

A TREATISE ON THE COVENANT OF GRACE

BY

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THE
COVENANT OF GRACE,

AS IT IS DISPENSED TO THE ELECT SEED, EFFECTUALLY UNTO
SALVATION.

Acts 7:8 *And he gave him the Covenant of Circumcision.*

This blessed Servant of God, *Steven*, being called to account concerning what he had said touching Jesus Christ his Destroying the Temple, it is the scope of his whole Discourse throughout this Chapter, to justify the Doctrine that he had taught; that though he had taught Jesus of Nazareth should destroy that place, yet in so teaching, he taught no Blasphemy: And this he doth in an Historical Narration make clear and evident:

1. From the sweet Communion which their Fathers had with God before either Temple or Tabernacle was built: and if so, then he would not have them look at it as unsafe for them, or as an utter ruin to Religion, if that both the Temple and the Ordinances of the Temple were destroyed in themselves, and fulfilled in him. Three passages of *Abraham's* communion with God, *Steven* doth relate and maintain that he had them before any of *Moses* his Customs were known.

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1. God did *effectually call him*; which call he did also obey, (2,3,4. verses) though as yet he knew no Circumcision.

2. *God giveth him* a trial of his Faith, wherein he found *Abraham* faithful, 5,6,7 verses. God promised to give him the land of *Canaan* for a possession, but he gave him not a foot's breadth. He promised to give it unto his Seed, when as yet he had no child: and when God gave him Seed, yet they should sojourn in a strange Land, and be in Bondage four hundred years.

3. God gave him the *Covenant of Circumcision*, in the words of the Text. And *Abraham* in the strength of the Blessing of God begat *Isaac*, and Circumcised him according to God's direction; and all this before *Moses* gave any Ordinances unto them to keep; and before either Temple, or Tabernacle was built. From hence we have heard, that the soul may have very spiritual and gracious communion with God, before it partake in any seal of Church-fellowship. For *Abraham's* Faith was throughly tried before he had the Seal of Church Covenant given him. We heard also this propounded, which is the words of the Text, that *God gave unto Abraham the Covenant of Circumcision* which Doctrine doth imply in it four principal parts, all of them serving to clear *Steven's* meaning.

1. The Author and manner of dispensing it: *God gave*, so it was by Gift.
2. The *Articles of it*; and they are to be inquired into.
3. The *Confederates*, and they are expressed; God on the one side, and *Abraham* and his Seed on the other side.

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4. The *Seal of it, Circumcision*, which was also the Seal of the Church-Covenant. These four parts do yield so many Notes; the first of them was spoken unto in the last point formerly handled. Now for the second and third parts, (to wit, the *Articles of the Covenant*, and the *Confederates*) we comprehend them both in this one Note.

Doctrine: *That in the Covenant which God made with Abraham, God gave himself to be a God to Abraham and to his Seed; and received Abraham and his Seed to be a People unto himself; and the chiefest of this Seed, the Lord Jesus Christ, he took to be the Mediator, or Surety of this Covenant between them both.* This is the sum of the Articles, and of the Confederates: what the Articles be is not here mentioned; But Genesis 17:7 they be, (for to speak of Circumcision before the Covenant, it is but a seal to a blank) where the Lord expresseth himself thus, saying, *I will stablish my Covenant between me and thee, and thy Seed after thee, in their Generations, for an everlasting Covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy Seed after thee.* As for other parts of the Covenant, they were more properly given unto himself, as to be *exceeding fruitful*, and to be the *Father of many Nations, to inherit the land of Canaan, &c.* those things were more peculiarly proper unto *Abraham*, though they have also a moral and universal use and force in all the Faithful, whom the Lord doth make fruitful, and giveth them a Nail in his Tabernacle. In the Covenant these three things are implied:

1. God gave himself to be a God unto *Abraham*, and to his Seed: This is such an Argument as the strength and wisdom of men and Angels cannot unfold: It is a Catechism-point, and by

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way of Catechism to be opened, (as the Lord hath revealed it), I mean, plainly, and familiarly.

2. God did *receive Abraham*, and *his Seed*, to be *his People*: this is implied, and necessarily inferred by the rule of Relatives: for if God do give himself to be a God to *Abraham*, and to his Seed, and doth not firstly require it of *Abraham* and of his Seed that they should give up themselves to be *his People*, then it must of necessity follow, that the Lord will undertake to receive them to be a People unto himself, and so he will perform both his own part of the Covenant, and *Abraham's* part also, according to what we read in Deuteronomy 7:6,7,8. *The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special People unto himself: Not because ye were in number more than any People, (for ye were the fewest of all People) but because he loved you, and would keep the Oath which he had sworn unto your Fathers, therefore hath he brought you out with a mighty hand, &c.* when as they were in a land of Idols, and the Lord lifted up his hand to have destroyed them there; yet he remembered, and wrought for his own Names sake: So that though they were far off yet the Lord (to make good his Covenant) brought them out of Egypt, and so from one Covenant to another: by all which things it doth appear, that the Lord will *keep our part of the Covenant also*; and this is necessarily implied, in that he promiseth to be a God unto *Abraham*, and to his Seed, and there is no Restipulation on *Abraham's* part; we see this likewise held forth, Deuteronomy 29:1,13, where the Lord entereth into another Covenant with them in the land of *Moab*, besides the Covenant which he made with them in *Horeb*; and in this Covenant he doth establish them to be a People unto himself, as well as give himself unto them to be their God

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verse 13. And as God required it of them to Circumcise the outward man, even the foreskin of their children; so he will also Circumcise them, taking possession of them, and Circumcising their hearts, taking away the stoniness of them, and so fitting them to be a Temple for himself to dwell in.

3. The Lord in this Covenant taketh the chiefest of *Abraham's* Seed even the Lord Jesus Christ, to be the Mediator and Surety of the Covenant, and unto him do all the Promises belong; so the Apostle doth expound it, Galatians 3:16: *Unto Abraham and to his Seed were the Promises made: He saith not, And*

to his seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ. And so by him are all the Promises and Blessings of the Covenant conveyed unto Abraham, and to his seed, (his faithful seed) all the world over: and therefore he is called the *Mediator of a better Covenant*, Hebrews 7:22, meaning the Covenant of Grace, Hebrews 3:6. These three things do contain the sum of the Covenant of Grace, and of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, and would therefore be plainly discovered unto Christians: As,

1. What is the meaning of this, that God gave himself unto Abraham?
2. How doth he take Abraham, and his seed, and make them his People?
3. How doth he take Jesus Christ, and make him the surety of the Covenant between them both? For the Covenant is established, and so is a firm, and sure, and everlasting Covenant: Now in this gift, that God gave himself unto Abraham, Observe three things,

1. The *Blessing given*.
2. The *Order* in which it was given.
3. The *Manner* of giving it.

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1. In the Blessing given: When God doth by Covenant give himself to be a God, it doth imply two things.

1. That God doth give himself, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; the whole Nature of God, and all the persons of the Godhead, with all the Attributes of that Nature, and all the Offices of those Persons: For it is not a confused God that vanisheth away in a general imagination, but God distinctly considered in his *Persons, Attributes, Promises, &c.* thus the Lord giveth *himself* to Abraham and to his seed: *I will be a Father unto you*, 2 Corinthians 6:28. and that is not spoken to the Jews only, but unto all the Israel of God: He giveth the *Son* also, Isaiah 9:6 *Unto us a Son is born, &c.* and *God so loved the World, that he gave his only begotten Son*: John 3:16. And for the *Holy Spirit*, *This is my Covenant with them, saith the Lord*, (Isaiah 59:21) *My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words that I have put into thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed from henceforth and forever*: And this is it which the Apostle also saith, Galatians 4:6. *God has sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba Father*: thus the Lord giveth himself unto his servants from one Generation to another. If therefore the Lord God the Father give himself, he will not be wanting to draw his People unto the Son, John 6:44. *No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him*: And what is the chief business, and work that the Son hath to do about us? No man can have fellowship with

the Father, but he must have fellowship with Jesus Christ; so our Saviour himself saith, John 14:6, *No man can come unto the Father but by me:*

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this therefore the Lord Jesus Christ will do for all the Elect Seed of *Abraham*: he will open their eyes to see, that the Father did not draw them to Damnation, nor utter desolation, but unto Salvation by him: this hath he promised to do. And if it be the work of the Spirit of God to establish us both in the Father and the Son, then will he *convince the World of Sin, of Righteousness, and of Judgement*, John 16:8 to 11, and so will stablish our hearts in the Comforts of the Lord our God; and this is that which the Apostle prayeth for the Ephesians, chapter 3:16, *That the Lord would grant unto them according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man:* and hence it cometh to pass, that what the Lord would have us to do, he is present by his Spirit to teach us, and to strengthen us, and so to do it for us: All these things doth the Lord work for *Abraham*, and for his Seed; so that look what is meet for a Father to do, and for a Brother to do, or for the Spirit of God to do, that will the Lord do unto his Elect ones; and so he giveth all his Attributes, and they are even God himself; and therefore when *Moses* desired to see his Glory (and he desired it from the Grace that God had showed him) Exodus 34:6, the Lord proclaimed his Name before him, *Jehovah, Jehovah, Strong, Merciful and Gracious, Long-suffering, and abundant in Goodness and Truth:* thus doth the Lord give himself, and all the Persons in the Godhead (as they are called) and *Attributes*, they are no more, nor other then *God himself*.

2. And as God himself is implied; so when God is given by Covenant; all the *Ordinances*, and *Creatures* and *Works* of God are given also:

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For so it was in all Covenants of old time; when *Jehoshaphat* maketh a Covenant with *Ahab* King of Israel, 2 Kings 22:4, then, *I am as thou art, and my People as thy People, and my horses as thy horses*, and all that he hath is for *Ahab's* service; as the King goeth, so goeth his strength; So thus it doth come to pass, that if the Lord of Hosts be for us, and give himself unto us, then also doth he give us his *eternal Election*, and *Redemption*, and whatsoever he hath wrought for the Salvation of his Elect: *He hath not so dealt with any Nation*, (Psalm 147:20) but only with the Israel of God, unto them hath he given his Laws, and shewed them his Judgements: And for his *Creatures*, they are all given to be for his people, to whom he hath given himself: If God be a God unto *Abraham*, then shall all God's People be for him; *Melchidedek* shall bless him; *Aner*, *Eshcol* and *Mamre* shall be confederates with him. The

Sun, Moon, and Stars, shall fight in their courses for the People of God; the Sea shall give way unto them, to pass through it on dry land: *What ailed you, ye Streams of Jordan, to go backward?* Why, all the Creatures of God must stoop unto the People of God, when he is in Covenant with them: this is that which the Lord promiseth unto his People, Hosea 2:18 to 22, when the Lord shall marry them to him in faithfulness. *In that day (saith the Lord) I will make a Covenant for them with the beasts of the field, and with the Fowls of the Heaven, and with the creeping things of the ground; and I will break the bow, and the sword, and the battle out of the earth, and I will make them to lie down safely. And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear the Heavens, and they shall hear the Earth, and the Earth shall hear the Corn, and the Wine, and the Oil, and they shall hear Jezreel,*

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Whether Paul, or Apollo, or Cephas, or the World, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come, all are yours, 1 Corinthians 3:22. This is the large gift of God's Covenant: Nay, and (which is wonderful, and beyond all comprehension) when I say all the Creatures and Ordinances of God are ours, the very expression of the phrase doth imply, that the Lord giveth himself to be the Staff and Strength of them, so that you shall see the presence of God in them; he will not only give a man Wife, and Children, and Ordinances and Providences, but he himself will be in all these, and bless his People in the enjoyment of them all, so as that they shall enjoy God in all: Psalm 16:5,6, *The Lord is the Portion of mine inheritance.* He saw the Lord in what he did enjoy; and when he had any thing, it was in God; and when he wanted any thing, it was supplied in him. The like did *Jacob* find, when his brother *Esau* came against him with 400 men, and the Lord turned him from the fierceness of his wrath; Here was the Covenant of *Abraham*, the Lord gave him the mouth, and arms, and tears of his brother *Esau*; What saith *Jacob* to all this? Genesis 33:10, *I have seen thy face as though I had seen the face of God:* He saw the power and mercy of God in changing the countenance of his elder Brother: and that is it which sweeteneth all that a man doth enjoy; the *loving kindness of God in all*, is the Blessing of all: and this likewise doth *Jacob* acknowledge, Genesis 33:5, *These are the children which God of his Grace hath given me;* and so he looked at them, as God's Wives, and Children, and Servants, and Cattle; and this is the very life of the Covenant of Grace, when as the Lord is wrapped up in all his Blessings, when as he giveth *Himself*, and in Himself, his *Christ*, and in *Christ*,

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Peter, and *Paul*, and *all things* unto his Church. This is the main thing given, *God himself*, the God of the Covenant, his *Persons, Nature, Ordinances, Providences*, and now *Abraham* is made the Lord of the world, and so the Apostle doth interpret it, *Romans 4:13. The Promise that he should be heir of the world, was not to Abraham, nor to his Seed through the Law, but through the righteousness of Faith*; and this is that which *Abraham* did receive, in receiving the Lord to be *his God*.

2. In the order of giving the Covenant, there is something to be observed:

1. God giveth first, and not the Creature, it was not *Abraham* that gave unto God first; for which of all the Creatures shall offer a Covenant unto the mighty God? *Romans 11:35, Who hath given unto him first? and it shall be recompensed unto him again*; the Lord hath the pre-eminence in giving; for what should *Abraham* give unto God, if God give not something unto him first? he is the first giver.

2. He is also the first thing in order that is given: For doth he give the world first? or Ordinances first? or any other spiritual or temporal blessings first? No doubtless, the Lord is the first thing that he giveth by his Covenant, and with himself all things else also; *Romans 8:32. and there is the precedency of Jesus Christ*; he is given, and in him all spiritual blessings, as the Apostle saith, *Ephesians 1:3, Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus*. And this for the order in giving the Covenant, not obedience first, nor faith first, nor anything else first, but Himself is *Donum primum, & primariam*, and in him all his goodness.

