they were created.” (Psalm 148:5.) Has this way of speaking any parallel in the language of men? Do human things and transactions furnish us with anything like this?

Now the Word which thus speaking created all things, is not more extraordinary, more above the common rules of speaking, or more without human example, than that Word which, in the institution of the sacrament, spake, and it was done; commanded, and it was created. For it is the same omnipotent Word that here speaketh, that spoke the creation into being;

and the effects of his speaking in the institution of the sacrament, are as extraordinary, and as much above the effects of human speaking, as when the same Word “spake, and they were made; commanded, and they were created.” And it is impossible for anyone to show, that there is less of divine power and greatness, less of mystery and miracle implied in these words spoken by the eternal Word in the institution of the sacrament, than when the same eternal Word said, “Let there be light, and there was light.”

All words have a meaning, a significancy and effect, according to the nature of him, whose they are. The words of God are of the nature of God, divine, living and powerful; the words of an angel are, as that angel is in power and perfection; the words of a devil have only his nature and power, and therefore they can only and solely tempt to evil; the words of man are, as men are, weak, vain, earthly, and of a poor and narrow signification. To direct us therefore to the common rules of speaking amongst men, as the only means of truly knowing all that the Son of God spoke, when he spoke of himself, and on such an occasion, and in such circumstances as never did, nor ever can happen or belong to anyone but himself, is surely no small mistake. The common rules of speaking are like other things that are common amongst men, viz., poor, empty, and superficial, hardly touching the outside of the mere human things we talk about. If therefore what the Son of God said of himself in the institution of this holy sacrament, must necessarily be supposed to have no higher meaning or deeper sense, than such as is according to the common rules of speaking amongst men; it must necessarily follow, that he spoke as meanly, as imperfectly, and as superficially in what he said of himself, and the matter he was upon, as when men speak of themselves and human things. For if there were not the same weak, empty, and superficial meaning in his words, as there is in the common discourse of men; then the common rules of speaking amongst men cannot be a proper, much less the only means of understanding all the truth that is contained in them.

This author seems to be in the same mistake concerning Jesus Christ and his kingdom, as his disciples were in, before they had received power from on high. They had till then heard him only with their outward ears; conceived what he said, only according to the common rules of speaking amongst men, and so continued perfect strangers to all the mysteries and great truths of the gospel. But after the descent of the Holy Ghost upon

them, their understandings were opened, and they saw all things with new eyes, and in a new light; they then fully apprehended what their Lord meant by these remarkable words, “My kingdom is not of this world.” Which is the same thing as if he had said, I speak not as a person of this world, and therefore the things which I say, can neither be understood by a worldly mind, nor according to the common ways of speaking amongst men. And had this author sufficiently attended to the sense of these words, and felt the truth of them in his own heart, it seems next to impossible for him to have fallen into his present way of reasoning. For he that truly and fully believes that the kingdom of Christ is not of this world, and that therefore worldly powers and privileges are not a proper part of it, can hardly be so inconsistent with himself, as to affirm, that worldly language, spoken on worldly matters, is the only proper key to the right understanding the truths and doctrines of this kingdom, that is so out of, above, and contrary to this world.

And if he has but one just and good argument to prove, that worldly power is not the proper and only power that belongs to this kingdom, the same argument will as fully prove, that worldly language understood according to the common rules of speaking, cannot be the proper and only means of rightly apprehending the truths of this kingdom.

To proceed: he refers and confines us to the bare words of the institution, for the right and full understanding of all that is to be understood of the nature, end, and effects of the holy sacrament.

Here he throws an easy deception into the mind of his reader, who because he may justly think he is right in declaring the words of institution to be the only true and full account of the sacrament, as to the outward form and matter of it, suspects him not to be wrong, when he concludes from thence, that the words are also the only true and full account of the nature, end and effects of the holy sacrament. Whereas this is as false, as the other is true; for the nature, and end, and effects of the holy sacrament, neither are, nor possibly can be taught us (as shall be shown hereafter) from the bare words of the institution, considered by themselves.

Let us suppose that one of this author’s rational men, of clear ideas, but an absolute stranger to the scriptures, and to our savior’s doctrines, had been



present only when he spoke the words of the institution; would his knowledge of the meaning of words, according to the common rules of speaking, have directed him to the true sense of all that was implied by this sacrament and the observation of it? To say that such a person thus qualified could have known the true nature, end, and effects of the holy sacrament, is surely too absurd to be imagined. And to say that he could not, is fully giving up this author's whole doctrine, namely, that the bare understanding the words of the institution according to the common rules of speaking, is the only way to understand all that is certain and true as the nature, end, and effects of the sacrament. For if this were so, it would evidently follow, that a perfect stranger to all the other doctrines and institutions both of the Old and New Testament, would be as well qualified to understand all that was implied in the words of the institution, as he that had the fullest knowledge of everything that ever had been revealed or appointed by God, either before or since the birth of Christ.

But if some knowledge of what God has revealed both in the Old and New Testament be required, for a right understanding what is implied in the words of the institution, then it is absolutely false, and highly blamable, to say, that the bare words of the institution, considered in themselves only, according to the common rules of speaking, are the only means or method of understanding all that is implied in them.

Either this sacrament has some relation to some other doctrines of the Old and New Testament, or it has not; if it has no relation to them, then it must be said to have no agreement with any other part of scripture: but if it has some relation to other doctrines of scripture, then it demonstratively follows, that this institution must be interpreted, not according to the bare meaning of the words in the common ways of speaking, but according to that relation which it has to some other doctrines of scripture. This, I think, is incontestable, and entirely overthrows his only method of understanding the nature of the sacrament.

Again, another argument of still greater force against him may be taken from the apostles themselves. He confines us to the bare words of the institution related by the apostles and evangelists, as the only means of knowing all that can be known of the nature, end, and effects of the sacrament; and yet it is certain, beyond all doubt, that the apostles and

evangelists neither had, nor could possibly have this design in relating and recording the words of the institution, namely, that we might thereby have the one only means of knowing all that is to be understood by it.

For they very well knew, that they had received no such knowledge themselves from the bare words of the institution, and therefore they could not relate them as the only means of instruction in that matter to others. They very well knew, that if they had received no other light, besides that which those words conveyed, they had died in a total ignorance of the whole matter.

They very well knew, that though they had personally conversed with Christ, had heard from his own mouth, mysteries preparatory to their right knowledge of their savior, that notwithstanding all this, when they heard and saw him institute the sacrament in its outward form and matter, as they relate it, by the help of the bare words of the institution, they then neither did, nor could rightly understand the nature, end, and effects of the holy sacrament. And therefore it may be said to be certain beyond all doubt, that they neither did nor could relate and record these words of the institution, as the only means of rightly understanding all that is implied in the sacrament, as to the nature, end, and effects of it. And yet this author takes all this for granted, and supposes that the apostles had all their knowledge of the sacrament from the words of the institution, and that they have recorded the institution for this end, and with this design, that we might know all that they knew, and all that could be known concerning it.

That the apostles themselves did not comprehend the nature, end, and effects of the sacrament from the words of the institution, is plain; for they did not then know what person their savior was, or how he was to save them or what their salvation in itself implied. They knew nothing of the nature or merit of his sufferings, but thought all to be lost, when he suffered death. They knew not how to believe in his resurrection, and when they did believe it, they knew nothing of the consequences of it; which is a plain proof that they did not at all see into the meaning of the holy sacrament, for had they known what was implied in it, they must have known their savior, and the nature of their salvation. And yet (what is well to be observed) it is also plain, that in this state of gross ignorance

and infidelity, knowing nothing of their salvation, they had all that knowledge of the holy sacrament which this author is recommending to the Christian world, as the only true knowledge of it. For they must have understood the words according to the common rules of speaking, which is all that he allows to be understood by them. For any other sense or meaning, that is not literally expressed in the words taken according to the common rules of speaking, is by him called a being wiser than Christ in his own appointments, an adding to the institution, or a putting something into it, which he has not put in. So that it is evidently plain, that this purity of knowledge concerning the sacrament, which this author has writ so large a volume in recommendation of, is that very knowledge of the sacrament which the apostles had, when they had no faith in Christ as their savior, nor any knowledge of the nature of Christian salvation. Everyone must see that this charge is justly brought against him, and that he cannot possibly avoid it. For if that is the only right knowledge the nature, end, and effects of the holy sacrament, which the bare words of the institution, understood according to the common rules of speaking, declare; if every other sense and meaning is to be rejected as a criminal adding, or putting something into Christ's institution, and a presuming to be wiser than he was; then it undeniably follows, that that simple and pure knowledge of the sacrament, which he lays so great claim to, and so much contends for, is that very gross ignorance of it which the apostles were in, when they had no light but from the bare words of the institution, and had all the articles of the Christian faith to learn.

Further, as the apostles did not, so they could not possibly know the nature, end, and effects of the holy sacrament, from the bare words of the institution, nor is it possible for anyone since their time to know it by that help alone.

The outward matter and form indeed, or that wherein the positive institution consists (as I have already said) is sufficiently plain and intelligible from the bare words of the institution, and is by them made unalterable. This is the only plainness of the institution. But what mysteries or doctrines of Christian faith are to be acknowledged or confessed by the words, the form, and the matter of it, and what are not, cannot be known from the bare words of the institution, but are to be learnt by that light which brought the apostles and the church after them

into a true and full knowledge of the fundamental articles of the Christian faith.

Take the words of the institution alone as the apostles first heard them, understood only according to the common rules of speaking, and then there is nothing in them, but that poor conception which they had of them at that time, and such as did them no good; and then also we have that knowledge of this institution, which this author pleads for. But, take the same words of institution, understood and interpreted according to the articles of the Christian faith, and seen in that light in which the apostles afterwards saw them, when they knew their savior; and then everything that is great and adorable in the redemption of mankind, everything that can delight, comfort and support the heart of a Christian, is found to be centered in this holy sacrament. There then wants nothing but the wedding garment to make this holy supper the marriage feast of the Lamb: and it is this holy solemnity, this author is taking so much pains to wrangle us out of, by so many dry subtleties of a superficial logic.

But I proceed to show, that neither the apostles, nor any other persons since them, could possibly know the nature, end and effects of the holy sacrament, from the bare words of the institution considered only in themselves, according to the common rules of speaking. And this may be demonstrated from every part of the institution.

I shall begin with these words, which are only a command to observe the institution, "Do this in remembrance of me": that is, let this be done as your confession and acknowledgement of the salvation that is received through me. Does not every common Christian, that has any knowledge of scripture, know, that this is the plain meaning of these words? And that as often as he does this, he does it in remembrance of his savior, in acknowledgement and confession of that salvation which mankind received through him? But now, that which is thus plain and intelligible in the words of the institution to a common Christian, knowing only the chief articles of his salvation, is altogether unintelligible to any man that is left solely to the bare words of the institution; for unless he was instructed in the other parts of scripture, so as to know what he was to understand by the words, they would signify no more to him than they would to a

heathen, who had by chance found a bit of paper in the fields with the same words writ upon it.

Now a heathen, ignorant of all divine revelation, if he found such a paper, could not know what it related to, nor what any of the words signified; he could not know when he was nearer, or when he was further from a right understanding of them; the common rules of speaking amongst men, would be of no use to teach him, whether there was any truth in such a paper, or what kind of truths were declared by it.

Now this is exactly the case of him that renounces all other means of knowing what is contained in the institution, but that of the words themselves, understood only according to the common rules of speaking amongst men. Such a one is only in the state of this heathen, the words of the institution are as unintelligible and useless to him, as if he had found them by chance; they relate to he knows not what, they may be all fiction and invention for aught he knows, they cannot possibly be understood as having any truth or reality in them, till he that reads them, knows more than is related by them, till he knows the chief articles of the Christian salvation. For the bare words of the institution, considered by themselves, do not at all prove, justify, or explain, even that which they literally express; they are all but empty, unmeaning words, till the proof, the justification and explication of them, is learned from some other parts of scripture. They do not at all prove, justify, or explain, either that we want a savior, or why we want him, or that a savior is given us, and how he effects our salvation; and yet all these things are absolutely necessary to a right understanding of this institution; and as soon as these things are proved, justified and explained, as soon as we know that we want a savior, and that one is given to us; as soon as we know who this savior is, how he saves us, and the nature and manner of our salvation, then, and not till then, all these words of the institution become clearly intelligible after a new manner; then all the great articles of our salvation appear to be finely remembered, acknowledged, and set forth by them.

The short of the matter is this; to understand these words only by themselves, knowing no more in them or by them, than what the common use of words teaches us, is to understand them only in such a degree as a heathen may understand them, who knows nothing of the scripture

besides; and this is the knowledge, or rather the total ignorance of the sacrament, that this author is contending for.

But if these words are but a part of the Christian religion, if they are to be understood according to that religion of which they are a part, if the articles of our Christian salvation have any concern in them, and we are to receive them as Christians in such a sense as our Christianity requires of us; then it is undeniably certain, that this author refers us to an absurdity, and impossibility, when he refers and confines us to the bare words of the institution, understood only according to the common rules of speaking, in order to have a Christian knowledge of the holy sacrament.

Again, “Do this in remembrance of me”: Now take these words in what sense you please, is it not equally and absolutely necessary for the right understanding of them, to know who and what kind of person this ME is, who is here to be remembered? For if this is to be done in remembrance of him, how can he be remembered, or acknowledged, unless it be known what qualities and characters of him are to be remembered and acknowledged?

But this is not done in the words of the institution; the state, nature, and characters of the person to be remembered are not there declared, nor proved, and explained; therefore something of the greatest importance to the words, and that must have the greatest effect upon the sense of them, and that is absolutely necessary to the right understanding of them, is necessarily to be learnt elsewhere; and therefore it is again proved that he refers us to an absurdity and impossibility, when he refers and confines us to the bare words of the institution, to know all that a Christian can rightly know of them.

For if all that is done in this sacrament, is to be done for the sake of remembering and acknowledging him as our savior, then surely it requires us to remember, and acknowledge him, according to what he is, with regard to our salvation, and according to those characters which are so plainly ascribed to him in scripture, and on which our whole religion is founded; and therefore it is also necessary, that we rightly know (what cannot possibly be known from the bare words of the institution) in what

respects and on how many accounts he is our savior, before we can rightly make this remembrance and acknowledgement of him as such.

It was the want of this knowledge, that made the institution of the sacrament useless to the apostles when they first heard it; but when they had got this knowledge, and knew all the characters of their savior, and in how many respects he stood as the mediator and redeemer betwixt God and man, then the institution became highly intelligible to them, and every part of it plainly declared the mystery that in a certain sense was both concealed and expressed by it. Now the addition of this knowledge of the nature, condition, and characters of the person to be remembered and acknowledged by the institution, is adding nothing to the institution, but the right use of it; it is bringing nothing to it, but a mind capable of knowing and observing it.

He that is to understand a proposition written in Hebrew, cannot be charged with adding to that proposition, because he holds it necessary to learn the Hebrew language before he pretends to understand a proposition written in Hebrew.

Now a scripture-Christian institution must as necessarily be understood according to scripture and Christian doctrine, as an Hebrew proposition must be understood according to the Hebrew language: and the making use of scripture and Christian doctrine, in order to understand a scripture and Christian institution, is no more an adding of something to the institution, that need not, or ought not to be done, than the interpreting an Hebrew proposition by the Hebrew language, is an adding of something to it, that need not, or ought not to be done.

And, on the other hand, to confine us to the bare words of the institution, as they are in themselves, as they sound only in common language, in order to understand a scripture-Christian institution, is exactly the same thing as to confine us to the bare words of a proposition written in Hebrew, considered only according to the common rules of speaking, and not according to that meaning they have in the Hebrew language to which they belong, and of which they are a part.

For a scripture-Christian institution must in the same manner have its dependence upon, foundation in, and interpretation from scripture and

Christian doctrine, of which it is a part, and to which it belongs, as an Hebrew proposition hath dependence upon, foundation in, and interpretation from the Hebrew language, to which it belongs, and of which it is a part.

This scripture-Christian institution being thus interpreted, according to the scripture and Christian doctrine, of which it is a part, is, when thus interpreted, left and kept in that state, in which Christ left it to be kept. Nay, the institution itself cannot even literally be observed according to the bare words of it, unless it be observed according to this knowledge and acknowledgement of all the characters of Christ.

For though the bare words of the institution do not express or teach these characters, yet the bare words or letter of it requires thus much: for since the letter of the institution requires us to do this in remembrance and acknowledgement of Christ, the bare letter requires us in doing this, to acknowledge and remember all the characters of Christ; therefore he that in doing this does not remember and acknowledge all the characters of Christ, must be said not to observe the very letter of the institution. Hence therefore there arises another plain demonstration against his doctrine, viz., that we are to know no more of the nature or right observation of the sacrament, than what is expressly taught us in the bare words of the institution. For the very letter itself of the institution contradicts this; and if he will not directly refuse what the bare words expressly command, he must seek for something towards the right observation of this sacrament, which is only required, but not taught in the words of the institution. For by the letter of the institution you are commanded to remember and acknowledge a person, whose characters, condition and offices to be acknowledged, are not taught in the institution, but only to be found in other parts of scripture; and therefore the bare letter of the institution is grossly violated, if we look no further than to the words of the institution for a right knowledge and observation of the sacrament.

Again, if the scriptures teach and prove Christ to be the sacrifice, atonement and propitiation for our sins, as expressly as they teach us the institution of the sacrament, does not the remembrance and acknowledgement of him as the sacrifice, atonement and propitiation for sin, become a necessary part of our right observation of the sacrament?



For if the sacrament is appointed for the remembrance and acknowledgement of Christ as our savior, and if as our savior he is the atonement, the sacrifice, and propitiation for our sins, is not the remembrance and acknowledgement of him as our sacrifice and atonement, essential to the remembrance of him as our savior? If these characters were mentioned in the institution, I suppose they would be allowed to be an essential part of it. But if the letter of the institution directly points to, and calls for the acknowledgement of these characters, then they are as essential to it, as if they were expressly mentioned in it.

Jesus Christ is not mentioned in the institution as our savior, but I suppose it will not be denied that he is there by way of necessary implication, since the person there to be remembered, is declared by the scripture to be our savior. But if we may be allowed thus to take our savior to be the person that is to be remembered and acknowledged by the sacrament, if this may be done without adding anything to the institution, if it must be done as absolutely essential to it, then the addition of sacrifice, atonement, and propitiation for our sins, may be added without adding anything to the institution, and must be done as absolutely essential to it; because the scriptures teach and prove, that Jesus Christ, as our savior, is the sacrifice, atonement, and propitiation for our sins. Therefore if the remembrance of him as our savior is essential to the sacrament, the remembrance and acknowledgement of him as the sacrifice and atonement, and propitiation for sin, is essential to the sacrament.

And therefore it follows again, that the very words of the institution direct us to a further knowledge of the sacrament, than that which is expressly taught by them.

To proceed: "Take, eat; this is my body." Now what signifies it what anyone can make of these words, understood according to the common ways of speaking? For the way itself is singular and uncommon, and has no certain meaning according to the common rules of speaking. He may as well read a discourse upon truth, to know whether these words have any truth in them, as consult the common forms of speaking, to know what is meant by them. For if the things mentioned and expressed in these words, were not made significant and important to us by something not mentioned in the sacrament, if they were not asserted and explained in

other parts of scripture, it could never be known from the words themselves, that they were of any significancy to us, or that there was any truth and reality in them. The short of the matter is this: either these words are only a great impropriety of speech, darkly expressing only a common thing; or they are a figurative form of words, which by the particularity of the expression are to raise the mind to a faith and apprehension of such things, as cannot be plainly and nakedly represented by human language. Now one of these two must necessarily be true, that is, they must necessarily be either a dark form of words with only a plain common meaning of an ordinary thing at the bottom, or they must be a mysterious form of words signifying something more than human. But now which of these two they are, cannot possibly be known from the words of the institution. For the words in themselves prove nothing at all of this; from aught that appears in the words themselves, they may be mere fiction and impropriety about a trifle, or the greatest and most important of all truths may be taught by them. But this can no other possible way be known, but by other parts of scripture. And if the scriptures were as silent about the truth, nature, and extent of the things barely mentioned in the sacrament, as the institution itself is, it must be the same useless, unintelligible form of words to us, that it was to the apostles when they first heard them, and had no knowledge of their savior.

But, on the other hand, if the things barely mentioned in the words of the institution, are openly asserted, and variously explained in other parts of scripture; if we are often told what the body of Christ is in several respects, of the necessity and possibility of eating his flesh, and drinking his blood; if the scriptures abound with instruction, showing us how we have our life in him and from him, how we must be born again in him and through him, how he must be formed in us, and we new creatures in him; then it follows, that to separate the institution from these scriptures that variously unfold its nature, and to confine us to the bare words of the institution itself, in order to understand it fully, is the same absurdity, the same offense against scripture and reason, as it would be to confine us to the bare words of the first promise of a savior made in the third chapter of Genesis, in order to know fully our Christian savior, and what our Christian salvation is. For as that first promise of a seed of the woman that should bruise the serpent's head, contained the whole character of our

savior, and all that related to him as such, and yet contained nothing of it intelligible enough, till further revelations, doctrines and facts explained all that was short and figurative in that first promise, and showed how every part of our salvation was promised by it; so the institution of the sacrament contained everything relating to Christ as our savior, and yet contained nothing of it intelligible enough, till further revelations, new light, doctrines and facts explained all that was short and figurative in it, and plainly showed what it was in its real nature, how it stood in the heart of our religion, fully attesting and representing the chief characters of Christ, as he was our savior and redeemer.

Therefore it is the same gross error to confine the words of the institution to their own literal meaning, and to understand them only according to the common rules of speaking, as it would be to confine that first promise of a savior to the literal meaning of the words in which it was expressed, understood only according to the common rules of speaking. For as it was by the scriptures speaking a language different from the expressions of the first promise of a seed to bruise the serpent's head, and giving further revelations concerning the promised savior in other words, that the words of the first promise itself came rightly to be understood and believed; so it is by the scriptures speaking a language different from that of the sacrament, and by revealing doctrines on which it is founded, that the sacrament itself came rightly to be known and understood. And if the scripture may and must be allowed to explain, confirm, and establish the true meaning of the first promise of a seed to destroy the serpent's head, even where the words of it are not mentioned, or expressly said to be explained; then the scriptures may and must be allowed to explain, confirm, and establish the true nature of the sacrament, even where the words of it are not mentioned, or expressly said to be explained.

Yet this author poorly and vainly supposes, that the nature of the sacrament, and the things meant by it, are nowhere to be looked for in scripture, but where the sacramental words, or the manner of the outward institution is repeated, or expressly said to be explained: which is as just and solid, as if a Jew should from the same skill in words suppose, that the explication of the first promise of a woman's seed to bruise the serpent's head, was nowhere to be looked for in scripture, but in such

places as spoke strictly the language of the first promise, and mentioned the express words, “seed,” and “bruise,” and the “serpent’s head.”

And indeed herein, in this poor literal exactness lay all the infidelity of the Jews, the blindness and hardness of their hearts, and their incapacity to receive their savior. Look at every folly, grossness, and erroneous principle of the scribes and Pharisees; look through the whole of their false religion, and you will find, that they fell into it all, because they had this author’s method of finding the truth. They placed all in the letter of scripture, as this author does; they understood that letter only according to the common rules of speaking amongst men, as this author does; they looked upon and understood all the institutions of their religion, as this author looks upon and understands the sacrament; they saw just so far into the Law, as he does into the gospel; they had his degree of knowledge, and he has their degree of ignorance. For take but away from the scribe and Pharisee the letter of scripture, understood according to the common rules of speaking, and you take away all their religion; they see no more of an inward mystery, spirit, or doctrine in it, than this author sees in the sacrament.

Again, leave them but the letter of scripture, understood according to the common rules of speaking, as this author would have the sacrament left, and then you leave them all that they would have; and the religion of the scribes and Pharisees is in its full perfection, and has exactly the perfection of this author’s plain account of the sacrament.

This made me say above, that it would appear, that this author’s method of understanding the scripture doctrine of the sacrament, was that very veil which the apostle said was upon the hearts of the Jews; and that he was laboring to draw skins over our eyes, and to make our ears gross and dull of hearing, that the New Testament might be as useless to us, as the Old Testament was to the unbelieving letter-learned scribes and Pharisees. For his excellent method of understanding the nature of the sacrament, is to a tittle that very method which kept them totally ignorant of the nature of their religion.

Every prophecy of our savior, whether in the Law, or the psalms, or the prophets, served only to keep him more out of their knowledge; because

looking only upon it, as this author looks upon the words of the institution, they were under a necessity of understanding it wrong, and so the more prophecies they had of him, the further they were carried from the true knowledge of their promised savior. Circumcision, sacrifices, washings, feasts and fasts, etc., which were intended and appointed as so many school-masters or guides to Christ, were by them turned into dead, carnal, earthly ordinances, that left them in their sins, and incapable of acknowledging their savior, or so much as feeling any want of one; for this very reason, because they saw no further into their sacrifices, than this author sees into the sacrament; but thought that the whole nature and end of a sacrifice was fully observed, when they had slain an ox, and not changed it into the cutting off of a dog's head. This was their great point in sacrifice, just as this author has found out the great point, as he calls it, of the sacrament, which consists in a bare act of the memory, remembering Christ as a teacher of religion at the instant you take the bread or the cup, and not remembering Aristotle or Socinus, etc., as teachers of logic and criticism.

When you have by this sole act of your memory thus separated and distinguished what is done in the sacrament, from that which is done for food, or mirth, or in memory of your friends, then you have secured the great point in the sacrament, and are to look for nothing further as to the peculiar nature, end, and effects of it. Just as the letter-learned Pharisee thought that the whole nature and end of the sacrifice was fully observed when he had slain an ox, and not cut off a dog's head.

And if you are for adding anything to the sacrament besides this distinguishing act of the memory, you are as blamable in the sight of this author, as the apostles were in the eyes of the unbelieving Pharisee, when they taught that the blood of slain beasts was, as to its nature and end, a type and application of the atonement of Christ's blood. Thus does this author stand in the very state and place of the unbelieving Pharisee, teaching Christians the gospel, as he taught the Jews the Law, and excluding the true knowledge of Christ from Christian institutions, just as the Pharisee excluded it from the Jewish.

And if you ask, or search ever so much into the true reason why the religion of the scribes and Pharisees was so odious in the sight of our

blessed savior, why he cast so many reproaches upon it, why he denounced so many woes against it; the one true genuine cause was this, it was because they stood on the outside of the Law, just as this author stands on the outside of the gospel, and were content with such a plain account of their sacrifices and circumcision, as he has given us of the sacrament; it was because they stuck to the bare letter of scripture, only understood according to the common rules of speaking amongst men; it was this fullness of a false, empty, and dead knowledge, that made the scriptures useless to them, that fixed them in a state of blind self-sufficiency, and made it harder for the rational, letter-learned Pharisee, than for a gross sinner to see the kingdom of God, or to acknowledge him that preached it.

And here we may see the true and solid meaning of the apostle, when he saith, God had “made them able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.” (2 Corinthians 3:6.)

For the letter of scripture, understood only according to the common rules of speaking, is the letter that killeth, the letter that made the Jews unbelievers in Christ, that makes speculative Christians, idealists, critics and grammarians fall into infidelity; but scripture, interpreted not by lexicons and dictionaries, but by doctrines revealed by God, and by an inward teaching and unction of the Holy Ghost, is that spirit which giveth life.

But this author, according to his own principles, is obliged to own himself to be an anti-apostle, and to declare, that not God, but logic, and much attention to human words and ways of reasoning, have made him an able minister of the New Testament, not of the spirit, but of the letter; and has convinced him, that it is the letter alone that giveth life. For he cannot allow the smallest degree of sound doctrine to be in the apostle’s words; had he but dropped an expression like it, or made the least acknowledgement of a killing letter of scripture, till the spirit gave life to it, it must have passed for a full recantation of all his Plain Account.

But to return to the further consideration of the words of the institution: “This is my body, which is given for you; this is my blood, which is shed

for many, for the remission of sins.” Who can know what is right or wrong in these expressions, or in what sense they are to be received, if he look only to the sound of the words according to the common rules of speaking? Or supposing he could guess out some tolerable meaning; yet if the scripture has doctrines concerning these things, teaching, asserting, and explaining how, and in what sense his body is given for us, and his blood the atonement for our sins, in a way and manner above all human thought and conception; then it follows, that no meaning of the words can be admitted, but that which is according to the scripture explication of the things mentioned by them.

Nothing therefore can be more unjustifiable and impracticable, than this author’s only method of understanding the nature of the sacrament from the words considered in themselves. For as this cannot be the way of understanding the truth of any doctrines of scripture, so least of all can it be the way of understanding the true meaning of the words of the institution; for these words have a more than ordinary relation to, and dependence upon all the scriptures. For as Christ is in some respect or other represented, and made further known what he is to us, in almost every page of scripture; so the sacrament, which is to be done in remembrance and acknowledgement of what he is to us, must have its relation to, and dependence upon all those places and doctrines of scripture, which teach what he is to us, and what we are to remember and acknowledge him to be. Therefore, all those passages of scripture, which teach and explain the nature, office, and condition of Christ, directly and immediately teach and explain what we are to do, remember and acknowledge in the sacrament, and are in the same degree true and proper comments upon the nature of the sacrament, in which they are true accounts and descriptions of our savior. And that which we are to believe of our savior according to the scriptures, that we are to remember and acknowledge of him in the sacrament; and therefore the scripture explication of the sacrament is not, as this author extravagantly supposes, confined to those texts that mention expressly the sacrament, or the words of the institution, but is as large and extensive as the scripture explication of the nature, office, and condition of Christ as our savior. Wherever we are taught anything concerning him as such, there we are directly taught

something of the true nature and end of the sacrament, and what we are to remember and acknowledge of him in the doing it.