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3. For the Manner of giving; in that he giveth Himself, there is implied both the freedom and eternity of the gift. Firmness therefore, and that unto eternity. In that he giveth himself, it must of necessity be done freely; for what can any creature give to purchase God? if a man could give thousands of worlds, they were not enough to redeem or purchase one soul; and if he had millions of worlds to give, what were they all to purchase so great a gift as God himself is? Therefore it must needs be of free gift; for the creature can do nothing to prevent God: God indeed may give with a purpose to receive back again; but he looketh to receive no more than what he first giveth us, and giveth us strength of Will and Deed to give him back again. He required this of *Abraham*, that he should walk before him and be upright, *Genesis 17:1*, but the very truth is, though *Abraham* shall perform these things

in an Evangelical manner; yet God himself doth undertake in this Covenant to be the Author and Finisher both of his Faith, and Obedience, Hebrews 12:2. And this doth argue the marvellous freedom of the Covenant of Grace: for the Lord offereth it out of his Grace, without the foresight of Faith, or Works; for he undertaketh to give both Will and Deed of his good pleasure, Philippians 2:13.

Objection: But it may be said, Did not the Lord except it, that he should give himself back again, or else the Lord would not give himself?

Answer: Truly then it had not been of Free-grace: But as you see sometimes great Princes will take in a neighbour-Nation into a league with them, and not tell them of it: so doth the Lord deal with his elect ones; he maketh a Covenant with Christ,

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and taketh us into that Covenant, otherwise he should not at all intend it effectually, nor ever give himself unto us; for we are not able to give ourselves unto him till he first take us. For if *Abraham* did give himself, it was because God did take him first; and therefore it is that the Apostle telleth us that the Lord took hold of *Paul*, that he might take hold upon the Lord, Philippians 3:12, *I follow after, if that I may apprehend that, for which I also am apprehended of Christ Jesus:* is not he the Father that hath bought us? hath not he made us, and established us? Deuteronomy 32:6. If we give up ourselves unto the Lord, it is because the Lord hath taken hold upon our hearts first.

Objection: But doth not the Lord require of him to circumcise his seed the eighth day?

Answer: So he doth indeed, but the Lord giveth him that also: God the Father seeth it needful for their everlasting Salvation, therefore he doth give him Circumcision, and giveth him the Grace to Circumcise his Children: I know that the Lord doth call for many things under a Covenant of Grace, but then the Lord doth

1. Work those things in them: And,
2. He will have them know, that those things are nothing, without the working of his Grace. It is true, he may Circumcise *Isaac*, but who shall Circumcise the heart of *Isaac*? it is a small matter to Circumcise the Flesh: So it is a small matter for us to Baptize with Water; but who must wash us from our sins, save only the Lord our God? so that he doth secretly intimate, that what his poor servants do outwardly, he would do it inwardly and effectually. The Children of Israel shall at the Lord's commandment, march about the City of *Jericho*

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seven days together, and not speak a word, and hereby the walls of the City shall fall-down flat; of what use were these weapons to such an end? what would the Lord show his People hereby? hereby he teacheth them to know by what ability and power to bring mighty things to pass: they shall do duties as the Lord commandeth them, but he himself will breath in them to make them effectual. For though we do never so much, yet we cannot reach unto the accomplishment of any good thing; *not by might, nor by strength, but by my Spirit*: the Lord therefore by his Spirit must work all our works for us: Here is the freeness of God's Covenant, in that the Lord giveth himself first, Jeremiah 32:40. *I will make an everlasting Covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good: but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me.* You may speak of Conditions in this kind; but the Lord doth undertake both for his own part, and for our parts also: for as the Covenant is free, so the Lord will freely maintain, and preserve all his Elect, and all from the immutable Nature of God; it is not possible that God should lie: *I am Jehovah, I change not, Malachi 3:6, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed*: Hence springeth our eternity, and perseverance unto it (Romans 11:29) *for the gifts and callings of God are without repentance*: And I am persuaded (saith the Apostle Paul) *that he that hath begun this work, will perfect it until the day of Jesus Christ, Philippians 1:6. The Lord took your Father Abram, and brought him from the other side of the Flood, Joshua 24:3, and he being called, obeyed, Hebrews 11:8.* Thus (mind ye) the Lord dealeth in the Covenant of Grace; he looketh towards those that look not towards him, as is held forth, Hosea 3:3, where the Lord biddeth the

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Prophet love a Woman that was an Adulteress, and say unto her, *Thou shalt be for me, and I will for thee*; this is a branch of the Covenant, when the Lord doth undertake to receive *Abraham* and his Seed unto himself; his giving himself unto them doth breed a reciprocal returning of them unto him. Now it may be demanded,

Question: How the Lord did take *Abraham* and his seed to be his People?

Answer: By a double Act: As,

1. *Of Preparation*, not on *Abraham's* part, nor on his seed's part, but on his *own part*, the Lord prepared them.

2. The Lord did invest him with the Blessings of this Covenant.

1. For Preparation: the Lord prepareth them by a double work of his Spirit, which are manifest in all the Seed of *Abraham*.

1. By a spirit of Bondage, whereby he cutteth off the Seed of *Abraham* from all worldly intanglements and delights: thus God took *Abraham*, and brought him from beyond the Flood, and so doth he take men off from their Countries and Fathers' houses; he separates them from all such things, that he might draw them unto himself: thus he dealt with the children of Israel, and called them to be a singular People unto himself, Deuteronomy 7:6,7,8. Thus doth the Lord deal with all those whom he receiveth to be a people unto himself: By this spirit of Bondage, he draweth them from all their sinful lusts, and passions, so as that they can find no life in them, nor any hope of mercy at all in any thing: by this Bondage, the Lord setteth home unto the Consciences of men, the weight and danger of their sins, and bindeth them under the sense of his wrath

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unto fear of Damnation. The Romans first received the Spirit of Bondage to fear, before ever they came to receive the Spirit of Adoption, Romans 8:25. But thus the Lord doth even shut a Soul out of doors, that he may open to him another and a better way.

2. The Lord also prepareth his People by a Spirit of Burning, which upon a Spirit of Bondage he doth shed abroad into the hearts of men. This we read of, Malachi 4:1, *Behold, the day cometh that shall burn as an Oven, and all the proud, and all that do wickedly, shall be as stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up, and it shall leave them neither root nor branch.* It is spoken of the Ministry of *John Baptist*, which did burn like an Oven against all the Scribes and Pharisees, and left them neither the root of *Abraham's* Covenant, nor the branch of their own good Works. He cutteth them off from the Covenant of *Abraham*, Matthew 3:9, *Think not to say within your selves that you have Abraham to your Father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham:* and so by cutting them off from the root, he leaveth them no grounds to trust on. From their good Works also, the Lord Jesus Christ cutteth them off, Matthew 6:2, *When thou dost thine alms, sound not a Trumpet before thee as the Hypocrites do,* that they may have the glory of men: and verse 5, *When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the Hypocrites are, &c.* and verse 16, *When ye Fast, ye shall not be as the Hypocrites are, of a sad countenance, &c.* This was a Spirit of Burning which the Lord conveyed by the Ministry of Christ, and of John Baptist, to burn up all the Hypocrites like stubble; and the beauty of their works were blasted by it: and this is God's usual manner of dealing.

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Now there are many under a spirit of Bondage, that never came under a spirit of burning; and they being convinced of sin, and of the danger thereof, yet hope to wrestle it out, and work it out by their own performances, till the Spirit of Burning come and consume all that false confidence. But when the Spirit of Burning cometh, he then blasteth all the fruits and branches of their righteousness, and burns up all that a man hath wrought, or can work. And this is that which the Prophet Isaiah, chapter 4:4 speaketh of, that *the Lord will purge away the filth of the Daughter of Zion, with a Spirit of Judgement and of Burning*; the one is a Spirit of Sanctification, and the other is a consuming fire, which forceth them not to build any comfort upon any works that they have done: this may Hypocrites reach unto in their judgements, so as that they may be convinced that they have neither root within them, nor branch growing upon them; and yet in the mean while they may not come unto a Spirit of Adoption: but hereby also the Lord useth to prepare his people. Some bless themselves in worldly courses, and never came unto a Spirit of bondage. Some do find comfort in their performances, and never saw the vanity of their own righteousness: But there are those whom the Lord doth carry further, unto a spirit of burning, even unto a sensible feeling of God's wrath, burning against whatsoever is as stubble, (and such is a man's own gifts, and parts, and worth) so that now the poor soul findeth that he hath no Root, not any sure mercy of the Covenant of Grace, that he can rest upon: no green branch of righteousness remaining, but all is blasted and broken in pieces, according to what the Prophet *Isaiah* saith, chapter 40:6,7, *All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as*

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the flower of the field: the grass withereth, and the flower fadeth; because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: and so the Lord cometh to leave a man neither Root nor Branch: For by a spirit of Bondage the Lord blasteth all flesh: but when it cometh unto the goodliness of flesh; that is consumed by a spirit of Burning.

2. As God thus prepareth us for himself: so he doth *give himself* unto us, and *taketh possession* of us by his blessed Spirit: the Father giveth himself and his Son by his blessed Spirit, (for the Spirit it is by which he doth visit the hearts of his people) and this is the main Blessing of the Covenant of Grace. For the better clearing of it, it may be demanded.

Question: How doth the Lord *give himself* unto his People, and his people back again to *receive him*?

Answer: 1. They being thus prepared, the Spirit of God taketh up his seat in the soul, by making it a Temple unto himself, in the Name of the Father, and of the Son; and so are they *made an habitation of God through the Spirit*, Ephesians 2:22. *Because ye are Sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, &c.* Galatians 4:6. (He speaketh not of sons by actual Regeneration, by God's eternal Counsel.) The same Spirit is also called the *Comforter*, whom Jesus Christ hath promised to send, John 16:7,8,9, *If I depart, I will send you the Comforter; and when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgement; of sin, because they believe not in me:* this the Holy Ghost convinceth men of, to be the greatest misery of the soul, that they have not believed upon Jesus Christ. And look as a talent of gold, or some weighty metal falling into a vessel of water, dasheth out all that

is in the vessel, to make room for itself: so the Lord Jesus Christ coming into the soul, dasheth out all watery confidences, and maketh room for himself. And in every deed, because the heart of man is not only like unto water, but is hard as Ice, and strong; therefore the Spirit of God cometh like fire, and melteth the iron stone of the heart, and softeneth it into flesh; so that now the soul is utterly at a loss, not only in regard of his sins, but in regard of his best works also; and is most of all convinced of his unbelief. Now this holy Spirit of God being thus shed abroad into the heart, at the very first entrance of it into the soul, as it doth chiefly convince the soul of unbelief; so,

2. The same Spirit *worketh Faith* in the soul, to yield himself unto the Lord, to receive the Lord Jesus Christ; and this is a true saving work; he now submitteth unto the will of God: so that the Spirit of God becometh unto the soul not only as a Spirit of *burning*, to consume all that is like stubble; but doth also melt the iron stone of the heart, and softeneth it into *flesh*, that the word may take deep impression in it. Now there is room for Jesus Christ, now faith is wrought there; and now a soul can plead with God by Faith in Prayer: he seeth there is no former safe hold of his Covenant that he can plead, nor any righteousness of his own, but such as hypocrites will quarrel for, and rise up to maintain, as they did against *John Baptist* pleading their covenant, and their righteousness: with these things a poor soul is not satisfied: *but unto you that fear my Name, shall the Son of righteousness arise with healing in his wings, &c.* Malachi 4:2. Herein is implied such a reverent fear, as distrusting our selves, giveth all the honour to the Lord Jesus; this Fear

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of the Lord accompanieth Faith, and is of like nature to it: both of them distrusting our selves, and both of them giving all honour to Christ; the one out of confidence in him, the other out of reverence to him.

Thus it is in our *Effectual calling*; the Spirit of God taking possession in our hearts, and working this Faith in us, thereby we submit unto the Lord; and this is Faith in Jesus Christ, that maketh us one with Christ: for our effectual calling bringeth us to be one with him, 1 Corinthians 1:9, *God is faithful, by whom ye were called into the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ*. This fellowship standeth in two things:

1. In the *unity* of the Spirit, 1 Corinthians 6:17, *He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit*.

2. In a *lively faith* on our parts. So that by Believing this is the first thing we do, we yield unto the work of God; when this stronger man cometh, to wit, Christ by his Spirit, we yield up all our armour to him; and herein standeth our coming on to be in Christ, and in God the Father, by this Spirit of God that taketh possession of the heart, and hath not only burnt up root and branch of our Legal righteousness, but hath also melted us unto a soft frame to yield up ourselves unto the Lord; and now we are fit for any duty, the Lord having possessed us with his powerful presence: herein lieth our effectual calling; and this is true spiritual union between the Lord and our souls. Now this Faith thus wrought in our Effectual calling, is not built upon any conditional promise of Grace pre-existent in us, nor can it be built upon any: but upon some absolute free Promise of God unto the soul, according to what we read, Isaiah 43:22 to 25, *Thou hast not called upon me O Jacob, but thou hast been weary of me O*

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Israel; thou hast not brought me the small cattle of thy burnt-offerings, neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices: I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense: thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices; but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities: I, even I am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins. In all this we see the absolute freeness of the Grace of God. But if the Promise be conditional, it is a condition subsequent to Faith, not antecedent before it.

Objection: You will say, Though some may be converted by such an absolute Promise, yet some other man's Faith may be built upon a conditional Promise, and the condition pre-existent.

Answer: I Pray you consider it: If it be a Condition, it is to some good Qualification or other, some good work or other of the Spirit of God in the heart of a Christian. Was this work wrought before Conversion, or after? Every Christian knoweth, that all works before conversion are but dross, and dung: to apply promises to such works were indeed to build upon a sandy foundation. What say you then to works after conversion? All works after conversion are fruits of Faith; and if they proceed from faith, then faith went before, then a man's faith was not built upon a conditional promise; how is it possible that it should? when as all works after conversion, are either fruits of Faith, or else they are no true sanctification; then faith went before in order of Nature, and so was not built upon works, but works upon it.

Our Faith closeth with Christ upon a promise of

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Free-Grace, otherwise (as saith *Calvin, Institutes 1.3.c.2.s.29*) my faith would always be trembling and wavering as my works be. Upon a promise of Free-Grace therefore my Faith is built, as upon the promise of God in Christ reconciling the world unto *himself*, 2 Corinthians 5:18,19. The word is (it may be) spoken outwardly unto all Christians: but if God do set it home particularly unto any Soul, that man receiveth this Gift of God, and it is made his own: First he believeth the promise of Free-Grace, and then afterward come other promises, that do bear witness unto the right application of that promise unto the soul: but I am first built upon a promise of Free-grace, or else there is no true closing with Jesus Christ: well then, being thus united unto Christ, from this union with Christ do flow all other blessings and benefits of the Covenant of Grace: for hence springeth communion with Christ in all *spiritual blessings*, that the Lord hath wrought for us in him; and they are two of them *Relative* blessings (as they are called by Divines) and two of them *positive* blessings. The two former are laid up in God's own Hand, and are not created in us: the other two positive Blessings are created in us.

1. For the uncreated blessings,

They are $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 1. \textit{Adoption} \\ 2. \textit{Justification} \end{array} \right.$

And they spring immediately (*simul & semel*) from the former union with Christ; for as soon as ever the Spirit of God is in our hearts, and hath wrought

Faith, that we do not spurn against Jesus Christ, but receive him, now is the Divine Nature of

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Christ in us, and we are now become the sons of God, as Christ himself is. Look as in a man's first natural conception, as soon as ever one doth live, there is an heir of *Adam*, even so soon as the soul liveth: so it is in the new spiritual Birth; as soon as the Holy Ghost cometh, and hath wrought this Faith, now is the Seed of God in us, the Life of Christ, and the Spirit of God; and now we are the *Sons of God*, as we read John 1:12, *As many as received him, to them he gave power to be the sons of God*. Immediately upon this union with Christ, we are Sons by *Adoption*; and as we are adopted, so likewise our *sins* are now imputed unto Christ, and his righteousness unto us, and so our persons are *justified*. For how, and when was *Adam's* sin imputed unto us? Psalm 51:5, *Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, in sin did my mother conceive me*: So soon as ever there was life, it was the life of *Adam*, and then the imputation of *Adam's* sin falleth immediately upon the soul. So when we do receive Christ by this living Faith, having the Life of Christ in us, we have the righteousness of Christ (the second *Adam*) imputed to us: For what doth the child in the womb? though it doth neither good nor evil, but is merely passive, yet sinful it is, and a child of *Adam*: So also in this our Regeneration, the soul receiveth Christ by that faith which the Lord hath wrought in it, whereby also it is made capable of the privilege of *Adoption*; and so the Lord *accounteth* us his children, and *imputeth* the Righteousness of his Son unto us, whereby we are *Justified*. These things do dwell in God's Bosom, and the meaning of them is afterwards revealed unto the soul; but communicated they are, both that of *Adoption*, and this of *Justification*, by this gift of faith wrought in us.

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But we are still upon the first work of conversion wherein a Christian is only passive, and receptive; and truly it must needs be so in the first work of God upon us.

2. Now for the *Positive blessings* that are wrought in us:

They are $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} 1. \textit{Sanctification.} \\ 2. \textit{Glorification.} \end{array} \right.$

1. When we are called, then are we *Sanctified*, then are we *Glorified*, 1 Corinthians 1:2, as in our natural conception, as soon as ever the child liveth, *Adam's* sin is first imputed, & then there is a proneness in it to carry it captive unto sin, and to make it backward unto any goodness: So when the life of

Christ is dispensed unto the soul, now the Lord comes to convey with it Justification, or pardon of sin, and when there is a promise in a Justified person to walk in the spirit, Galatians 5:25, *If we live in the Spirit, let us also walk in the Spirit. By Faith our hearts come to be purified*, Acts 15:9. And the same Spirit quickeneth us unto holy duties, *so that we live, yet not we, but Christ liveth in us*; neither are we only in his hand, but the Spirit sanctifying, draweth us into an holy confederacy to serve God in Family, Church, and Commonwealth; and this Sanctification groweth, and increaseth more and more, 2 Corinthians 7:1; 1 Thessalonians 4:1; 5:23.

2. The other positive gift is *Glorification*, which we read of, Romans 8:30, *Whom he called, them also he justified; and whom he justified, them also he glorified*: this the Apostle *Peter* mentioneth, 1 Peter 5:10, *The God of all grace hath called us into his eternal glory in*

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Christ Jesus: And in truth, he hath begun the work from the time that he first began to sanctify us, 2 Timothy 1:9. *He hath saved us, and called us*: from the very first time that God worketh upon the soul graciously, there is a glorious work in that soul; and others may see it, though himself sometimes seeth nothing that he hath received. Thus we see the second branch of the doctrine opened, How the Lord doth receive *Abraham* and *his seed* unto himself, preparing them by a spirit of *Bondage*, and of *Burning*, and then taking possession of them savingly by the *inhabitation* of the blessed spirit; the same Spirit begetting Faith, we are alive in Jesus Christ, and so come to be *Adopted* and *Justified* in him: the same Faith which receiveth Adoption and Justification, doth begin to stir a little, and to breath forth into gracious desires, and some holy mourning, and beginneth now to put forth such works as the holy Ghost carrieth the soul an end in; working all our works in us, and for us.

3. Now for the third and last part of the Doctrine: The Lord took the *chiefest* of *Abraham's* seed to be the Mediator of this Covenant, unto whom all the Promises were made, Galatians 3:16.

Question: How did the Lord constitute *him* so to be?

Answer 1: By a double Act: first, by receiving *Jesus Christ* the Son of the Virgin *Mary*, to be one Person with the second in Trinity, hereby laying a ground of a firm Mediation between God and us: for *Jesus Christ* being of God's Nature, therefore he will be faithful unto God; and being of our Nature, therefore he will be compassionate towards us. And here is the root of all the life and power of this Mediation, to wit, this Personal Union of the Son of man, with the second Person in Trinity,

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which is a firm and everlasting Union.

2. By God's giving him to be a *Covenant*, Isaiah 42:6, *I will give thee for a Covenant of the People, for a Light of the Gentiles*. What is meant hereby? the Lord meaneth that he giveth him to be a *Mediator* of this Covenant.

1. To receive from God all the *Promises* and gracious *gifts*, whatsoever is requisite for him to be *King, Priest, and Prophet*; and all these things he receiveth from the hand of the Father, Colossians 1:19, *For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell*: thus he becometh a plentiful Redeemer. And as the Lord gave him to be a *Covenant*, so he giveth him also to work all things needful for our Redemption; partly by his *passion*, and *obedience* unto the Death of the Cross, Philippians 2:8, and partly by fulfilling all the righteousness of the Law, Matthew 3:15. The Lord Jesus Christ did fully accomplish whatsoever was requisite for him to accomplish in his own Person.

2. He doth perform all things needful for the *Application* of this Redemption unto our souls, Isaiah 26:12. And to this end, he it is that sheddeth abroad his Spirit into our hearts, John 15:26, & 16:7, and when this blessed Spirit cometh, he applieth unto the soul all this gracious Redemption of Jesus Christ, by giving Jesus Christ and all the Fruits of his redemption, and by working all those blessed works, that the souls of his people come to be partakers of; and so performeth all those conditions that are required on our parts: if it be needful for us to have *Faith*, he will work it in us; if it be needful for us to live a *life of Faith*, he will help us so to live, for *it is not of ourselves, it is the gift of God*: Ephesians 2:9. Thus hath the Lord made him a

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complete Mediator of this holy Covenant; and whatsoever we receive, we receive from him: for unto him first, as the head of the Church, are all blessings given; and unto us, *all promises in him are Yea, and in him Amen*, 2 Corinthians 1:20, for though Christ be not a sinner in his own Person, yet in respect of his Members, he is many times lost in them, though not in himself; and poor in them, though not in himself: for us therefore he receiveth the Promises of God; and that is the great security of them, that they are laid up safe in him, and belong unto us if we have union with the Head; and in him we perform whatsoever God requireth; whether we pray, or preach, or hear, we do all in the Name of Jesus Christ, going forth in his strength, and power: Colossians 3:17. Thus is the Lord Jesus Christ a firm surety of *this better Covenant, stablished upon better Promises*, Hebrews 8:6.

Use 1: In the first place: This may teach us a broad *difference* between the Covenant of Works, & the Covenant of Grace. In the Covenant of Works,

Difference 1: The Lord offereth Himself as a Father, his Son as a Redeemer, his Spirit as a Sanctifier; but this is still upon a condition of obedience: *if they shall keep his Laws, and obey his voice, then shall they be a peculiar treasure unto him above all people*, Exodus 19:5,6. This also they undertake to do, Deuteronomy 5:27, *All that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee, we will hear it, and do it; but, O saith God, that there was such an heart in them*, verse 29. When they rebelled, he did not pardon them graciously, but the Angel whom he sendeth with them, he biddeth them *beware of him, and obey his voice, and provoke him not, for he will not pardon your transgressions, for my name is in him*: In the Covenant of Grace he

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will, but not in this: here is indeed a conditional Redeemer and Saviour; and so it is expressed, Isaiah 63:8,9,10, *He was their Saviour; in all their affliction he was afflicted, and the Angel of his presence saved them in his love, &c. But they rebelled, and vexed his holy Spirit, therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and fought against them: with many of them God was not well pleased (almost with none of them) but overthrew them in the wilderness*: Thus in the Covenant of Works all is given upon condition of obedience.

Difference 2: The Lord giving himself, his Son, and Spirit upon condition, though it be but to Works, yet he is pleased to receive them into some kind of *Relative Union*, expressed, Jeremiah 32:32. *Which my Covenant they brake, although I was an Husband to them*. He was married unto them in Church-Covenant, this was some kind of union: He was their God and they were his peculiar people; and yet the Lord cast them off, a generation of his wrath, from this Marriage-Covenant between them and him: from this union there springeth a kind of Faith, by which the soul cleaveth unto the Lord in some measure, else there could not be this Marriage-Union: and this Faith is that of which you read, Psalm 106:12,13, *They believed his words, they sang his praise; they soon forgot his works; they waited not for his counsel*. So also Exodus 14:31, it is said, *They believed the Lord, and his servant Moses*: This is that Faith which men may receive, and yet may Apostate from it, spoken of, Hebrews 6:3 to 6, *For a while some do believe, and in time of temptation fall away*, Luke 8:13. But all that Faith was never grounded upon any free promise of Grace, but all was built upon *Ordinances*, and *Duties*, and upon no higher ground. In the

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2 Chronicles 13:8 to 12, marvellously strong are the expressions of Abijah, when *Jeroboam* came against him; You think to withstand the Kingdom of the Lord in the hand of *David*, &c. Have not you cast out the Priests of the Lord? saith he, &c. *But as for us, the Lord is our God, and we have not forsaken him; and the Priests which minister unto the Lord are the Sons of Aaron, and the Levites wait upon their business; and they burn unto the Lord every morning, and every Evening, Burnt-Sacrifices, and sweet Incense; the Show-bread also they set in order upon the pure Table, and the Candlestick of Gold, with the Lamps thereof, to burn every evening: for we keep the charge of the Lord our God, but ye have forsaken him. And behold, God himself is with us for our Captain, and his Priests with sounding Trumpets to cry Alarum against you. O ye children of Israel, fight ye not against the Lord God of your Fathers, for you shall not prosper.* Thus we see what Faith he did express; and hereupon (verse 18,) the children of Israel were brought under, and the children of Judah prevailed; and yet this King's heart was not perfect with the Lord his God: 2 Kings 15:3, and yet (mind you) a strong confidence he had, that the Lord was with him, and that he would be present with his own Ordinances; there Faith built upon fellowship with Ordinances, like unto that Faith in the Scripture before alleged, Luke 8:13. Men are affected with the Word, and believe, and find comfort; and all this springeth from that Relative communion which they have with the Lord; they find refreshing in their way and work, and many times take it for the very Seal of the Spirit of God; all which may be, and often is found in Hypocrites: but here is the difference; In a Covenant of Works God giveth himself

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conditionally; in that of Grace, *absolutely*: in both, he maketh a Covenant, in the one of *Grace*, the other of *Works*, in which the voice of the Lord is, If you be true to me, then I will not renounce you; and in this Covenant is Faith found, but it is only built upon such changes as they find in themselves, and will in the end vanish utterly away.

Difference 3: There is a Difference also that springeth from the fruits of these two Covenants in their continuance: for though in the Covenant of Works there be a semblance of *Justification*, and *Adoption*, and a *kind of Sanctification*, yet they endure but for a season; and therefore he calleth them *Loammi*, for ye are not my people; and *Loruhamah*, for I will no more have mercy, though sometimes they were his People, and he then had mercy on them: they may also have *pardon of sin for a season*, *Psalms 78:37,38, Being full*

of compassion, he forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not; yet they were such whose heart was not upright with him, neither were they steadfast in his Covenant: this is plainly held forth in the Parable, Matthew 18:23 to the end: when the servant had not wherewith to pay his Lord, he fell down and worshipped him, saying, Lord have patience with me, and I will pay thee all, his Lord was moved with compassion, and loosed him, and forgave him the debt: but when he had not like compassion on his fellow-servant, then his Lord was wroth, and charged all his iniquities upon him, and cast him into Prison until he should pay all that was due unto him: So that this pardon is not everlasting, but only respite from outward punishment, and from inward pangs of Conscience many times; and this they take for pardon of sin, and acceptance in Jesus Christ, when indeed they are deluded: So likewise their

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Sanctification is but for a moment, they come at last some of them to *tread underfoot the Blood of the Covenant wherewith they were sanctified*, Hebrews 10:29. For, Christ was but a conditional Redeemer unto them: they had only gifts of Tongues, and utterance, and wisdom, and discerning of Spirits, and a common Faith: which things are not that Sanctification which is a fruit of Saving Faith; but only such gifts as do sanctify them unto the work of the Ministry perhaps, or Magistracy, and fit them for household government, or the like: and so much positive work there is in them, as doth make them in some measure fit for the work, or service which they are called unto. For a little more explaining of this:

Question: Is it the same with that *Sanctification* which is in God's children?