“Search the scriptures, ” saith our blessed savior, “for they are they which testify of me.” Is not this in the plainest manner referring us to all the scriptures that speak of him as our savior, to know what we are to remember and acknowledge of him in the sacrament? For since he saith, Search the scriptures, for they are they that testify of me; and in the sacrament, Do this in remembrance or acknowledgement of me; is it not directly as full to the purpose, as if he had said, Search the scriptures, for they are they which testify what you are to remember and acknowledge concerning me in the sacrament? For that which they testify of him, that they must testify of the nature and end of the sacrament, which is to be done in remembrance and acknowledgement of that which is so testified of him. Since therefore every scripture that testifies anything concerning Christ, as our savior, testifies so much of that which is to be acknowledged of him in the sacrament, it plainly follows, that the nature and end of the sacrament can only be so far known, as the nature, character, office and condition of Christ is known; and that all those scriptures which teach us the one, in the same degree teach us the other, and are as necessary to teach us the nature of the sacrament, as the nature of Christ; for this plain reason, because the sacrament is to remember and acknowledge that which is taught us concerning the nature of Christ.

Hence again it appears with how little judgment and less truth this author affirms, that the nature and end of the sacrament is only to be known from the bare words of the institution, understood according to the common rules of speaking.

Again, another argument which will make the absurdity of this same error still further apparent, may be taken from the following passage of scripture. When our savior said in the 6th of St. John, that his “flesh was meat indeed, and his blood was drink indeed”; and that unless a “man did eat his flesh, and drink his blood, he had no life in him; his disciples were astonished at his discourse, and said, How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” To which, by way of answer, he said, “The words that I say unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.” For if our savior had thought at all like this author, and had intended to be understood according to the



common rules of speaking, he would have spoken only common language; and upon their not understanding what he said, he must have directed them to the right way, and have said, Consider my words only according to the common rules of speaking, and then you will know all that is to be known by them.

Least of all could he have said, to help their understanding of them in a common way, “The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life”; for surely such a way of speaking could not be directing them to the common rules of speaking amongst men. For if he had intended to show them in the strongest manner, how much what he said was different from, and superior to all the common meaning of human words; how could he have done this in a higher degree, than by saying as he did, “The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit and they are life.”

Now, the question put by his disciples, “How can this man give us his flesh to eat?” comes as naturally in the case of the sacrament, where we are to eat his body, and drink his blood, as in the forementioned place of St. John; and as there is the same foundation for the same question, so there is strictly the same foundation for the same answer, viz., “The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life.”

And it is absolutely impossible for anyone to show, that the words of the institution are not as truly to be looked upon as Spirit and life, as the other words about eating his flesh, and drinking his blood. For surely, he that is obliged to own, that the words in St. John, of eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, are Spirit and life, cannot have any proof that the words in the sacrament, of eating his body and drinking his blood, have nothing of that Spirit and life in them. For if it be asked, Why the words in St. John are Spirit and life? The one only reason is this, because they speak of eating Christ’s flesh and drinking his blood, which is such a spiritual, living participation of the nature of Christ, or, in scripture words, such a putting on of Christ, as cannot be understood or obtained by outward and dead words. And yet if the words in the sacrament must be said, not to be Spirit and life, the one only reason must be this, because they only speak of eating Christ’s body, and drinking his blood.

But surely this is too great an absurdity for anyone to hold; for it is saying, that the drinking his blood, when joined with eating his body, is only an human expression, to be understood according to the common rules of speaking; but that the drinking his blood, when joined with eating his flesh, is so great a mystery, so above our common way of conceiving, that the words expressing it, are said to be Spirit and life.

But now if the case be thus, if the words in the sacrament must be allowed to be Spirit and life, for the same reason that the words in St. John are said to be Spirit and life; then there is an end of this author's poor contrivance to enter into the whole truth contained in the sacrament, by only considering the words according to the common rules of speaking. It is a contrivance as unfit for the purpose, as weakly and improperly thought of, as an iron key to open the kingdom of heaven.

Again, if a person hearing the words of our savior, as recorded in St. John, had said to him, There is no more Spirit and life in your words than in the words of anyone else, and they can mean no more than our words according to the common rules of speaking, such a person might have been reckoned amongst those that blasphemed the Son of God.

Now if this author will say the same thing concerning the words of the institution, of eating his body and drinking his blood, that they are no more Spirit and life, than the words of men speaking of human things, and that nothing more is to be understood in them and by them, than according to the common rules of speaking; I desire to know, how this could be a lesser degree of blasphemy, or a smaller offense against the Son of God, than in the former case? Or why it was not as right and justifiable for a person to say, there was no Spirit and life in the words of our savior, speaking of eating his flesh and drinking his blood, as to say, there is no Spirit and life in his words, speaking in the sacrament of eating his body and drinking his blood?

Lastly, either therefore this author must say with those that blaspheme the Son of God, that the words of the institution are not the words of him, whose words were Spirit and life, or he must give up his only method of understanding the true meaning of them. For if they are Spirit and life, then

to seek for the sense of such words in the common forms of speaking, is truly to seek the living amongst the dead.

From what has been said of the words of the institution, of their not being understood by the apostles, of the impossibility of their being understood according to the sound of the words in the common ways of speaking; of the impossibility of their being understood, till the great doctrines and articles of the Christian faith were first known, and so became the plain and visible explication of them; from these things we may sufficiently see the falseness of this author's chief propositions concerning the sacrament.

These propositions are printed in a pompous manner, with great show of significancy, as so many pillars of truth. The four first are the chief; if therefore they are removed, the others must go with them.

I shall begin with the fourth proposition, because it is the chief; both those that are before, and those that follow it, depend entirely upon the truth of it; and yet it has already appeared, and shall be made still more apparent, that there is not the least glimpse of truth in it.

Speaking of our savior's instituting the sacrament, he says as follows.

Proposition IV. It cannot be doubted, that he himself sufficiently declared to his first and immediate followers, the whole of what he designed should be understood by it, or implied in it.

And yet it has been fully shown to be out of all doubt, by a variety of arguments, that the first followers of Christ, neither did, nor possibly could understand the whole nature of the sacrament from the words of the institution; which is all that our savior himself declared to them about it, and also all that this author appeals to, as a proof of his having sufficiently declared the whole matter to them.

Further, what is asserted in this proposition, is as directly contrary to truth, scripture, fact, and our savior's own declarations; as if it had been asserted, that our savior did that sufficiently himself, which he declared he had not done sufficiently; and also should not be done, till after his leaving the world. For at the time that he was about to depart from them, he expressly says unto them, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but

ye cannot hear them now. Howbeit, when he the Spirit of truth is come, he shall guide you into all truth.”

From this declaration of our savior, as well as from plain facts recorded in the history of the apostles, it is out of all doubt, that he left the apostles in great ignorance of the Christian religion, and that it was not his intention to deliver them out of this ignorance by his own personal instruction of them; but that they were to continue in this ignorance till further revelations, new light, and certain facts which were about to happen, should open to them a clear and full view of the nature of the Christian religion.

For first, here are many things that they were yet to be taught, which they then had not been taught, and of which they were then to continue ignorant; therefore it is plain, that they could not sufficiently know all that they were to know, or all that our savior designed they should know of any article or institution of the Christian religion; that is, they were so far from knowing the whole nature and end of the sacrament, that they knew the whole nature of nothing else in the Christian religion, but knew everything that they did know, in the most imperfect manner. For surely, if many things relating to the Christian salvation were yet to be kept secret from them, the Christian salvation was imperfectly made known unto them; and therefore they could only have been taught in part, and had only seen as it were some first sketches, or beginning lines of what they were afterwards to see in its true fullness.

And that these many things, of which they were kept thus ignorant, were many things of the greatest importance and signification to the right knowledge of the Christian salvation, is evident from the reason given by our savior, why they were not then taught by him, viz., “But ye cannot bear them now.” For surely, if those many things were then not taught them, for this reason, because they were not able to bear them then; they must have been things of the greatest importance, and most uncommon in their nature; such things as were the hardest to be comprehended, the most difficult to be believed, and the most contrary to the common conceptions of men, and consequently such as were most necessary and essential to a right knowledge of the Christian salvation.

From this it also appears, how low a state of knowledge the apostles were in at the time of the institution of the sacrament, since they were not only ignorant of so many things of the greatest importance to be known, but were in a state so contrary to this knowledge, so full of dispositions contrary to it, that they were then incapable of being taught it.

And though all this be declared by our savior himself, at the end of all his instructions, when he was upon the point of going from them; yet this author, in direct and full contradiction to scripture facts, and this express declaration of our savior, says, “It cannot be doubted, that he sufficiently declared to his disciples the whole of what he designed should be understood by it.”

Whereas, the contrary to this is as plainly declared by our savior himself, as if he had said in express words, I have instituted a sacrament to be observed by you hereafter; but what is to be understood by it, and implied in it, can only be known by you now, in that poor, low, and ignorant manner, in which you know other things at present concerning me. But when the many things which ye now cannot bear to be taught, shall by my death, resurrection, and ascension, and the coming of the Holy Ghost, be made truly intelligible to you, and become the real light of your minds, then shall ye clearly see and know the whole of that which I designed to be understood by, and implied in this sacrament of my body and blood.

For what our savior has said concerning the imperfection of their knowledge then, and their unfitness to be instructed further, and of their necessity of being taught in another manner, is as plain a proof of this, as if it had in express words been applied to the sacrament.

For though it is too much for anyone to pretend to say exactly what or how many these things were, that they were then not in a condition and capacity to understand; yet this may with great assurance be affirmed, that the doctrines concerning Christ’s death, the nature, necessity, and merits of his sacrifice and atonement for the sins of the world, the possibility and necessity of eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, were certainly amongst those many things; and therefore this holy sacrament, which hath its foundation in this atonement for sins, and is itself instituted for the eating his flesh, and drinking his blood must of all necessity be amongst

those many things, of which they were then greatly ignorant, because they were not in a condition to receive a right and full knowledge of them. Therefore there is the fullest proof that can be desired, that our savior did not, and could not intend sufficiently to declare to them the whole of what he intended should be understood and implied in the sacrament of his body and blood.

And for this reason also he saith unto them, "It is expedient for you that I go away; for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come. But if I depart, I will send him unto you." Again, "These things have I said, being yet present with you; but the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

As if he had said, "It is expedient for you that I go away, because so long as I thus stay with you in the flesh, ye cannot know, nor believe, nor enter into the true nature, end, merits and effects of my death, resurrection and ascension; neither can the Holy Ghost come upon you in my name, till my kingdom is thus set up, and these things are accomplished in me. Therefore these things I have said, being yet present with you; that is, I have spoken thus far of these things in a way suited to your present state; not that they should be the matter of your present knowledge, whilst you know nothing rightly, nor apply anything that I say, to its proper object; but I have said these things to you, that they may be laid up in your minds, then and then only to be truly understood, rightly remembered in their proper place, and duly applied to their proper objects, when the Holy Ghost shall come in my name, that is, upon the foundation of my death, resurrection and ascension, and shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

From all these things it appears sufficiently, that this author's fourth and fundamental proposition is absolutely false, and grossly contradictory to scripture, facts, and the express declaration of our savior; and that our savior himself, in his own person, before he left the world, did not, could not intend sufficiently to declare to his disciples the whole of what he intended should be understood by, and implied in the sacrament.

And here I must observe to you, that the confutation of this fourth proposition, is not to be considered as the discovery of a single error in this author, but as a full detection of the general falseness, and erroneous procedure of his whole book; for everything, and every other proposition of any moment, throughout his whole book, is founded upon the supposed truth of this fourth proposition. He cannot take one step, in the way he is in, without it. He has not an argument but what is built upon it. And all his treatise, from the beginning to the end, is as idle and wandering as a sick man's dream, unless you grant him these two bulky errors; 1st, that our savior himself, in the words of the institution, sufficiently declared to his disciples the whole of what he intended should be understood by, and implied in the sacrament. 2dly, that the only method of understanding the whole of what he so sufficiently declared to them, is to interpret the same bare words of the institution, according to the common rules of speaking.

But as both these positions have, as I think, been already shown to be gross errors, directly contrary to reason, sense, scripture, facts, and the express declaration of our savior himself, so the whole of his treatise is already in the fullest manner confuted.

But I shall now proceed to consider some poor, little pretenses of argument, which this author brings in support of this false proposition. Which are as follows: "For this being," says he, "a positive institution, depending entirely upon his will; and not designed to contain anything in it, but what he himself should please to affix to it, it must follow, that he declared his mind about it, fully and plainly," p. 4.

This is his whole proof, that our savior himself sufficiently taught his disciples the whole nature and meaning of the sacrament, and they wholly understood it.

The thing that he would here speak to, is very improperly expressed, and ought to have proceeded thus: "This being a positive institution, by his will and pleasure introduced into a religion, which contains the means and method of the salvation of mankind by himself the institutor, cannot be designed by him to be any ways understood, or to have any other nature, meaning, and end in it, than such as is truly and fully according to the

doctrines of that religion into which he has introduced it, and more especially according to that part of religion in which he has placed it.”

Whereas instead of this, this author poorly says, it was not designed to contain anything in it, but he should please to affix to it. For he put nothing to be contained in it, he affixed nothing to it, but only placed it in the heart, or midst of a religion; which religion, as soon as it was truly known by his disciples, would sufficiently declare and explain to them the whole nature and end of this positive institution. In consequence of what he had just now erroneously said, he proceeds thus: “Because otherwise he must be supposed to institute a duty, of which none could have any notion without his institution; and at the same time not to instruct his followers sufficiently what that duty was to be.” Whereas instead of this, it ought to have been expressed thus: “Because otherwise, if he had not so instituted this sacrament, as to have its nature, end, and effects explained and determined by that religion, and chiefly by that part of religion, in which it was placed, it could never have appeared to any of his followers, what they were to do in it, or that there was any reason in its institution, or any benefit to be had from the observance of it.”

As for instance; if the religion, of which the sacrament is a part, did not teach us how his body is given and his blood shed for us, if it did not teach us something concerning the eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, what could the mentioning of these two strange things in the sacrament signify to us, or how could we have any notion of what was to be done or acknowledged by the sacrament? For if the sacrament speaks of anything that the religion in which it is placed speaks nothing of; if it represents anything that that religion has not to be represented, then it can signify no more in that religion after its institution, than it did before. But if to be a part of that religion in which it is appointed, it must speak the language of that religion; if the things that it represents, must be the things of that religion, then it plainly follows, 1st, that our savior himself in person, at the time, and by the words of the institution, did not, could not fully and plainly declare the whole nature of the sacrament; because the language which it spoke, and the things that it represented, were the language and things of a religion, which was not, and could not then be known by his disciples. 2dly, it follows also, that our savior had fully and sufficiently provided for their right knowledge of this sacrament, because it was so



worded and so placed in their religion, that the first true knowledge of their religion would become the full and clear explication of it.

This sacrament was instituted before the religion, of which it was to be a part, was known; is it therefore any wonder in itself, or any matter of accusation of our savior, that when he appointed this institution, he left it to be then only understood, when the religion, of which it was to be a part, should be known? And if he left his disciples in the same ignorance of the sacrament, as of the nature, merits, and end of his death, resurrection and ascension, is there any more to find fault with in the one, than in the other?

And this author might with the same show of argument prove, that he did declare unto them, fully and plainly, the whole nature, merits, and end of his death. For it may as well be said of that, as of the sacrament, that he must have fully and plainly declared his mind about it; otherwise he must be supposed to have instructed them of a matter of faith, which, without his instruction, they could have no notion of, and at the same time not to instruct them fully about it.

Now if anything may be said in defense of what our savior did to his disciples with regard to that imperfect state in which he left them, as to the knowledge of the nature, merits, and end of his death; if he might justly leave the true and full knowledge of it, to its only proper time, and only proper manner of being fully known; namely, till the consequences of his death, till his resurrection, ascension, and coming of the Holy Ghost, should prove the nature, power, merits, and end of it; then the same may and must be said in defense of our savior's leaving his disciples so ignorant of the nature, end, and effects of the holy sacrament. It was not because he was deficient in instructing them, but because he instructed them with the greatest wisdom; not giving them verbal explications of thing which could not so be understood by them, but leaving them to be informed in the one only proper time, and the only proper manner; namely, when by the knowledge of his death, resurrection, and ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost, they should truly and fully know the whole of that religion, of which this sacrament was appointed to be a part.

All therefore which this author saith of the necessity of their knowing sufficiently at first from the words of the institution, the whole nature of it, because it was a positive institution, and could have no more in it than he intended should be in it, are mere empty words; for it is granted on all sides, that the institution can be only that which Christ intended it should be, and can imply no more than he designed should be implied in it. But the question is, how we are to know all that he designed should be understood by, and implied in it.

This author says, this can only be known from the bare words of the institution considered in themselves, according to the common rules of speaking. Therefore, according to this author, had Socrates said the same things that Christ said, the institution had been just the same thing as it is; it had had the same meaning, and there had been neither more or less in it. This cannot be denied: for if the words of the institution are only to be understood according to the common meaning or sound of words in common life; then they must have the same meaning, and signify neither more or less, whether they be applied to Christ, or Socrates.

On the other hand, we say, since Christ appointed this institution to stand in a certain place, to be a certain part, and to have relation to certain doctrines of a religion not known, when this institution was appointed; that therefore what Christ meant by it, and would have implied in it, can then only be fully known, and when that religion in which it was to have a certain place, and of which it was to be a certain part, and to whose doctrines it was to be related, came to be fully known and understood. In short, that a Christian institution, ingrafted into the Christian religion, and connected with its chief doctrines, could then only be fully known, when the Christian religion was fully known.

Thus for instance: let it be supposed that at the time of instituting the sacrament, the apostles had no other way of knowing what was meant by it, but by considering the words in themselves, according to the common sound of the words. Yet, if after the death, and resurrection, and ascension of our savior, and the coming of the Holy Ghost, they knew a religion, which they knew nothing of before, and saw this sacrament to be a part of that religion; had they not then got a new and sure way of understanding what our savior meant by it? And had they not this very new means of

understanding it from our savior himself? Did not he teach them all that they were taught by his death, resurrection, and ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost? And was not that which he thus taught them in this manner, to be as sacred with them, and as much to be adhered to, as when he only taught them the words, outward form, and matter of the sacrament? And if he thus led them into the possession and knowledge of every truth and doctrine upon which this sacrament was founded, and to which it was related; is he not still the teacher of the sacrament, as well as he was the teacher of it in the words of the institution?

Vainly therefore doth this author thus further argue, that seeing “no one can be a judge, but the institutor himself, of what he designed should be contained in it; therefore, supposing him not to have spoken his mind plainly about it, it is impossible that any other person should make up the defect,” p. 5.

Vainly, I say, is all this argued, because here is no defect charged upon the words of the institution, nor any other person appointed or appealed to, to make up the defect. The words of the institution are allowed to be full and plain, as to all that is positive in this institution, both as to the matter and form of the sacrament: they were as plain at the first as they are now, or ever can be. But that part which is not positive in this institution, which is the greatest and chiefest part of it, namely, the truths signified and represented, and acknowledged by the outward form and matter of the sacrament; as the body of Christ given, and his blood shed for the sins of the world, and the eating his flesh and drinking his blood were not then, are not now, nor ever can be truly and rightly known from the plainness of the words of the institution alone. Yet here is not the smallest defect either in the institutor or the institution. For since the institution was not an independent thing, made for itself, and on its own account, nor to be practiced at the time it was appointed; it was no defect in it, that it did not explain itself, or was not then known, when it was not to be practiced. And seeing the institution was appointed for the sake of a religion, that then was not, but soon should be, it could be no defect in the institutor, that it was not known sooner than it was wanted, or till the time came, that everything else that was to be practiced with it, or for the sake of it, were fully and truly known.

It was no defect in our savior as a teacher of religion, that his religion was not known nor understood, till after his ascension into heaven, and the coming of the Holy Ghost; because his ascension, and the coming of the Holy Ghost, were to be fundamental articles and principal parts of his religion.

So also it was no defect in him, as an institutor of the sacrament, that the true nature and end of it was not known, when he first instituted it, or from the bare words of the institution; or that it was not to be known, till such things as were to be the principal parts of it came to be known.

And as that which was further and fully known of the Christian religion, after our savior's death, was not by anyone's making up the defect of his teaching, but was solely done by his own power, and in his own name; so all that which was further and fully known of the sacrament after the death of Christ, was not by anyone's making up the defect of his institution, but was his own further teaching them by his death, resurrection, and ascension, and by the coming of the Holy Ghost. For as he thus by his own power set up his own kingdom, so all that which was plainly shown and declared by his kingdom, was strictly shown and declared by himself.

And as it necessarily followed, that they must know more of Christ as their savior, and the manner of their salvation, after his death, resurrection, and ascension, and mission of the Holy Ghost, than they did before; so also it necessarily follows, that they must have exactly the same increase of knowledge at that time, concerning the nature of the sacrament, which they had concerning their savior; because the sacrament is expressly appointed to do that which it does, in remembrance and acknowledgement of that savior so made known. And therefore the more they knew of him as their savior, the more they must know of that which was to be remembered and acknowledged of him in the holy sacrament.

All therefore which this author says, of the making up the defect, if Christ did not at first make the whole of the institution plain, is of no significancy; for what they further knew rightly of it, when they knew their religion, and saw how and in what manner it was part of it; all this further true and real knowledge of it, came as plainly and undeniably from him, as the words of the institution did; and what they were taught by his

death and resurrection, and the consequences of them, was as truly from him, as what they were taught by his birth and incarnation, and miraculous conversation with them.

Having thus dispatched this author's fourth and chiefest proposition, and his proof of it; I shall now go back to his first, which stands thus.

Proposition I. The partaking of the Lord's Supper, is not a duty of itself, or a duty apparent to us from the nature of the thing; but a duty made such to Christians, by the positive institution of Jesus Christ, p. 2.

There is a great deal of error and deceit proposed to the reader in this proposition. For it is to make him believe, that the nature and end of the sacrament is wholly positive, and that all that we are to mean, and intend, and do by it, is something that we are only obliged to do by virtue of the institution: all which is absolutely false.

For the institution, as to its nature and end, is so far from being wholly positive, that its nature and end hath nothing positive in it. And all that which it is our duty to intend and do by the sacrament, is to be intended and done for itself, on its own account; and that which is positive in the sacrament, is only as a means, or mark, or sign of our doing it. That which is positive in this institution, and not to be done but because of the will of the institutor, is something entirely distinct, and different from the nature, end, and intent of the institution. And that in which the whole reason, meaning, end and intent of this institution essentially consists; is something that is to be done for itself, and does not take its reason of being done from the institution.

Now if all that is to be done, implied and intended by our celebrating the Lord's Supper, was, and is absolutely necessary to be done, though the way of doing it by the sacrament had never been instituted; then the meaning, end and intent of the sacrament cannot be positive; and if our obligation to do all that is contained in this meaning and intent of the sacrament, is an obligation arising from the thing itself, then this is not a positive duty.

Now the meaning, end and intent of the sacrament, is to remember, acknowledge and profess Christ to be our savior, and the manner in which

he is our savior; but all this is to be done on its own account, from the nature of the thing itself, and must have been done, though the sacrament had not been instituted; therefore the meaning, end and intent of the sacrament has nothing positive in it, and contains only our natural duty to Christ, arising from the relation between him and us. For to acknowledge and profess Christ to be our savior, and in all the respects in which he is our savior, is no more a positive duty, than it is a positive duty to acknowledge and profess the goodness of God towards us; but is a duty of itself, of the same nature, and of the same obligation, as faith and love, and adoration of our creator and redeemer are.

But to show still more plainly, that the nature, end and intent of the sacrament, is not positive, but entirely distinct and different from that which is positive in the sacrament; take the following instance.

Let it be supposed, that God by a positive command enjoined the people of one age to build an altar for his honor and worship; the people of another age to set up a tabernacle, a third to build a temple for the same end and intent; namely, for his honor and worship.

Now here are three positive appointments, and three positive duties; and all that is positive in the one, is very different from that which is positive in the other; yet the meaning, end and intent of all three is the same, namely, the honor and worship of God; therefore the meaning, end and intent of positive appointments, is something not positive, but entirely different and distinct from that which is the positive part of it.

Now this is exactly the case of the sacrament: bread and wine appointed to be used in acknowledgement of Jesus Christ as our savior, is as the altar or tabernacle, appointed to be built for the honor and worship of God. And as it was purely depending upon the will of God, whether it should be an altar or a tabernacle, or a temple, that should be built for his honor and worship; so it was solely depending upon the will of Jesus Christ, whether it should be bread and wine, or any other thing else that was to be used in remembrance and acknowledgement of him. And as the honor and worship of God, which was the sole meaning, end and intent of building either altar or tabernacle, was a natural duty, founded in the relation between God and his creatures, and was something that was to be done,

though no altar or tabernacle had ever been built; so the remembrance and acknowledgement of Jesus Christ as our savior, which is the end and intent of our using bread and wine in the sacrament, was a natural duty, founded in the relation between Christ and us, and was something that was to be done for itself, though the use of bread and wine in the sacrament had never been appointed. It is therefore an unpardonable error in this author, to represent the sacrament, as containing nothing in its meaning, end and intent, that was a duty itself, or to be done upon its own account; but that everything implied by it, was only a duty by virtue of the institution. For the reverse of all this is the very truth; for all that is meant, implied and intended by the sacrament, is as much our duty to do on its own account, as it is our duty to believe in God; and the positive part, the use of bread and wine in this sacrament, is only an appointed way of our expressing, acknowledging and doing that, which it was our duty to express, acknowledge and do, though we had never been taught to use bread and wine for that end.

And indeed this is the case of all positive appointments and institutions of revealed religion; the meaning, end and intent of them, was always something entirely different from that which was positive in them; for the same reason, that an idea or sentiment is entirely different from that English or Latin word by which you are to express it, or to put yourself, or another person in mind of it. For the positive part of an institution has much of the nature of language in it, and is to express and teach something by symbols and outward things, better than it could be expressed or taught by mere words; but that which is meant, implied, and intended by the symbol, is as different from it in its whole nature, as the idea of sentiment meant and intended by an English or Latin word, is different from it in its whole nature. To look therefore, as this author doth, for the whole nature, end and intent of the sacrament, in the positive part of this institution, is as absurd, as to look for the true knowledge of God and the divine attributes from the English word, "God." For the things meant and intended by the sacrament, are as entirely and wholly different from that use of bread and wine by which they are expressed, as the divine nature is entirely and wholly different from that English or Latin word which is to express or remind us of that divine nature.

Great part of the Jewish religion consisted in positive appointments and institutions; but the meaning, end and intent of them was entirely of another nature, and consisted of such things as were duties of themselves, and of the highest necessity to be done. For the end and intent of their institutions were either to keep up and exercise their faith and hope of a redeemer, or to set forth the character and marks by which they should know him, or to represent to them the nature and manner of their expected redemption, or to teach them some inward dying unto sin, and inward living unto God, or some other truth, doctrine or practice, that was to be acknowledged and done for itself, though no positive institution had ever been made on its account. And the one only reason why the greatest part of the Jews lived in such a total ignorance of their religion, was, because they had learned it in the same manner as this author has learned Christianity; they would see nothing in their institutions but what a heathen might as well have seen, nothing but what could be seen in the outside of them; just as this author will see no more in the sacrament, than what a heathen that knows only the words of institution may see in it. They were too learned and rational to allow of any mysteries at the bottom of their services, as this author is too sober a critic to allow of any mystery in the institution of the sacrament. And as they, through a blind zeal for the letter, and to show their fidelity to them, lost all that which was truly meant and intended by them; so this author, full of the same zeal for the letter and plainness of this Christian institution, is doing all that he can to make us lose all that is truly meant and intended by it.

The sacrifices of the Jews were at the bottom, only so many representations and applications of that great sacrifice for the sins of the world, first promised to all mankind, in these words: "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head"; but because this was not expressly said in the institution of any of their sacrifices, this is done in consequence of that first promise, or this is to show you how and in what manner you are to seek and find your redeemer, because the letter was not thus adapted to these carnal men, they contented themselves with the religion of slaying beasts. Just as this author is only a bare eater of bread and wine in the sacrament, because it is not there expressly said, what great mysteries of Christ as our savior are represented by it. The Jews had many passages in their scriptures that called them to the spirituality of



their religion, and showed them the inward meaning, spirit and intent of all their institutions; but because it was not expressly said, This is an explication of such an ordinance, or this that is here said, relates to the true meaning and intent of such an institution, all these passages of scripture were neglected by them, and not applied to their proper objects. It is just thus with this author; the New Testament abounds with passages that prove, teach and explain the true meaning, end and intent of the holy sacrament; but because those passages don't expressly say, This is the proof or explication of what is said in the institution, they are by him overlooked and rejected, as having nothing to do with it. The learned Pharisee, in order to know the meaning and intent of killing a heifer in sacrifice, or of circumcising the flesh, would only look for such places of scripture, as appoint the killing of an heifer, and the circumcising of the flesh; just so this author, to know the true meaning and intent of the institution of the sacrament, only searches the scripture in the same manner. He seeks only such places as expressly mention the institution, or repeat the words of it.

The Jews neither expected nor allowed any benefits and merits of Christ to be obtained by means of their sacrifices; because such benefits were not literally mentioned in the institution of their sacrifices; just so this author, neither expects nor allows the merits and benefits of Christ's passion to be applied to us by the holy sacrament, because the application of such benefits and merits is not expressly mentioned in the words of the institution. Thus was it that the Jews never found their savior in the Old Testament; and thus it is, that this author has lost him in the New.