Answer: God forbid. All the men in the world are divided into two Ranks: Godly, or Ungodly; Righteous or Wicked: of Wicked men, two sorts; some are notoriously wicked, others are Hypocrites: of Hypocrites two sorts (and you shall find them in the Church of God) some are *washed Swine*, others are *Goats*.

1. The Swine are those of whom our Saviour Christ saith, that *they return unto their wallowing in the mire*: like unto these are such men, as at the hearing of some Sermon have been stomach-sick of their sins, and have rejected their wicked courses, but yet the Swine's heart remaineth in them; and as a Swine, when he cometh where the puddle is, will readily lie down in it; so will these men wallow in the puddle of uncleanness, when their Conscience is not pricked for the present: but these are a grosser kind of Hypocrites.

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2. There is another sort that go far beyond these, and those are Goats, so called, Matthew 25:32,33, and these are clean beasts, such as chew the cud, meditate upon Ordinances; and they divide the hoof; they live both in a general, and particular calling, and will not be idle: they are also fit for Sacrifice: what then is wanting? Truly they are not sheep all this while, they are but Goats; yet a Goat doth loath that which a Swine will readily break into: but where then do they fall short of the nature of Sheep? A difference there is, which standeth principally in these particulars.

1. The Goat is of a capricious Nature, and affecteth eminency; *his gait also is stately*, Proverbs 30:31. *Agur* reckoneth the He-Goat among the four things that are comely in going.

2. And they are full of Ambition; they cannot abide swamps, and holes, but will be climbing upon the tops of Mountains; there is not that plain, lowly, sheep-like frame, that attendeth unto the voice of the shepherd to be led up and down into fresh Pastures: they attend upon their own ends, and will outshoot God in his own bow, and therefore when they have done many things for Christ, he will say unto them, *Depart from me ye workers of iniquity*: more eminency they did affect, than they were guided unto; Thus it was with *Jehu*, who in his zeal for God, thought to promote himself; and herein he will not be persuaded of his sin, and therefore walking along in crooked ways, the Lord led him forth with evil doers; he cometh at length to cleave unto the sins of *Jeroboam* the son of *Nebat*, who made Israel to sin: notwithstanding you may receive a Goat into Church-fellowship for all his capricious Nature, and he will be a clean

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creature, and of much good use: the *five foolish*, (Matthew 25:2) were all of them *Virgins*, all of them abhorring Idolatry, and all go forth to meet the Bridegroom: and yet they are *foolish*, and never shall you make them wise, to be all for Christ, in him, and from him, only hearing and obeying his voice.

3. They are of a rankish nature all of them, specially the old Goats will have an unsavoury relish, far from the pleasant sweetness that is in a sheep; and herein Hypocrites are greatly different from the sheep of Christ; and many times also they do push with the shoulder the poor sheep of Christ, as the Prophet speaketh, Ezekiel 34:21, *And they mar the Pastures with their feet*, and will be at length *mulding the fair waters of the Sanctuary also*: And in their best sanctification they fall far short of a sheep-like frame of spirit,

diligently to hear the voice of the shepherd; this will not be found in the sanctification of the best hypocrite under heaven; they may go far, and yet at length fall away: this is no *Arminianism*, but if you search the Scriptures diligently, you will find these things to be true. But such instances deceive the Arminians.

Difference 4: There is a fourth Difference between the Covenant of Works and of Grace; in respect of the *Mediator*, Galatians 3:19, *The Law was given and ordained by Angels in the hand of a Mediator; Moses was a Mediator according to their Works; and this our Saviour telleth the Jews, John 5:45, You have one that accuseth you, even Moses in whom ye trust:* and as for Jesus Christ, if he be given to be their Redeemer, it is but according to their Works, if they shall obey his voice: but if they shall sin against him, he will overthrow them body and soul into the nethermost

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Hell. But now in the Covenant of Grace, Jesus Christ hath obtained a more excellent Ministry, to be the *Mediator of a better Covenant, stablished upon better Promises*, Hebrews 8:6. Thus we see in this first use the difference between the Covenant of Works and the Covenant of Grace.

Use 2: I might (in the second place) from hence also gather an Argument against the whole Body of *Arminianism*; for they look at no gift of God, but merely upon the Faith, or Works of the creature foreseen: If you speak of Election, they tell you it is of Faith foreseen; if of Glory, it is upon condition of perseverance: but we see how contrary it is unto this truth of God; for he giveth himself first, before he giveth any thing else accompanying salvation: he gave us Christ in his eternal Counsel, before Election; and so doth he also in our Effectual calling; not Faith before Christ, to enable us to choose whether we will have him, or not have him: but he is God, and first giveth himself, and with himself, Faith, and so worketh our wills unto himself, not otherwise, leaving it to us to choose whether we will have him to be our God or no. Many things in *Poperie* and *Arminianism*, come to be confuted from hence; for in truth they hold forth no more but a Covenant of Works: and if we will not grant Faith and good Works to be the cause of all the blessed gifts of God, they will take it marvellously unkindly; but they were as good deliver unto us another Gospel.

Use 3: This may also serve to teach the people of God to bear a gracious respect unto those that are under a Covenant of Works, and not forthwith to condemn them, as if there were no hope of their salvation; for God never calleth any unto fellowship

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with himself in a Covenant of Grace, but ordinarily he first bringeth them into a Covenant of Works. The ignorant look to be saved by their good Prayers, and by their good serving of God. After, God may terrify and humble their souls with the sense of their palpable wickedness. Then they may reform and trust in their performances: and then God may burn up all such false confidence. Therefore those that are under a Covenant of Works, may belong unto the Lord, as well as thyself; pray for them therefore. *Paul* was under a Covenant of Works, *Steven* prayeth for him; and as most conceive, that Prayer was effectual unto his Conversion, and *Paul* was as dear unto the Lord as *Steven* himself was. Men under a Covenant of Works, the Lord may bring them home unto himself, by dashing all their Works in pieces, and showing them the presidence of their spirit: and the Lord will also come and pluck away the caul from their hearts; and then they will have none in heaven but Christ, nor in the earth in comparison of him; and then the Holy Ghost convinceth them of this sin above all their other sins, that they have not believed on Jesus Christ. Do not therefore censure any such, as to say there is no likelihood that they should ever come to have fellowship with Christ; for if the Lord make them to fall down before him, and to yield up their spirits unto the Lord in holy reverence, and fear, these have now received some secret smoking affections (besides a Spirit of burning) which the Lord will not quench.

Use 4: It may serve in the next place to clear up our Judgements in sundry passages that do concern the Covenant of Grace, by Answers unto these six Questions following.

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Question 1: What is the *first Gift* that ever the Lord giveth unto his *Elect*?

Answer: First of all he giveth himself: the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit; this is the Foundation; and if you shall lay Faith in the Foundation before these, the Foundation will lie uneasily, and the spirit of a true Christian shall not lie long in peace; Christ must therefore be first, and with him Faith cometh in to receive him: First he will make a Covenant with us, and put his holy Spirit within us, which worketh in us Faith, and Fear, that we never shall depart from him. He giveth us his Son and all things else in him: he giveth us in him pardon of sins in our Justification, and in him some degrees of glory also, and in him right unto all the Promises of the Covenant; no other Foundation but him: take him first therefore, for he is the first thing given.

Objection: But whether doth not the Lord give us some saving preparations, before Jesus Christ?

Answer: Reserving due honour to such gracious and precious Saints, as may be otherwise minded, I confess I do not discern, that the Lord worketh and giveth any saving preparations in the heart, till he give union with Christ; for if the Lord do give any saving qualification before Christ, then the soul may be in the state of Salvation before Christ; and that seemeth to be prejudicial unto the Grace and Truth of Jesus Christ: for if there be no name under heaven given, whereby we must be saved, but only Jesus Christ; nor his Name, but in a way of fellowship with him; then it seemeth to me apparently to follow, that whatsoever saving work there be in the soul, it is not there before Christ be there. It is true *John Baptist* was sent to subdue all flesh, by a

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Spirit of Burning, which burneth up carnal confidence in the Covenant of *Abraham*, and all their fruits of righteousness: here were indeed preparations for Christ, but these were not saving, they were still children of wrath; *ye Serpents, ye Generation of Vipers*, notwithstanding all this. Further, *John* did indeed dispense poverty of Spirit, unto which a saving promise was made; but then Jesus Christ was there also; whether they knew it, or knew it not, that is not greatly material in this Argument: but if the Kingdom of Heaven was there, Jesus Christ was there first, otherwise it will prove dishonourable unto the Name of Christ. Indeed there is a saving preparation before consolation in Christ, and the manifestation of our gracious union with him; but for our first union, there are no steps unto that *Altar*, Exodus 20:26, but Christ doth prepare his Tabernacle for himself to dwell in. This is in the first place for instruction, concerning what is the first gift which the Lord giveth unto the soul, before any work. He giveth spiritual union with his Son: this standeth firm from the tenor of the Covenant, and the nature of it.

Question 2: In what order the Lord giveth the Covenant, and the blessings of it: whether Faith before them, or those Blessings before Faith be able to apply them?

Answer: He doth give himself to work Faith, before Faith can be there; for it is the fruit of the Spirit that Faith is wrought in the Soul, Galatians 5:22, the Spirit is in the soul in which Faith (as a fruit) groweth; and this Faith doth receive the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ himself by his Spirit; and it doth also receive Adoption, and Justification: but to be able actually to apply Christ, before we be in Christ,

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our first birth will not bear it; for a man is as passive in his Regeneration, as in his first Generation; only the Lord giveth us his Spirit that doth unite us unto Christ, which is received by Faith, together with Adoption and Justification: and this is the true and native order of the Lord's working.

Question 3: Whether do we receive the Lord Jesus Christ in an absolute, or in a conditional Promise?

Answer: We know the Lord can convey himself in an Evangelical commandment, as well as in a Promise; as we find it, Isaiah 41:14, *Fear thou not worm Jacob, I will help thee, &c.* He can also convey himself in a threatening unto the Devil; as unto our first Parents he did convey himself, wrapping up a promise in it, as Genesis 3:15, *I will put enmity between thee and the Woman, and between thy seed and her Seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel:* and from hence the Lord gave them to suck a sweet and comfortable promise of his Free Grace: and when the like is conveyed in a Commandment, the Lord undertaketh to work that which he so commandeth: But now it is questioned, Whether the Promise wherein the Lord giveth himself, be absolute or conditional. Faith uniting us to Christ, it is ever upon an absolute Promise; or a condition subsequent, not antecedent. If you will say it is a Promise to a condition; what kind of condition was it? There is no condition before Faith; for then a man is out of the way of any gracious Blessing from Heaven; no condition before it, whereby a man can close with Jesus Christ: and if it was a condition after Faith, unto which the Promise was made, then Faith was there before; and whatsoever followeth conversion, is no ground of faith,

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but a fruit and effect of it: therefore I say, our first coming on to Christ, cannot be upon a conditional, but upon an absolute Promise. If the Lord bear witness unto Justification, it is either absolute, or to Faith: If he come to bear witness unto a man's Sanctification, then the Lord doth it from some work or other of his Grace in them; as unto *Abraham*, Genesis 12:12, *By this I know that thou fearest me, seeing thou hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son.* It is true indeed, after a man's Justification is born witness unto from Grace, or from faith, then Sanctification and Justification do mutually bear witness one to another: that is, when Justification is not wholly doubted of, but in part, then Sanctification is of use to witness; but not when Justification lieth wholly prostrate.

There is a fourth Question, which is as a further branch of the fourth Use; of which I would not speak, but that I might through the good hand of God the better clear things, that we may not stumble in our expressions, nor in any Office of brotherly love, in conference about the Covenant of Grace and Works.

Question 4: For as much as you hear of a Sanctification under a Covenant of Works, it doth imply, that there is a Sanctification that is but transitory, and not everlasting, nor immortal; Whether then *may a man evidence his union with Christ from his Sanctification?*

Answer: I answer in four Propositions, that I might not leave any occasion of scruple or difference about what is held forth in our Congregation; as being that which doth yield as much agitation as any other Doctrine that is taught among us. Let me therefore shortly and plainly discover it; and let it

be so far received, as we see the life, and presence, and truth of the Spirit of God revealed in the Doctrine of Free Grace, from the Scriptures of Truth.

Proposition 1: That Sanctification according to the Law, (that is to say, such a Sanctification as may be found in a Covenant of Works) is no evidence, or witness of our union with Christ. And I suppose there is no difference there. But though there be no difference in men's Judgements in this; yet it is an easy thing for Christians to mistake their evidence upon this very ground, and as much upon this ground as any: For when Christians come to be really wrought upon, and find themselves discouraged from sin, and so reform their lives, and give up themselves to obey the Word, and find comfort therein, (and great consolation many times) in such a case as this Christians do much differ upon the point; and yet I do not know any of all the Teachers in this Country that withdraw their consents from this doctrine, that such Sanctification as is wrought in hypocrites, though that it may reach to great improvements, yet it is no evidence of Justification at all. It hath been handled in another Congregation, (and I think not without weight of truth) that to distinguish in men between that Sanctification which floweth from the Law, and that which is of the Gospel, is a matter so narrow, that the Angels in Heaven have much ado to discern who differ: a work fitter for Angels to cut the scantling in it, then for the Ministers of the Gospel, though indeed there be great difference of the one from the other. Now though this do not tend to heal any difference in Judgement; yet it is useful to heal a misprision of Sanctification, that may be found in

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all hypocrites. Three things are to be attended unto in all Sanctification:

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|---|--|
| { | 1. From what <i>Root</i> it springeth. |
| { | 2. By what <i>Rule</i> it is guided. |
| { | 3. At what <i>End</i> it aimeth. |

And commonly under some one or other of these three, are put all the differences between the one Sanctification and the other: I speak it that it may be searched, and (God is my witness) not to unsettle the well-grounded comfort of any soul: but if any man hath built upon any unsafe Foundation, or hath built hay, or stubble; better it is to know it at first, whilst there is hope in Israel, then when it is too late. In those three things formerly mentioned, are all the differences between the Sanctification of Hypocrites, and of the children of God; and they go so close together, that you will say, it is not an easy matter to discern Justification by Sanctification.

1. For the *Root* of it: The soul having fellowship with Christ, by the Holy Ghost coming into the soul, and working Faith in Jesus Christ. This is the Root of all Christian Sanctification, Ezekiel 36:27, *I will put my Spirit within you, &c.* And, *he that is joined to the Lord, is one Spirit*, 1 Corinthians 6:17, and for Faith, it is *Faith that purifieth the heart*, Acts 15:9, and, *without Faith it is impossible to please God*, Hebrews 11:6. So that Faith must concur unto the rootedness of our Sanctification in Christ. But the Apostle doth attribute both these roots unto those Christians that shall afterwards fall away to sin the sin against the Holy Ghost, Hebrews 6. *They have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the*

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Holy Ghost: that Heavenly Gift was Faith, which the Apostle reckoneth chiefly among the *Principles* of our Christian Religion, verse 1. A *taste* they had of it; yet from both these they fall away: you know what was said of *Saul*, 1 Samuel 10:10. *The Spirit of God came upon him*: And so did it likewise upon *Judas* and *Demas*, acting them mightily in their administration; and as they were thus carried along by the Spirit; So likewise the Spirit of *Bondage* will marvellously prevail with the sons of men, to draw them on to strong works of Reformation, from whence they reap no small consolation; but think and say, (as *Abijah* did) that the Lord is with them, whilst they are with him: And as sometimes *David* said of himself, *I believed, therefore I spake*: So the *Israelites* also, Psalm 106:12) *believed, and sang the praises of God*, upon the Red-sea-shore, and yet were they but an hypocritical Generation. And if hypocrites may work Miracles in the Name of Christ (as they did, and expostulate with Christ about it, Matthew 7:22, *Have we not Prophesied in thy*

Name, and in thy Name cast out Devils and in thy Name done many wonderful works?) then may a temporary Faith work ordinary works in Christianity also: and therefore you shall read, Matthew 13:22, that there is no fault found in the thorny soil for their want of root, or for their want of depth of earth; for the want of both which, the stony soil was taxed: but look as it is with the branches of a Vine, what depth of earth the root hath, they have it, being grafted into the Vine, though they be but *πρόσκαρτοι*, branches of the wild Olive, and will bring forth but wild fruit: for though the branch of the wild Olive be grafted into the fat Olive, and may flourish there; yet will it bring forth its own

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fruit; but in the root you will not find a difference: yet there is a difference, but it is very hard to be discerned.

Objection: Yes, (will you say) there is a plain difference; for an Hypocrite is ever full of himself, but a true Christian doth all in Faith: he seeketh God daily, and waiteth upon God daily; and these are not the ways of Hypocrites.

Answer: Consider I pray you what the Word of the Lord holdeth forth as the Root of this Sanctification, and I will go no further then express Scriptures: Isaiah 58:2, *They seek me daily*, and this is spoken of Hypocritical Israelites: and for waiting, we often hear it spoken of the five foolish Virgins, *they all went out to meet the Bridegroom*, Matthew 25:1, though whilst he tarried long, they all fell asleep; and so did the Wise Virgins also. And for more particular application of God unto themselves, we find that also, Hosea 8:2, *Israel shall cry unto me, My God, we know thee*; and yet (in the same Scripture) this *Israel had transgressed the Covenant, and cast off the thing that is good*: And for a further act of Faith, which is a *staying man's self upon God*; what saith the Text? Isaiah 48:2, *They stay themselves upon the God of Israel* (and yet these are obstinate; their neck as an iron sinew, and their brow as brass) but it was not in truth and uprightness; True, it was not: But how shall we know the difference? Truly it is hard to perceive when men differ, and therefore it is not an easy matter to make such use of Sanctification, as by it to bear witness unto Justification; and it will be a very hard case, yea much more difficult, when men cannot feel the presence of spiritual gifts, but want of spiritual light: and when they do find Faith in themselves, they will find it in

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Hypocrites also, even *Faith to seek the Lord, and Faith to wait upon him*, and *Faith to apply him, saying, My God*; and *Faith to stay upon the God of Israel*: and yet these men do vanish away in hypocrisy. This Hypocrites may do: seeing

therefore what easiness of error may befall Christians whether this or that Grace may be of the right stamp, or no, it will behove Christians to be wary; for even Eagle-eyed Christians will have much ado so to discern of Sanctification in themselves, before they see their Justification, as to cut of all Hypocrites from having the like in them. For the sanctified frame of life in God's children, and that which seemeth to be like it in Hypocrites; both of them spring from the Holy Ghost, and both from Faith: but now the Spirit of God hath this farther work in his own people, beyond what he worketh upon others; though he melteth both, yet Hypocrites are melted as iron, which will return again to his hardness; but his own People are melted into flesh, which will never return to his hardness more; neither can they rest in any measure of softness, unto which they have attained, but still are carried towards Jesus Christ. So that the one is a temporary Faith, and the other Persevereth; though both work in the Name of Jesus Christ, yet this difference will be found between them; not only when Hypocrites come to be blasted, but even in the midst of their profession. As for the Faith of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, it is not president of his own power, but his strength lieth out of himself in Jesus Christ, whereas Hypocrites and legal Christians are confident of their Faith, that they can make use of it unto such and such ends: they think they need no more but look up to Jesus Christ, and their work is at an end;

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and such strength they find in themselves, that they do not fear but that they shall carry an end all their work in a safe course to God's glory, and their own: whereas the strongest Faith, even of the Thessalonians (whose Faith was such, as that none of all the Churches went before them) if it be not supplied, and strengthened, they know, and the Apostle *Paul* knoweth that it will warp; this may we see by comparing 1 Thessalonians 1:3 with chapter 3:2,10, and the faithful people of God, Isaiah 26:12, acknowledge him to *work all their works for them*: and therefore as there is a real difference in the presence of the Spirit: so also in the work of Faith in Hypocrites, and the children of God; for the one putteth confidence in himself, and the other in *Jehovah*. This is the first difference of Sanctification.

2. There is difference also in the *Rule* whereby they are guided: though both seek to the Word of God, and take delight in that, insomuch as you shall not be able to difference them there, yet a great difference there is in the apprehension of the word: the one is so confident of the strength and comfort that he hath in the word, as he will be ready to take it at God's

hand, if he find not assistance from him, and acceptance before him. Now the other see their need they have of the Lord to maintain their strength and comfort for them: this manner of affection we find in *David*, when as the Lord had brought him and his people into a sweet frame and temper of spirit, to offer willingly towards the building of the Temple; what saith *David* now? doth he think this to be enough? No, no, But he prayeth to the Lord, 1 Chronicles 29:18, *O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our Fathers, keep this for ever in the imagination of the thoughts of the heart*

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of thy people, and prepare their heart unto thee: thus is he sensible, that these comforts and strength would soon fail them, and they should again wax barren and uncomfortable, if the Lord should not still keep them: and here is the nature of true strength and consolation in Christ, to look up unto the Lord to preserve and maintain it; and so he is still drawn nearer and nearer unto Jesus Christ. But now, though both attend unto the Word, as their rule of Sanctification, if you take it in the way in which the one and the other hold it forth, yet there is a great difference. *Then shall I not be ashamed, when I have respect unto all thy Commandments*, Psalm 119:6. Here is a *Rule*: what may not Hypocrites walk according to this Rule? Truly they profess no less, and they think it is enough, if they have but a rule in their eye; and therefore under a Spirit of *Bondage* they are confident, and say, *Whatsoever the Lord commandeth us, we will hear it, and do it*, Deuteronomy 5:27, and what saith *Balaam*? *Though Balak would give me an house full of Gold and Silver, I cannot go beyond the Commandment of the Lord*, Numbers 22:18 and yet he loved the wages of iniquity: and indeed those that undertake so much in their own strength, they come afterward to be weary of the Lord, and weary of his Commandments; as Amos 8:5, *When will the New Moon be gone, that we may sell Corn? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth Wheat? &c.* And they say at last, *It is in vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept his Ordinances?* Malachi 3:14. These are but like *washed Swine*, that will crop grass for a while in a fair Pasture;. but if you keep them long there, they will not delight in such manner of feeding, but will rather choose to go into the Mire, and into a

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jakes; (that I may so speak with reverence to the Assembly) but as for *Goats*, they will delight in the Commandments of the Lord, Isaiah 58:2. *They delight to know my ways and delight in approaching unto God*: It is not a very hard thing unto them, not grievous to keep solemn Fasting-days together;

they come willingly, they delight to come, therefore the difference will hardly be discovered; and unless you be a Christian of a very clear discerning, you will not find the difference.

Objection: But an Hypocrite will not delight in all God's Commandments: if you take *Herod*, he will *delight* in *John Baptist's* preaching, and reform many things; but if it come to his not having his brother *Philip's Wife*, then put *John* into Prison; and in the matter of *Herodias*, off with *John's* head.

Answer: We see what Hypocrites profess, Deuteronomy 5:27, *Whatsoever the Lord commandeth us, we will hear it and do it.* But you will say, *Not always:* It is true, a difference in time will grow; but whilst they hold forth universal obedience, how will the difference be discerned? Discerned it will be when the Lord leadeth them forth with workers of iniquity; but many may be led on to their death before they can be discovered: and therefore what will the servant of God say? I have seen hypocrites (to outward view) well rooted, and more comfortable then I myself; and for zeal, and love, the *Galatians* would have plucked out their eyes to have done *Paul* good; they thought themselves blessed in his Ministry, blessed souls they took themselves to be: whereas the dear servants of God are slow to see so much goodness in themselves, they see so much corruption.

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Objection: But you will say, An hypocrite cannot aim at God as his *last end*, but will out-shoot God in his own bow; and at the highest, he seeketh no more but his own salvation, without respect unto the glory of God in it.

Answer: It is true, and in time will appear, that every hypocrite thinketh to outreach God in all the gifts that he hath received: but in the mean while, it is much that an hypocrite will do; and so much, that a poor Christian will be put to much exercise, to find a difference between himself and them: *Jehu* did not only think that he had *zeal* for the Lord, as he said, *Come see my zeal for the Lord of Hosts:* but good *Jonadab* likewise did so persuade himself, and therefore did readily join with him in his reformation; and when he proclaimed a sacrifice for *Baal*, he thought that *Jehu* would do no harm to himself in the Temple of *Baal*. Thus therefore sometimes it cometh to pass; because an hypocrite may for a long time find all his own ends attained in seeking the glory of God, as *Jehu* did: but in conclusion, when a man and his own honour must part; then either he must hold to his own glory, or else he must neglect it, and keep him close to the honour of God: but in the mean time, what can I tell but that I may shake hands with, and bid farewell unto God's glory, when his and mine lie at stake together?

Objection: But may not a man perceive a plain difference, when it cometh to *Persecution*?

Answer: No, persecution will not clear the difference; for though the stony ground indeed fell off upon point of Persecution, yet the thorny soil did not so. Many Papists have died for their Religion; and how much more then may some hypocrite do it

for the Truth? yea, even *give his body to be burned*; and yet want Jesus Christ, and everlasting Salvation by him, 1 Corinthians 13:3. Now when a poor Christian cometh, and seeth how much such an one doth magnify God both in doing and suffering, and yet falleth away; it maketh him conclude, Surely I also shall at length turn away from the Lord. So that whether you look at the *Root*, or *Rule*, or *Scope*, and bent of holiness, an hypocrite will carry all things in so fair a way, that you shall hardly discover him to his very death; and when a Christian cometh to measure his own Sanctification by this man's Sanctification, he will verily think the one to be as light as the other; and unless it be one that hath his wits well exercised, marvellous much ado he hath to clear himself in such a point as this. There be that think there is no reality in hypocritical sanctification; but certainly it is a real work, the gifts be real, though common Graces; and not mere counterfeit pretences: There are indeed some that do merely pretend, and do but outwardly make fair weather in their profession: but (believe it) it is not so in all hypocrites, there is a real work in some, *Hebrews 6:4,5, They are enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and are made partakers of the Holy Ghost, &c*, these things are real, and not imaginary: God casting in their own ends, and their own glory in their way; the servants of God have given them the right hand of fellowship; and so long they have held out, that it was never known when they did Apostate; yea, and so glorious may this common Sanctification be, that it may dazzle the eyes of the best of God's children, and especially of poor Christians, and almost discourage them, when they see such to fall away. This very point hath been

one principal root of *Arminianism*; as another is, that men receive Christ by their own *Free-will*: they are able to prove, that there is not only a pretence in hypocrites, but a real work; and so indeed the Scripture doth call it Sanctification, *Hebrews 19:29*, now hereupon they do believe, that the very best of all the servants of God may depart from, and forsake their Justifying Faith: but therein they show the bleat of a *Goat*; in so saying they condemn

the generation of the Righteous. It is true, that the best of their righteousness may die; for they have known no more but the way of works. Thus much for the first Proposition.