And indeed, upon his principles, it is impossible that anyone should ever know anything of the real nature and truth of the Jewish or Christian religion. For let anyone but search into the nature, meaning and intent of the Jewish institutions, as this author doth into the nature and intent of the sacrament; and he must, as I said above, be rendered stone-blind to all the mysteries of the Old Testament as well as of the New.

For as Christ was the substance, the heart, and true meaning of all their ordinances, though not mentioned expressly in the letter of their positive institutions, they were obliged by this author's principles, not to acknowledge him to be in them, and to reject all such interpretations as led

to him; and to allow nothing to be meant by their positive institutions, but that which the words of them understood, according to the common rules of speaking, declared to be in them: therefore every Jew that had this author's principles, was under a necessity of being stone-blind, or totally ignorant of the real nature and truth of the Jewish religion.

Again, the apostle saith, "He is not a Jew which is one outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter." (Romans 2:28.)

But according to this author's principles, you are to maintain, that he only is a Jew, which is one outwardly, and that only is circumcision which is outward in the flesh; for to allow Judaism to have anything inwardly more than is in the outward letter, or circumcision to be anything else than that which is expressed in the words of the institution, is a thing not lawful to be done upon this author's principles. This I think may sufficiently show you the truth of what I said to you in the beginning, that if you accept of this author's key of knowledge, for the right understanding the nature of the sacrament; you will not only lose all the right knowledge of the sacrament, but be rendered a blind, deaf and dead reader of all the other most important doctrines of scripture. For, according to his principles, you are to see no more spirit, life, or mystery in any other sayings of our savior, than in that of the sacrament; and low as he had reduced that, it is full as high and mysterious, and deep in its meaning, as anything in the whole nature of the Christian religion can be allowed to be by this author.

But to return; there are plainly two distinct and essential parts of the sacrament, which constitute its whole nature. The first is in these words, "This is my body which is given for you, this is my blood which is shed for the remission of sins."

What is here said by our Lord Christ, we are to acknowledge to be true; therefore we are to own and acknowledge this great truth, that this bread and wine are made symbols and memorials of, viz., that his body is given for us, and his blood shed for the remission of sins; and consequently all that the scripture teaches concerning the truth, reality and manner in which he is the sacrifice, atonement and satisfaction for our sins, is in this

sacrament to be of all necessity acknowledged and confessed by us. And we cannot perform this sacrament according to what it is, unless we see and own all that to be in it, which Christ saw and owned to be in it; unless we present it to him in the same meaning, as he presented it to his disciples. For if Christ has declared this nature and meaning to be in it, we cannot perform this sacrament according to Christ's declaration, unless we also in our performance of it, declare that same nature and meaning to be in it. Therefore the acknowledgement of Christ's being the atonement and satisfaction for our sins, is an essential and important part of the sacrament. If we were to mistake or neglect something in the right use of bread and wine in the sacrament, such mistake would only relate to the outward positive part of this institution, which has no obligation upon us but from divine appointment; but if we refuse to own and confess Christ to be the atonement and satisfaction for our sins, we sin against God and the nature of things, as those atheists do, who refuse to own that it was the goodness of God that created them.

Secondly, the other essential, and no less important part of the sacrament is, the eating the body, and drinking the blood of Christ. This is plainly another essential part of the sacrament, entirely distinct from the other. The one respects Christ, as he is the atonement and satisfaction for our sins; the other shows that he is to be owned and received as a principle of life to us.

The other words, "Do this in remembrance of me," relate equally to both parts, and are only as if our savior had said after the institution; Let this, which I have thus appointed to be done, be your acknowledgement of that salvation which is received through me, both as I am the atonement and satisfaction for sin, and a principle of life to all that lay hold of me.

You cannot help seeing that all this is plain, easy and natural in this explication of the words of the institution, and that I have used no art or force to come at it, and that no one can find any fault with it; but he that is unwilling to own these two great truths of scripture, that Christ as our savior is the atonement and satisfaction for our sins, and a principle of life to us. The short of the matter is this; the scriptures are full of proofs of these two great and fundamental characters, that he is in one respect the atonement and satisfaction for our sins, and in another, a principle of a

new life to us; if therefore these two essential characters of our savior, which contain all that is said of him as such, are not to be acknowledged by us in the sacrament; then the sacrament must be said to be instituted for the denial of Christ; and the words, “Do this in remembrance of me,” must have this meaning, “Do this in denial of me”: then he is not to be remembered and acknowledged as he is, and therefore in the strictest sense is to be denied.

Hence it appears, that this author’s Plain Account can have no truth or reasonableness in it, but upon this supposition, that Christ Jesus is not a real atonement and satisfaction for our sins, nor a real principle of life to us. For if these things were true of Christ as our savior, then the sacrament, which is done in acknowledgement of him, as such, must also of necessity acknowledge these truths. Therefore this author’s Plain Account, which does not acknowledge these things of Christ, can have no truth or reasonableness in it, but upon this supposition, that these things are not true of Christ.

For if these things were real doctrines of scripture, it must follow, that they were to be acknowledged in the sacrament, even though they were not expressly mentioned or pointed at in the words of the institution. For since the sacrament is to be done in remembrance and acknowledgement of Christ, it necessarily follows, that that which the scriptures teach us concerning the nature and character of Christ, is to be remembered and acknowledged of him in and by the sacrament, because the sacrament is appointed for that end. And therefore, since this author will not allow our savior to be thus acknowledged in the sacrament, he must deny that he is thus described in scripture.

Now deny either of these characters of our savior, and you deny all the Christian religion; the words, “savior,” “salvation,” “redemption,” and such like, have no proper meaning, truth or reality in them.

But if you allow these characters of our savior, that he really is, what he said he was, and what all the scriptures affirm of him; namely, the atonement for sins, and a principle of a new life to us; then the sacrament, which is the representation and acknowledgement of these two great truths, has all that is great, mysterious, and adorable in the Christian

religion, centered in it. And had this author believed these two great doctrines concerning our savior, it had been as impossible for him to have his present poor notion of the sacrament, as it was impossible for St. John, who knew that the Word was God, and that the same Word was made flesh, to have had so poor a notion of Jesus Christ, as those Jews had, who took him to be only the carpenter's son.

Hence also it plainly appears, that seeing these two great truths are the essential parts of the sacrament, and that it is appointed to express our faith of them; that the nature and end of the sacrament is not, as this author teaches, to turn an act of our memory upon Christ; but that it is to exercise our faith in Christ, and to be our open profession of these two great truths; and also that our faith is thereby exercised in this twofold manner; 1st, in believing Christ to be the true atonement for our sins, and a real principle of life to us; 2dly, in believing that this atonement, and his being a principle of life to us, is made certain and confirmed to us, by taking the bread and wine to be the true significations of them.

For when our savior says, Do this, it is the same thing as if he had said, Do these two things appointed in the sacrament, as your act of faith, that I am both the atonement for your sins, and a principle of life to you. Don't say bare and empty outward words, when you say, "This is my body which is given for you, and this is my blood which is shed for the remission of sins"; but let faith say them, and acknowledge the truth of them: when you eat my body, and drink my blood, don't let your mouth only eat, or perform the outward action; but let faith, which is the true mouth of the inward man, believe that it really partakes of me, and that I enter in by faith; and when you thus by faith perform these two essential parts of the sacrament, then, and then only may what you do be said to be done in remembrance of me, and of what I am to you. For nothing remembers me but faith, nothing acknowledges me but faith, nothing finds me, nothing knows me but faith.

I appeal to the most ordinary understanding for the truth of all this; for it is so plain and visible, that nothing but art or prejudice can avoid it. For since our savior says, This is my body which is given for you, this is my blood which is shed for the remission of sins, what he says, that we are to say; and what we say, is an act or exercise of faith. And since in these

words he says two things, the one, that he is the atonement for our sins; the other, that this bread and this wine are the signification or application of that atonement, or that which we are to take for it; therefore we in doing this, are by faith to say and believe these two things; and therefore all that we here do, is faith, and faith manifested in this twofold manner.

Again, seeing our savior commands us to eat his body, and drink his blood, we are to say and believe, that his body and blood are there signified and exhibited to us; and that his body and blood may be eaten and drank, as a principle of life to us; and therefore faith is all, or all is faith in this other essential part of the sacrament; and we cannot possibly do that which our savior commands us to do, unless it be done by faith.

But now this author, in his Plain Account, takes no more notice of these two great essential parts of the sacrament, than if there was not one word about them: and yet they are so much there, that in the whole institution, there is not a word about anything else. For the words, “Do this in remembrance of me,” are as entirely distinct from the institution, as a command to do a thing, is distinct from the thing that is to be done. They enter no more into the nature of the institution, nor any more teach us what is to be done in it, than if Christ had only said, “Do this as your duty to me.” Had he said thus, it would easily have been seen, that the institution must be entirely distinct from such a command to observe it. And yet his saying, “Do this in remembrance of me,” has neither more nor less in it, than if he had said, “Do this as your duty to me.”

The plain truth is this; the institution consists of those two essential parts just mentioned; that is, in offering, presenting, and pleading before God, by faith, the atonement of Christ’s body and blood, and in owning him to be a principle of life to us, by our eating his body and blood: this is the entire, whole institution. The words, “Do this in remembrance of me,” are only the command to observe the institution. Do this, is a command to do all that had been mentioned in the institution; and the words, in remembrance of me, don’t show what the institution is, or what is to be done in it, but only the reason, why such an institution, whatever it is, was commanded to be observed.

The words therefore, in remembrance of me, are not a part of the institution, but are only a part of the command to observe the institution, and only show the reason why such an institution is commanded to be observed.

And yet this poor man (for so I must call one so miserably insensible of the greatness of the subject he is upon) can find nothing in the institution, but, first, bread and wine, not placed and offered before God, as first signifying and pleading the atonement of his Son's body and blood, and then eaten and drank in signification of having our life from him; but bread and wine set upon a table, to put the people, that see it, in mind, that by and by they are to exercise an act of memory. And then, secondly, this same bread and wine afterwards brought to everyone in particular, not for them to know, or believe that they are receiving anything of Christ, or partaking of anything from him; but only to let them know, that the very instant they take the bread and wine into their mouth, is the very time for them actually to excite that act of memory, for the exciting of which, bread and wine had been before set upon a table.

This is the author's great point in the observance of the sacrament, and what he calls the peculiar nature of this duty. And this he teaches, not because the church, or saint, or father of any age since Christ, has taught him so; but because being a serious man, and of great exactness in weighing of words, he has found out, that the words, in remembrance of me, which are only a part of the command to observe the institution, are the whole of the institution itself; and that therefore nothing is to be admitted into it but an act of the memory, and bread and wine taken into the mouth to excite that act of the memory; because remembrance which is the whole of this duty, neither is nor can be anything else but an act of the memory.

Thus by making first the words, in remembrance of me, the whole essence of the institution, when they are as distinct from it, as they are from these words, "This is my body which is given for you"; and teach us only the reason why we are commanded to do that which is to be done in the institution:

And then, 2dly, by limiting the word "remembrance," and allowing nothing to be meant by it, but an act of the memory: by the help of these

two equally false and shameful steps, this author has stripped the institution of every mystery of our salvation, which the words of Christ show to be in it, and which every Christian that has any true faith, though but as a grain of mustard seed, is sure of finding in it.

God, we know, made a certain great promise to Abraham; now let it be supposed, that God, after the making of this promise to him, had enjoined him to come frequently to that place where the promise was made to him in remembrance of it: could it be supposed, that the remembrance here spoken of, could signify anything else, but an exercise of his faith in that promise; and as an outward sign of his declaring to God his full belief in it? Or could anything be more extravagant, than to say that God here only required of Abraham an act of his memory, because the word remembrance relates only to the memory?

Now this is strictly the case of the sacrament. In the institution our savior has said, "This is my body and blood, which is given and shed for you, for the remission of sins"; in the institution he has bidden us to eat his body, and drink his blood. All this is proposed to our faith, just as the promise was proposed to Abraham's faith. When therefore he bids us to do this, that is, do these two things in remembrance of him; can it be supposed, that the remembrance of him can be anything else but an act of faith in him, believing and owning all that concerning him, which we say and do in and by the sacrament? For nothing but faith can see, or hear, or understand, or do that which is to be done in the sacrament: nothing but faith can say, that this his body and blood are the atonement of our sins: nothing but faith can say, that the bread and wine are his body and blood: nothing but faith can eat his body, and drink his blood: nothing but faith can say, that his body and blood are a principle of life to us: therefore the command to do these things, is a command to exercise so many acts of faith; because the things commanded can only be done by faith; and the person, in remembrance of whom these things are to be done, can only be remembered by faith. For to remember him, neither is nor can be anything else, but to have faith in him.

And therefore it is out of all doubt, that when he said, "Do this in remembrance of me," nothing more nor less can possibly be meant by it, than if he had said, Do all this, as your act of faith in me.



Since therefore this is so plainly the nature of the institution, which is solely appointed to express our faith in these two great characters of our savior, both as he is the atonement for our sins, and a principle of life to us; you may well ask how it was possible for this author, with his eyes open, and the scriptures before him, to give us so false and so poor an account of it.

Now the one only reason why the scriptures are thus useless to him, and why he is forced to find out a doctrine that is not in them, is this, it is because he is blinded with a philosophy, and science falsely so-called, which will not allow him to believe, that Jesus Christ was truly and essentially God, as well as a perfect man: for the foundation and possibility of Christ's being a real atonement and satisfaction for our sins, and a real principle of life to us, was his divine nature; but as this author cannot be suspected to believe this great foundation doctrine, that Christ was truly and essentially God, very God of very God, so he could not believe him to be a true and real atonement for sins, or a true and real principle of life to us, and therefore could admit nothing of these truths into his account of the sacrament.

The way therefore that this author came by his Plain Account of the sacrament, was not, as he would have you believe, from a bare impartial consideration of the words of the institution, but from his wrong knowledge of the Christian faith. He had first lost and renounced all the right and true knowledge of our savior in the scriptures, and therefore was obliged not to find it in the sacrament. And because it would be openly confessing to the world, that he was in the sense of the scripture an anti-Christ, if he should plainly have told you, that he did not believe Christ to be truly and essentially God, or the atonement and satisfaction for our sins, or a principle of life to us; therefore he only tells you, that he has been led into this account of the sacrament, by a bare consideration of the words of the institution, according to the common rules of speaking.

Now if this author will declare, that he sincerely believes Jesus Christ to be truly and really God by nature, and the true real atonement and satisfaction for our sins, and a true and real principle of life to us; I shall be glad, and he ought to be glad, that I have been the occasion of his declaring things so important to himself, and to the matter in hand. But this I may

still say, that he could not have had this faith, when he wrote his Plain Account, unless he may be supposed to have had it, but would not write of the sacrament conformably to it.

And, secondly, if he will now declare, that without any equivocation or mental reserve, he fully believes these great truths, no further recantation of his whole book need to be desired.

For if these things are true and undeniable characters of our savior; then it follows, that the nature and end of the sacrament must be essentially concerned with them, since it is the confessed nature and end of the sacrament, to remember and acknowledge Christ to be that which the scriptures testify him to be.

The short of the matter is this; either this author will plainly own a sincere belief of these doctrines, or he will not: if he will not own the belief of them, you have no reason to consider him as a Christian writer upon this subject; and so ought no more to learn from him, than from a Jew, the nature of the sacrament. But if he will declare his full belief of these doctrines, then you have the fullest assurance from himself, that his Plain Account cannot be Christian: because if these things are true of Christ, they must be remembered and acknowledged in that sacrament, which is appointed for the remembrance and acknowledgement of him.

Now these two essential parts of the sacrament, relating to this twofold character of our savior, as he is the atonement and satisfaction for our sins, and as he is a principle of life to us, contain the whole nature, end, and effects of the sacrament. You are to look nowhere, nor in anything else, for the right knowledge of this sacrament, but in the right faith and knowledge of these two great points. And everything that they teach you, and everything that scripture teaches you of these two great points, is the only true doctrine of the sacrament.

All that you know of Christ, as the atonement for our sins, all that you know of him, as a principle of life to us, is neither more nor less than that which you are to know, and confess, and appeal to, in and by the use of the sacrament. And indeed these two great points do so plainly show themselves, at first sight, to be in the words of the institution, that any man upon the bare reading of them, without any further knowledge, might

justly say, If Christ is not an atonement for our sins, why is his body said to be given, and his blood shed for our sins? If he is not a food to our souls, or a principle of life to us, why are we commanded to eat his body, and drink his blood?

So that though a man could not say, that these things were certainly true, or in what sense they were true, merely from the mention of them in the sacrament, yet he might justly say, that the words of the institution pointed at such truths, and could have no foundation, unless these things barely mentioned in it, were in the scriptures proved and declared to be true doctrines of the Christian religion.

And as these two great points are so visibly plain in the sacrament, and constitute its whole nature; so as soon as we rightly understand what the scripture has taught concerning these points, they make known to us, in the shortest and plainest way, all the merit, dignity, and value of this sacrament, all the blessings and advantages derived to us from it, and all the pious dispositions with which we are to approach it. Hence it was that the apostles, after the day of Pentecost, when they had all their ignorance dispelled, yet gave us no further or particular explications of the nature of the sacrament; because as soon as it was known, that Christ was a real atonement and satisfaction for sins, and a real principle of life to us; as soon as these two great doctrines were known, the sacrament had all the explication it could possibly have.

For no more can be known of the sacrament, than is signified by them. All that is great, mysterious, and adorable in these doctrines, as found in the scriptures, is equally great, mysterious and adorable in them as they are found in the sacrament.

Needless therefore would all books be upon the nature of the sacrament, and the right preparation for it, did we but truly know and believe Christ to be the atonement and satisfaction for our sins, and a principle of life to us; for the belief of these things in the sacrament, would like the unction, spoken of by St. John, teach us all things concerning it; and we should have no need of other teaching.

No one need then, as this author vainly does, inquire for some promise of scripture annexing a benefit to this sacrament, to know what good we are

to receive by it. For the knowledge of these two great parts of the sacrament, would sufficiently show us the inestimable benefit that we receive by it.

For if this sacrament is appointed by Jesus Christ, as the acknowledgement of his being the atonement of our sins, and a principle of life to us; if it is appointed to stand between him and us, as a declared proof on his side, that he is thus our atonement and life; and as a declared proof on our side, that we own, seek, and apply to him as such; and if this is not set as a mark once for all, but as a proof that is to be repeated continually, and that is to be made good to us, not by our once having done it, or he once owned it, but to be perpetually owned and done, both on his side and ours, can we want any other assurance of the benefit and advantage of observing this sacrament, than the thing itself by its own nature declares?

For if we are in covenant with Christ, and have an interest in him, as our atonement and life; not because he once said, that this was his body and blood, given and shed for our sins, or because we once owned it, and pleaded it before him; but because he continues to say the same thing in the sacrament, and to present himself there to us as our atonement and life, and because we continue to own and apply to him as such; it necessarily follows, that the sacrament rightly used, is the highest means of finishing our salvation, and puts us in the fullest possession of all the benefits of our savior, both as he is our atonement and life, that we are then at that time capable of.

For if the atonement of our sins by Christ, and that life which he communicates to us, is not to be considered as a transient matter, as something that is done and past, but as something that on the side of Christ is always doing, and never will be done, till the consummation of all things; if our applying to, and receiving Christ as our atonement and life, is not to be considered as a transient act, as something that is done and past, but as something that is always doing, and never will be done, till we depart out of a state of trial; then it follows, that that which is the appointed means or proof of Christ's continuing to communicate himself to us, as our atonement and life, and of our continuing to apply to, and receive him as such, is in its own nature, unless hindered by us, a certain

means and instrument of conveying and imparting to us all the benefits of Christ, both as he is our atonement and life. To ask therefore for a particular promise annexed to this institution, which in its nature communicates to us all that ever was promised to us in a savior, is highly absurd.

But after all, it can be truly said, that the scriptures are very full and particular in setting forth the benefits and advantages of the holy communion, to all those that have eyes that see, and ears that hear. For do not the scriptures plainly enough tell us of the benefit of believing, seeking, and applying to Christ as the atonement for our sins? And is not the benefit of this faith the benefit of the sacrament, if Christ is there believed, sought and applied to as our atonement?

And is it not the sole end of the sacrament to continue, confirm and exercise this faith, to which all the blessings of our salvation are annexed? Therefore, all that the scriptures say of the riches and blessings, and treasures, which faith in Christ as our redeemer, can procure to us, all that they say of the benefit of that faith, which is absolutely required and exercised by this sacrament.

Again, do not the scriptures plainly and frequently enough tell us of the benefit of the new birth in Christ, of the putting on Christ, of having Christ formed in us, of Christ's being our life, of our having life in him, of his being that bread from heaven, that bread of life, of which the manna was only a type; of his flesh being meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed; of our eating his flesh, and drinking his blood, and that without it we have no life in us; and are not all these things so many plain and open declarations of that which we seek and obtain, by eating the body and blood of Christ?

For we eat the sacramental body and blood of Christ, to show that we want and desire, and by faith lay hold of the real, spiritual nature and being of Christ; to show that we want and desire, the progress of the new birth in Christ; to put on Christ, to have Christ formed and revealed in us, to have him our life, to partake of him our second Adam, in the same fullness and reality, as we partake of the nature of the first Adam: and therefore all that the scripture says of the benefits and blessings are sought and

obtained by the eating the body and blood of Christ in the Lord's Supper. For to eat the body and blood of Christ, is neither more nor less than to put on Christ, to receive birth and life, and nourishment and growth from him; as the branch receives its being and life, and nourishment and growth from the vine. And because Christ is that to us, which the vine is to the branches, therefore there is a strict truth and reality in these expressions; and the same truth and reality, whether it be expressed, by saying, that we eat the flesh and blood of Christ, or that we put on Christ, or that Christ is formed, manifested or revealed in us.

For if you could bid the branch to eat the substance and juice of the vine, the same must be intended, as if you had said, that the vine must be formed in the branch, or must manifest itself in the branch. So when it is said, that we must eat the flesh and blood of Christ, it is the same thing as saying, that Christ must be formed in us, or manifested in us.

But you will perhaps say, How does it appear, that these expressions of putting on Christ, of Christ's being formed in us, of his being our life, the bread of life, and his flesh meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed; how does it appear, that these and the like places of scripture are to be understood sacramentally?

I answer, it does not appear. And the question itself is as absurd, as if it was asked, How does it appear, that the scriptures are to be understood sacramentally? Whereas, if the question began at the right end, it should proceed thus, How does it appear, that the sacrament is to be understood scripturally, or according to the plain doctrines of scripture? Was the question thus put, as it ought to be, it would fall of itself. For surely it need not be proved, that the things spoken of Christ in the sacrament, are to be understood according to that which is spoken of Christ in the scripture. When our savior said in the sixth of St. John, "that his flesh was meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed, and that except a man eat his flesh, and drink his blood, he hath no life in him; and that he who eateth his flesh, and drinketh his blood, dwelleth in him, and he in him"; he did not speak of the sacrament, nor could possibly speak of it, for this plain reason, because he spoke of the truth, the reality, and the thing itself; for the sake of which, and for the application of which to ourselves, he afterwards instituted the sacrament.

But if the sacrament was instituted for the sake of that truth and reality, of which he then spake; then the sacrament must be essentially related to that which he then said, and must have its meaning and end according to it.

And if what he then said, was that truth and reality of the thing itself, and the sacrament was instituted as an outward sign, proof or declaration of it; then what he said in St. John, he spoke not of the sacrament; and yet what he instituted in the sacrament, has all its meaning according to that which he said in St. John.

To ask, whether our savior meant the sacramental bread and wine, when he said, my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed, is as absurd as to ask, whether he did not mean the flesh and blood of some other person, when he said, my flesh and my blood?

And, on the other hand, to ask, whether the sacramental bread and wine does not signify to us that flesh and blood which is our meat indeed, and drink indeed, is as absurd, as to ask, whether the appointed sign of a thing, does not signify that which it is appointed to signify?

These two things therefore are evidently plain: First, that our savior in the sixth of St. John did not, could not possibly speak of his sacramental body and blood, or bread and wine, because he spoke of himself, of his real, natural, and true life, of which we must partake: Secondly, that what he calls his body and blood in the sacrament, or has appointed to be the signs of his body and blood, must be understood according to that which he has said in St. John, of his flesh which is meat indeed, and his blood which is drink indeed; for this plain reason, because the appointed sign of a thing must signify that which it is appointed to signify.

Therefore in St. John there is nothing said of the sacrament; and yet what is said in the sacrament, is to be necessarily understood of that very thing which is said in St. John. And the reason is plain; for the thing is essentially different from that which is appointed to be a sign of it; therefore, he that speaks of the thing, cannot in speaking of that, speak of the sign. But the sign, as such, has all its nature from the thing that it is to signify; and therefore the thing itself must be meant by that which the sign speaks of.

To say, as some do, that our savior could not speak of that in St. John, which is intended by the sacrament, because the sacrament was not then instituted, is very weak and unreasonable; for it is saying, that he could not then speak of a thing or doctrine, because he afterwards appointed something to be a sign or outward declaration of it. For if he had appointed an institution, or positive rite, which related to nothing that he had before taught, it must have been very unaccountable. Thus to command us to eat his body and blood in the sacrament, if he had not beforehand taught that we had our life from him, and that his flesh was our meat indeed, and his blood our drink indeed, had been very unaccountable. But seeing he had in the openest, plainest manner declared, that he was the life of men, and that except we eat his flesh and drink his blood we have no life in us; the command to eat bread and wine as his body and blood, is plain and intelligible; and we have the fullest assurance of the meaning of it, for this reason, because Christ had often, and long beforehand taught that truth, of which he afterwards appointed the sacrament to be an outward sign, and an outward means of our owning, confessing, and embracing it. Thus all the controversy about this place in St. John, and other like passages of scripture, is at an end, and has the most plain and satisfactory solution; such passages do not speak of the sacrament, because they speak of the thing itself, of which the sacrament is an appointed outward signification; but the sacrament directly speaks of, and points to those passages, because they contain that truth and reality which the sacrament is appointed to signify.

For were not Christ our real life, there had not been any outward figure or declaration of it appointed; was there not a real eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ, was there not a true substantial putting on of Christ, or partaking of the nature of Christ, the sacramental eating and drinking of his body and blood, had not been appointed; there could have been no foundation for it; or if appointed, it could have had no meaning suitable to the words. But since that which is sacramentally figured or signified, by the eating and drinking the sacramental body and blood of Christ, is in the scriptures declared to be a real truth, since its reality is taught, declared and explained by various ways and manners of speech, it is undeniable, that the sacrament, which is an appointed figure, must be



explained and asserted according to that truth and reality, of which it is the appointed figure.

When our savior said, “he that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, dwelleth in me, and I in him”: when he said, “I am the life”; and again, “I am the true vine, and ye are the branches,” etc., he spake as much strict and real truth, and as much according to the letter, as when he said of himself, he came down from heaven, or that he is in the Father, and the Father in him. What is there said, is no more to be considered as a metaphor, or figure of speech, than when it is said, that God is our Father, or that in God we live, move, and have our being.

For what is said of Christ, as our life, is as strictly true, as when it is said, that in God we live, and move, and have our being; and what is said of Christ’s being the true vine, has the same real truth in it, as when God is said to be our Father.

Had Christ indeed said, This vine is me, and these branches are ye, what he said must then have been as figurative, as when he said of the bread, “This is my body”; and his speaking so of a vine, must have been only a sign to us, that he was in truth and reality that to us, which the vine is in a poor, earthly, perishable manner to its branches. But seeing he does not speak of a vine, but speaks directly of himself, and says, that I am the true vine; it is as if he had said, I am the vine in truth and reality, as God is the Father of you all in truth and reality, because I am that in a true and real, and living manner to you, which the vine is in a poor, earthly, perishable manner to its branches.

Therefore all that is here said, is the real truth, as far as human words can set it forth; and when it is said, that we must put on Christ, or that Christ must be formed in us, or that he is the true vine, and we are the branches, there is the same literal, real, immutable and eternal truth in these expressions, as when it is said, that “in God we live and move, and have our being,” or that God is our Father, and we are his children.

Now to deny that Christ is thus our life, is as great a denial of him, as to deny him to be the eternal Word, or the Son of God, or the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world. And to deny that we receive our life from him, or eat his flesh and blood in the same reality as

the branch eateth of the substance and juice of the vine, and receiveth what it hath from it, is as great a denial of him, as if we deny that he came from heaven, and was in heaven, even when he was upon earth.

But if we own these great truths, which are the very heart and substance of Christianity, if we know and acknowledge that we are thus of him, and by him, that our inward man, which is all that is Christian within us, has all its birth, life, and growth from Christ, as its principle, eating, drinking, and drawing in life from him, as the branch eats, drinks, and draws its life and substance from the vine; then we cannot be at a loss either to know what is meant by the sacrament, and the benefits we receive thereby, or to know what parts of scripture explain those benefits to us. Since it must appear to us beyond all doubt, that all that which the scriptures speak to us of Christ, as the atonement for our sins, and our peace with God, and all that they speak to us of our life in Christ, of his forming and manifesting himself in the birth and growth of our inward new man; is that which it speaks to us of the meaning and benefits of this holy sacrament, which is solely appointed as the figure of all this, as the application of all this to us, and as an established means of exercising, increasing and strengthening our faith in him, as he is all this to us.