Proposition 2. That *true Christian Sanctification*, (which is a work of Faith) is many times dark to a sincere Christian; it is generally granted to be so, in the first Conversion, and in time of temptation and desertion; as also when a man looketh at the Majesty and Purity, and Glory of God: *Woe is me for I am unclean* (saith the Prophet Isaiah) at such a time: there is so much power of flesh even in spiritual Christians, specially in young Christians, so much power in their lusts, and in their passions, as will put their best friends to a stand, what to think of them, and much more themselves, when as they come to be pressed with the power of their corruptions, specially when they compare with such hypocrites as run along with more freedom of spirit then themselves; for sometimes their corruptions do less appear, and they are more free from temptations; and not exposed to such sinful courses, as sometimes true hearted Christians are subject unto: so a poor Christian is discouraged, and an hypocrite is emboldened, seeing himself more sanctified in the outward view than the other

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Proposition 3: That *the true sanctification of a sincere Christian is not discerned by him, nor is indeed discernible, until he first discern his Justifying Faith.* A double ground of it, and so leave it to your Christian disquisition, and search; they are both taken from the necessity of Faith, both to the acceptance of a man's person, and of his work: there is a necessity of the activeness of Faith in a man's sanctification: *The Lord had respect to Abel, and to his Offering, Genesis 4:4.* A man's person must be first accepted, otherwise all his work will not go beyond the work of a legal Christian, and *without Faith it is impossible to please God:* no acceptance therefore without Faith. It is also necessary to the performance of all spiritual and holy duties; for all sanctification is from that Faith which Christ doth convey into the soul. Now if the just man live by his Faith, whether it be the life of Sanctification, or consolation; then no Christian can discern his Sanctification to be lively, but he must discern his Faith living in it; he must see his Faith, deriving strength, and grace, and life from *Christ*, or else he cannot approve his Sanctification to be the Sanctification of the Gospel: For as there can be no true Sanctification, unless there be Faith whereby the person is accepted, and whereby life is received to act in all Sanctification; so there can be no knowledge of Sanctification, but there must be knowledge of Faith, whereby a man's person is accepted, and whereby

strength is conveyed to Sanctification: For if a poor soul be doubtful of his acceptance with the Lord, he is where he was, notwithstanding his Sanctification, and wanteth comfort; for this doubt remaineth, whether he be accepted, or no; which (until the Lord do manifest a man's Faith unto him by the Revelation of the Holy

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(Ghost) he is still at a loss in; for though true Sanctification be an evidence of Justification, yet itself must be first evident. Thus we see by this third Proposition, that a further light is required to the sight of Sanctification.

Proposition 4: Notwithstanding this near resemblance between legal and Evangelical holiness, yet there is a real difference between them: and such a difference as is discernible to Christians, whose wits are exercised in the ways of the Spirit and Word of God; and is discerned by the Revelation and manifestation of the Spirit of God, both of the state and work of good Christians: and that ordinarily also; for I would not count it extraordinary, being that which the Lord by his Spirit doth reveal unto his people. A real difference there is, both in the root, and in the rule, and in the scope which they aim at; and so it will appear to be at the last day, Matthew 2:23. Depart from me (saith Christ) you workers of iniquity, I never knew you: though they came and told him that they wrought by Faith in him: indeed they stood in some Relation to him, but not as members to the head, only as branches to the Vine, which may be cut off, and yet the Vine not maimed; but if the Members should be cut of; any one from the other, then is the body maimed, and Christ will not suffer his Body to be maimed: but take you never so many branches from the Vine, and it is not maimed, but will bring forth the more fruit: if therefore there be no more fellowship between Christ and a Christian, than between the branches and the Vine, you may take them away, and yet not hurt the Vine. But wherein should this relation stand? It is very hard to conceive, insomuch that those who have been most exact, and diligent to inquire into it, have professed that it is Angels work;

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very hard it is so to distinguish them from God's own children, as not to discomfort poor Christians, nor to embolden hypocrites; we must be tender therefore, that the least of God's children may not want their bread: Better leave ninety nine sheep, than that one poor stray sheep should not be sought after; and better an hundred hypocrites perish, than that one poor Christian should want his portion; and yet it is not meet that hypocrites should wallow themselves in the fellowship of the Saints, and always bless themselves in

their carnal condition. If you shall ask a difference in the *Root*: both of them are partakers of the Holy Ghost; Hypocrites may have a *taste*, and a poor Christian will fear that his best fellowship with Christ is but a *taste*, and that manifold experience maketh good. Wherein then lieth the difference? doth the Spirit of God leave the heart of an Hypocrite *stony*, and *unmelted*? It is so indeed with the *stony*, but not with the *thorny soil*, for the hearts of some hypocrites are melted as iron stones; they may come to melt about their own estates through fear and sorrow: and so all those melt that want not depth of earth, as the thorny soil did not. But mind you, they will grow hard again, as iron, or lead will do, after it hath been melted. Now look at the Spirit of God when he cometh to work effectually, and he doth not only melt the heart, but *taketh away the heart of stone, and giveth an heart of flesh*; for it is not enough to *break* a stone, it will be a stone though it be broken; but when the Lord changeth it into flesh, then it will be hard no more; but though a man may have many temptations, yet the Lord will keep his heart soft forever. This is the first difference between hypocrites and God's own servants in the *root*; though both may work in the

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Name of Christ; yet as the one is *temporary*, and the other *persevereth*: so this difference you shall find between common and sincere Christians; and that not only when legal Christians are blasted of God, but even then when they do most flourish in their profession. The true Faith of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is never president of his own strength, but goeth out of himself, and is dependent on Jesus Christ: whereas the legal Christian is confident in his Faith, that he can make use of it to these and these ends which are before him. He thinketh there is no more needful, but to look up unto Christ, and so his work is done: whereas take you the strongest Faith of the *Thessalonians*, who were grown to such height, that none of the Churches were before them; yet the Apostle doth not think their Faith strong enough, but prayeth for the supplying of something that is lacking in their Faith: otherwise, when it is at the best, it will wark; whereas one that hath but a temporary Faith, he is confident in the strength of that Faith, insomuch that he doth not fear but to carry an end his profession in a safe course to God's glory, and his own: thus we see there is a real difference between the presence and work of the Spirit in an hypocrite, and in a child of God: in particular, we see there is a difference in the Faith which is given unto both of them; the one hath *confidence* in *himself*, the other in *Jehovah*, Isaiah 26:12,13. This is the first Difference in the *Root* of their Profession.

2. There is difference also in the *Rule* by which they walk: though both seek to the Word, and delight in that, you shall not difference them there; yet this difference you shall find in their apprehensions; the one is confident of his comfort that

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he hath in the Word, the other seeth need that the Lord should maintain his comfort for him, 1 Chronicles 29:18. *David prayeth thus, O Lord God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, our Fathers; keep this for ever in the thoughts of the hearts of thy People, and prepare their hearts unto thee.* As being sensible that this their comfortable frame of Spirit would soon fail them, and they would quickly grow listless unto such spiritual work, as then they had been about: and this is the nature of true consolation in Jesus Christ, it maketh a man to have recourse unto the Author of it, to preserve it. Now though both attend unto the Word, yet here they differ: The one hath enough if he can see the *Rule*, like to the *Israelites*, Deuteronomy 5:27. *All that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee, we will hear it, and do it:* they have enough if they have the *Rule*: but a Christian attending rightly unto his *Rule*, findeth it far off from him to walk according to it; unless the Lord be pleased so to set it home unto him, as that by his power he may be carried an end in obedience unto it; for though he know, and see his *Rule*, yet he wanteth somebody to rule his heart, according to his *Rule*; otherwise, though the *Rule* be strait, his walking will be crooked; as a child will write crookedly, though his line be strait: So a Christian man is sensible how his feet and hands will shake, when he cometh to walk, or do any thing by a rule; therefore he doth wholly look unto Christ, as being sensible of his own inability, unless he find help and strength from him.

3. There is difference between Hypocrites and God's people in the *scope* and *end* which they aim at: though both aim at the glory of God, yet both cannot attain to this, to make the glory of God their last end; but the one of these do secretly wind about

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to their own glory in the end, as *Jehu* doth, 2 Kings 10:16, *Come, see my zeal that I have for the Lord:* but he bringeth about his own glory by it, and here is the main deceit of the work: he seeketh the glory of God in himself, and in his own hand; whereas the principal care of God's own people is, and ought to be, the glory of God in Jesus Christ: but the other, his chief care is to have it seen that God is glorified by his hand; Come, see the zeal that I have.

Objection: You will say, Is it not a great glory unto God to be glorified by my hand?

Answer: Yes brother; but there is a great deceit in it; for many a man will work much, so far as his own glory is wrapped up in his actions, and like it well so long as God may be glorified in him: but all this while he wanteth those single affections after the glory of God for God's sake. But how then should a man seek to promote the glory of God? If it be the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, which a man seeketh after, he will then rejoice as much that God may be glorified by his brother, as by himself; and that is the spirit of a true *Israelite* indeed: so that the name of Christ may be magnified, it's no matter by whom; *I therein rejoice, yea, and will rejoice*, saith the blessed Apostle, Philippians 1:18. If any man therefore aimeth at God's glory then only, when it may be an honour to his profession, no thank to you brother for that; much close work may be found, so long as both are carried an end together: but if when I hear that my brother glorifieth God, I could have wished that such a thing had been done or spoken by me; and it is the worse because it is not done by my hand: if that, which is the rich goodness of God to my brother, be not my

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rejoicing, it is because of the Core of hypocrisy in my heart. Thus have we seen particularly the difference between Legal and Evangelical holiness.

We proceed still in this fourth Use, to a fifth Question,

If Jesus Christ be the first Gift that is given to the children of God, before he giveth right unto Promises, or to me to challenge Promises, yea, before he giveth me any other gifts of his saving Grace; then any soul may ask this Question,

Question: Of what use are Promises, if they be not to bring me to Christ? yea specially, to what end are conditional Promises made (that is to say, Promises to such and such Qualifications) if I may not take a Promise in the one hand, and a Qualification in the other hand, and bring them both to God, and lay hold upon Christ with both hands, in the strength of this Promise made to this Qualification? Thus ariseth the Question, If God give Jesus Christ first, before any other blessing; as we read before, To *Abraham* and to his *Seed* were the *Promises* made, (he meaneth unto Christ) and *all the Promises are in him, Yea, and in him, Amen:* no having of Promises therefore before Christ: to what purpose are they given then, if not to bring me unto Christ? It is a point needful to be known, because we read Promises in Scripture daily: and certainly great use is to be made of them; and if we shall

make no other use of them, but to bring us unto Christ; and God hath not sanctified them unto that end; then we shall take them all in vain, and the Name of God that is called upon them.

Answer: There is a *threefold use of Promises* in Scripture, to wit, 1. *before Union with Christ*

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2. *In Union with Christ.* 3. *After Union with him.*

Benefit 1. Before union with Christ, there is a threefold use of Promises.

1. They are of use for *Doctrine*, to teach all the people of God what great and glorious things are laid up in Jesus Christ, even *the unsearchable riches of Christ*, Ephesians 3:8, and this all the Promises of God do hold forth: if the Lord promise to be your Father, your Husband, your Shepherd, your Head, your Root; if he promise to be any other blessing in the world to you; whatever Promise you read or hear, the Lord showeth you by it, the unsearchable Riches of Jesus Christ; and that is no vain use of Promises, for a man to know by them the great good things that are treasured up in Jesus Christ by the Father: therefore they are called *Great and precious Promises*, 2 Peter 1:4. Why so? because they declare the great and precious Privileges and Blessings in Jesus Christ: therefore it is that the Lord will have all his people to look at him in his Word and Promises, and to know what great good he hath in store for all them that trust in him, and seek after him in Jesus Christ. Thus all the Promises of Grace declare his excellency, as Canticles 5:10, *My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand:* So do all the Promises declare him to be a plentiful Saviour, and a Mighty Redeemer of all his people.

2. As they are of use for *Doctrine*, so for *instruction*: it is good for the honour of God, to know them; but instruction is a further thing, and distinct from *Doctrine*, 2 Timothy 3:16, by instruction men are taught not only what to know, but what to do; to know, and see whither they should resort for the

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enjoyment of all those precious blessings that God hath laid up in Jesus Christ; and this is a precious use of the Promises, that by them the soul should be thus instructed whither to go for life and salvation: such instruction we find, Isaiah 45:22, *Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth:* here is a direction to me before I look, whither to look; I do not only see great things, and so vanish away, but I am directed to look, and be saved: thus are we taught of God likewise by his blessed Apostle, Acts 2:38,39, *Repent, and*

be Baptized into the Name of Jesus Christ, for the Remission of sins: for the Promise is unto you, and to your children, and to as many as the Lord our God shall call: Thus are we taught by the Promises, whither to look for life and salvation.

3. The Promises serve also for *Exhortation*; as the Scripture last alleged holdeth forth: for so many blessings as you see propounded in the Promises, so many *invitations* are there to persuade, and provoke men's Souls to come unto Jesus Christ; as old *Jacob* sometimes provoked his Sons, saying, *Why stand ye gazing one upon another? behold, I have heard that there is Corn in Egypt, &c;* Genesis 42:1,2, so saith the Lord to the Sons of men in his Promises; Why stand you gazing in the want of this and that blessing? is there not pardon of sin, and all manner of blessings in Jesus Christ? thus is the Soul exhorted not only to look for mercy, but not to rest till he may enjoy it. Though it be not the Promises that can by their own power (without the Spirit) carry men an end: yet this is the *end* to which God giveth them, to stir up the Sons of men, not to rest in beholding the good things in the Promises, but to exhort them to provoke themselves and one another to look after the Lord: thus did the Apostle *Peter*

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exhort the Jews, and testified to them of the Free Grace of God in his Promises, Acts 2:40, and indeed, the promises in themselves are strong grounds of Exhortation, to stir up the spirits of all God's people to look to Jesus Christ, and to come unto him, in whom such abundance of rich Grace is laid up. Thus do the Promises of God furnish both Ministers and People, with Doctrine, with Instruction, and with Exhortation in their kind.

Now there is a threefold effect that they have in some of all sorts, good and bad, that live in the bosom of the Church.

1. They have a power of *Illumination*: they will enlighten the minds even of Hypocrites, and men that are endued with no more but common gifts, as well as the people of God: of such the Apostle speaketh, Hebrews 6:4. *Who were once enlightened, &c. and had tasted of the good Word of God.*

2. When not only enlightening, but a second thing is expressed, An Hypocrite may have a taste of Jesus Christ in the Promises, and be so affected with him, that he doth despise all other things in comparison of him, so as that he cometh to resolve for his part never to forego him; and hath so much confidence in God, that he saith with *Haman*, Whom will the King delight to honour more then my self? and this illumination, he taketh to be a strong and effectual conversion unto the Lord.

3. The Promises have a work of *Conviction* upon the Soul: if any man refuse, and despise them, they leave him unexcusable, Proverbs 1:24,25,26, &c. *Because I have called, and ye have refused: I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded: but you have set at nought all my Counsels, and would none of my reproof: I will laugh at your Calamity, &c.* thus is

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their blood justly upon their own head, that refuse and despise his Promises, and they aggravate their condemnation another day: and to this end the Apostle maketh use of a precious Promise of God, Acts 13:38,39,40,41, *Be it known unto you men and brethren, that through this man is preached unto you forgiveness of sins; and by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the Law of Moses: beware therefore, lest that come upon you which is spoken of by the Prophets: Behold you despisers, wonder, and perish, &c.* A strange Application of such a gracious Promise; a sign there is a power in the Promises even unto this end. Thus we see there is a marvellous gracious use of Promises, before Union with Christ, as to help Ministers and people with matter of Doctrine, and Instruction, and Exhortation; so also to awaken men unto Illumination, and Affection, and Conviction, and to seal them up unto everlasting destruction, if they turn their backs upon them.

Benefit 2: As the Promises are of use before our Union with Christ: so, *In* our Union with him they are of great use; for when the Lord giveth himself to the Soul, he doth it in a Promise. He cometh unto the Soul riding (as it were) upon the Chariot of a Promise, and begetteth faith in the Soul by the Promise, or some such word of Grace as is equipollent to a promise, *Ezekiel 37:11*, whereby we receive Jesus Christ, though before him we can have no Promise, yet in a Promise we do receive him. This is the very first stroke of closing with Jesus Christ; he giveth himself, and we take him as he offereth himself, even in a Promise: such a like Dispensation of himself we read of, Acts 3:25,26, *Ye are the children of the Prophets, and of the Covenant which God made with our Fathers,*

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saying unto Abraham, And in thy seed shall all the Nations of the earth be blessed: unto you first, God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning away every one of you from his iniquities: Here is Christ offered in a Promise of Free Grace, without any previous, gracious qualification mentioned. Howbeit, many of them that heard the Word, believed, and the number of the men was about 5,000; about 3,000 of them believed before: so that here are 2,000 that believe upon this gracious Promise: the Lord

Christ is offered to them, and they receive him by Faith. Thus we see that Promises are not vain things, but there are great use of them; *before* our Union, all Promises are of excellent use, as also *In* our Union.

3. *After* our Union with Christ, they are of abundant use: They were of use before we were in Christ, for Doctrine, and for Instruction, and for Exhortation; but now they are of more efficacy in the same kind, and

1. They serve for Doctrine, to teach us, that there is not only free grace in Christ, but there are gifts of grace in Jesus Christ, and all the treasures of the good things of God are in him, and all the Blessings of the Promises made unto qualifications are laid up in him also.

2. They serve for Instruction, to direct us whither to look for qualifications, and the blessings promised unto them; namely, to the Lord Jesus Christ, to receive the blessing through him, and the qualification by the same hand: for they are first fulfilled in him; there is no good *Condition*, but it is found in Jesus Christ, no *blessing* belonging thereunto, but it is found in Christ also; in him therefore they are to be sought for: so that though a poor

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Soul see himself wretched, and blind, and naked, yet he hath an Husband in whom all riches is laid up: this he is taught to know by the Promise; and directed also to go to Jesus Christ, that enjoying him, he may enjoy all good things in him.

3. They are of use to stir *up unto Prayer*: for now, I see, that all these good things are in Christ, and in him they must be enjoyed, if they be enjoyed at all; hereupon the Soul is set a work (the Holy Ghost concurring therewith) to consider, Is there so much Grace in Christ, and in him abundantly? hath the Lord made so many gracious Promises unto such and such gracious qualifications? Whither then should I go either for the one, or for the other, but unto Christ, that he may work in us a Spirit of Faith, of love, and of a sound mind, and what else soever we stand in need of?

4. They are of use to help us to *know our spiritual state*, and means to discern thereof: All these qualifications to which the Promises are made, are fruits of the Spirit, and will more or less declare unto you your sanctified state, which is a marvellous blessing: Upon the Promises made unto such conditions, the Lord stirreth up the hearts of his people to seek for such conditions, to which the Promises are made; and when the Lord hath given us them, he then openeth our hearts to see what he hath given us, and so to discern our sanctified estate: *Now I know that thou fearest God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy Son, thine only Son from me*; so the Lord said to *Abraham*, Genesis

22:12, wherein he bare witness to his work; and this doth fill *Abraham* with strong consolation, together with the Oath of God unto him: for now the Lord doth not only know it, but causeth him to know it also: so that if the Lord do but

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breathe in such a fruit of the Spirit, if he doth but give power to the Soul to do such a work unto which the Promise is made, and to make it appear unto the Soul to be indeed such, by the revelation of his own blessed Spirit, then doth the Lord fill the Soul with consolation, *Psalm 9:18, The patient expectation of the meek shall not perish forever*: When the poor soul is meekened by God's hand, and the Lord letteth him so discern it, that now he quietly resteth upon the Lord, now the Spirit of God doth help *David* along be supported with some stay: and besides, the waiting of a Christian upon him who hath made the Promises, doth make him yet more patient and hopeful: and this is a fourth use of *Conditional Promises*.

5. They are of use to work all these qualifications in us, to which the Blessings are promised: *By the exceeding gracious Promises we are made partakers of the Divine nature*, 2 Peter 1:4, and this is no small work, or use of these Promises, that from them should spring all our gracious qualifications; for the Lord having promised such blessings in them, these Promises being received and enjoyed, and meditated on by us, we *beholding them, and the glory of the Lord Jesus in them, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord*, 2 Corinthians 3:18, this great power there is in the Promises to help an end the work of God in the soul of a Christian: So that, though they were never given to bring us to Christ, yet to this end they were given to work all those qualifications in us to which the blessings are promised.

6. They are of use to *provoke* and *stir up* Christians to all such duties to which blessings are promised; they stir them up effectually: the Lord maketh

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a Promise, 2 Corinthians 6:17,18, that *such as touch no unclean thing, he will receive them, and be a father to them, and they shall be his sons*, And mark what use the Apostle maketh of this conditional promise, chapter 7:1, *Having therefore these promises (dearly beloved) let us cleanse our selves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God*. Implying, that the having of these promises stirreth up God's people unto duties, and the Lord is wont to breathe in them, and so to set forward the work of cleansing in the hearts and ways of his servants.

7. They are of use further, to *strengthen faith*; for the Lord that hath made such promises will accomplish them for his servants, Genesis 32:9,10, *Jacob* there putteth the Lord in mind of his Promise, and faith, *O God of my Father Abraham, and God of my Father Isaac, and the Lord, which said unto me, Return unto thy Country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee:* and he was now returned according to the appointment of God; but what now doth he plead the condition? mind in the next words: *I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth which though hast showed unto thy servant:* Yet now, though he pleadeth not any worth at all, yet seeing the Lord hath promised such a mercy to him, he prayeth for it, verse 11, *Deliver me I pray thee from the hand of my Brother:* thus his faith is strengthened, though he doth not plead his worthiness to receive mercy. So also do *absolute Promises strengthen faith*, and the Prayer of Faith, 2 Samuel 7:13,14, &c, the Lord there promiseth *David* that he would build him an house, and that he would not take his mercy from his Children; this stirreth up, and strengtheneth the Faith of *David*,

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verses 28,29, *Now O Lord, thou art that God, and thy words be true, and thou hast promised this goodness unto thy servant; therefore now let it please thee to bless the house of thy servant, &c.* this well ordered and sure Covenant of God *was all his stay, and all his salvation, though his house was not so with God,* 2 Samuel 23:5. So when the Lord promiseth to heal the backslidings of his people, Hosea 14:4, their hearts are strengthened to come unto the Lord, and to say, O Lord, thy words are true, let it please thee to heal the back-slidings of thy servants. Thus by the Promises of God, the Faith and faithful prayers of God's servants are both of them strengthened together.

Now let me further say thus much, Let us rightly discern what use to make of the principal part of the Scriptures; take heed you do not close with Promises before you have *Jesus Christ*, specially take heed you make not use of Promises to a qualification to give you your part in Jesus Christ, neither be taken aside to make account that the Lord did give you himself graciously in a conditional Promise; for these are aberrations from the Covenant of Grace: Consider therefore well what the Promises be, and what use the Lord would have us to make of them: It is not for a woman to take her husband's inheritance before she take his person; and you know that all the blessings, and all the Promises are (as it were) the Inheritance of the Lord Jesus, given unto him and to no other, but in his Name; and therefore there is not any soul under Heaven that can challenge his right in Christ at the first by any

Promise, till Christ first be given: if you know that you are in Christ, you may then know that the Promises are yours, otherwise you shall not be able to know your right in Christ by your right in the Promises;

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and therefore do not turn them upside down beyond the scope and intendment of the Covenant of Grace: we may take occasion by them to admire the goodness and grace of God, as *David* did, *Psalm 21:19, O how great is thy goodness, which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee!* thus ought we to consider of them, and whither to look that we might enjoy them, and the blessings in them: If you shall say, We have been converted, and we have had gracious changes wrought within us; be not deceived: such work may reach no farther than conviction, and you may come at the last to turn your backs upon Jesus Christ. Consider therefore, did ever the Lord give *himself* to be one with you? whensoever the Lord doth strike up the bond of Union, it is in an *absolute*, and *free promise* of his Grace. Trust not therefore unto every leaning of your souls upon conditional Promises; for so you may build upon a *Covenant* made upon a *work*, and in the end you and your Covenant will fail together: but when you read how the Lord hath made such Promises to such and such qualifications, then consider that those things are indeed requisite to be found in you; but who is there in heaven, or earth, that is able to work them in you? there is none but Jesus Christ; and unless you have him to be in you, you cannot have any of these things wrought in you. But, will a poor Soul say, I am not able to reach the Lord *Jesus Christ*, therefore all the Promises of the Gospel do fall heavy upon a man, and he seeth that they are too burdensome and weighty for him; he doth not say, Here is the qualification, and here is the blessing promised to it, and therefore I will take it to myself, but one that is taught of God, doth forthwith go, and pray unto God, that he will set

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him in the way of those blessings, and that so he will make him partaker of them; he prayeth that God will give him his Son, and that he will adorn him with his grace, as a Bride of Jesus Christ. Thus while the soul looketh towards Jesus Christ, and Grace in him, the Lord doth secretly transform him into the image of Christ, by working such qualifications in him, and then beareth witness to that sanctification which is wrought in his heart, thereby enlarging his soul with strong consolation in Jesus Christ: and in the same way it is that the Lord doth strengthen the faith of his people to believe that all those things which God hath promised are accomplished in Jesus

Christ, and the Law fulfilled in me so far as Christ is in me; and therefore I come unto God in prayer, to make good those Promises unto me in a right way, which would have been preposterously applied before Christ was given. And this may serve for answer unto this fifth question.

Question 6: We come now unto a sixth question. If the Lord do give himself first in the Covenant of his Grace, this may then be a doubt, and a question in a Christian soul; If God gives himself before any blessing, before any Promise in order of nature (though he giveth himself always in a Promise) or in a word that is equivalent to a Promise, as *Canticles* 5:9,16, chapter 6:1, if we cannot claim any blessing from God at the first in any conditional promise, therefore not by any condition in our selves, but as we received all things from God, so we claim all things from God in Jesus Christ, and so do first seek for him, and for all things in him: If thus, *to what use then serveth the Law of God, which requireth such and such conditions in us? do we not abrogate the Law, and make it of none effect, and root it out from having*

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any power over Christians? And truly, some under pretence of the Covenant of Grace, have thought it altogether bootless to bind Christians unto the Law of God, and to look at it as any part of the direction of their course: because this is an imputation usually reflected upon the Covenant of Grace, let us consider therefore, and enquire *to what use serveth the Law of God, if God give himself first unto his people in the Covenant of his Grace?*

Answer: Though the Lord giveth himself freely to the soul, and his Son, and all the blessings of the Covenant of Grace, without respect unto any work of the *Law*, yet the *Law* is of special and notable use unto all the sons of men, both unto them which are not yet brought home unto God by converting Grace, and also to those that are Regenerate in Jesus Christ. The Apostle Paul did observe that the question would arise upon the Doctrine of the Covenant of Grace, *Galatians* 3:16,17,18, *For if the blessing of Abraham cometh upon the People of God by Jesus Christ, to what end then serveth the Law, which came 430 after it cannot disannul to make the Promise of God of none effect: to what end then serveth it? some say it is of no use, others say that it is of such use, that they had rather renounce the Covenant of Grace then it: but the answer is, It is of especial use both unto spiritual, and carnal men.*

First, unto *carnal* men, and they are of two sorts; some belong unto the *Election* of Grace though they be not yet called; others are not written in the Lamb's Book of Life, but will in the end finally perish: and yet the *Law* is of use unto both sorts of them.

1. For those that are the *Elect* of God, it is of use unto them, to aggravate their sin, and to multiply

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it unto them as it were; that is to say, to aggravate the apprehension of the heinousness of sin upon there Consciences, and to set home the burden of their sins unto their souls, thereby to drive them to feel their great need of the Lord Jesus Christ, whom otherwise they should for ever have despised. Thus the Apostle answereth in the place fore-named, *The Law was added because of transgressions*: that they might clearly appear, and be aggravated thereby; that a man might plainly discern how he hath made himself liable unto the wrath of God, by so manifold breaches of so many Commandments in one kind or other: the Law giveth clear knowledge of sin, and so much the more doth it set on the weight of it upon the Conscience, working fear in the heart, *Romans 8:15*, and hence it is that the Apostle telleth us, *Galatians 3:24*, that *the Law was our school-master to Christ*; as a School-master driveth his Scholar through fear, unto this or that duty: so the Law of God driveth the soul through fear unto *Jesus Christ*; not that it doth reveal *Christ* a Saviour and Redeemer of Free Grace, but the soul being once brought down under the sense of sin by the terrors of the *Law*, will readily and diligently hearken unto the news of *Christ* a Saviour: for being once made sensible of his own inability to redeem himself, and unworthiness to be redeemed from the wrath of God, now is the Soul fitted to hear the voice of the Gospel, now is the news of *Jesus Christ* beautiful, and glad tidings: and of this use is the Law unto the *Elect* of God, before they come under the Covenant of the Grace of God.