Here therefore is full room for all our devotion, and at the same time a full security against all delusion. For whilst we believe nothing of the sacrament, seek nothing in it, nor plead anything by it, but such scripture truths and benefits as we are obliged to believe, own and plead, though the sacrament had not been appointed, all the devotion which the sacrament thus raises in us, is as secure from delusion, has as much the stamp of truth upon it, and is as proper an exercise of solid piety, as when any thing or occasion excites us to an act of loving God with all our mind, and heart, and strength. For as we cannot too much esteem, love and adore our savior, both as he is the atonement for our sins, and a principle of life to us; so if the use of the sacrament quickens, nourishes, keeps up, and increases this esteem, love and adoration of him, as such, it cannot do this too much.

For as we do nothing in the sacrament, but what is our natural duty, and good and right in itself; as we seek to Christ, trust in Christ, rely upon his merits, desire to have life in and from him, only in such a manner as we

ought to do, though we were not assisted in it by the sacrament; so all this faith and hope, and love and desire, and devotion which we practice by means of the sacrament, has everything in it, that can prove to be right, and just, and good. And the want of this faith, hope, love, desire, adoration and devotion, is more blamable in the use of the sacrament than anywhere else, because it is there more properly required, and has the most proper object and occasion to excite it.

You must therefore consider the sacrament purely as an object of your devotion, that is to exercise all your faith, that is to raise, exercise, and inflame every holy ardor of your soul that tends to God. It is an abstract, or sum of all the mysteries that have been revealed concerning our savior, from the first promise of a seed of the woman to bruise the serpent's head, to the day of Pentecost.

As you can receive or believe nothing higher of our savior, than that he is the atonement for our sins, and a real principle of life to us; so every height and depth of devotion, faith, love, and adoration, which is due to God as your creator, is due to God as your redeemer.

Jacob's ladder that reached from earth to heaven, and was filled with angels ascending and descending between heaven and earth, is but a small signification of that communion between God and man, which this holy sacrament is the means and instrument of.

Now here it may be proper for you to observe, that whatever names or titles this institution is signified to you by, whether it be called a sacrifice propitiatory, or commemorative; whether it be called an holy oblation, the eucharist, the sacrament of the body and blood of Christ, the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, the heavenly banquet, the food of immortality, or the holy communion, and the like, matters not much. For all these words or names are right and good, and there is nothing wrong in them, but the striving and contention about them.

For they all express something that is true of the sacrament, and therefore are every one of them, in a good sense, rightly applicable to it; but all of them are far short of expressing the whole nature of the sacrament, and therefore the help of all of them is wanted.

He therefore that contends for one name, as the only proper one in exclusion of the rest, is in the same mistake, as he that should contend for one name and character of our savior, as the only proper one, in exclusion of all the rest. For as all the names and titles by which Christ is described, from the seed of the woman in Genesis, to the Alpha and Omega in the last chapter of the Revelation, are only to help us to know, believe, and experience more of him as our savior, than can be expressed by all these different characters of him: so all the various names and titles given to the sacrament, are only to teach us to know, believe, and find more of our redemption and salvation in the sacrament, than can be pointed out to us by any or all these expressions.

If you have yet known Christ in any true degree, what must you think of him, who should contend that the Lamb of God was the only proper character of our savior, and that therefore those other names, seed of the woman, root of David, bright and morning star, bread of life, tree of life, son of man, first-born of all creatures, Word of God, could not belong to him as our savior, because of the disagreement there is between a lamb, and the bread of life, or a tree of life?

Now this is the learning this author is full of; from this scrupulous attention to words, and the ideas annexed to them, he rejects almost all the names by which the sacrament has ever been expressed.

He is able to prove, that the sacrament is not a commemorative sacrifice, because it is the Supper of the Lord; just as another by the same skill in words, might prove, that the Lamb of God is not the tree of life, or the bread that came down from heaven, because of the great difference there is between a tree, bread, and a lamb.

Now the reason why our savior is described under this vast variety of characters, is this, because no one phrase or particular form of expression can truly describe him to us; therefore that is to be done as well as it can, by different and seemingly contrary characters.

Thus he is called the seed of the woman that was to bruise the serpent's head, in another aspect the Lamb of God, in another the desire of all nations, in another the son of man, in another the brightness of his Father's glory, in another the bread that came down from heaven, in

another the tree of life, the Alpha and Omega. Now it is the exceeding difference, and even literal contrariety of these expressions, that makes them proper and useful to us; and we have the more true knowledge of our savior because of these characters, which, considered in themselves, seem to have no agreement with each other.

Thus the Lamb of God, and the bread of life, are characters of our savior, that have no connection with each other, and yet they teach us the greatest truths concerning our savior, because they are thus without connection, and so unrelated to each other.

It is just thus with the sacrament; the different and seemingly incoherent characters and expressions by which it is signified to us, help us to know more truth of it, merely because of their difference, than could be taught us by such expressions as had a literal agreement and connection with each other.

Do you therefore reject this author's wisdom of words which he proposes to you, and be content to be devout without it. Be glad to know, that as the nature, office, and condition of our savior could not be made known to us, but by a variety of different names and titles ascribed to him; so the nature and end and effects of this holy sacrament could not be made known to us, but by a variety of different names and titles ascribed to it; that in one respect it is a propitiatory sacrifice, in another a commemorative sacrifice; in one respect it is the seal and renewal of the covenant between God and man, in another the food of immortality, the life of the soul, the bread that came down from heaven, the tree of life; that in one respect it is the holy eucharist, in another the holy communion.

And be assured, that he who tries to set these expressions at variance with each other, and would persuade you that if one is a true account of the sacrament, the others cannot be so, is as vain a disputer of this world, as he that would persuade you, that if our savior be the seed of the woman, he cannot be essentially the Son of God; or if he be the Lamb of God, he cannot be the bread of life.

The reason why this sacrament is said in one respect to be a propitiatory, or commemorative sacrifice, is only this, because you there offer, present, and plead before God, such things as are by Christ himself said to be his

body and blood given for you: but if that which is thus offered, presented, and pleaded before God, is offered, presented, and pleaded before him only for this reason, because it signifies and represents both to God, and angels, and men, the great sacrifice for all the world, is there not sufficient reason to consider this service as truly a sacrifice? Or even supposing, that the calling the service a sacrifice, is no more according to a certain literal exactness of some critics, that when our savior says of himself, “I am the resurrection”; or that a quibbler in words may be able to object as much against it, as against our savior’s saying of himself, “I am the resurrection and the life, ” have you any reason to dislike it on that account, or to wish that such little critics might find more of their empty, superficial, worthless niceties in the language of the church, than in the language of scripture?

The miserable use which this author makes of this kind of learning may be sufficiently seen by the following instances: “To say, ” says he, “that this communion is the actual partaking of all the benefits of Christ’s body broken and blood shed for us, or of his living and dying for our good, has this peculiar absurdity in it, that in this rite, which was instituted for the remembrance of Christ, it destroys that very notion of remembrance, which is the essence of it. The great design of this institution is to call to mind the remembrance of Christ, and to commemorate the benefits accruing to Christians from it. To make it therefore the actual partaking of these benefits, is altering the nature of it, as much as actual partaking of anything is different from remembering it.” (Page 158.) Many other passages like this are to be found in this author.

Now to see the truth and sense of this doctrine in its proper light: Let it be supposed, that our savior, after the institution, had thus added, “Observe well what it is that I have taught you to understand and do by this rite: I have indeed said, This is my body which is given for you; but the meaning of my institution does not lie in these words, nor are you to think that I am any way present in that which I call my body, or that you are to present, and show, and plead it before God as my body, which is given for you; for this is not my intent, though I thus speak. I have also said, This is my blood which is shed for the remission of sins, and have ordered you to say so of it before God, and angels, and men in the church; but what I have taught has nothing to do with this institution, nor is it to be any part of it;

there is no remission of sins to be thought of in it, or pleaded by it. I have also bid you to eat that which I have declared to be my body, and to drink that which I have declared to be my blood; but you must not therefore imagine, that you receive anything of me, or of my nature, into yourselves, or that I am a principle of life to you. For though I thus speak so fully and plainly of eating my very body and blood, yet nothing is meant of any real partaking of anything from me. For this is no part of my institution, nor is it appointed for you to receive anything from me, nor for me to communicate anything to you. And to prevent your apprehension of anything of this kind, and to secure you from the dangerous error of supposing that any benefits and blessings are received by your receiving my body and blood; I have added, Do this in remembrance of me; which words sufficiently show, that neither me, nor the benefits of me, as your savior, can here be received, because that which is appointed here to be remembered, cannot, without great absurdity, be supposed to be present. Had I indeed said, Do this in acknowledgement of me, or of that salvation which is received through me; or had I said, Do this as an act of faith in me as your savior, then indeed you must have believed that there were great benefits and blessings presented to you by this institution; for ye could not by faith appeal to this my body and blood, without the actual partaking of my benefits and blessings, both as I am the atonement for your sins, and a principle of life to you: but as I have chosen the word remembrance, you must see that it is only an act of your memory that is required of you; for this is the great point in this institution, perform but this and you have performed all that the nature and end of this institution requires of you. Take care therefore that you keep strictly to this bare act of the memory, and that you don't add anything to it; for the essence of this institution consists in this simple act of the memory. But above all, take heed of such faith, devotion, and desire of me, as may lead you to hope or believe that you partake of my benefits by the partaking of this holy rite; for such a faith and hope are so inconsistent with this institution, that they would destroy the very nature and essence of it, which is to be the remembrance of my benefits, and therefore cannot possibly be the actual partaking of them. Nor can you think of partaking of them by this holy institution, but by making it an institution of your own, directly contrary to that which I designed it to be."

Everyone, I believe, must at first sight perceive, that to put this paraphrase upon the sacrament into the mouth of our savior, would be profaneness and blasphemy; and yet everyone must plainly see, that profane and blasphemous as it would be, there is not a thought or word in it, but what is strictly according to this author's doctrine.

Secondly, let it be supposed that instead of "Do this in remembrance of me," our savior had said, Do this as a means of partaking of all my benefits to mankind: this author's criticism would prove it absurd to make the sacrament even than an actual partaking of those benefits. For he must say, that the great design of it, was to be a means of partaking of those benefits. To make it therefore the actual partaking of those benefits, is altering the nature of it, as much as actual partaking of anything is different from the means of partaking of it. Such is his wisdom of words!

Thirdly, if it were true, that the actual partaking of Christ's benefits was not only not intended by, but also inconsistent with the right observance of this institution, so as to destroy its essence, and alter its nature, if such actual partaking was thought of by it; then it would follow, that no good Christian ought to observe this institution, or act according to the nature and intent of it.

For it is as unlawful and even atheistical for any Christian to think himself not an actual partaker of the benefits and blessings of Christ, as to think himself not an actual partaker of the benefits and blessings of a God and providence. "Without me," says our blessed Lord, "ye can do nothing." (John 15:5.) But, according to this author, we not only can, but must do all that is done in this sacrament without him, and must look upon the sacrament as instituted for this very end, to keep up a sense and belief of our being without him, and to assure us, that we are not actual partakers of him, that he is not present with us, nor acting in us. Again, saith our blessed Lord, "Abide in me, and I in you; as the branch cannot bear fruit, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me."

But, according to this author, he that would rightly perform this institution, must, every time he performs it, come out of Christ as perfectly as he can, and make himself as separate from Christ, as the withered branch that is separated from the vine; that having no actual



possession of the benefits and blessings of Christ, he may be qualified to do this in remembrance of them.

Further, no one can believe in Christ, love Christ, adore him, and hope and trust in him, without being an actual partaker of the benefits of Christ by so doing; if therefore to the due observation of the sacrament, and to preserve its nature and essence, there must be no actual partaking of the benefits of Christ allowed in it, or by it; then it must be performed without faith or love of Christ, and without any devotion towards him, or adoration of him; for if these accompany that which we do in the sacrament, and attend our reception of it, the benefits of Christ must be actually received by it.

Fourthly, to see still more of the absurdity and impiety of this author's observation on the remembrance in the sacrament, we need only apply it to this parallel text of scripture, "Remember thy creator in the days of thy youth." (Ecclesiastes 12:1.) For, according to our author, he that would not alter and destroy the nature and essence of this duty of remembering God, must not pretend, or hope, or believe, that by the observance of this duty, he is made an actual partaker or sharer of the goodness, perfections, and attributes of his creator, or of anything that belongs to his creator, or that can be remembered of him: because so long as he keeps strictly to the true nature of this duty, and continues to remember his creator, so long every thing, or attribute, or perfection that belongs to his creator, must be considered as at a distance from him, as unenjoyed and unpossessed by him, because that which is to be remembered, cannot be present. And therefore the command to remember our creator, is, according to this doctrine, a command to look upon our creator as at a distance and far from us, and is inconsistent with our believing, that "in him we live, move, and have our being"; because we cannot remember a creator so present with us, and of whose perfections we are actual partakers.

If therefore this author has found out the right way of remembering God as our redeemer, he ought to have told us, that the same way of remembering God as our creator was wrong, and tended to atheism. For to remember God as absent, is but a very little way from atheism.

Lastly, if, as this author teaches, the actual partaking of the benefits of Christ's living and dying for us, by means of this sacrament, is an absurdity that cannot be supposed, without destroying the nature and essence of the sacrament, for this reason, because that which is possessed as present, and actually partaken of, cannot be remembered; then it follows, that no man can fully perform this duty, that is, make it a remembrance of all the benefits of Christ, but he that is actually dispossessed of all of them. Because he cannot remember all, if any of them are then present with him, and enjoyed by him.

Secondly, it follows, that he who daily grows in the gifts and graces of Christ, and in whom Christ is every day more and more formed, must, in proportion as the strength, and spirit, and power of Christ is revealed in him, daily be less qualified to do perfectly that which is to be done in the sacrament; because being daily more and more possessed of the benefits and blessings of Christ, he has every day less and less to commemorate in and by the sacrament.

Thirdly, it follows, that he who falls from his state of grace in Christ, who becomes every day more and more empty and destitute of his gifts and graces, who daily loses something of the sense and taste of the heavenly gifts, and the powers of the world to come, and finds himself less animated, assisted and strengthened by the power and spirit of Christ, must in proportion, as he becomes every day more earthly, sensual, carnal, blind and weak, and wretched, and dead, and fallen from Christ, be more and more qualified to do that which, according to this author, is to be done in the sacrament; for losing every day something of the benefits of Christ, and being daily less a partaker of them, he is daily qualified to commemorate more of them, and so to perform that which is to be performed in this sacrament in a more perfect manner.

Again, the apostle saith, "Know ye not that Christ Jesus is in you, except ye be reprobates"? (2 Corinthians 13:5.) But this author must say, Know ye not that Christ Jesus is not in you, nor can be in you, if the sacrament is to be observed in remembrance of him? For how can ye without absurdity commemorate that which is not absent from you?

Lastly, he who can say with the apostle, “the life that I now live is not mine, but Christ that liveth in me,” is utterly incapable of remembering Christ in the sacrament; for he cannot commemorate an absent Christ, and therefore cannot commemorate him, till Christ has done living in him.

But there is no end of exposing all the impious consequences of this author’s learned account of the word remembrance. Which, monstrous as it is, is only founded upon a little criticism, that the word remembrance can only signify an act of the memory upon something that is absent. And yet it is certain that it does not, cannot signify so, when you are to remember your creator, and therefore need not signify so, when you are to remember your redeemer. And if you do but suppose it possible, that “Do this in remembrance of me,” may only signify, do this in regard of me, as your act of faith in me; then all this extraordinary doctrine of the impossibility and absurdity of partaking of the benefits of Christ by partaking of the sacrament, has not so much as one of his quibbles to support it.

Further, this author’s absurd interpretation of the word remembrance in the sacrament is founded on this gross error, that the things to be remembered, are things done and past, and therefore only capable of being remembered by an act of the memory. This he expressly says in many places. Thus, “They,” says he, “could not do the actions here named, in remembrance of anything which was not done and past.” (Page 30.) And in other places, that the “benefits cannot be present that are to be commemorated.”

And therefore the whole support of this arguing is founded on this error, that the things to be remembered, are done and past. Which is an error, that he could not have fallen into, if he had but moderately understood the nature either of the Jewish or Christian religion.

Now that which is to be remembered in the sacrament is Christ, or the benefits and blessings of Christ as the savior of mankind; but neither Christ, nor his benefits and blessings have the nature of things done, or gone, and past, but are always present, always in being, always doing, and never done.

“Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and for ever,” always was, now is, and ever will be present as the savior of the world. He is the Alpha and

Omega, the beginning and the end, and therefore equally present in and through all from the beginning to the end. "Behold," saith he, "I stand at the door, and knock; if any man hear my voice, and open the door, I will come into him, and will sup with him." (Revelation 3:20.) Thus he stood at the door of Adam's heart, as near as he stood to the apostles'; and thus he stands, and will stand knocking at the door of every man's heart, till time shall be no more. Happy he that does not consider this Christ as absent, and is only for such a Supper of the Lord, as will not admit of his presence.

The benefits and blessings of Christ as the savior of mankind, began with the first promise of a seed of the woman to bruise the serpent's head; they have continued with this promise, they are the benefits of every age, they will never be at an end, till all that was implied in the promise shall have its full completion in the utter destruction of the serpent. Jesus Christ was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world; and the first sacrifice of the first man, and every sacrifice since, that hath been accepted of God, has been made solely acceptable through the benefits and blessings of Christ.

All the shadows and types, sacrifices and ceremonies of the Jewish religion were only so many ways of applying the benefits of Jesus Christ to that people. "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, today, and for ever," is the same in and through all ages; he was the savior of Adam, the patriarchs, and the Jews, just as he is our savior. His body and blood, offered in their sacrifices, was their atonement, as it is ours, offered upon the cross. His flesh and blood was meat and drink, or a principle of life to them, as it is to us.

Jesus Christ was theirs, as he is ours; he was the life, and substance, and spirit of the Law, as he is the life, and substance, and spirit of the gospel; only with this difference, that then Christ was covered, and received under more outward figures and ceremonies than he is now; we do that more openly, which was then done more covertly by the Israel of God.

His atonement for our sins is not a transitory thing, that began and ended with his passion and death, but it began with the Lamb that was slain from the foundation of the world; for he was the Lamb of God slain in all their

types and sacrifices through every age, till he became the real expiatory sacrifice on the cross for the sins of the world.

When he died upon the cross, his atonement did not then become a thing that was over, or past, and done, that was only to be remembered by an act of the memory, but continued increasing in its power and virtue.

As Christ by his death put an end to nothing in religion but types and prefiguration; so by his death he put an end to nothing of his atonement, but that which was typical and prefigurative of it. And as he arose from the grave with greater power and strength, and became instead of a meek and suffering Lamb, a powerful conqueror over death, a royal priest over the house of God, so his atonement went on increasing in strength and virtue.

His atonement was so far from being a thing done and past, when his blood was shed upon the cross, that it was shed for this very end, that he might for ever do that in the reality, which the high priest did in the type, when with the blood of the sacrifice he entered once a year into the holiest of all, to make the highest atonement for the people.

Thus Christ, to perform, and to continue for ever the most powerful way of atoning for us, by his own blood he entered once into the holy place — now to appear in the presence of God for us. (Hebrews 9:24.) Where he continueth for ever, and hath an unchangeable priesthood; (Hebrews 7:24) and therefore our atonement is never done and past, but is just as perpetual and unchangeable as his priesthood. For he can be no longer a priest, than while he maketh an atonement and intercession for us. And from this his unchangeable priesthood, the apostle thus argues, “wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost, who come unto God by him, (Hebrews 7:25) seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for us.”

But if he is “able to save them to the uttermost, who come unto God by him”; then his atonement is not something done and past, but always in being, always present, always doing, and always presenting itself everywhere, and to every man; and if he is ever living to make intercession for us, then we have a propitiation that never ceases, that is as near to us as it was to the apostles, and will be as present to those that shall be born two thousand years after Christ, as it was to those who stood by his cross

when he died. Agreeable to this, St. John saith, “We have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for our sins.” He does not say, we have had an advocate with the Father, nor that Christ was our propitiation some time ago, but that he is the propitiation for our sins.

And indeed Jesus Christ is the atonement for our sins, in that same unlimited universal and omnipresent manner, in which he is the life and light of the world. And as he is the light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world, and is not an actual present light to some, and a distant unpossessed light to others, only to be remembered by an act of their memory; so he is the atonement for every man that cometh into the world, and is not an actual, present atonement to some, and a distant atonement to others, only to be remembered by an act of their memory; but is an atonement actually and really present to all, as he is a light actually and really present to all, and every man that cometh into the world.

Therefore this author’s account of the remembrance in the sacrament, has not only those absurdities in it demonstrated above, but is also solely founded upon this grossest of all errors, that the benefits and blessings of Christ, as the savior of mankind, are something done and past; which is an error that no one could have fallen into, that had but a common knowledge of the first and plainest principles either of the Jewish or Christian religion. For both these religions are founded upon this great truth, and suppose it in every part, that the benefits and blessings of Christ were always in being, always doing, always present in and to every age, as well before as since the incarnation and death of Christ.

And as this author has been forced to assent, they were things absent, done, and past, in order to make the sacrament to consist of an action of the memory upon those absent things; so seeing it is an undeniable truth, that they are not things absent, done, and past, but are as actually present, as ever they were, or ever could be, it follows, according to his own principles, that the remembrance spoken of in the sacrament, cannot possibly signify only an action of the memory, but must necessarily signify such faith and acknowledgement of Christ, as when we are bid to remember our creator, or believe in God.

Further, this author proceeds thus: “To say that the communion is the actual partaking of all the benefits of Christ’s living and dying for us, is to put that upon one single act of obedience, which is by our blessed Lord made to depend upon the whole system of all virtues united.” (Page 58.) And again, “Such a doctrine as this would, in my opinion, be not only inconsistent with the plainest declarations of the gospel, but directly contradictory and destructive to the main design of it.” (Page 144.)

What this author calls here a single act, and a single instance of obedience, is true only of his own sacrament, which consists only of a single action of the memory cast upon Christ at a certain instant of time, and to which single action, this author expressly says, that no prayer is necessary, (Page 160.) not even necessary to attend upon it, either as going before, or following after it. That in its own proper and peculiar nature, it has nothing to do with prayer or devotion of any kind, can have no perfection from it, nor be in any degree imperfect as to its nature and essence, for want of any prayer, because its essence is entirely distinct from prayer.

And therefore all prayers, thanksgivings and devotions, are to be considered as things distinct from this sacrament, that have no relation to the peculiar nature and proper essence of it. (Page 173.)

Hence it is plain, that we do not overcharge this author, when we say, that he places the whole nature of the sacrament in a bare single action of the memory. For if, as he says, no kind of prayer, devotion or thanksgiving, is of the essence of this sacrament, or can be an essential part of it; then it has all its perfection within itself, as it is a bare act of the memory, and cannot, as to its own proper nature or essence, have anything added to it by prayer, or taken from it by the want of prayer. Hence it is also undeniable, that this author’s sacrament is not so much as a bare act of religion, nor can have any more religion in it, than if it was the act of a parrot. For no act can be a religious act, but so far, and in such degree, as it is an act of faith, and love, and devotion to God. But this author’s sacrament will not, as it is a sacrament, allow faith, or love, or devotion to be any part of it, therefore it cannot be so much as a bare act of religion.

Nay, it may and must be said, that the right observation of this author’s sacrament is directly an act of atheism. For if it is an act, that in its own

nature, and according to its peculiar essence, cannot be performed according to what it is, unless it be done without faith, and love, and devotion towards God; then it is directly an act of atheism, because atheism is nothing else but a cessation of faith, love and devotion towards God. But the essence of this author's sacrament cannot be preserved, unless you keep prayer, devotion and thanksgiving out of it. Therefore to perform it rightly according to what it is, is to perform an act of atheism.

And if at the taking of the bread and wine, you should suffer faith, or love, or adoration of God, or thanksgiving, to take up your mind, you might as well have let the sacrament alone, for you have neglected all that in which its whole nature consists; and have only been in such a state of devotion, as has nothing to do with it, nor can possibly be a part of it. And therefore, if you will perform this sacrament rightly according to this author, you must perform it atheistically; you must excite such a remembrance as excludes faith, love, devotion and thanksgiving, from being a part of it. And your remembrance is not performed, unless it be such a remembrance as these things cannot be a part of.

The devils are said to believe a God; but why is it that their faith is no religious act, nor of any benefit to them? It is because their faith is only a bare act of believing, just as this author's sacrament has only a bare act of remembering; and that which is the perfection of his sacrament, is their wretchedness.

If you ask this author, why faith, and prayer, and adoration and thanksgiving, are not of the essence, or cannot be essential parts of the sacrament: all he has to say is this, that the "duty of prayer is a duty absolutely distinct from the participation of the Lord's Supper." (Page 160.)

It may and must be granted, that prayer, humility, faith, hope, charity, etc., are absolutely distinct from each other; that humility is not prayer, nor faith in its proper idea prayer, and so of the rest. Yet notwithstanding this distinction between them, they are all of them essential to each other. Faith is of the essence of prayer, hope is of the essence of faith, and all of them are essential parts of prayer. Therefore when this author asserts that prayer is not an essential part of the communion, he is just as much in the



right, and has as much truth on his side, as he who says, that humility, faith and hope are not essential to prayer, because prayer is distinct from humility, faith and hope.

What this author saith of the sacrament, that it is one single act, or one single instance of obedience, is only true of his own fiction of a sacrament, which he makes to consist in a single act of the memory; and indeed it would be highly inconsistent with the gospel, to make such a sacrament a means of obtaining the benefits of Christ. But this is not the sacrament of Christ, nor the sacrament which the church of Christ observes.

For all that relates to our salvation, either on the part of Christ, or on our own part, is plainly united in that sacrament which Christ has instituted. All that relates to our salvation on the part of Christ, is in the sacrament, because he has said that his body and blood are there for the remission of our sins, and that his body and blood are there to be eaten and drank, as the food and life of our souls, therefore Christ as our savior is wholly there.

And all that relates to our salvation on our own part, is there; because we cannot come to Christ, or find him to be there, as he has said he is, unless we come to him with all those qualities and pious dispositions that correspond to him, as he is an atonement for our sins, and a principle of life to us; therefore all that relates to our salvation, either on the part of Christ, or on our own part, is plainly united in the sacrament. And to call such a communion one single act of obedience, is just the same absurdity, as to say, that the baptism of a heathen converted to Christianity, is but one single instance of obedience. For everything that is implied in such a conversion and baptism, whether it be on the part of Christ, or on the part of the person baptized, is implied in this communion.

And as the baptism of such a person contains all in it that relates to his salvation, either on the part of Christ, or on his own part, and therefore cannot without great ignorance be called a single instance or act of obedience: so it is with the sacrament, it is all that to the pious communicant, both on the part of Christ, and on his own part, that baptism is to the true converted heathen; and he is made an actual partaker of all the benefits of Christ by it, as the convert is made so by baptism;

and therefore it is the same absurdity to call it a single act, or instance of obedience.

And as it would be vain and groundless to say, that it was inconsistent with the main design of the gospel, to make such baptism the actual partaking of all the benefits of Christ; so it is equally, if not more so, to say the same thing of communion; because every pious and holy disposition is to be supposed to be in an higher state, in the pious communicant, than in the pious desirer of baptism; and therefore, it cannot without much absurdity be supposed, that the sacrament is not as beneficial to the pious communicant, as baptism is to the pious convert.

For if Christ has appointed this institution, to assure us, that he is there, both as the atonement for our sins, and a principle of life to us, and we come to it with such pious dispositions as correspond and answer to him in both these respects, and make us capable of him; it must be great absurdity to say, that we find him not there as our atonement, nor receive him as a principle of life to us, nor are made partakers of these benefits of him.

If we stand before this atonement, without such dispositions as correspond to it, we are as absent from the sacrament of Christ, as they are that refuse to come to it; if we eat that which is before us in the sacrament, without such faith and purity as qualify us to receive the flesh and blood of Christ, we are only eating that, which might have been the bread of life to our souls.

But if we, according to the condition of our humanity, are that which these two essential parts of the sacrament require us to be, then we may and ought as firmly to believe, that we are by this sacrament made actual partakers of all the benefits of Christ, as that we are saved through Christ, and not by ourselves.

This author makes great complaint of ascribing these benefits to the reception of the communion, because it is, as he says, to put that upon a single instance of obedience, which our blessed Lord has made to depend upon the whole system of all virtues united in us: that is, Christ has made the system of all virtues united in us, to be the only qualification for the actual partaking of his benefits; which is not only utterly inconsistent with

the gospel, but nonsensical in itself; for it is saying that we are then only qualified for the benefits of our savior, when we have no need of them; for if all virtues were so united in us, all that our savior could do for us, would be done beforehand.

But let us take an instance or two from our savior's own words, and then we shall best see how truly this author has said, that he has made the actual partaking of his benefits, to depend upon the whole system of all virtues united. When our blessed Lord stood by Jacob's well, talking with the woman of Samaria, he said to her, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, give me to drink, thou wouldst have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water; a water which shall be in him that drinketh it, a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John 4:10.)

Here, I suppose, are offered to this poor woman all the benefits of the savior of mankind. Our Lord does not say to her, If thou hadst the whole system of all virtues united in thee, then thou mightest be made a partaker of all my benefits; I could make the water of eternal life perpetually spring up within thee.

No, there is no such jargon as this in the gospel: but as he came as a compassionate savior, to make the blind to see, the deaf to hear, and the dumb to speak, and the dead to awake; as he came as a good shepherd to seek that which was lost, and as a physician to heal the sick; so he only says to the woman, if she had asked, that is, if she had felt the want of a savior, as the blind feel the want of sight, and her heart had only desired this gift of God, he would then have bestowed this greatest of all gifts upon her.

But surely, if this desire in the woman would have made her thus capable of all the benefits of our savior, it cannot be inconsistent with the gospel, to make the same desire as beneficial to a true and pious Christian, as it would have been to an unbaptized Samaritan.

Again, our Lord saith, "All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive." (Matthew 21:22.) Here you see, all things, and therefore all the benefits of Christ, are ascribed to faith, and we have everything that we can desire or pray for, by virtue of it. Does not our

Lord here ascribe as much benefit to faith, as ever anyone ascribed to the holy communion? Or who ever said that of the power, or benefit, or efficacy of the sacrament, which our Lord here says of the benefit of faith in prayer?

Is not this as inconsistent with the gospel, as the actual partaking of Christ's benefits, by the single duty of receiving the sacrament? Is not this benefit of the prayer of faith as contrary to this author's whole system of virtues united in us, as that other benefit of the sacrament? Is it not as just to say, that this prayer of faith is only a single instance of obedience, as to say so of the sacrament? And is not the main design of the gospel as much destroyed by making faith to be thus beneficial, as by making the communion to be so beneficial?

Or can it be supposed, that when our Lord, who ascribes thus much to the prayer of faith, when it is alone, would think it too much to be ascribed of it, when the holy sacrament is united with it? Or must it be supposed, that this prayer of faith loses its virtue and power, is deprived of its excellent effects, only then, when it is a part of the communion of Christ's body and blood.

Again, our Lord saith, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you." Must not this author have as much to complain of in this doctrine, that ascribes so much to prayer in the name of Christ, as in that doctrine, that ascribes so much to the sacrament? Must he not say, that the praying in the name of Christ, is but one single instance of obedience; and that to say, we are thereby made partakers of all the benefits of Christ, is putting that upon one single act of obedience, which our blessed Lord has made to depend upon the whole system of all virtues united in us? Must he not say, that this account of the power and efficacy of prayer in Christ's name, is a doctrine destructive of the main design of the gospel?

For everything that this author objects against this doctrine of the sacrament, must with the same strength be objected against these, and many other the like express declarations of our savior.

Everyone must know that it would be very easy to produce various passages of the gospel, that teach the same doctrine, as these do that I

have quoted; and that when this author said, our savior made the partaking of his benefits to depend upon the whole system of all virtues united in us, he had just the same reason and authority from the gospel to say so, as he has to say, that Christ declared he came to seek that which was not lost, to heal those which were not sick, and save those who stood in no need of a savior.

But now, seeing this is the nature, power, and efficacy of the prayer of faith, and of prayer in the name of Christ; seeing he himself has assured us, that they make us actual partakers of everything that we can ask of the Father, or that he through Christ can give us, we have the fullest assurance, that if we do that which the sacrament requires to be done; if we don't separate faith and prayer in the name of Christ from it, but perform it in this faith and prayer, or make it as it ought to be, a real exercise of this faith and prayer, then we receive in and by it all the benefits of our savior.

But because this author seems entirely out of his element, when speaking of the benefits of Jesus Christ, and not to be able to speak an intelligible word about it, as to the true grounds and nature of it, but only to puzzle himself and the reader with an empty superficial way of arguing from the sound of words: I shall therefore, in a word or two, endeavor to lay before you the true grounds of the benefits of Jesus Christ, as he is the savior of all mankind.

It is the fundamental doctrine, or rather the known foundation of all revealed religion, and the known foundation of all natural piety and goodness, that Jesus Christ is the second Adam: that he is a common head, or parent, or person to all mankind, in the same manner as Adam is the common head, or parent, or person to all mankind.

That a real birth, life, nature, and true man, is in the same truth and reality derived to us from this our second Adam, as a real birth, and life, and nature is derived to us from our first Adam. And that as without any figure or metaphor of speech we are all said to be born of Adam, and descended from him; so we are all in the same dependence upon our second Adam, really and not figuratively born of him, and have our descent from him; spirit of his spirit, life of his life, in the same truth and reality, as every man has the nature of the first Adam.

And herein is seen the infinite depth of divine love and goodness to mankind, who though they were by the condition of their creation to be derived from one head or parent, and to take his state of perfection or imperfection; yet were by the goodness and care of God for them, provided from the very beginning with a second parent, or common head, who after the fall of the first, and the fallen state that he had brought upon his posterity, should be a common restorer, and put it in every man's power to have the same choice of life and death, as the first man had; that so, they who were lost before they were born, and were made inheritors of a miserable nature without their choice, might have a divine life restored to them in a second parent, which should not be in the power of anyone to lose for them, but should depend entirely upon their own will and desire of it, upon their own faith, and hope, and hungering after it.

This eternal and immutable truth, worthy of being written in capital letters of gold, is the foundation of all revealed and natural religion: and a standing monument of God's universal goodness and love to all mankind, and such as is sufficient to make all men rejoice and give praise to God.

For by this truth, all that seems hard and cruel to human reason, that the posterity of Adam should be involved in the consequences of their first Father's fall, (yet how could it be otherwise?) all this, I say, is made a wonderful scene of love, as soon as we consider, that all mankind were redeemed as soon as they were lost, and that their redemption was as early, as universal, and as extensive in its effects, as the fall was. And that no son of Adam is left to inherit a poor, earthy, perishable, corrupt nature from him, without having it in his choice to be born again of a second Adam, and restored, with advantage, to all the riches, and treasures, and blessings of a divine and paradisiacal nature, which were lost without his consent.

There is something so amazingly loving and merciful in this conduct of divine providence over mankind, that I cannot help thinking, no one can calmly consider it in the quiet of his mind, without having all his infidelity melted down by it. And that such an act of general pardon, as early as the first sin, and a new parent provided for us, to be our parent by choice and faith, as soon as our first parent had undone us without our consent: such an act of pardon being the beginning and foundation of all revealed religion,

and of everything that is afterwards revealed in it, has surely enough in it, if once known, to make revealed religion the joy, and comfort, and desire of every man's heart. What would I give that I could but dart one ray of this truth into every unbeliever's heart; for the smallest ray of it would do to everyone as the light that fell from heaven did to St. Paul, it would make as it were scales fall from his eyes: and he would find that all books and systems of infidelity were as unreasonable in themselves, and as hurtful to him, as those commissions were which Paul had from the high priest to bind all that called on the name of Christ.

But to proceed: that Jesus Christ is thus the savior and universal redeemer of all mankind, that he is this second Adam or parent, giving a new birth and life to all that which was extinguished and lost by Adam; restoring Adam himself, and in him all mankind to a possibility of being born again, by their own will, choice, faith, and desire; and that revealed religion began with the declaration of this redemption, and has revealed nothing but for the sake and support of it, is a truth sufficiently attested by scripture.

The declaration which God made to Adam immediately after his fall, of a seed of the woman to bruise the serpent's head, was a declaration of pardon and redemption to Adam, and in him to all mankind; for what he said to Adam, that he said to all that were in the loins of Adam; who, as they fell in his fall before they were born, without the possibility of any one man's being exempted from it; so were they all put into his state of pardon and redemption before they were born, without the possibility of any one man's being excluded, or left out of it.

Thus revealed religion begins with an offer of a second Adam, and upon the foot of an universal pardon and redemption to all mankind. Every son of Adam is in the same covenant with God that Adam was, and has the same bruiser of the serpent as near to him, as he was to Adam, and declared to be his redeemer, in the same degree as he was declared to be the redeemer of Adam.

And who would seek for arguments against such a savior? Or who would cavil at a revealed religion, that has no other beginning or end, but to reveal an universal redemption? Or who can enough call upon all creation, heaven and earth, angels and men, and everything that hath breath, to praise the

Lord for such salvation? You must forgive these little digressions; for I want so much to touch the heart of my reader, and make him in love with God, and his own salvation in Christ Jesus, that I know not how to content myself with bare argument.

Now this declaration of God to Adam, of his pardon and redemption by the seed of the woman, is not to be considered, as we consider the declaration of a pardon made by some great prince to an offending subject, which is only a declaration of words, that are heard only with our outward ears, and of a person that is entirely distinct from us.

God's pardoning a sinner, or redeeming fallen man, has nothing like this in it. If this offending subject had his life, and breath, and being in and from this great prince, or could be said to live, and move, and have his being in him; it would be easy, nay, necessary to believe, that his declaration of pardon to him, must be something very different from a pardon of words, and must signify some inward light, or change, or new state of existence in his prince.

Now this declaration of God's pardon and reconciliation to Adam, and in him to all mankind, is not the declaration of a being that is out of, or separate from us, but of a God in whom we live, and move, and have our being; who is the center of that which is most central in us, the life of our life, the spirit of our spirit: his declaration therefore of pardon is not a declaration of words, or of a being that is separate from us; but must signify some inward change, or new state of our existence in him, or that he is to us, and in us, that which he was not before he pardoned us. For his words are power, and what he speaks he acts; and what he acts, he acts not out of us, but in the inmost essence of our being, because so we exist in him, and he in us.

If God at the fall had said, Let us save man, the same had been effected, as when he said, "Let us make man." When therefore God said to Adam and Eve, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent," what was said, was done; and it was the same thing, had the same meaning and effect, as if he had said, "Be ye henceforth in a state of salvation, and let the redeeming, conquering seed of the woman from this time begin to have power in you, and to be in you a strength and might against the serpent."



And what he said was done, as when he said, “Let there be light, and there was light.”

Thus this declaration of pardon and redemption made by God to Adam, and, in him, to all his posterity, was not solely a promise of something to come, or of a pardon that was at a distance, no more than it was the promise of a God that was at a distance from him; but the declaration of something then inwardly done and given, by a God inwardly present in him, and signified no less than God’s seeking and manifesting himself again to a creature, that had lost him as his God and only good.

For how can the anger of that being, “in whom we live, and move, and have our being,” be only an anger of words, or made known to us only by words? Or how can it be anything else, but some inward loss of that which is our good in him?

Or how can his pardon be only a pardon of words, or something heard only with our ears? Or how can it be anything else, but his restoring that to us, or his reviving that in us, which makes us again capable of finding him our God and only good?

Therefore God’s declaration of pardon to Adam, was not barely a promise of something to come, but the pardon itself; and was the real communication of something to Adam, which made him capable of enjoying God as his good, which he had not when he wanted to be pardoned, and which he could not have, if God was in a state of anger with him.

Now had not God spoken this pardon and reconciliation to Adam after his fall, he had been in the condition of the deep, when it was said, darkness was upon the face of the deep.

Nay, it had been much worse with him; for had not God made this declaration of pardon and redemption to him at that time, that is, had he not done inwardly in the depth of his soul, something like that which he did to the darkness of the deep, when he spoke light into it, Adam and Eve, and all their posterity, had been inwardly mere devils, and outwardly mere beasts, a motley mixture of both, till the beast fell into the earth, and the soul to the state of devils.

For had not God thus in the beginning of the fall, before any man was born into the world of Adam and Eve, had he not spoke pardon and redemption unto Adam and Eve; neither they, nor any of their posterity had been capable of any faith, or hope, or desire of God, but had lived as much without all conscience, or instinct of goodness, as the beasts of the earth and devils do.

Therefore God redeemed man, that is, restored to him a power of being again his creature, or a power of knowing and finding him to be his God, when he said, the “seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent’s head.” He redeemed him by communicating to him a sense, a feeling, and a desire of God, by communicating to him a capacity to enjoy him as his only good, by sowing into him a seed of the woman, a spark of life, an instinct of goodness, a taste of heaven, a principle of holiness, a touch of love, the pearl of the gospel, the pledge of immortality, the hidden kingdom of God.

For all these expressions of a seed, a spark, an instinct, a principle, a pearl and kingdom, are insufficient to express that inward treasure of the soul, and fund of everlasting happiness, which God in the beginning of redemption, or as his act of redemption, communicated to man.

Now in this degree of redemption is every creature that is born of Adam; he has this kingdom of God in his soul, as a grain of mustard seed, as a spark of life, as a pledge of immortality, as his attraction to God: if he tramples this pearl under his feet, if he will choke this Word, if he will put out this spark, if he will resist this attraction, then his destruction is from himself; and when the carcass of flesh and blood falls off from him, he must find himself in his own hell, and must have the misery of a darkened, anxious, fiery, self-tormented nature for ever, that would not suffer itself to be redeemed.

But if he will consent to his redemption, and cooperate with that inward redeemer which God has put into his soul; if he will suffer his spark to kindle, his instinct of goodness to spread itself, the light of the life to arise in him, the voice of God to be heard in him; then will the divine life, the inward man, be brought forth in him; and when his body breaks off, heaven will be made manifest in his soul, and he will fall into all the fullness of God. The Son of God will be his light, the Holy Spirit will

breathe in him, and the power and omnipotency of the Father will be life and strength in him; and thus, in the completest sense of the words, shall he ever live, and move, and have his being in God.

And now, my dear reader, what shall I say to you? How shall I do that, which I most of all desire to do, touch your heart? Or how can your heart be untouched with this affecting view of the mercies of God in Christ Jesus, and of the riches and treasures which lie hid in your own soul, wanting nothing but your own consent and good wishes to be manifested in you?

But it may be, modern infidelity has stolen into your heart, and so you lie starving in the midst of plenty, choosing rather to famish on the dry husks of reason, dispute, and infidelity, than to have this divine life, this riches of your own soul, discovered to you on the terms of the gospel. It may be you have buried this spark of life, this inward man, and have heaped all the earth upon him that you can get, that you have sealed the stone of his sepulcher, and have set your greatest enemy, a reasoning infidelity, upon the watch, to dispute, wrangle, and deny every doctrine of scripture, that as a good angel would roll away the stone of the sepulcher, and let your inward redeemer arise in you.

If this is your case, if you have let a reasoning infidelity into your heart, you know not what mischief you have let into it; for the denial of the gospel reaches much further, and is more extensive than you imagine.

For to deny Jesus Christ, is to deny your share in the first pardon of God to man; it is returning into the first state of the fall, and refusing to be a partner with Adam in his state of forgiveness; it is going over to the side of the serpent, and declaring that you will not enter into peace with God on the terms of bruising his head; for Jesus Christ that calls upon you in the gospel, is that same Christ which became Adam's pardon; and if you reject him in the gospel, it is rejecting him from the beginning: and is saying, that you will have no share in that salvation which was granted to Adam, and in him to all mankind. Nay, what is still more, if you reject the savior offered to you in the gospel, you reject all that which makes you differ from a devil; for that savior which speaks to you in the gospel, is that very same inward light of your mind, which makes you differ from a devil; for

had you nothing of that Jesus Christ in you, whom you reject in the gospel, you would be in the same dark malignity, and self-tormenting wretchedness, in which every diabolical nature is.

To refuse him that speaketh to you in the gospel, is not barely to renounce a certain particular religion revealed by God at a certain time, it is not barely to reject Christ as come in the flesh; but it is rejecting all that God has ever transacted with man, it is renouncing all that is divine and good within you, all that God inwardly speaks and teaches in the depth of your soul; it is saying that you will have no benefit from the good workings or motions of your own heart, or the instincts of goodness that are stirring in it; for Jesus Christ that calls you to repentance in the gospel, is the very same blessed savior, that warns, reproveth, and preaches repentance in the inmost essence of your spirit. For it is a deceit of the grossest kind, to think that Christ came only as our savior, when he came in the flesh, or that he only speaks to us that which is outwardly spoken in the gospel; for he always was that in every man that saved him from being entirely a diabolical nature, and was as really the teacher and mover of all that is good within you, as he was the teacher of the gospel. Therefore to reject him as your savior, to refuse him as such, and to desire to be without him, is in reality to desire to be in hell, to have the darkness and distress of diabolical beings; it is desiring to be without any light of God upon your mind, or any instincts of goodness stirring in your heart.

And if this is not the immediate effect of your infidelity, if you don't immediately find that the denial of Christ is putting out all the light within you; 'tis because Christ is love, and will be so good towards you, as to continue his inward light to you, though you reject his outward light of the gospel.

But, my friend, be wise in time, for this goodness will continue but a time; don't let a poor worthless infidelity beguile you to eat the dust of the earth with the serpent, when God has provided for you the bread of life. For this time of goodness and forbearance will soon be over; and if the end of it finds you in your infidelity, rejecting the benefits of Christ, you will then see the whole of all you desired, you will be without Christ, you will find that all is gone with him, and that you will have nothing left, but that nature which is the torment of hell.

You now think, that because you can frame ideas of virtue, and exert some acts of goodness, though you reject all faith in Christ, that therefore he is not necessary to your virtue and happiness; but your miserable mistake lies here, that you think Christ is only he that preached the gospel, and that it is not him that speaks and moves every good thought or word that is spoken in you, but that you have a light and goodness of your own. But when this time is over, and you have spent your hour of grace, Christ will no longer stand knocking at the door of your heart; and then you will find, that you are as empty of all inward light, as you are of the gospel, and that by rejecting him as your savior, you have rejected all that was divine and good within you.

Infidelity therefore is a much deeper evil than you may imagine, it denies and rejects more than you think of; you may intend by it only to change the light of the gospel for the light of reason, but Christ will not be divided by your intention; he is the one only light of men, the same in the heart that he is in the gospel; and though you may now think that you have two teachers, because he teaches in two places, and therefore may adhere to one, and reject the other; yet this is a deceit that can last no longer than the disputings of this world last with you.

When the veil of flesh and blood is pulled off, and you must stand in the nakedness of your soul before God; then you will know, that these two lights are only one, and that neither of them can be rejected by itself. These lights appear now as two, only because God is so good as to leave no part of you untried, but presses the kingdom of heaven upon you, both from within, and from without.

The eternal Word, the Son of God, took human nature upon him, worked all his miracles, taught all his doctrines, underwent all his sufferings, to make that light of the mind, which every man that cometh into the world had received from him, effectual to their salvation; therefore the light of the gospel, and the light of the mind, are one, as Christ is one, whether he speaks to you inwardly or outwardly. If therefore you reject Christ in the utmost efforts of his goodness to save you, you will find that the renouncing of Christ, is renouncing all that you have from him, and that all the good light of your mind, call it what you will, as it was his, is all

rejected with him, and that nothing is left in that soul, where he is not, but mere darkness.

But to return to my subject; what I have said above of God's covenant with Adam, and the redemption granted to him, is God's covenant with all mankind, and therefore thus far all mankind are the redeemed of Jesus. There is no partiality in God, no election of one people to salvation, and dereliction of another to their own misery. As all fell and died in Adam, so all were restored in his restoration.

Thus says the apostle, "As by the offense of one, judgment came upon all to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life." (Romans 5:18.)

But you will perhaps say, how does it appear, that this first covenant of God with mankind, or redemption of all men in the redemption of Adam, is the redemption in and by Jesus Christ.

I may better ask you, Where you can have the smallest reason even to suspect the contrary? For is not the seed of the woman, Jesus Christ? And if our salvation then began, when God made declaration of the saving power of this seed, it is plain, that Christ's redemption then began in mankind, that he was thenceforward in every man as a spark of life, that as a secret power, should bruise the serpent, and support us against him, till he, in the fullness of time, should, in the fullness of the promise, become such a seed of the woman, as should openly triumph over death and hell, and all the kingdom of the serpent. For if it were Christ that became the ransom and life of his soul; then all the sons of Adam, from the first to the last, are in Adam's state of covenant with God through Jesus Christ, and have the seed of the woman doing all that for them, which it did for Adam.

Again, does not the gospel expressly say, that Jesus Christ is the true light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world? Therefore Jesus Christ is in every man that cometh into the world, and every son of Adam is in a state of redemption in and by Jesus Christ, and every son of Adam has received that same from Jesus Christ, which Adam received from him, viz., an inward light of life, a beginning of his salvation, an actual power or strength to resist the serpent; therefore Jesus Christ, as he is the

light and life of men, as he is the bruiser of the serpent, as he is the power of salvation, is and ever was the free gift of God unto all men.

Again, does not the scripture teach us, that God is as well the God of the gentiles, as the God of the Jews? But if he is their God, then they are his people. And as we know that God is not the creator of any beings, but in and by Jesus Christ, by whom everything was made, that was made; so he is not the God of any people, but in and by Jesus Christ, who is the reconciler of all things unto God, by whom alone all things and persons are made acceptable to him; therefore if he is the God and Father of the gentiles, then the gentiles have an interest in Jesus Christ, have all their access to God, as their Father and creator, in and by the benefits and merits of Jesus Christ; or, in other words, are actual partakers of the benefits of Jesus Christ, as he is the savior of mankind.

Which is a privilege or blessing that this author will not allow Christians to have, even when eating the flesh and drinking the blood of Christ; so little does he know what he speaks of, when he speaks of the partaking of the benefits of Christ.

But you will perhaps further ask, how can the gentiles have an interest in the benefits of Jesus Christ, since they know him not, nor ask anything in his name. May you not as well ask me, how they can be said to live, and move, and have their being in God, who know not what it is to have life, and motion, and being in him, nor ever confessed it in a true manner, or under a right sense of it? For if they can have the benefit of a life in God, and be blessed by it, who are either totally, or much ignorant of it; then Christ, as he is the atonement and life of Adam and his posterity, may be a benefit and blessing to those who are totally ignorant of it, or at least know nothing of him, as he is Christ, or the Son of God manifest in the flesh.

Again, the scripture says of Jesus Christ, that he came unto his own, and his own received him not, that is, they knew him not: now if he could come unto his own, though they knew him not, then it is plain, that they may be his, who know him not, that is, they may have some interest in him, be purchased by him, have received much from him, be greatly related to him, who yet are insensible of it.

Lastly, you might much better ask me, how can they, who never knew anything of Christ, as their mediator and atonement, be judged by him at the last day? For if they were altogether strangers to Christ, had no relation to him, had received nothing from him, or by means of him, he could not be their judge. For Jesus Christ cannot do anything as a judge, till he has done everything as a savior; nor be anywhere a judge, but where he has first appeared as a savior.

Therefore, it is an evident truth, that had not all nations, and every individual man, received a certain means of salvation through him, he could not be the judge of all.

Heathens, Jews, and Christians differ not thus, that the one have a savior and are in a redeemed state, and the other are not; or that the one have one savior, and the other have another; for the one judge of all, is the one savior of all: but they only differ in this, that one and the same savior is differently made known to them, and differently to be obtained by them. The heathens knew him not as he was in the numerous types of the Jewish Law, they knew him not as he is gloriously manifested in the gospel; but they knew him as he was the God of their hearts, manifesting himself by a light of the mind, by instincts of goodness, by a sensibility of guilt, by awakenings and warnings of conscience; and this was their gospel, which they received as truly and really in, and by, and through Jesus Christ as the Law and gospel were received through him.

Therefore it is a great and glorious truth, enough to turn every voice into a trumpet, and make heaven and earth ring with praises and hallelujahs to God, that Jesus Christ is the savior of all the world, and of every man of every nation, kindred and language. Therefore saith St. John, "They sung a new song, saying, Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood, out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation." (Revelation 6:9.) And again, "After this I beheld," says he, "and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and with palms in their hands, and cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb." (Revelation 7:9, 10.)



I must, before I proceed further, put in here a word of caution to two sorts of readers. If you are in such a state, as I supposed one to be above, touched with modern infidelity, having your reason set upon the watch to guard you against the gospel, it may here do its office, and will perhaps tell you, that what I have here said in favor of the general light, or seed of life that is in all men, is much the same thing that you say in defense of natural reason, or religion, only with this difference, that I mention it as coming from Christ, and you consider it as the bare light of nature.

Now if this were all the difference, is not this enough to show you, that my opinion is the very denial of yours; for if I proved that what you called the natural light of men, was wholly derived from the divine revelation, would not that be a sufficient proof that I denied and disproved your religion of natural reason? And have I not done the same thing, if I have asserted the light of men to be a light derived from Christ? And how can such an assertion be made in the least favorable to your opinion, that such a light is natural?

But to prevent all misapprehensions, I now declare to you, and will show you in the most explicit manner, that that which I call the light of men, or the seed of life sown into all men by Jesus Christ, is as wholly different from that which you call natural reason, as light is different from darkness; and that they stand in that same state of contrariety to each other, both as to their original, their nature and qualities, as our savior and Pontius Pilate did.

I must therefore assure you, that as I fear God, and wish your salvation, so I can no more say a word in favor of what is now called the religion of natural reason, than I would recommend to you the ancient idolatry of heathens. And yet at the same time, I am no more an enemy to reason, than I am an enemy to the light of the sun, and as freely wish you all the benefits of the one, as of the other.

But if you do by reason, as they did by the sun, who thought it to be divine, fell down before it, and expected all from it; then I must speak as plainly to you of the inability of reason to do you this good, as I must have spoken of the inability of the sun to such idolaters of it.

And if I should have told them, that the sun was no more their God, than the poorest worm upon earth, and that it could no more make those to be divine that worshipped it, than a storm of hail could make those to be divine that it fell upon, I should have told them a great truth. So if I say to you, that reason, or the faculty of reasoning, is no more the religion of man, than the faculty of doubting or erring is; and that it can no more make those to be divine who place their trust in it, than a great error can make those to be divine who abide by it, I should tell you a great and useful truth.

For reason, or a faculty of reasoning upon the moral habitudes and relations of things and persons, or upon the moral proportion of actions, has no more of the nature and power of religion in it, than so much reasoning upon the relations of squares and triangles. And if a man had this religion of reason only when he was dreaming in sleep, it would be the same good thing to him, as it is to those who make it their religion when they are awake.

For the good of religion, is like the good of food and drink to an hungry and thirsty creature; and if instead of giving such a one bread and wine, or water, you should teach him to seek for relief, by attending to clear ideas of the nature of bread, of different ways of making it, and the relation it hath to water; he would be left to die in the want of sustenance, just as your religion of reasoning leaves the soul to perish in the want of religion. And as such a man would have no more benefit from such reasoning about the relation that bread had to water, whether it was the reasoning of a dream, or the reasoning of a man awake, because either way he was kept under the same want of that which was to preserve his life; so whether a man has your religion of reasoning only when he is asleep, or when he is awake, is the same thing; because either way he is kept under the same want of that which can alone preserve the life of the soul. For the good that is in religion, or the good that we want to receive by it, is no more within the reach of our reason, or to be communicated to us by it, than the good of food is in the reach of our reason, or can be communicated to us by it. And yet as a man may have the good of food much assisted and secured to him, by the right use of his reason, though reason has not the good of food in it; so a man may have the good of religion much assisted

and secured to him by the right use of reason, though reason has not the good of religion in it.

And as a man ought not to be accused as an enemy to the true use of reasoning about food, because he declares that reason is not food, nor can supply the place of it; so a man ought not to be accused as an enemy to the use of reasoning in religion, because he declares that reason is not religion, nor can supply the place of it.

But to show you the bottom of this whole matter, pray consider with me as follows: We have no want of religion, but so far as we want to better our state in God, or so far as we are unpossessed of God, or less possessed of him than we might be. This is the true ground of religion, to alter our state of existence in God, and to have more of the divine nature or perfections communicated to us. Nothing therefore is our good in religion, but that which alters our state of existence in God for the better, and puts us in possession of something of God, or makes us partakers of the divine nature in such a manner and degree as we wanted it.

Everything that is in life, has its degree of life in and from God, it lives, and moves, and has its being in God. This is as true of devils themselves, as of the highest and most perfect angels. Therefore all the happiness or misery of all creatures consists only in this, as they are more or less possessed of God, or as they differently partake of the divine nature, according to their different state of existence in God.

But if this be the truth of the matter, (and who can deny it?) then we have the certainty of demonstration, that nothing can be our good in religion, but that which communicates to us something of God, or the divine nature, or that which betters our state and manner of existence in God.

For if devils are what they are, because of their state and manner of existence in God; if blessed angels are what they are, because of their state and manner of existence in God; then it undeniably follows, that all that is betwixt angels and devils, all beings from the happiness of the one to the misery of the other, must and can have no other happiness or misery, but according to their state and manner of existence in God, or according as they have more or less of the state of angels, or the state of devils in them. Therefore nothing can be our good in religion, but that which alters our

state and manner of existence in God, and renders us possessed of him in a different and better manner.

Now if you were to send to the fallen spirits of darkness, all the systems of your religion of reason, that have been published here, to let them know that they have the power of their own restoration and happiness within themselves, that they need seek to nothing, but their own natural reason and understanding, and the strength and activity of their own powers, to raise them to all the happiness they are capable of; such a religion would be so far from altering or mending their state of existence in God, or doing them any good, that it would add strength to all their chains; and the more firmly they believed and relied upon it, the more would they be confirmed and fixed in their separation from God.

And yet, a religion that must necessarily keep them in hell, is the only religion that you will have to carry you to heaven. May God deliver you from this error!

On the other hand, if you could infuse into those dark spirits a glimpse of that light of the mind, or instinct of goodness, which I have said all mankind have received from Jesus Christ, as their second Adam, their salvation would be so far begun, and hell would become a state of trial for their redemption. Therefore that light of the mind, or instinct of goodness, which I have spoken of, has the utmost contrariety to your religion of reason, that can possibly be imagined.

The one is the beginning of the new birth in Christ, and the foundation of heaven; the other is the growth of death, and the very essence of hell in the soul. Now that here is no aggravation of the matter, but plain and naked truth, you may easily see from a consideration of the articles of your religion of reason. Your religion of reason, is a religion of natural strength and power, that rejects the necessity of a savior, that feels no want of him, that rejects the necessity of divine grace, the guidance of the Holy Spirit, and feels no want of it; these are the essential parts of your religion of reason, which are in truth and reality the religion of hell, or that very state of mind which reigns and governs there.

For could those miserable spirits renounce these articles of your religion, their chains of darkness would break off from them. Could they cast

themselves down before God, humbly confessing, that of themselves they are not able to save themselves, or even to think a good thought: could they in humility and penitence beg of the mercy of God, to do something in them and for them, which they cannot do for themselves: could they acknowledge the want of a savior, ask God to find one for them: could they feel and own the want of his Holy Spirit, and humbly beg of God to be assisted by it, a door of salvation would be opened to them. And yet you see that nothing opens this door, but the plain and full renunciation of every part of your religion of reason.

And if it be asked, why they cannot be saved? no other reason can be given, but because they will not; they cannot renounce your religion of reason, that is, they cannot humbly acknowledge their own inability to do themselves good; they will not admit the thought of a savior, they will not be assisted by the Spirit of God, or own the want of his life in them, and therefore they are and must be what they are, prisoners in chains of darkness.

Awake therefore, my dear friend, and cast away this religion from you, with more earnestness than you would cast burning coals out of your bosom: for could it only destroy your body, I should have been less earnest in giving you notice of it. But as I have the fullest conviction, that it is the death and darkness of your soul, and is bringing the essence of hell secretly and invisibly into it; you must forgive me, if I use all the expressions and descriptions I can think of, to prevent your giving into it. Had I a superficial charity for you, or a slight view of the hurt you are doing to yourself, I should speak to you accordingly; but the depth and earnestness of my desire to do you good, must have expressions suitable to it. Study not therefore how to find fault with me, or to dislike the words, or manner of my style, for it is the style of love and zeal for your salvation; and if you condemn anything but love in it, you condemn something that is not there.

I have shown you, that the religion of reason is the very state of hellish minds, and that they are what they are, because they will do all for themselves, place all in their own strength, because they cannot be humble, cannot own the want of a savior; and have only appealed to this instance of the nature and power of your religion of reason, to show you in the

most undeniable manner, that it must, and can have no other effect upon you, than it has upon them; that it must produce the same hell in your soul, the same separation from God, and cannot possibly be any more the way of salvation for you, than it is for them.

What is the reason that the faith of the devils, or their belief of a God, does them no good? It is because there is nothing in it but their own act, a mere product of their own; it is because it is an act of your religion of reason, that will have no virtue but by its own strength, and of its own growth. But if they could have so much of the religion of the gospel, as to say in the language of it, "Lord, help our unbelief," their faith would be changed, and be beneficial to them, only for this reason, because they had renounced your religion of doing good to themselves by their own natural powers.

Hence it sufficiently appears, that your way of natural reason cannot be the way of salvation; 1st, because the want of salvation is nothing else, but the wanting to have our state, or manner of existence in God, altered for the better; or to have something of God communicated to us, which we want and are capable of receiving. But if this is the nature of salvation, then no religion can save us, can do us our proper good, or supply our proper want, but that which has power to alter our state of existence in God, or to communicate to us that of God which we want, and are capable of. Therefore it follows, that nothing but that same God which created us, which gave us our state and manner of existence in him, and communicated to us that which we possess of him; nothing but that same God can redeem us, or help us to that state or manner of existence in him, which we have lost, or are in want of.

But if God alone can redeem us, and for the same reason that he alone can create; if creation and redemption necessarily require the same power, and must for the same reason be necessarily appropriated to God, because each of them equally imply the communication of something of God to us; then I suppose it may be granted, that the religion of reason, which is for saving ourselves by our own natural powers, is the greatest of all absurdities; as absurd as to suppose, that we can create by our own natural powers, because creation and redemption both of them equally imply a communication of something of the divine nature; and therefore he that cannot do the one, cannot do the other.

And if a man was to ask himself, why he cannot be the savior of other people, as well as of himself? He could say nothing against the one, but what must for the same reason be said against the other. For if salvation is a communication of something of God to the person saved, then it is plain, that a man can no more do this for himself, than he can do it for another.

There never could have been any dispute about the possibility of saving ourselves, nor any pretense to save ourselves by our own natural faculties, had not men lost all true knowledge both of God and themselves. For this dispute cannot happen, till men suppose that God is some outward being, that our relation to him is an outward relation, that religion is an outward thing that passes between God and us, like terms of behavior between man and man; that sin hurts and separates us from God, only as a misdemeanor hurts and separates us from our prince; that an offended or angry God either gives or refuses pardon to us, as an angry prince does to his subjects; and that what he gives us, or forgives us, is something as distinct and different from himself, as when a prince sitting upon his throne gives or forgives something to an offender, that is an hundred miles from him.

Now all this is the same total ignorance of God, of what he is, of the relation we have to him, and the manner of his being our good, as when the old idolaters took men to be gods. And yet nothing is more plain, than that your religion of reason is wholly founded upon these gross and false notions of God. You have not an argument in its defense, but what supposes all these errors just mentioned; that our relation to God is an outward relation, like that of subjects to their prince, and that what we do to, and for God, as our service to him, is and must be done by our own power, as that which we do to, and for our prince, must be by our own power. And here lies the foundation of all your religion of reason and natural power, that if it was not sufficient to obtain for us all that we want of God, he must be less good than a good earthly prince, who requires no more of us, than that which we have a natural strength to do, or can do by our own power.

And yet this error appears to have all the grossness of idolatry, as soon as you suppose, that God is no outward separate being, but that we are what we are, have what we have, can do that which we can do, because he has brought us to this state of life, power and existence in himself, because he

has made us, so far as we are made partakers or possessors of his own nature, and has communicated to us so much of himself; or, in the words of scripture, because in him we live, move, and have our being, and consequently have no life, motion or being out of him. For from this state of our existence in God, it necessarily follows, first, that by the nature of our creation we are only put into a capacity of receiving good: a creature as such, can be in no other state; it is as impossible for him to enrich himself, or communicate more good to himself, as it was to create himself. 2dly, that nothing but God himself can do us any good. 3dly, that God cannot do us good, but by the communication of himself in some manner to us.

For hence it evidently follows, that your religion of reason, which supposes that we have natural powers that can put us in possession of that, which we want to be possessed of in God, or that we need no more divine assistance to recover what we have lost of God, than to obtain a pardon from a prince; or that God need communicate no more of himself to us in our salvation, than a prince communicates of himself to his pardoned subject, has all the mistakes, error and ignorance of God that is in idolatry, when it takes God to be something that he is not; and has all the false devotion that is in idolatry, when it puts the same trust in, and expects the same help from its own powers and faculties, which idolaters did in and from their idols.

Therefore your religion of reason, which you esteem as the modern refinement of an human mind, and more excellent and rational than the faith and humility of the gospel, has all the dregs of the heathen idolatry in it, and has changed nothing in idolatry, but the idol; but has the same mistakes of the nature of God, and of the manner in which he is our God, and our good, as those idolaters had; and only differs from them in such a degree of philosophy, as the religion of worshipping the sun differs from the religion of worshipping an onion.

And if you expect that divine assistance from your reason, which one did from the sun, and another from an onion; ye are all equally idolaters, though ye may not be equally philosophers.

For as soon as it is known and confessed, that God is all in all, that in him we live, move, and have our being; that we can have nothing separately or



out of him, but everything in him; that we can have no being, nor any degree of being, nor any degree of good but in him; and that he can give us nothing but himself, nor any degree of salvation, but in such a degree as he communicates something more of himself; as soon as this is known, then it is known with the utmost evidence, that to put our trust in the sun, an onion, or our own reason, if not equally absurd, is yet equally idolatrous, and equally prejudicial to our salvation.

This I think, my friend, may sufficiently show you both the nature and danger of your religion of reason; and that it can no more supply the needs and necessities of your soul, than an idol can save them that worshipped it; that in this respect it has the insignificancy of an idol, the vanity of an idol, and the sin of an idol; that it is that same self-confidence, self-acquiescence, that same refusal of a savior and all divine assistance, that keeps lost spirits the prisoners of hell. Could they touch the spirit of the gospel, their freedom would be begun; and because they will not, cannot depart in the smallest tittle from your religion of natural strength, their chains are unmovable.

For no soul can be lost, that can truly humble itself before God, and apply to his mercy to be helped, saved, and redeemed in such a manner as it shall please him. Let it be hid, or buried, or imprisoned where it will, hell and earth, death and darkness, and everything must give way to the soul thus converted to God, that has no confidence in itself, that sees nothing of its own but sin, and that desires and calls upon God to save it by some miracle of his own mercy and goodness. By this sensibility of the want of a savior, and by this humble conversion and application to God for him, all chains are broken off, all wounds are healed, and the soul must infallibly find, if it thus continues to seek, its salvation in the unknown depths and riches of the divine mercy.

On the other hand, no soul, however refined and speculative, however lofty and aspiring in its imaginations, spiritual in its conceptions, or deep in its penetration, can possibly be saved, that trusts in its own strength and ability, and will have no other savior or redeemer, but its own natural reason and faculties.

The whole universe has not two truths of greater certainty than these. And yet if they are truths, and truths of the utmost certainty, then the absolute necessity of the gospel salvation, and utter impossibility of being saved by your religion of reason, has its final decision.

Further, that principle of life, or light of the mind, which I have said that every man receives from Jesus Christ, as the beginning of his salvation, is entirely different from your magnified light of reason, as that signifies a faculty of viewing the relations of the ideas of things, and drawing consequences from them. For that light I speak of, is goodness itself, a seed or degree of so much of the heavenly life in the soul; but this faculty of speculating and reasoning has nothing of the nature of goodness or religion; it has not so much as the shadow of it, and is in its own nature as foreign from religion, when it is speculating upon it, as when it is speculating upon anything else. Just as our faculty of seeing has no more of goodness, or the nature of an angel in it, when it sees the picture of an angel, than when it sees the picture of a beast.

And as a blind man has no more light in him, when he reasons about light and colors, than when he discourses about weights and measures; so this ratiocination, or reasoning of the mind, has no more of religion in it, when it speculates its ideas of God, goodness and morality, than when it speculates its ideas of trees and houses.

And the reason is plain, because this faculty of speculating and arguing, is only the activity of the mind upon its own images and ideas, and is only the same bare activity, whatever the images be that exercise it; it has nothing of the nature of the images that it views, nor gets the nature of them, because it views them; as it does not become dark when it considers the nature, causes, and effects of darkness, nor becomes light when it reasons about it; so neither is it religion, nor gets anything of the nature of religion, when it is wholly taken up in making descriptions and definitions of it.

If the needle touched with the loadstone was an intelligent being, it could reason and make definitions of itself, of attraction, and of the loadstone; but it would be easy to see, that the attraction of the needle, or the virtue of the loadstone that was left in it, was something in its whole nature

really different from this reasoning about it; and that this reasoning and defining had no relation to this attraction, nor would ever be the more like it, for its reasoning upon it, though it continued ever so long, or improved ever so much in its descriptions of it, but would always be at the same distance from it, and could have nothing of its nature in it. But now if this reasoning faculty in the needle should pretend, that the needle need not be drawn by an inward attraction, that it need not be unfix'd, or delivered from any outward impediments of its turning to the loadstone, because this reasoning faculty was its true and proper attraction, being full of ideas and definitions of it; you would then have a plain example of your practice, in taking natural reason to be true religion, and to have the nature and power of something that carries the soul to God.

For this instance is a clear explication of the whole matter; for that which I have called the first redemption of Christ in the soul, a seed of life, an instinct of good, a stirring of conscience, an attraction to God, is that to the soul, which attraction is to the needle that is touched, and is as different from your religion of reason, as a reasoning faculty in the needle would be different from its attraction, and never could be attraction, or have the nature of it.

If the needle loses its attraction, its communication with the loadstone is at an end; and though it reasons never so long about it, it is still at the same distance from it. So if the soul loses its instinct of goodness, its seed of a divine life, its attraction to God, all its reasonings and definitions about God and goodness are of no use to carry it to God, but it must lie in an absolute state of separation from him, if its attraction, its inward tendency to God, is lost.

And let me tell you, my dear friend, for so I must call you and think of you, that there is much more in this instance than you imagine. For all is magnetism, all is sentiment, instinct, and attraction, and the freedom of the will has the government of it. There is nothing in the universe but magnetism, and the impediments of it. For as all things come from God, and all things have something of God and goodness in them, so all things have magnetical effects and instincts both towards God and one another. This is the life, the force, the power, the nature of everything, and hence everything has all that is really good or evil in it; reason stands only as a

busybody, as an idle spectator of all this, and has only an imaginary power over it.

We discover this magnetism in some things, where it breaks out sensibly; but it is everywhere, for the same reason that it is anywhere, though we are too busy with the fictions of our own minds to see it, or too much employed in such things as resist and suppress its force.

But because this magnetism is a secret life, that wants to increase its strength before it can sensibly show its power; and because we have an activity of reason within us, that is soon in action, and concerns itself with everything, and takes all upon it, as if it did all; because it can look at all, and dispute about all, therefore it is, that this magnetism, or instinct towards God and goodness, has much difficulty to show itself sufficiently, and only stirs now and then within us, or when sickness, distress, or some great outward shock has so dashed in pieces all images of reason, and stopped the activity of our minds, that this secret power of the soul has liberty to awake in it.

This is that trumpet of God which will raise and separate the dead, and then all impediments being removed, everything will take its place not according to the images and ideas it has here played with, but according to the inward tendency and attraction of its nature, and heaven and hell will each take its own.

And even whilst we are in this life, this magnetism is the mark within us, to what part we belong; and that which has its attraction in us, has the right to us, and power over us, though for a while flesh and blood, and the nature of our temporal state, hinders this from being visibly and sensibly known.

Nothing however is more plain, than that our goodness bears no proportion to our intellectual abilities of reason; everyone sees this, and yet no more than this need be seen, to give us the fullest demonstration, that natural reason has no connection with virtue and goodness, and therefore surely can have no connection with our salvation, or be the proper cause of it.

Hence we see, that learned, acute, rational philosophers are often atheists; and those that can demonstrate the foundation of virtue, and paint every office of it, are rakes and debauchees, and will sell every appearance of practical virtue for a salary of so much a year; whilst those that seem to have little of intellectual accomplishments, are virtuous and honest, have a taste and relish for every practical virtue.

The natural love or affection of relations, bears no proportion to our rational abilities to speak or write of them. A parent that is of too refined an understanding to content himself with the morals of the gospel, or its low way of making men good, and that wants to be entertained with a virtue of more mathematical exactness, is often content with the demonstration, and so remains deficient in the plainest duties of domestic affection: when the poor laborer or mechanic, that knows not what you mean by a definition, has all the solid love and affection that becomes a good relation. All this, and much more, which you and everyone may think for himself of the same kind, is something entirely distinct from our natural faculties of reason and speculation.

And therefore, when you place the power of your salvation in your intellectual light, or the strength of your own reason, you place it in your weakest part, in the poorest, most trifling and insignificant thing that belongs to you, and upon that which has the least effect in human life.

The only good that reason can do to you, is to remove the impediments of virtue, and to give room to that inward instinct or attraction to God and goodness to display itself; that the inmost spirit of your mind may receive its strength and assistance from the Spirit of God, from which, as the needle from the loadstone, it has all its instinct of goodness and tendency towards God.

For this inward instinct of goodness, or life of God in the soul, is all the real and living goodness that is in you, and is as different and distinct from natural reason, as the light, and heat, and power and virtue of the sun, is different from a picture of it upon a piece of canvas, and has as different effects upon the mind.

For this light of bare reason, or the reasoning faculty of the mind, has no contrariety to the vices of the heart, it neither kills them, nor is killed by

them. As pride, vanity, hypocrisy, envy or malice, don't take away from the mind its geometrical skill; so a man may be most mathematical in his demonstrations of the religion of reason, when he has extinguished every good sentiment of his heart, and be the most zealous for its excellency and sufficiency, when he has his passions in the most disordered state.

But in that light of the heart, or attraction to God, which I have said is common to all mankind in and through Jesus Christ, all is contrary. As it is a gift and grace of God, so it is a real life, a living thing, a sentiment of the heart, and so far as it grows and increases in us, so far it destroys all that is bad and corrupt within us. It has the same contrariety to all vices of the heart, that light has to darkness, and must either suppress or be suppressed by them.

Now when I speak of this light, or instinct of the heart, or attraction to God, I have not only the authority of scripture, but every man's own experience on my side; that distinction between the head and the heart, which everyone knows how to make, plainly declares for all I have said. It shows that the state, and manner, and tendency of our heart, is all that is good within us; and that the reasonings and speculations of the head, are only an empty show and noise that is made in the outside of us.

For that which we mean by the heart, plainly speaks thus much; it is a kind of life and motion within us, which everyone knows contains all that is good or bad in us; that we are that which our hearts are, let us talk, and reason, and dispute what we will about goodness and virtue; and that this state of our heart is as distinct from, and independent of all speculations of our reasoning faculties, as it is distinct from, and independent of all the languages in which a scholar can reason and speculate upon it. And if a man should say, that the excellency and sufficiency of natural religion consisted in knowing all the languages in which virtue, goodness and religion are expressed by different sounds and characters, he would have said as much truth, and as well grounded, as he who places the excellency and sufficiency of natural religion in the many arguments and demonstrations which reason can raise about it. For all reasoning and speculation stand on the outside of the heart, in the same superficial manner as all languages do.

For our heart is our manner of existence, or the state in which we feel ourselves to be; it is an inward life, a vital sensibility, which contains our manner of feeling what and how we are; it is the state of our desires and tendencies, of inwardly seeing, hearing, tasting, relishing and feeling that which passes within us: it is that to us inwardly with regard to ourselves, which our senses of seeing, hearing, feeling etc., are, with regard to things that are without, or external to us.

Now as reason is a poor, superficial, and insignificant thing with respect to our outward senses, unable to add anything to our hearing and seeing, etc., or to be the true power and life of them, by all its speculations and reasonings upon them; so it is much more a poor, and superficial, and insignificant thing with respect to the inward sensibility of the heart, or its seeing, feeling, etc., and much more unable to add to, or amend the state of the heart, or become the life and power of its motions, by its arguing about them.

And therefore, to seek for the religion or perfection of the heart in the power of our reason, is more groundless and absurd, and against the nature of things, than to seek for the perfection and strength of our senses in the power of our reason.

Now I appeal to every man in the world for the truth of all this; for every man has the fullest inward conviction, that his heart is not his reason, nor his reason his heart, but that the one is as different from the other in its whole nature, as pain, and joy, and desire, are different from definitions of them; and that as a thousand definitions of joy and desire, will not become that desire and joy itself; so a thousand definitions of religion will not become religion itself, but be always in the same state of distance from it; and that all reasoning and speculations upon religion, are at the same state of distance from the nature and power of religion, as speculations upon our passions are from the nature and power of them.

You know, not by hearsay, reasoning, or books, but by an inward sentiment, that your reason can be very nicely religious, very strict in its descriptions of goodness, at the same time that the heart is a mere libertine, sunk into the very dregs of corruption: on the other hand, you know, that when your reason is debauched with arguments, is contending

for profaneness, and seems full of proof that piety is superstition, your heart at the same time has a virtue in it, that secretly dissents from all that you say.

Now all this proof that the state of reason is not the state of your heart, is the same proof that reason is not the power or strength of our religion, because what our heart is, that is our religion; what belongs to our heart, that belongs to our religion; which never had nor can have any other nature, power, or perfection, than that which is the nature, power, and perfection of our heart.

You are forced to know and feel, whether you will or no, that God has a certain secret power within you, which is watching every opportunity of saying something to you, either of yourself, the vanity of the world, or the guilt and consequences of sin.

This is that instinct of goodness, attraction of God, or witness of himself in the soul of every man, which without arguments and reasonings rises up in the soul, and would be doing some good to it, if not quenched and resisted by the noise and hurry either of pleasures or business.

And this is everyone's natural religion, or call to God and goodness, which is faithful to every man, and is the only foundation of all the virtue and goodness that shall be brought forth in him. And the least stirring of this inward principle, or power of life, is of more value than all the activity of our reason, which is only as it were a painter of dead images, which leave the heart in the same state of death, and emptiness of all goodness in which they find it.

Therefore, my dear friend, know the place of your religion, turn inwards, listen to the voice of grace, the instinct of God that speaks and moves within you; and instead of forming dead and lifeless images, let your heart pray to God, that all that is good and holy in him, may touch, and stir, and revive all that is capable of goodness and holiness in you. Your heart wants nothing but God, and nothing but your heart can receive him. This is the only place and seat of religion, and of all communication between God and you.



We are apt to consider conscience only as some working of our heart, that checks us, and so we are rather afraid, than fond of it. But if we looked upon it as it really is, so much of God within us, revealing himself within us, so much of a heavenly life, that is striving to raise us from the dead, we should love and adhere to it, as our happy guide to heaven.

For this reason, I have called this spark of life, or instinct of goodness, our inward redeemer; not only because it is the only thing within, that helps forward our salvation, but also because it is the first beginning of Christ's redemption in the souls of all men, by his becoming the atonement for all.

And as it is the first step of Christ's redemption in the soul, and that which became their capacity of salvation; so the progress of their redemption consists in the increase and growth of this first seed of life, till the new man be wholly raised up by it.

Lastly, another real difference between this instinct of goodness, or piety of the heart, and your religion of reason, is this, that natural reason in itself is incapable of Jesus Christ; it cannot comprehend him, it is at enmity with him, and sets itself up against him. For it feels no want of a savior, and therefore is unwilling to receive one. Or if it were to admit of a savior, it must be only such a one as came to increase the number of its images and ideas, or to help it to be more active and artful in the ranging, dividing and distinguishing them. And for this reason it is, that a book of ideas and distinctions is more valued by some people, than all the salvation that is offered in the gospel.

But this natural religion or instinct of goodness, of which I have spoken, as God's free gift to all men in Jesus Christ, has that natural fitness for the receiving of Christ, as the eye has for receiving the light; it wants him, it desires him, it is for him, it knows him, it rejoices in him, as the eye wants, desires, knows, and rejoices in him, as the eye wants, desires, knows, and rejoices in the light. And of this natural religion, or religion of the heart, does our savior plainly speak, when he saith, "He that is of God heareth God's Word," and again, "My sheep hear my voice." Therefore this instinct of goodness, or piety of the heart, though it is God's gift to man before his hearing the outward word, is yet a certain preparation for it; and if it be brought forth in us, is a never-failing fitness to receive it. Therefore

he that has this natural religion of the heart, of which I have spoken, has the greatest fitness to receive the gospel, he is so of God, that he heareth God's Word, such a sheep of Christ as knoweth his voice. And therefore the receiving, or not receiving the gospel, is the greatest of all demonstrations, whether a man hath, or hath not that right religion that is antecedent to it.

Natural religion, when rightly understood, is a real thing, and of the same truth as revealed religion. But the mistake lies here, in our taking natural religion to be the work or effect of natural reason; whereas reason, or our faculty of reasoning upon our ideas, is not a part of natural or revealed religion, but only a bare spectator of its own images of natural and revealed religion, just as it is not a part of our hearing and seeing; nor can come any nearer to them, than as it is a bare spectator of its own images of them.

All men, by virtue of God's first pardon to Adam, are put into a state of salvation; and as this state, though it is the free gift of God, is common to all men, as men, or born of Adam; so it may in a good sense be called their natural state, and the religion of this state, their natural religion.

Now the question is, What is the natural religion of this state? It is that which his state and condition speaks to him. Now his condition and state in the world plainly speaks thus much to him, that he is a sinner, and yet in a state of favor with God, or in a possibility of being accepted of him. Every man's nature teaches him thus much, with the same certainty that it teaches him, that he is weak and mortal. That he is a sinner, and at the same time an object of divine mercy, are things that are made known to him, not by arguments or speculation, but by his own being what he is.

Therefore the whole of natural religion consists in a man's following this voice of nature, and acting conformably to it; in acknowledging the sinfulness of his state, and in imploring and relying upon the divine mercy to be delivered from it. This is the whole truth of natural religion; an humble penitent sense of sin, and an humble faith and trust in the mercy of God to be delivered from it; though it is not known by what name to call that deliverance, or what kind of savior is wanted to effect it. But he that thus according to the direction of his natural state lives before God, in penitence, and in faith in his mercy, is sure of having the benefit of all the

mercy of God, though he does not know the method, or the means, by which the mercy of God will save him.

So that true, natural religion and revealed religion agree in these two great and essential points, that man is in a state of sin, and yet in a state of acceptance with God through his mercy; therefore the piety of the one, is the piety of the other, viz., a penitent sense of sin, and a humble faith and trust in God to be delivered from it by his mercy.

And here you may again see, why this natural religion is to be considered, not as a matter of reason, but as an instinct of goodness, or piety of the heart; because it is nothing else but so much goodness, not in idea, but in the very inward essence of the soul, as distinguishes and preserves it both from beasts and fallen spirits.

Had a man no sense of shame for his sins, he would be in the very state of the beasts; had he no faith and hope in the mercy of God, he would be in the state of the devils. Therefore that internal sentiment of heart, that instinct of goodness, is his only true religion of nature, because it is thus the preservation of his nature, and the saving him from being like to beasts and fallen spirits.

Reason therefore, as it is a faculty of speculating and comparing ideas, has no more share in this religion of nature, than it has a share in our natural powers of hearing and seeing; and as it can only in a little way, and in certain circumstances, do some outward service to these senses, so it can only in the same little and low way help and assist this religion of nature by some outward services.

And as this instinct of goodness, or inward sentiment of the heart, is that alone which preserves our nature, and therefore is alone the true religion, or salvation of nature; so the whole of all revealed religion is to improve this true religion of nature in its two essential parts, penitence for sin, and faith and trust in the mercy of God. For all revealed religion has only this end, it teaches nothing, intends nothing, but to give us more reasons for penitence, and more reasons for faith and trust in the mercy of God.

And therefore it was that I said, this instinct of good, or true religion of nature, is the very preparation of the heart for the reception of the gospel.

For so much as there is of this penitence and faith living in the soul, so much it has of eyes to see, of ears to hear, and of a heart to understand all the truths of divine revelation. The humility and penitence of the gospel, the mercies of God in and through Jesus Christ, are as agreeable to a man in this state of heart, as food and water to the hungry and thirsty soul. The gospel presents everything to him that he wants; and God is thereby become all that to him, which the miserable state of his soul stood in need of. And so when he finds the gospel, he finds the pearl, for which he gladly sells all that he hath.

Therefore a man can have no greater proof that the religion of nature is suppressed in him, that he has not the religion of penitence and faith, than by his refusal of the gospel; for the gospel as naturally agrees with such a state of heart, as light mixes with light, and darkness with darkness.

Lay the cause of infidelity where you will, it is a certain truth, that it lies only in this insensibility of heart, in this extinction of the religion of nature. And if the least sentiment of penitence arises in your heart, or a sensibility of the need of divine mercy, the gospel has got so far an entrance into you, and it cannot lose its hold of you, but by your losing this state of heart.

Let your reason pretend what it will, and fancy it has ever so many objections of speculation and argument against the gospel, they are all objections of the heart. For the gospel speaks only to the heart, and nothing but the heart can either receive or reject it. For this is an eternal truth, which you cannot too much reflect upon, that reason always follows the state of the heart, and what your heart is, that is your reason. If your heart is full of sentiments of penitence, and of faith in the divine mercy, your reason will take part with your heart, and will entertain itself with all arguments, ideas, and discourses, that can exercise this religion of the heart.

But if your heart is shut up in death and dryness, your reason will be according to it, a poor quibbler in words, and dead images, and will delight in nothing but such dry objections and speculations as answer to the deadness and insensibility of your heart.

So what you imagine, of your having a religion of pure reason, is the merest fiction of deceit that can be imposed upon you; for reason has nothing of its own, it acts nothing of itself, it barely reflects that which comes from the heart, as the servant of the heart, and must act or not act in obedience to it; what the heart loves, that reason contends for; and what the heart has no inclination to, that reason objects against. Therefore there neither is, nor was, nor ever can be any other religion but the religion of the heart, and reason is only its servant, in the same manner, and in the same degree, whatever the religion of the heart be, whether true or false.

And to imagine that natural religion is the effect of pure reason and speculation, is as great an error against the nature of things, and more hurtful to you, than to imagine that natural hearing and seeing is the effect of reason and speculation.

Natural religion, if you understand it rightly, is a most excellent thing, it is a right sentiment of heart, it is so much goodness in the heart, it is its sensibility both of its separation from, and its relation to God; and therefore it shows itself in nothing but in a penitential sentiment of the weight of its sins, and in an humble recourse by faith to the mercy of God. Call but this the religion of nature, and then the more you esteem it, the better; for you cannot wish well to it, without bringing it to the gospel state of perfection.

For the religion of the gospel is this religion of penitence, and faith in the mercy of God, brought forth into its full perfection. For the gospel calls you to nothing, but to know, and understand, and practice a full and real penitence, and to know by faith, such heights and depths of the divine mercy towards you, as the religion of nature had only some little uncertain glimmerings of. Therefore there is the same agreement, and the same difference between the true religion of nature, and the religion of the gospel, that there is between the breaking of the day, and the rising of the sun to its meridian height; the one is the beginning, and the other is the perfection of the same thing. And as the light of the daybreak, and the light of the noonday, are both the same light, and from the same producer of light; so the light of the religion of nature, and the light of the gospel, are the same light, and from the same producer of light in the mind.

If you only stood for some time in the first break of day, sensible of the misery of darkness, and only feeling some hope and expectation of the light, yet knowing nothing of that globe of fire that afterwards was to appear, and bless you with so many unknown and unhopd for joys and comforts of the noonday light, you would then resemble one standing for some time in the daybreak of natural religion, sensible of the weight of his sins, and only hoping in God for some kind of mercy towards him; yet knowing nothing of that globe of fire, that mystery of divine love that was by degrees to discover itself, and bless him with so many unknown, unhopd-for joys and comforts of the divine mercy towards him.

The original instinct of goodness in the soul, which I have shown to be the only religion of nature, is the light of daybreak in the soul, and is that light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world. The light of the gospel is that noonday light, which discovers such joys and comforts as no one could have thought of, that had only stood in the break of day.

And as no one, when the day arises, can reject or dispute the coming or goodness of the rising sun, but because he has lost that sense which was to distinguish light from darkness; so no one can reject or dislike, or dispute against the light of the gospel, but he that has extinguished that instinct of goodness in his soul, which alone can distinguish good from evil, and make him love the one, and reject the other.

Don't therefore, my dear friend, deceive yourself, nor let anyone else deceive you. The matter is of infinite consequence that you have before you. You come into the world but once, and have but one trial, but the effects of it are to last for ever. The time of disputing and speculating upon ideas is short; it can last no longer than whilst the sun of this world can refresh your flesh and blood, and so keep the soul from knowing its own depth, or what has been growing in it. But when this is over, then you must know and feel what it is to have a nature as deep, and strong, and large as eternity.

If you have lived upon the amusements of reason and speculation, your life has been worse than a dream, and your soul will, at the end of such a life, be left to itself in its own darkness, hunger, thirst, and anxiety, to be for ever devoured by its own fire. But if you have watched over that

instinct of goodness which God planted in your soul, and have exercised yourself in that penitence for your sins, and humble faith in the mercy of God, that the gospel proposes to you; then when your body falls off from you, you will feel and know what a kingdom of God lay hid in your soul, you will see that you have a life and strength like that of eternity, and the fullness of God himself will be your everlasting enjoyment.

For heaven and hell stand ready to awake and be revealed in you, and can no longer be hid from you, than whilst you are under the cover of flesh and blood. And then will be fully verified in you that saying of scripture, “he that seeketh findeth”: for you will find that which you have sought, and according to your faith, so will it eternally be done unto you. Your soul will have nothing taken from it, but it will have all that good which you sought after, and provided for it. You chose to be saved only by the powers of your own reason, and refused the mercy of God that was to have saved you, and therefore you will have that very salvation you have chosen, you will be entirely without the mercy of God, and left wholly to your own nature: and that salvation is the misery of hell.

You are now your own carver, and must be that which you shall have made of yourself. If the depth of your heart has not in this lifetime its proper cure; if it has not something done to it, which your reason can no more do, than it can create the light, your heart will become your hell. And if you let the light of the gospel shine into it, and revive the good seed of life in it, then it will become the seat and habitation of your heaven.

You may perhaps imagine, that because you practice sobriety and justice, and are a friend to moral behavior, both in yourself and other people, that therefore your disbelief of the gospel cannot proceed from the disorder of your heart, or a want of piety. But this, sir, is all mistake. For you may have all this moral behavior, and yet have nothing at all of that sentiment of penitence, and faith in the divine mercy, which I have shown to be the only true religion of nature. It is as easy to have all this kind of goodness which you appeal to, as it is to be civil, well-bred, and a friend to the peace and order of that society of which one is a member. Even an atheist may find his ends, and act suitably to his own principles of self-love, ease and reputation, by this moral behavior.

But the preaching of the gospel discovers all, and shows from what principle all this morality proceeds. If there was this sentiment of penitence and faith in the mercy of God at the bottom, then this morality would want and rejoice at the precepts and doctrines of the gospel, because they raise a morality built upon the foundation of penitence and faith. But when this morality is only a worldly wisdom, a convenience of life, a political conformity, and as mere a gratification of selfishness, as any other worldly accomplishments are, then this morality is in the greatest enmity with the gospel, because the gospel takes away its worth, and all the self-accomplishment that was placed in it.

Therefore it is not the mere moral man that has that goodness of the heart, that is a qualification to receive the gospel: for an atheist may be such a moral man; but it is he, whose heart is in a state of penitence for his sins, and humbly looking to the mercy of God to be some way or other delivered from them.

This is the only foundation of a religious morality, and this is that state of heart which must be wanting in every moralist that refuses the gospel.

Hence therefore it is plain, that you may have a great deal of morality in your behavior, and yet nothing of the religion of nature in your heart, and so be entirely unqualified to receive the gospel, because of the disorder of your heart. For the morality of an unreformed heart, adds no more goodness to it, than whited sepulchers do to the rottenness of dead men's bones.

What I say I say not to reproach you, but from a sincere desire of doing you all the good that I can. For I have too much experience myself of the weakness and mistakes of human nature, to reproach any degree of them in other people. But if you will take in good part what is well meant, I hope you will find that I have been your friend in discovering the bottom of your disorder.

But it may be you will say, you would believe the gospel if you could, but that its evidence cannot have that effect upon your mind. You may say also, the gospel is a matter of fact; you must examine into the truth of it, as you do into the truth of other matters of history; and as both the internal and external evidence of the gospel is much defended and opposed



by learned men, its evidence is so perplexed, and made a matter of such laborious and intricate inquiry, that your mind cannot come at any certainty of what you ought to believe concerning the truth of it.

I will therefore propose to you the shortest, and at the same time the surest of all methods, and such as you shall either be obliged to acquiesce in as sufficient, or to own that you have suppressed that instinct of goodness within you, which I have shown to be the original birthright of all mankind, and to be the only state of heart that saves us from being a mere mixture of the beasts and the devils.

I don't recommend to you to lay aside prejudice, and begin again the controversy from the bottom, and read all on both sides with all the impartiality you can. I would as soon send you on a pilgrimage, to be a penitent, as propose to you this travel to be a Christian. The truth of the gospel lies much nearer to us than we imagine, and we only dispute and wrangle ourselves into a distance from it.

Do you think that you need many books to show you that you are a sinner, that you have the disorder of almost all the beasts within you; that you have besides this, such passions and tempers of pride, envy, selfishness and malice, as would make you shun the sight of other people, if they could see all that passes within you? Need any learning instruct you, that at the same time that you have all these disorders, both of the beasts and evil spirits within you, you have a great desire to seem to be without them, and are affecting continually to have, and appear in those very virtues which you feel the want of? When you are full of hatred and envy, you affect to be thought good and good-natured, when proud, to appear as humble.

Now I desire you to know no books, but this book of your own heart, nor to be well read in any controversy but in that which passes within you, in order to know the gospel to be the greatest of all truths, and the infallible voice of God speaking the way of salvation to you. No echo answers to the voice that raises it, so certainly and agreeably as the voice of nature or the state of your own heart answers to that which the gospel preaches unto you. And this I will show you to be the shortest and surest of all methods to discover the truth of the gospel.

The gospel is built on these two pillars, first, that you are a fallen: secondly, that you are a redeemed creature. Now every man's own soul, and what daily passes within him, speaks these two great truths to him, with a conviction and sensibility that cannot be avoided.

You have seen, and you feel, and know that you are a sinner, that you have the disorders of the beasts, and the depravity of evil spirits within you. Is not this saying to you, not in the sound of words, but by the frame and voice of your nature, that you are a fallen creature, and not in that state in which a good being must have created you? For I appeal to yourself, in your own degree of goodness, if you could create your own children, whether you would not create them in a better state, and with less evil, both of the beast and the devil, in them, than that in which you were born yourself?

Therefore, only supposing God to have your degree of goodness, he could not have created the first man, from whom your nature is derived, in the state that you are; and therefore supposing him only to be good, you have a sufficient proof; but supposing him to be infinitely good, or goodness itself, you have an infallible demonstration written in the frame of your nature, that you are a fallen creature, or not in that state in which God created you.

Again, do you want any learning, or books, or reasoning, to show you, that every man, as well as yourself, affects to appear virtuous, to have good qualities, and is ashamed of every beastly and diabolical disorder; and would seem to have virtues and goodness that he has not, because of an innate love that he has for them, and from a sense of their being proper for him? And is not this saying again with the same fullness of certainty, that you are a redeemed creature, that there is in you an inward redeemer, a light of the mind, a seed of goodness, an instinct to virtue, given you by God, though without revelation you don't know when nor how?

And is not this such an evidence of the truth of the Christian religion, and of its fitness to save your soul, as not only needs not the assistance of foreign books and learning, but is also sufficient to support itself against all the books and learning in the world that should oppose it? Can any echo answer better to the voice that raises it, than the voice of your nature

answers to the sound of the gospel? And do you not hereby plainly see, that you stand nearer to the truth of the Christian religion, than you do to anything else? It is only the description of that which passes within you. It is the book of yourself, it talks of nothing out of you, it speaks but that which is written within you, and therefore you have a sufficient help to understand it. To look for outward testimonies, is like looking for yourself abroad; turn but your eyes inward, and you have no need of miracles to show you, that Jesus Christ came from that God that made you, and that he teaches you the only way to find that perfection and happiness for which he made you.

What can the gospel say to you of the fall of man, that your heart does not feel to be true? What can it say to you of your redemption, that is not at the same time said to you by the state of your own soul?

For if you were not fallen, how could you labor under so much corruption? A sinful creature cannot come from God in its sinful state. And, on the other hand, if you were not redeemed, how could you feel a dislike of sin, an inclination to goodness, and a desire of appearing virtuous? For what else is this desire of goodness, but a certain inward principle that has begun your redemption, and is trying to carry it on?

Now the Christian religion says nothing to you; it has not one doctrine, or practice, or institution, but what has its immediate relation to these two great truths, and is, for the sake of them, either to convince you of your fall, or to assist your redemption.

Now if a revelation from God had only told you, that you had a mixture of evil and good in you, could you have any doubt about the truth of such a revelation? Or if it told you that the evil came from the fault of your first parents, and the good was God's free gift to you at their fall, that the evil might be resisted and suppressed; if it told you, that God had a desire, and a design in the depths of his mercy, to assist the good that was in you, that it might conquer and put an entire end to all the evil of your nature, would you ask for proofs of the goodness of such a revelation, or of its being worthy of God, and suitable to your own needs?

Now the Christian religion is this revelation. It tells you only this great truth, that you are fallen and redeemed, that is, that you have a mixture of

evil and good in you; it tells you that God, as early as the fall, redeemed you, when the seed of the woman became the enemy of the serpent; that is, as soon as the evil came into you, he of his free gift put a good power into you to withstand it; it tells you, that from the beginning of the world, it has been God's gracious desire and design in and by Jesus Christ to render your redemption effectual, that is, to make the good that is in you perfectly overcome all your evil.

Complain therefore no more of want of evidence; neither books, nor study, nor learning is wanted; the gospel is within you, and you are its evidence; it is preached into you in your own bosom, and everything within you is a proof of the truth of it.

Ask how you shall know there is such a thing as day and night; for the fall and redemption are as manifest within you, as day and night are manifest without you.

Here, sir, in this intimate and true knowledge of yourself lies the most precious evidence of the gospel, and is as near to you, as you are to yourself; because all that is said and declared, and recorded in the gospel, is only a plain record of that which is said and done, and doing in yourself.

And when you once feel it thus proved to you, by its agreement with the state of your own nature, then it becomes a pearl that is dearer to you than your life; and what is best, it is then a pearl which no one can rob you of. You are then in such assurance and possession of the power and goodness of Christ, as those blind men were, whose eyes he had opened to see the light.

Then all the wrangle and dispute of learned men against the truth of the gospel, will signify no more to you, nor raise any more doubt in you, than if by history and criticism they would prove, that you never had any benefit from the light of the sun.

If you go only outwardly to work, and seek only for an outward proof of the truth of the gospel, you can only know it by such labors, and in such uncertainty as you know other matters of history, and must be always balancing what is said for, and against it. And if you come to believe it this way, your faith will be held by an uncertain tenure, you will be alarmed at

every new attack, and frightened at every new enemy that pretends to lessen the evidence of the gospel.

But these, sir, are difficulties that we make to ourselves, by neglecting the proper evidence of the gospel, and choosing only to know it, as we know other histories that have no relation to us, or connection with our own state.

The gospel is not a history of something that was done and past 1700 years ago, or of a redemption that was then present, and only to be transmitted to posterity as a matter of history; but it is the declaration of a redeemer, and a redeeming power that is always in its redeeming state, and equally present to every man.

We all stand as near to the reasons and motives for receiving the gospel, as they did to whom it was first preached. No one then did, or could receive Jesus Christ when he was on earth, but for the same reasons, that the sick, the lame, and the blind, sought to him to be cured, namely, because they felt their infirmities, and wanted to be relieved from them. But if this state of heart, or their insensibility of their condition, of what they were, and what they wanted, was then the only possible reason they could have for receiving Christ; then it follows, that every man of every age, has all the reasons for receiving or not receiving the gospel within himself, and stands just as near to and just as far from the evidence of it, as those did who first heard it.

If you know of no burden or weight of sin, nor want any assistance to overcome it, the gospel has no evidence for you; and though you had stood by our savior, you had been never the nearer to it. But if you know your state, as the sick, the lame, and the blind knew their state; if you groan under the power of sin, and are looking towards God for some assistance to overcome it, then you have all the reasons for receiving the gospel written in your heart, and you stand as near all its proper evidence, whether you were born the last age, or 1700 years ago.

Now if you don't know and feel, that the gospel has this foundation in you, that you have that fall and redemption in you that it teaches, then all external evidence of it can be of no use to you, because you are not the person that wants such a salvation.

But if you know that these two things are written in the frame of your nature, that evil and good, or the fall and the redemption, are at strife within you, and that you want some divine assistance to help you to overcome the evil that is in you; then the gospel needs no external evidence, because your heart is a witness of all the truth of it. For you are then only doing that in a lower degree, which the gospel teaches and enables you to do in a more perfect and prevailing manner.

Further, if you have only that instinct of goodness in you, which I have shown to be the only religion of nature; if you have a desire to act suitably to this state of your heart, this struggle of evil and good that is in you, and are weary of your sins, and desirous to be delivered from them, then you are fully prepared to love, admire, and receive all the precepts of the gospel, because they have no end, but to do that which you want and desire to have done in you; that is, to suppress the power of evil in you, to destroy the old man, or the first life of your corrupt nature, and to raise the new man, or principle of goodness that is in you, to its full state of strength and perfection.

And here you have the shortest and surest of all methods, to find both the truth and excellency, and necessity of the gospel method of salvation.

I put no labor or deep inquiry upon your hands; I desire you only to know, what you cannot help knowing, that you have good and evil alive, and at work in you. For this is the whole of the fall of Adam, and of the redemption of Jesus Christ. Say that you have no evil in you, and I will not desire you to believe the fall of Adam. Say that you have no sense of goodness in you, and I will not desire you to acknowledge the redemption through Jesus Christ. But if neither of these can be denied to be in you, if your own heart confesses these two things; how can you want a proof of the truth of that religion, which only tells you that which your own heart is a witness of?

Again, say that you have no instinct of goodness in you, that you have no dislike of the corruption of your nature, nor the smallest desire to be free from it, and then I will excuse your ignorance of the truth and fitness of the precepts of the gospel.

But if you will but own so much of natural religion, as to be at all troubled at your sins, or but secretly wish that God would some way or other help you to get the better of them; then you are under a necessity of seeing and knowing that the precepts of the gospel are highly suited to the state of your soul, to assist this degree of natural religion in you, and to help you to that conquest over sin which you want.

So that from this plain and easy knowledge of yourself, you are absolutely obliged either to deny the most known state of your heart, and to deny that you have any degree, or desire of goodness in you; or to own the gospel to have everything in it, both as to doctrine and precept, that strictly answers to the state and necessities, and good inclinations of your heart.

And therefore the proof of the gospel is at no distance from you, requires no labor of learning, or search of history, but arises from the most obvious knowledge of yourself, what you are, and what you want. And you may have the utmost assurance, that you cannot hurt or deceive yourself in this short method that I have recommended. For if you cannot be hurt or deceived in believing yourself to be a sinner, and yet to be in a state that admits of the divine mercy to you, then you are sure that you cannot have any hurt or deceit put upon you by the gospel; because it is to do nothing to you, you are to receive nothing from it, but a confirmation of your penitence, and a strengthening your faith in the mercy of God.

Understand all the gospel in this manner, and then you understand it according to the truth, as it is in itself. For there is not a doctrine or precept of the gospel, but is given you for this end; to perfect your penitence, to show you all the grounds, and reasons, and extent of it, and to confirm, increase, and exercise your faith in the mercy of God, by such a discovery of God, and his goodness towards you, as without the gospel could not have been known.

So then, if you know the religion of nature, the religion of penitence and faith, to be a true and good religion; if the proof of the truth and goodness of this religion lies within you, then the proof of the truth and goodness of the gospel is in the same degree of nearness to you, and you cannot but

know it in the same manner and degree as you know yourself, what you are, and what you want.

Thus much may serve to convince my unbelieving reader, if I have such a one, whom I would fain lead to God, that I have said nothing in favor of a modern religion of reason; which I have shown to have the vanity, insignificancy, and sin of the ancient idolatry in it, and to be that very confidence in natural strength, and hardness of heart, which keeps fallen angels prisoners of darkness.

I must now say a word to the zealous Christian, who may perhaps imagine, from what I have said of that inward light, which is the gift of God to all men in Jesus Christ, that I have brought this light too near to the advantageous state of revealed religion, whether Jewish or Christian.

To such a one I say, first, that what I have said of this light of the mind, or instinct of goodness common to all men, is so much said of the light and benefit of divine revelation. Because this light of the mind, or instinct of goodness, is not something independent of, and antecedent to all divine revelation, but was the effect of God's revealing himself as reconciled to Adam through the seed of the woman. God's pardoning Adam as the head and representative of all mankind, and giving him a mediator and redeemer, was putting him into a state and capacity of being renewed in his mind; and this renewing power, which God then by pardoning him bestowed upon him, is that instinct of goodness, or light of the mind, of which I have spoken. And therefore all the possibility of religion, and all that is good in it, is to be ascribed to divine revelation.

Secondly, what I have said of this common light, or piety of the heart, is only to signify, that they have a possibility of such good dispositions as belong to those, of whom it is said, "He that is of God, heareth God's Word"; and of such as Christ spoke, when he said, "My sheep hear my voice."

Now if there were not a possibility or capacity of this degree of goodness in men, distinct from all outward revelation, how could mankind be fit for God to make a revelation to? For if men could not be in this state of goodness, so as to be prepared or qualified hearers of the Word of God, why should God speak to them? Or why should the voice of Christ be



sounded, if there were no sheep that could know it? Therefore what I have said of this light of men, is only so much said of their capacity to receive divine revelation; it is only a glimmering of light, a seed of goodness, a possibility of piety, which lies only in the soul, as the beginning of its salvation, and therefore is in great want of, and must be much benefited by further revelations from God.

I have not considered it as a species of religion that may trust in itself, or set up itself against divine revelation, as having no need of it. When it is thus, it is not the religion I speak of, it is so far from being then the light of Christ in the soul, or the instinct of goodness that it had from him, that it is the darkness and depravity of the heart, and the foundation of that hell which will be at last manifested in it.

Lastly, if my zealous Christian should find it a disagreeable thought to him, to think that all mankind have had some benefit from Christ, and that the seed of the woman from the beginning has helped, and will to the end of the world help and call every man to resist and make war against the serpent; I must tell him, he need have no greater proof than this, that his own heart is not yet truly Christian, that he is not a true disciple of that Lord who would have all men to be saved.

Having said this much to guard against all misapprehension, either by the unbeliever, or the Christian, I now return to my subject, concerning the benefits of Christ, as he is the savior of mankind.

Now this great truth that I have already declared, namely, that all mankind were pardoned and redeemed in Adam's pardon and redemption; that at the fall, Jesus Christ became the second Adam, or parent of all mankind, who from him received a principle or seed of life, an instinct of goodness, which was to be in every man a beginning of a new birth, a possibility of his salvation, or receiving a new man from this second Adam, in the same reality as he received a natural life from the first Adam; this great and glorious truth is of great importance when rightly known, and is the key to all the mysteries of scripture; it leads you into the fullness of the greatest truths, and disperses all difficulties.

This free gift of God to all men, in thus making all men partakers of Christ's redemption, by a seed of life, which all men, as men, receive from

Christ, is the true and solid meaning of that which is called preventing grace, and which, when rightly spoken of, is said to be common to all men. It is grace, because it is God's free gift; we could not lay hold of it by any power of our own, nor had any right to claim it. It is preventing grace, because it prevents, or goes before, and is not given us for anything that we have done. And therefore it has its plain distinction from God's assisting grace, which always is in proportion to the nature of our actions, and only works as they work. Hence there is a full end of all the wretched disputes of an abominable election and reprobation, and of other disputes concerning the grace of God.

For if all men, as sons of Adam, are by the free gift of God made sons of the second Adam, and, as such have a principle or seed of life in them from him, in order to be raised up to a perfection of the new man in Jesus Christ; and if this seed of life, or instinct of goodness, or light of the mind, is the general preventing grace of all men, that enables them so to act as to obtain God's assisting grace in the renewal of their minds; then you must easily see, that all men have a general call and a general capacity to obtain their salvation, and that the doctrine of particular absolute election and reprobation is plucked up by the roots, and most of the difficulties of God's dispensation fairly solved. But this is by the by.

Now you must have observed that this general grace, or redemption, of life given to all men in Christ as their second Adam, is not done only by an outward teaching, as when one teaches another the way of a new life, or by an outward adoption, as when a person takes a stranger to be his son; but by the communication of an essential seed or principle of life from the second Adam to all the sons of the first Adam. From which seed or principle of life, every son of Adam has Christ for his spiritual father and parent in the same reality, as he had the first Adam for his natural parent.

For this reason, the change that religion aims at, is constantly represented as a new birth, and our progress in religion as our progress in regeneration, or being born again. We are not called upon only to change our notions, or to receive such an alteration, as scholars may receive from their teachers, but to die to ourselves, that a new life may be raised up in us; or to suffer something to be revived in us that is not of our own growth, or any change that we can make upon ourselves.

Thus says our Lord, “Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” (John 3:5.) And to show that this new birth is to be understood according to the literal truth of the expression, there is added, “That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” Therefore the birth of the spirit is as real as the birth of the flesh, and Christ is a principle of life to us, as surely as we derive our flesh from Adam.

Again, “The first Adam was made a living soul, the last Adam was made a quickening Spirit.” (1 Corinthians 15:45) That is, the first Adam was made to be a fountain, or original, of a natural life to men, the second Adam was made a reviver or parent of a spiritual life in men. Therefore the spiritual life derived from the second Adam, is in the same degree of reality, as the natural life derived from the first Adam. The apostle adds, “The first is of the earth, earthy; the second is the Lord from heaven. And as is the earthy, such are they also that are earthy: and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly.”

Therefore those that are related to Christ, have his heavenly life and nature in them, in the same reality as those that are related to Adam have his earthy nature in them. “And as we have borne the image of the earthy, so we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.” Therefore, as we bear the image of the first Adam, by having his nature and life in us, derived, from him; so we can only bear the image of the second, by having his nature and life in us, derived from him.

So that it is an undoubted truth, that Christ is our second Adam, or a raiser of a new birth and life in us, in the same reality as we have our natural birth and life from Adam. Hence it is that you see so much mention in scripture of Christ’s being in us, formed in us, revealed in us, of our putting on Christ, of our receiving life from him, as the branches from the vine. Hence also so much mention of a new and old man that is in us, and the whole of religion represented as a contest betwixt this twofold man that is in us, the one from the first, the other from the second Adam.

The knowledge of this great truth, that Christ is our second Adam, as mentioned above, renders all the most mysterious, and seemingly hard passages of scripture, not only plainly intelligible, but full of a most

affecting sense. Thus when it is said, that Christ must be formed in us, and that “we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones,” etc. (Ephesians 5:30.) all this, and the like, is highly intelligible, as soon as it is known, that Christ is the parent of a spiritual man in us, in the same reality, as Adam is the parent of our natural life.

Thus also when Christ saith, “Except ye eat the flesh of the son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you.” And again, “I am the bread of life, he that cometh to me shall never hunger, and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.” (John 6:35.) And again, “Whosoever shall drink the water that I shall give him, shall never thirst: but the water that I shall give him, shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” (John 4:14.) And again, “I am the resurrection and the life. Whosoever liveth and believeth in me, shall never die.” (John 11:25)

Now if Jesus Christ had been only a teacher of morality, how unaccountable must all this language have been? But as soon as it is known that he is a spiritual parent, or principle of life to us, in the same reality as we derive our flesh and blood from Adam, and that this life lieth in us as a seed, which is to be brought forth to the fullness of its stature by faith in Christ, then all these passages have a meaning that is plainly intelligible, yet never to be exhausted, but is always suited to the state and progress of the reader.

For if Christ is a principle of life to us, and this life is drawn into, or formed in us by means of our faith; then how justly are we said to eat Christ as the bread of life, to eat his flesh and drink his blood, etc., when by faith we draw him into us, as our principle of life? For what can express the nature of this faith, so well as hunger and thirst? Or how can it be a real faith, unless it have much of the nature of hunger, or a strong desire, and ardent thirst?

Therefore all these expressions are as literally suited to the nature of the thing, to that which Christ is to us, as human words can be, and are not a language adapted to our reason, to increase its ideas; but are the language of heaven to the heavenly part of us, and are only to excite, direct, and confirm our faith in Christ, or to raise, increase, and exercise our hunger, thirst, and desire of the new birth of Christ in our soul.

But this author knowing nothing of this doctrine, is forced to deny the most precious truths of scripture. Thus all that our savior says of himself in the sixth of St. John, of his flesh being “meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed,” and of the necessity of eating and drinking it, to have eternal life in us; all this, says this author, “was only a very high figurative representation to the Jews then about him, of their duty and obligation to receive into their hearts, and digest his whole doctrine, as the food and life of their souls.” (Page 100.)

Therefore, according to this author, Christ is our life, in no other meaning or sense, than any other person who teaches us any doctrine that may do us good, and we have no life from him any other way, than we may have from any teacher of useful truths. And therefore what he says of himself, of his being the life of the world, has just as much truth in it, as if any of the apostles had said the same things of themselves. Nay, had Socrates, or Plato, or anybody else, preached the same gospel that our savior has done, there had been just the same meaning, and neither more nor less in it than in the gospel of Jesus Christ.

St. John saith, “Who is a liar, but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is anti-Christ that denieth the Father and the Son.” (1 John 2:22)

Now surely the Son could not be mentioned with the Father, as an equal object of our faith and acknowledgement, if he could not in reality be said to be our life in such a sense, as the Father may be said to be our God, not by a very high or strong figure of speech, but in truth and reality.

The scriptures tell us that Jesus Christ is the “Word that was with God,” and “was that God by whom all things were made.” (John 1:3.) “That by him all things were created that are in heaven and in earth, visible and invisible, and that in him all things consist.” (Colossians 1:16.) (Sic, but should be 17.)

Must not this author be here obliged to have recourse to much higher and stronger figures of speech, to account for the meaning of these expressions? For if there is anything in the nature of our savior, to support the literal meaning and truth of these expressions, then it must not only be groundless, but absolutely false, to say, that we can only be said to dwell in him, or have our life from him, by a very high or strong figure of speech.

For surely, if all things both in heaven and earth are created by him, if “in him all things consist,” then it may be said without any strong figure, that he is our life, and that we “dwell in him, and he in us,” in the same reality, as we are said to “live, and move, and have our being in God.” For if this creator becomes our redeemer, we may be said to receive life from him, to be new-born, or created again by him, in the same reality and fullness of truth, as we can be said to be created by him at first.

When therefore this author saith, “We may be said (by a strong figure of speech) to dwell in him, and he in us; to be one with Christ, and Christ with us,” that is, that “Christ and we, to all the intents and purposes of true religion, shall be in perfect friendship and union together”: (Page 111.) it is the same barefaced denial of the gospel, the same direct blasphemy against God, as to affirm, that God can only by a strong figure of speech, be said to be our life, our “creator, in whom we live, and move, and have our being.” It is the same blasphemy as to affirm, that we have no relation to, or dependence upon God, or existence in him, but such as any party of people, whether at court, or the exchange, have with one another, when they are to all the intents and purposes of their party interest, in perfect friendship and union together.

But to return: from this doctrine of Christ’s being a principle of life, or parent of a new birth in us, we may see the plain reason, why the scripture describes a Christian as a creature or instrument of the Holy Spirit, and entirely animated by it, so far as he is truly Christian. Because as Christianity consists in the birth of a new man within us, it must needs have a Spirit and breath as suitable to it, as the spirit and air of this world is suitable to a life of flesh and blood. And as every thought and motion of our outward man must be in, and by the assistance of the spirit, and air of this outward world: so every thought, and motion, and desire of our inward spiritual man, must be in, and by the assistance of the Spirit, and air of that world, whose creature it is.

Now, was there not as really this new spiritual man within us, in the same reality of existence, as our outward rational nature, there could be no foundation for this doctrine of the necessity of God’s Holy Spirit. Nor could the scripture account of the guidance of that Holy Spirit be at all

intelligible, upon this supposition, that we had nothing more in us, but our outward rational nature.

Thus when it is said, “No one can call Jesus the Lord, but by the Holy Spirit”: how could this be intelligible, or have any truth in it, if there were not a principle in us, a spiritual man, distinct from our rational nature? For our rational nature can as well call Jesus Lord, as it can call anyone else Lord, or as Judas said, “Hail master.”

Therefore since man in his natural state, and by his powers as a rational man, cannot truly call Jesus Lord, it follows, that he has a spiritual nature or principle in him, entirely distinct from his rational nature, and which receiving its life and power from the Spirit of God, has alone the power of owning, knowing, and receiving Jesus Christ as Lord.

St. Paul saith, “Ye are not in the flesh, but in the spirit, if so be the Spirit of God dwelleth in you. Now if any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.” (Romans 8:9.) And again; “Now we have received not the spirit of this world, but the Spirit which is of God, that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him, neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Corinthians 2:12)

Therefore there is a spiritual life, or man within us, by which alone we have our communication with God, and which is so distinct and different from our natural, rational man, that they are of a nature contrary to each other. The one is by nature fitted to receive, and know the things of the Spirit of God; the other has a nature that cannot know, nor receive them.

This is not to be understood, as if the natural man could not understand the words of scripture, as other words are to be understood, for he can reason and discourse as well upon scripture, and the things of the Spirit of God, as upon other matters.

Neither are we to take him that is able to discern things spiritually, to be only such a one whose faculty of reasoning is assisted by the Holy Spirit. For this does not make the spiritual man here spoken of. No, the subject of the Holy Spirit, or that which (it?) operates upon in us, is not our

reasoning faculty, it no more assists our reason in this manner, than it assists our eyes to read a difficult print, or our ears to hear sounds more distinctly.

For as the Holy Spirit is holiness itself, or the life and power of holiness, so it operates only in the manner of itself, and only upon that part of us, which has its own nature, or a real agreement with it. Therefore the spiritual man that is animated, enlightened and guided by the Holy Spirit, is that vital instinct of goodness, that spark of life, of which I have spoken so much, and which shows itself in an inward sentiment of the weight of sin, and in an inward sentiment of hope and conversion to the mercy of God.

This is the beginning, or foundation, or seed of that spiritual man, for whom the scriptures are written, to whom they speak, and who alone has a capacity to be animated, moved, and governed by the Holy Spirit.

And therefore it is, that our savior saith so often, “He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.” Meaning only this inward state of sensibility of the heart. He is so far from saying, according to modern learning, he that hath clear ideas, that has accustomed himself to reason, and distinguish about them; he that can speculate impartially, and search into the nature of things, actions and persons, by comparing the ideas of them; let such a one so prepared, draw near to the kingdom of heaven; he is so far from saying anything like this, that he rejects it all as the burden and darkness of the heart and says, “Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of God.”

But you will perhaps say, If the scriptures are not proposed to our reason, if reason is not the subject or faculty of religion in us; is not this the same as to say, that the scriptures and religion are proposed to the unreasonable part of us; is it not saying, that we must neglect or suppress that which is most excellent in us, in order to be religious?

You shall see reason possessed of all that belongs to it, and yet religion set up in a better place.

I will grant you much more than you imagine in respect of reason; I will grant it to have as great a share in the good things of religion, as it has in



the good things of this life; that it can assist the soul, just as it can assist the body; that it has the same power and virtue in the spiritual world that it has in the natural world; that it can communicate to us as much of the one as in the other. Can you ask more?

Now man considered as a member of this world, that is to have his share in the good that is in it, is a sensible and a rational creature; that is, he has a certain number of senses, as seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling and touching, by which he is sensible of that which the outward world, in which he is placed, can do to him, or communicate to him, he is sensible of what kind and degree of happiness he can have from it; besides these organs of sense, he has a power or faculty of reasoning upon the ideas which he has received by these senses.

Now how is it, that this world, or the good things of this world are communicated to man? How is he put in possession of them? To what part of him are they proposed? Are his senses or his reason the means of his having so much as he has, or can have from this world?

Now here you must degrade reason, just as much as it is degraded by religion. And as we say, that the good things of scripture and religion are not proposed to our reason; so you must say, that the good things of this world are not proposed to our reason. And as St. Paul says, the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit of God, because they are spiritually discerned; so you must also say, the rational man cannot receive the things of this world, because they are to be sensibly received, that is, by the organs of sense.

Thus must you necessarily set reason as low, with respect to the things of this world, as it is set with respect to the things of the spiritual world. It is no more the means of communicating the good things of the one, than of communicating the good things of the other.

It stands in the same incapacity in one world, as in the other.

For everyone knows, that we know no more, can receive no more, can possess no more of anything that is communicable to us from this world, than what we know, receive and possess by our senses, or that sensible capacity that is in us, of having something communicated to us by the

world. Sounds are only proposed to our ears, light our eyes; nothing is communicated to our reason; no part of the world hath any communication with it. Reason therefore has no higher office or power in the things of this world, than in the things of religion. The world is only so far known, received and possessed, as we receive and possess it by our senses. And reason stands by, as an impotent spectator, only beholding and speculating upon its own ideas and notions of what has passed between the world and the sensible part of the soul.

And as this is the state of man in this world, where he receives all the good he can receive from it, by a sensibility of his nature, entirely distinct from his faculty of reasoning; so is it his state with regard to the spiritual world, where he stands only capable of receiving the invisible good things of it, by a sensibility of his nature, or such a capacity as lets the spiritual world into him, in the manner as the natural is let into him in this life. Religion therefore does no more violence to your reason, or rejects it in any other way, than as all the good things of this life reject it. It is not seeing, it is not hearing, it is not tasting and feeling the things of this life, it can supply the place of no one of these senses. Now it is only thus helpless and useless in religion; it is neither seeing, nor hearing, tasting nor feeling of spiritual things; therefore in the things of religion, and in the things of this world, it has one and the same insignificancy. So that the things of the Spirit of God belong not to reason, cannot be known and received by it, for the same reason, that the good things of this world belong not to reason, and cannot be known and received by it.

It is the sensibility of the soul that must receive what this world can communicate to it; it is the sensibility of the soul that must receive what God can communicate to it. Reason may follow after in either case, and view through its own glass what is done, but it can do no more.

Now the sensibility of the soul, which is its capacity for divine communications, or for the operation of God's Holy Spirit upon it, consists in an inward sentiment of the weight and disorder of sin, and in an inward sentiment of hope and conversion to the mercy of God. This is the first seed of life, sown into the soul when Adam was redeemed; and it is this seed of life, or sensibility, that the Holy Spirit of God acts upon, moves and quickens, and enlightens; and to this it is, that all that is said in

the scripture is addressed. Nothing but this sensibility, or state of heart, has eyes to see, or ears to hear the things of the Spirit of God.

Reason may be here of the same service to us, as it may be when we want any of the enjoyments of this life. It may take away a cover from our eyes, or open our window-shutters, when we want the light, but it can do no more towards seeing, than to make way for the light to act upon our eyes. This is all its office and ability in the good things of religion, it may remove that which hinders the sensibility of the soul, or prevents the divine light's acting upon it, but it can do no more.

Hence you may judge of the following passage of the Plain Account, "We may be sure we are pleasing God, whilst we are obeying the command of his Son." "But in this particular instance of our duty, we can with reason go no further, I say with reason; because the benefits received from all such performances by reasonable creatures, cannot possibly be received in but a reasonable way. These duties, how well soever performed, cannot be supposed to operate as charms; nor to influence us, as if we were only clock-work, or machines, to be acted upon by the arbitrary force of a superior being." (Page 154.)

Now all this is in direct contradiction to the nature and state of man in this world. For no good thing of this world, no power or virtue in the whole system of beings that surround us, can possibly be communicated to our reason, or by the way of our reason. Whatever the world communicates to us of its power and virtue must be communicated to the sensibility of our nature, to that part of us which is as distinct from our reasoning faculty, as seeing the light is distinct from a conjecture about the nature of it.

Now let us suppose a man to stand in this world, only with his rational nature, or faculty of reasoning, but destitute of the sensibility of his nature, or the organs of sense; what would all this world, or all the good of it signify to him? If he was to receive nothing but the way of reason, would it not be the same thing as to say, that he was to receive nothing from it?

Now this is the state that this author would have you be in, with relation to God, and the spiritual world. No power, or virtue, or influence of God, or the spiritual world, is to be communicated to you, but by the way of

reason, and you are to stand with relation to all the riches and powers, and virtues of God, and the spiritual world, in the same state as he stands in this world, who is to know and feel, and possess no more of it, than he can know, and feel, and possess by way of reason, without any one sense. Therefore it is plain, that this author desires all communication from God to you, to be as much at an end, as all communication from this world must be at an end, if you had not one sense left.

I have just supposed a man to stand in this world, without all sensibility of nature, endued only with a faculty of reasoning; let it now be supposed, that you had a power to awaken a sensibility of nature in him, and to help him to all those senses that are common to man. Would you say, this must by no means be done? Would you say, that you must keep off this sensibility of nature, that you might preserve him a free agent? And that if the light and heat of the sun, the virtues and powers of the world, should operate upon him in any other manner than by the way of reason, he would be turned from a rational creature, into a mere machine and clock-work.

Now this is the way that this author would preserve you a free agent, with relation to God, and the spiritual world: he will not allow you to have any senses, that he may preserve your reason. For if God, or the spiritual world, could do that to you, which this outward world can do to a man that has his senses; if God should communicate any good to you, as the sun communicates its light and good influence without the assistance of your reason, and only by making you sensible of them, you are undone, the freedom and rationality of your nature is lost, and you are turned into clock-work.

Let me ask this rational man, who is so great an enemy to all that is not done in a rational way, whether he feels no attachment to the world, and his interest in it; whether he pursues it no further, and has no sensibility of its power over him, but just so much as pure reason and the light of the gospel raise in him; whether he has no self-love, no family-love, no party-love, no ambition, no pride, no sensuality, but what is weighed out to him by arguments and motives of pure reason, enlightened by the letter of the gospel? Now if there is something of those tempers in him, arising from some secret power that is working in him, that has not all its life and

working from pure reason, will he therefore say, that he is a mere machine, that he has no liberty left, that he is no longer a rational creature; now if a degree of goodness should steal upon him this way, without consulting his reason, if he should find a heavenly love, a purity of heart, an attraction to God, a desire of holiness, a poverty of spirit, a contempt of the world, a sensibility of the greatness of eternal things, stirring and awakened in him in a greater degree than ever he intended to have them by his own reason, would he be obliged to cry out, that his reasonable soul was undone, that he had lost the rationality of his nature, was become a machine, because such a sense of God and goodness had got entrance into him without consulting his reason?

And if God is as ready to operate upon our souls, and to manifest his power and presence in them, when we give way to it, as the world and the devil are when we leave an entrance for them, has a preacher of the gospel any authority from thence, to reproach this divine assistance, as “communications and impressions from above, which leave the mind in a state satisfied with what carries no rational satisfaction in it”? (Page 156)

For however this author may please himself with thinking that his mind is free from communications and impressions from above, and satisfied only with such things as carry a rational satisfaction in them; yet it is an eternal immutable truth, founded in the nature of things, that no soul can enjoy any degree of good whatsoever, but by a communication or impression of something upon it.

Every creature, as such, is by the necessity of nature, in a state of poverty and want, and may be defined to be only a capacity to receive so much good as shall be communicated to it, or impressed upon it. Were not this the state of our souls, it would not be the state of our bodies; and as the body stands in this world in poverty and want, only capable of being fed, nourished, comforted and blessed by communications and impressions from the things that surround it, so the soul stands in the same poverty and want in the spiritual world, and only capable of being nourished, comforted, and blessed by communications and impressions from God.

So that this author’s satisfaction which he has chosen for himself, a satisfaction purely rational, or by way of his reason, instead of divine

impressions, is the choice of a man in a dream, that knows nothing of the nature of God, or of his soul, or of the state and nature of things. For the satisfaction of every being, from the highest angel to the lowest of human creatures, is all sensible, and wholly seated in the sensibility of their nature.

This is as certain, as that a child has no rational satisfaction; for no man ever was satisfied or dissatisfied for any other reason, or upon any other account, than as a child is satisfied or dissatisfied, namely, according as its senses, or the sensibility of its nature, has or has not that which is agreeable to it. For nature shows what it is in a child, and does not become another thing in a grown man. The child has no cunning or fraud, and therefore he plainly owns what he wants and cries for it.

Grown men are under the same sensibility of nature, want only what the child wanted, viz., to have their senses gratified, but they have the cunning not to own it, and the fraud to pretend something else.

And thus it must be with every human creature. He must be governed by this sensibility of his nature, must be happy or unhappy, according as his senses are gratified, till such time as he is born again from above, till the new birth has awakened another sensibility in him, and opened a way for divine communications and impressions to have more effect upon him, than the things of this world have upon his natural senses. For no created being whatever, can any moment of time be free from communications and impressions of some kind or other; if it is not governed by communications and impressions from above, it is certainly governed by communications and impressions from below.

The needle that is touched with the loadstone, does not then begin to be under the power of attraction, for it was under the power of attraction from the earth before. And if it loses the attraction of the loadstone, it does not cease to be attracted by something else.

The soul that is touched with an impression from God, does not then begin to be under the power of something that acts upon it, for the world and the devil, or the nature of those things that surround it, attract it, and act upon it. For as it has something of the nature of everything in it, so the

whole nature of things as continually act upon it by impressions, as the sun acts upon everything that has anything of the nature of the sun in it.

Now the freedom of the will, is not a freedom from communications and impressions, but is only a liberty of choosing to be made happy, either by yielding ourselves up to the attraction or operation of God upon us, or to be miserable, by yielding ourselves up to the impressions of the world, and sensible things.

There is no middle way; if we reject or make ourselves incapable of impressions from God, we are the machines and clockwork of this sensible world.

Two men born blind may talk and dispute about receiving light in a rational way, and think it ought only to be received by their reason, or in conformity to its power of speculating; as soon as their eyes are opened, they both see that reason was a fool, and that light can only act upon them by way of impression upon the sensibility of their nature.

It is so far therefore from being a dangerous delusion to expect, desire, believe, and pray for communications and impressions from above, by means of the holy sacrament, that it is as right and sound a faith, and as beneficial to the soul, as to believe that the goodness of God's providence is in everything, and that everything is blessed by his power and presence in it to the faithful receiver.

All the perfections of God have some kind of similitude or resemblance of their power in the perfections of the sun, which refresh our animal and rational nature by continual communications and impressions upon it, as the perfections of God communicate and impress themselves upon the inmost spirit of our souls.

And he that would have his animal rational nature comforted and refreshed only in a rational way, without communications and impressions from the sun, would be just such a pleader for reason, as he that would have religious satisfaction only in a rational way, without communications and impressions from above.

For the impressions from God are more necessary and essential to the pious life of the soul, than the impressions of the sun are to the comfortable life of our outward rational man.

And he that prays for nothing else but these divine communications and impressions, who thinks of nothing else, desires nothing else, trusts in nothing else, as able to comfort, strengthen, and enrich his soul: he that is thus, all prayer, all love, all desire, and all faith, in these communications and impressions from above, is just in the same state of sobriety, as he that only prays that God would not leave him to himself.

For he that is without anything of these communications and impressions of God upon him, is in the same state of death and separation from God as the devils are. And to turn men from the faith and love, and desire of these divine impressions, is to lay the ax to the root of religion, and is as direct a way to atheism, as to teach them, as Epicurus did, that God is afar off. For a God without any communications and impressions upon us, a God afar off, are equally atheistical tenets, equally destructive of all piety.

The one opinion is the same denial of God as the other.

And when men have once lost all sense of the necessity of being inwardly, invisibly, and secretly supported, assisted, guided, and blessed by communications and impressions of God upon their souls, it signifies not much what religion they profess, or for what reason they profess it, whether they have the reason of Epicurus, or Hobbs, or this author. For a religion has no good of religion in it, but so far as it introduces the life, power, and presence of God into the soul.

For there is nothing good even in heaven itself, but the fullness of divine communications and impressions; no wretchedness in hell, but what arises from an entire cessation of them; and this life has no possibility of being changed into a heavenly life, but so far as it is capable of divine communications and impressions.

For as the sun is the light of this world, only by communications and impressions of his light upon all objects, according to their capacity to receive it; so God is the God of all his creatures, only by communications and impressions of his life, and power, and presence upon all his creatures,



according to their capacity to receive them. And therefore to discredit and ridicule the desire, hunger, faith, and expectation of divine communications and impressions in all acts and parts of religion, is to teach men to unite religion with atheism, and to make their very acts of religion, a renunciation of, and departure from God.

Had this author openly and plainly said with Epicurus, God is afar off, the atheism had been plain and apparent, and confessed by all; and yet he has said more than this; for to say that we are without all communications and impressions of God upon us, for this reason, because they would make us machines and clock-work, and could give us no rational satisfaction, is not only saying that God is afar off, but that he ought and must continue to be so, if we are not to be machines, and lose the rationality of our nature. So that according to this author's doctrine, rational and free agents are not only to believe with Epicurus, but also ought to rejoice that God is afar off, and to desire, for the sake of the rationality of their nature, that he may always be at the same distance from them.

Hence it is, that this author is, as Epicurus was, forced to invent a *summum bonum*, or chief good for man, exclusive of the enjoyment of God. Thus says he, "The highest good of mortal man, is the uniform practice of morality, chosen by ourselves, as our happiness here, and our unspeakable reward hereafter." (Page 157.)

For as Epicurus was forced to place the highest good of man in his philosophical garden, because he had separated the gods from men, and placed them apart by themselves; so this author having rejected all divine communications and impressions upon us, as having no rational satisfaction in them, as making us machines and clock-work, was forced to invent a highest good for mortal man, both here and hereafter, that has nothing of good in it.

Epicurus therefore and this parochial minister of the gospel agree in this: first, that they place the highest good, or happiness of man, in something that is exclusive of God. Secondly, that they place it in something that they can do for themselves.

The church, of which this author says he is a minister, sings every day, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God, heaven and earth are full of thy majesty and

glory”; but according to him, it sings of something that is no part of its happiness, either here or hereafter.

The gospel, of which he pretends to be a preacher, brings the glad tidings of a savior, and salvation to all mankind; but he preaches a highest good of mortal man, that has nothing of this savior or salvation in it.

Jesus Christ says, “Except a man be born again of the water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.” That, “as the Father raises up the dead, and quickeneth them, even so the Son quickeneth whom he will.” (John 5:21.) And “that to as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God.” Who “were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” (John 1:12.) Again, “If ye abide in me, and my words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will, and it shall be done unto you. Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full. If any man love me, my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.” The apostle saith, “Giving thanks unto the Father, who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, in whom we have redemption through his blood.”

Now had a Celsus, or a Porphyry, or any modern adversary of the gospel, a mind to show their utmost detestation and abhorrence of these doctrines, of a birth of the Spirit, a birth of God, a quickening savior, a life in him and through him, a redemption through his blood, a translation into his kingdom, of our asking and receiving all through him, of his Father’s and his abode in us, had they the greatest desire to persuade all people that all this was a groundless fiction, without the least truth, or reasonableness in it, need they declare any more, or desire any more to be believed than this, “That the highest good of man, is the uniform practice of morality, chosen by ourselves, as our happiness here, and our unspeakable reward hereafter”? For is not this the same thing as to say, all the doctrines of the gospel savior and salvation, of a new birth, of the Spirit of God, of redemption through Christ, of righteousness in him, of entering into his kingdom, are absolutely false? For it is the same total denial of all the Christian method of salvation, as to say, that we have our happiness or highest good both here and hereafter from Epicurus. For the salvation, and happiness, and eternal life which we receive through Jesus Christ, is

equally denied and rejected as false, whether you place our highest good in what we can do for ourselves, or in what Epicurus can do for us.

The scripture saith, “The gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” (Romans 6:23) And again, “He that hath the Son, hath life; and he who hath not the Son, hath not life.” (1 John 5:12.) Again, “By grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.” (Ephesians 2:8.) And again, “If Christ be not raised, ye are yet in your sins”: And, “as in Adam all died, so in Christ shall all be made alive.” And again, “Your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.” (Colossians 3:3.)

Now this author does not expressly say all this is absolutely false, and not fit to be believed, but he only desires you to believe something, that will show it to be impossible to be true.

For if our own morality, chosen by ourselves, is our highest good and reward both here and hereafter, it is impossible to be true, that we have no life but in the Son of God, or that eternal life is the gift of God to us through Jesus Christ, or that we are saved by grace, through faith, and not of ourselves.

So that this author is not to be considered as one that has barely mistaken something in the nature of the sacrament, but as one that rejects the whole method of salvation through Jesus Christ, and will have no happiness or redemption from him here, or eternal life hereafter.

When therefore he saith, “Do we not partake of the benefit of remission of our sins, by partaking of the Lord’s Supper worthily?” I must answer, No; if the gospel be true. (Page 144.)

This ought to have no more weight with you, than if Celsus or Porphyry, or Hobbs, had said the same thing. For since he makes our own morality, chosen by ourselves, to be our highest good, both here and hereafter, he as absolutely rejects our salvation through Jesus Christ, and denies the love and goodness of God towards us in Christ Jesus, to be our highest good, both here and hereafter, as ever Celsus or Porphyry did: and therefore can have no more right or pretense to explain any part of that salvation, which

he has so totally denied, than they had. In the gospel, says he, no pardon of past sins is promised or given, unless to those just converted, renouncing their sins, and baptized into the Christian faith; or to those, who having sinned after baptism, actually amend their lives. This is to show you, that there is no remission of sins obtained by worthy partaking of the sacrament, if the gospel be true.

Now in the gospel, our blessed Lord seeing their faith, “saith to the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer, thy sins are forgiven thee.”

Now here pardon of sins is given, directly contrary to this author’s assertion, to one not converted and baptized into the Christian faith, but because of his and their faith that brought him on a bed.

Again, of Magdalen, our Lord saith, “Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much. But to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little.”

Here you see again a plain confutation of this author’s doctrine; for here remission of sins is actually given and declared to be due to love, and love is affirmed to be the measure of it.

Therefore it is an undeniable doctrine of the gospel, that faith and love are certain means of obtaining remission of our sins; if therefore the sacrament is an exercise of our faith and love, then we have the utmost assurance from our savior’s own words, that we thereby obtain remission of our sins.

But this author has another argument against it, taken from our liturgy. In our public office, says he, “it is not supposed that the worthy partaking of the Lord’s Supper does itself operate this forgiveness; but it is made part of a prayer to God, that they who have partaken of it, may obtain remission of their sins, etc. They are taught to pray thus, after the act of communion is over, which supposes that it is not already obtained.” (Page 145.)

Now if there was any truth or reason in this argument, it would follow, that our savior’s apostles had obtained no remission of sins from him; and though he had chosen them out of the world, called them his friends, and

declared his extraordinary love for them, and though they left all and followed him, yet he had not done that for them, which he had done for the sick of the palsy, and many others; for this reason, because he had taught and enjoined them a form of prayer, in which they were to pray for the forgiveness of their sins.

For if it is rightly argued, that there is no remission of sins obtained by the use of the sacrament, because afterwards there is prayer made for the forgiveness of sins; then it must follow, that our savior's apostles could not have received any remission of sins, when he taught them to pray for it. It must follow also, that he never intended that they should be in the state of new converts, baptized for the remission of their sins, because then they could not without great absurdity have used that form of prayer which he gave them.

It follows also, that the apostles could not have taught this form of prayer, or enjoined the use of it to their new baptized converts, because it would have been, according to this author, a proving to them, that they had not received the pardon of their sins by baptism.

Now the inconsistency which this author finds in praying for the forgiveness of sins, and all other benefits of Christ's passion, after the reception of the sacrament, if the sacrament itself was a means of obtaining them, all this inconsistency and difficulty had been removed, if he had only known or acknowledged, that the Christian life is a progressive state, and that forgiveness of sins is a grace and benefit of Jesus Christ, bestowed upon us in the same manner as every other grace or degree of holiness, as a talent to be improved, as a seed to be nourished up by us to its full growth. And for this reason it is, that we are obliged to pray for every grace, and every virtue, that we have already received, because we had received it to grow up in us, and prayer or desire of it is the only soil in which it can grow.

Thus he to whom God has already given the grace of penitence, for that reason prays for penitence; he that has already received of God the gift of faith, for that reason prays, Lord, help thou my unbelief; and he that is the fullest of righteousness, feels the greatest hunger and thirst after it.

But according to this author's religion, he that has received the Spirit of God, cannot be supposed to pray for it; and yet according to the religion of the gospel, no one can pray for it, but because he has received it.

I shall now add a word or two on what this author says in defense of the safety of his doctrine of the sacrament; though it should be erroneous.

"It ought certainly, " says he, "to be far from the thoughts of every Christian to lessen any privileges, or undervalue any promises, annexed by Christ to any duty or institution of his religion. It is an inexcusable carelessness to do it for want of due consideration. But this, I think, may with truth be said, that an error of this sort (should it be supposed) does not really hurt any Christian, nor alter the effect of the duty at all." (Pref., p. 5.)

The safety therefore of his doctrine of the sacrament, supposing it to lessen and undervalue the benefits of it, is grounded upon this general proposition, which he takes to be a great truth, viz., "That to lessen or undervalue the privileges and promises annexed to any duty or institution by Jesus Christ, does not really hurt any Christian, or alter the effect of the duty at all."

Now this doctrine directly leads to infidelity, for infidelity is nothing else but a lessening and undervaluing the privileges and promises annexed to faith in Christ.

The scripture saith, "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him"; and again, He sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life." Here the privilege and promise of life, and atonement for our sins, is annexed to faith in Christ; but according to this author, it does you no real hurt, nor alters the effect of your faith at all, though you lessen and undervalue this privilege and promise of life, and atonement for your sins, offered to your faith in Christ Jesus.

Is not this directly saying, that infidelity is as safe and beneficial to you, as a belief in the privileges and promises of the gospel? Is it not saying,

that it is as beneficial to you to esteem Christ only as a carpenter's son, as to expect atonement and life from him, as the only begotten Son of God?

It is said of our blessed Lord, that among those of his own country he did no mighty works, because of their unbelief. Now what was their unbelief? It was nothing but the infidelity which this author would prove to be harmless; it was only a lessening and undervaluing all those privileges and promises which our savior offered to those that would have a just sense of the value of them. Now if we lessen or undervalue any privileges and promises annexed to faith in Christ, or any other duty, such unbelief will certainly have the same effect upon us that it had upon those amongst whom Christ lived, it will hinder him from doing any mighty works among us, or in other words, render our knowledge and profession of him ineffectual to our salvation.

Prayer and faith are amongst the greatest duties of the Christian life, and are the most powerful means of obtaining all the blessings of our salvation. Now to these two duties the greatest privileges and promises are annexed by Christ. The promise of the Holy Spirit is made to prayer. Now, according to this author, if you lessen and undervalue this privilege and promise annexed to prayer, if you grow indifferent about the necessity or benefit of the Holy Spirit, and fancy that you are sufficient of yourself for all the virtue that you want, all this does you no real hurt, nor alters at all the effect of your prayer.

Again, another privilege annexed to prayer, is that of being heard in and through the name of Christ.

“Hitherto, ” says our blessed Lord, “ye have asked nothing in my name; ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full.” “Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my name, he will give it you.” (John 16:24.)

Now if any infidel, to abate your zeal for, and confidence in this kind of prayer, should teach you, that no one can suffer any real hurt by lessening and undervaluing prayer in the name of Christ, and that it would have the same effect upon you, though you expected little or no good from it, the gospel would be preached to you, just as it is by this author.

Again, “All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive.” Now what is this believing, but an entire faith in the privileges and promises annexed to prayer?

But if prayer is effectual because of this faith in the promises made to prayer, then everyone suffers a real hurt, and the effect of his prayer is altogether hindered by this want of faith, or by a lessening and undervaluing the privileges and promises annexed to it.

But if this author’s doctrine was true, it might then be said, in contradiction to the gospel, prayer does you as much real good when you have little or no faith in it, as when you have ever so much, and your believing is no help to your receiving.

The scriptures attribute a kind of omnipotence to faith; thus, “All things are possible to him that believeth.” Again, “According to thy faith, so be it done unto thee. Thy faith hath saved thee. Thy faith hath made thee whole.” But according to this author, it must be said, that the want of faith does you no real hurt, that you will be healed and saved, and have all things done to you, in the same manner, whether you be faithless or believing.

And on this foundation it is that he grounds your safety in receiving his doctrine of the sacrament, though he should have lessened and undervalued the benefits annexed to it. But you ought to observe, that you can have no safety in receiving his doctrine of the sacrament, unless it be safe for you to receive another gospel.

Had the sick, the lame, the blind, and the deaf believed that which this author would have you believe, as safe doctrine, viz., that to lessen and undervalue the promises and privileges made to faith, could do them no real hurt, they had continued in their infirmities, merely for knowing Jesus Christ and the gospel as this author would have you know them.

When two blind men ran crying after our savior to have mercy on them, “He saith unto them, believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, yea, Lord. Then touched he their eyes, saying, according to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened.” (Matthew 9:30.) The poor woman that wanted to be healed of her infirmity, said, “If I may but touch



his clothes I shall be whole.”: upon this faith of the woman, our savior said, “I perceive that virtue is gone out of me; and turning him about, and seeing the woman, he said unto her, daughter, be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole.” (Matthew 9:22)

Now, had the blind men answered to our savior’s question, No, Lord, we do not believe that thou canst give us sight; had the diseased woman said, I am so far from expecting to be healed by touching his clothes, that I don’t believe he has the power of healing in himself; according to this author, their infidelity must have helped them to just the same benefit from Christ, as their faith did, notwithstanding that Christ himself ascribes it to their faith. For unless it be true, that their want of faith had helped them to the same benefit from Christ that their faith did, it cannot be true, that to lessen and undervalue the privileges and promises annexed to any duty, does you no real hurt, nor alters the effect of it at all.

And therefore the safety which this author proposes to you, in lessening and undervaluing the privileges and promises annexed to the sacrament, is only the safety of infidelity, and such a safety as they are in, who lessen and undervalue the privileges and promises annexed to faith in Jesus Christ.

And indeed herein he is, though inconsistent with the gospel, very consistent with himself. For if, as he has said, an uniform morality chosen by ourselves, is our highest good both here and hereafter; our highest good makes Christ as needless to us as the sacrament; for if this is true, you can no more need the benefits of a savior, than the benefits of a sacrament, and it can signify nothing to your happiness, whatever privileges and promises are offered to you in the gospel, because you want none, can receive none as a part of your happiness, because you have it all from yourself, both here and hereafter.

So that if this minister of the gospel carries his point with you, if you believe his doctrines of the sacrament, upon the principles on which he teaches it, you may indeed retain something of the outward form of the sacrament, but must reject the whole salvation of the gospel.

**FINIS**

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