2. But of what use is the Law unto other men?

Answer: First, In regard of *disobedience* it is of use unto them, and 2. the *obedience* to it is of use,

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1. In regard of *disobedience*: for if men had not known sin, it had been some pretence, though they had committed sin; but when men have the knowledge of the *Law*, and yet commit sin willingly, now they have no Cloak for their sin, *Romans 1 verse 21* compared with 32. where the Apostle speaketh of the great sin of the Gentiles, and much more of the Jews, who *though they knew God, and the judgement of God, and that they which commit such wickedness are worthy of death, yet not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them*. When a man shall not only do such wickedness, but bless himself in it, this aggravateth a man's condemnation: if men will not come unto *Jesus*

Christ that they might have life, *John* 5:40, what saith our Saviour in such a case? verse 54, *Do not think that I will accuse you to the Father, there is one that accuseth you, even Moses in whom you trust; Moses will judge all those that please themselves in wickedness, and will not turn to the Lord Jesus Christ:* thus there is use of the Law unto disobedient persons, their disobedience will leave them without excuse when they sin against their Consciences, and against the means which the Lord hath administered unto them: though the Lord never gave them such grace as did accompany Salvation, yet such *Illumination* he did give them, that they needed not to have broken his *Law* so many ways, with such wicked hands as they have done: therefore when they have been enlarged to perform many duties, and might avoid much sin, and yet will sin against their Consciences, and tread underfoot those means of grace that were committed unto them; It is then most righteous with God that they should be condemned.

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2. Of what use is the *obedience* of the Law unto such whom God's soul taketh no pleasure in? Truly it is of sad and dreadful use unto them; for it serveth to harden them in their sins, (though that be but an accidental use thereof) their sins are thereby made out of measure sinful, *Romans* 7:13. They harden their hearts, 1. by their *obedience* to the Law. 2. By the *Comfort* which they take in that obedience; both these do marvellously harden their hearts. For the first of these, The Apostle *Paul*, *Acts* 23:1, had kept so good a Conscience, that he knew not any sin against the *Law* that he lived in; but though he was unrebukable, he did count it all loss afterward, *Philippians* 3:7,8, those things that before he thought had been his gain, now he *counteth them but dung that he may win Christ:* when a man attaineth to outward conformity unto the *Law*, he is then ready to think it is indeed good for poor sinful men to look for Salvation by *Jesus Christ*; but for himself, he hopeth in his devotion, and that he is able to save himself: these are such as justify themselves before men, to whom our Saviour speaketh, *Luke* 16:15, and of whom he saith, *That Publicans and Harlots shall go into the Kingdom of Heaven before them*, *Matthew* 21:31,32, for many times you shall have the most deoboist and profane wretches more humbled, and readier to hearken to the voice of Christ, and sooner convinced of the necessity of the Covenant of Grace, then those that are but morally righteous by the Law, *Romans* 9:30,31,32, *the Gentiles which followed not after righteousness have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of Faith: but Israel which followed after the Law of Righteousness, hath not attained to the Law of Righteousness; wherefore?*

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because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the Law: and chapter 10:31, *They being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.*, Thus the Law becometh a snare unto them; and that which is of singular and wholesome use unto the Children of God, is made death unto them. And as their obedience to the Law is thus a snare unto them: so secondly, the *delight* and *comfort* which they take in their obedience is a greater snare then the other: the stony and thorny soil did hear the Word with joy, and so those Hypocrites, Isaiah 59:2, *did delight to approach unto God:* but what followed upon the delight which they took in God, and in holy Duties? it made them ready to expostulate with God, why he did not answer them according to their works: the delight which they found, did so fill their hearts with assurance of the Grace of God, that they looked at their Duties as so many tokens of the love of God unto their souls; and then when men come to find more comfort in their obedience, than in the grace of God in *Jesus Christ*, it maketh them ready to expostulate with God, touching the worth of their own righteousness, Isaiah 57:10, *Thou hast found the life of thine hand, therefore thou wast not grieved;* as long as a man findeth life and comfort in his own duties and performances, what need can he see to be grieved for the want of *Jesus Christ*? or at the best, if he do grieve, and find his heart comforted in grieving and delighting in the course of Humiliation, he then thinketh he hath no need of being farther solicitous about his spiritual estate. Thus we see plainly, that the Law of God is of marvellous use in the days of the Gospel, of great use unto those that belong unto

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God, to break their hearts for sin, and to drive them *Jesus Christ*; and for others, the *disobedience* of the Law, leaves them without excuse, that so disobey it; again, the obedience of it, and comfort in that obedience, doth harden the hearts of others from *Jesus Christ*.

2. But what say you then unto men that are under a Covenant of Grace, and brought unto fellowship with Christ therein? of what use is the Law of God unto such? is it utterly antiquated, or is there any more to be done with it?

Answer: The Apostle answereth this Question, when he saith, *I am not without the Law to God, but under the Law to Christ*, 1 Corinthians 9:21: so (mind you) the Law is of use unto the Apostle *Paul*, but how? as the Law cometh under Christ, so *Paul* cometh under the Law; this is the sum of the

Answer, but that would be further explained. What meaneth he when he saith, *I am under the Law to Christ?* In some sense a Christian is wholly freed from the *Law*: In some sense he is yet under the *Law*. So far as the *Law* is any way besides, or out of Christ, so far the Apostle is without the *Law*: So far as the *Law* is under Christ, so far he is under the *Law*. Keep close to these two Principles, and you shall safely avoid Rocks on every hand: thus by the use of the *Law* shall you not go aside to a Covenant of Works, nor by attendance unto Grace, shall you need to neglect the *Law*. How far is the *Law* under Christ? when it hath brought the soul nearer unto Christ, and in a remote manner prepared him, the *Law* is *in Christ*, and you subject to it in him. 1. As the *Law* is *given* by Christ. 2. As in Christ *help* is given to perform it. First, as the *Law* is *given* by Christ, as 1 *Thessalonians* 4:2,3, *You know what Commandments*

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we gave you by the Lord Jesus; for this is the will of God, even your Sanctification, &c. and many other Commandments he gave them, all which are legal Commandments, and yet the Apostle gave them by the *Lord Jesus*: so *Matthew* 5:17. to the end of the Chapter: our Saviour Christ would not have us think that he came to destroy the *Law* or the Prophets, but to fulfil them. And to that end he doth there expound the spiritual and true meaning of the *Law*, that whereas the *Pharisees* held forth the outward letter of the *Law* to be observed only, as thinking that unless a man did commit the Act of Murder, he was not guilty of the breach of the sixth Commandment; and if he committed not the Act of Adultery, he transgressed not the seventh Commandment, and so of the rest: Our Saviour Christ expoundeth the *Law* more spiritually, showing that anger against a man's brother is the breach of the sixth Commandment; and whosoever shall look on a Woman to lust after her, hath committed Adultery with her in his heart, and broken the seventh Commandment; thus Christ hath as it were revived *Moses*: but as the *Law* is given by Christ, it is not a Covenant of Works, but a Commandment of well-doing; and he having given it, we take our selves bound to be subject to it. The Apostle also presseth the Moral *Law* upon several relations of men, *Ephesians* 6:1,2,3, &c. It is an honour to *Jesus Christ*, that his servants should be holy, as he is holy; it is for the glory of God, and he requireth it: The Apostle *James* presseth it, chapter 2:8. to the end of the Chapter. *If you fulfil the Royal Law according to the Scripture, (Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self) ye do well.* And again, *Whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.*

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Thus we see the Apostles of *Jesus Christ* put it upon Christians to keep the *Law* of God, and *Christ* himself beareth witness to the *Law*: for God will never justify sin to be no sin, though he will justify the person of a sinner.

Now as the Lord *Jesus* giveth the *Law*, and as it were reneweth it, so he doth also give his *Spirit* unto his servants, enabling them to keep it, *Jeremiah* 31:33, *Ezekiel* 36:27, *I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my Statutes, and ye shall keep my Judgements, and do them.* And again, *I will put my Law in their hearts, and write it in their inward parts.* Now this *Law* would he not write in the hearts of his people, nor give unto them his holy *Spirit* enabling them to keep his *Law*, were it not his will in *Jesus Christ*, that the *Law* should be the rule of holiness and righteousness unto his people: hence it is, that the children of God, though they be not under the *Covenant* of the *Law*, yet take themselves to be bound to the obedience of it; for if *Jesus Christ* have given the *Law*, as well as *Moses*, and if he have ratified it by giving them his *Spirit*, to teach and strengthen them to keep it, though not perfectly yet sincerely, then they take themselves bound to obey the *Law*, though they be under the *Covenant* of *Grace*; for do we make void the *Law* through faith? *God forbid: yea, we establish the Law.* For what need have Christians of free Justification by *Christ*, if they were not bound to obedience by the Commandment of the *Law*? Therefore the free Justification of men under a free *Covenant* of *Grace*, doth establish the obedience of the *Law*, otherwise what need they run to *Christ* to save them from the curse of the *Law*? Why do we still run to *Christ* for the continuance

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of our justification? But that we find our selves ungodly creatures against the righteous and holy *Law* of God: therefore if God have given men the *Law*, and his holy *Spirit* to strengthen them in the obedience of it, and his grace to save them from the curse of it; then Christians are to know that they are bound to keep the *Law*; they lie under the authority of it, and dare not pluck their necks from under that yoke.

Now, there are two *Effects* springing from the subjection of God's people to the Commandment of the *Law*.

1. As they take themselves bound to the obedience of it; so they believe, and many times feel the *fatherly displeasure* of God, when they transgress the *Law*: now the transgression of the *Law* could not bring them under God's displeasure, unless they were bound unto the Commandment of the *Law*: this displeasure *David* was sensible of, *Psalms* 38:1,2,3, &c, *There is no soundness*

in my flesh because of thine anger, neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin. And many complaints of like nature doth he there make, which do all of them spring from the conscience of the disobedience of the *Law*, which God hath framed in the hearts of his servants, whereby they reflect upon their sin as the ground of all the distempers which lie upon their bodies or minds. This is the first effect of the subjection of God's people to his *Law*: they lie under the faith and fence of the danger of the *disobedience* of it.

2. They are under the faith and fence also of God's *gracious acceptance* of their ways, when they are suitable to the blessed directions of his *Word*; not that they can raise there from the assurance of

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their justified estate, but by the same Spirit of God, whereby they are helped to obey the Commandment, they do see the Lord's *gracious approbation* of them in their poor and weak endeavours: for *the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous*; that is, acknowledgeth, and approveth it, *Psalm 1:6*, when the Lord by his Spirit boweth the hearts of his servants to obedience, then he knoweth and accepteth their obedience; *Genesis 22:12*, *Now I know that thou fearest me, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me*: thus the Lord beareth witness to his servants that he doth accept their works; so that they sensibly know, and believe that the Lord doth acknowledge their poorest and weakest endeavours, unto which they are carried forth by his Spirit in the obedience of his word: This the Prophet *David* confirmeth, *Psalm 18:20*, to 26. *The Lord rewarded me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands hath he recompensed me: for I kept the ways of the Lord, and have not wickedly departed from my God: for all his judgements were before me, and I did not put away his statutes from me; I was also upright before him, and kept myself from mine iniquity: therefore hath the Lord recompensed me according to my righteousness, according to the cleanness of my hands in his eye-sight: with the merciful, thou wilt show thyself merciful, and with the upright man thou wilt show thyself upright, &c.* This *David* speaketh of his righteous dealing with *Saul*; and whereas his enemies laid it to his charge, that he was an enemy unto *Saul*, the Lord beareth him witness that he had walked toward *Saul* with a good conscience: now the Lord having led him an end to deal justly, and righteously, and purely with *Saul*, having kept him from all the malice and outrage of *Saul*, and maintained

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his cause against *Saul*, and delivered him out of the hands of *Saul*, whom the Lord had now rejected; herein the Prophet seeth the Lord accepting

him, when in the name of his Son, by the power of his Spirit, he is helped to attend unto the Commandments of God. This is comfortable unto a Christian spirit, when the Lord beareth witness to his soul, that he hath all eye to all the Commandments of God. And all this argueth that the servants of God, being in a state of Grace in Jesus Christ, have looked at themselves as bound by the Commandments of the *Law*, and as *being under the Law to Christ*, who hath given the *Law*, and power unto his servants sincerely to keep it, both by writing in their hearts a law of *obedience*, and by putting his holy Spirit within them: for if the people God were not sensible of their bounden duty to the observation of the *Law* of God, they would neither have faith, nor sense of God's fatherly displeasure when they negligently break these laws; neither would they be sensible of God's acceptance of their conformity thereunto; but we know what the Apostle *Paul* saith, *2 Corinthians 1:12*, *For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our Conscience, that in simplicity, and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world, &c.* and truly the Lord doth often bear witness unto the integrity of his servants against the oppositions of men; so he did to *Abraham*, to *David*, to *Paul*, and to sundry of the Saints of God: though the servants of God are not wanted thereupon to build their safe estate, yet this kind of God's acceptance of their ways and obedience they do discern; yet in their best obedience, which they do perform, they see the need they have to go unto God for

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justifying Grace, because if they have failed in any one circumstance, their best righteousness is polluted; therefore they have need of Jesus Christ to cover the failings of their most strict performances. This *Nehemiah* was sensible of, when he had been very faithful in reforming the abuses of the *Sabbath*, and of many other Ordinances of God: and though the Lord hath helped him to undertake the reformation with much dexterity, and success; yet, for all this he runneth unto Christ for acceptance and pardon, *Nehemiah 13:22*, *Remember me, O my God, concerning this, and spare me according to the greatness of thy mercy:* and what would he have done if he had been conscious of some gross sin? He would then much more have run to the Lord Jesus. Thus the *Law* is established by Faith; for there is no justified person, but he is very apprehensive of his sins, and so of his continual need of Christ, *whose blood cleanseth us from all sin*, *1 John 1:7*, and *who is faithful and just to forgive our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness*, verse 9, who is *an Advocate if any man sin*, and *a propitiation for our sins*, Chapter 2:1,2, and what do all these things

argue? but that a Christian being under the Covenant of the Grace of God, doth submit himself unto this yoke of God. Thus far then a Christian is under the *Law* to Christ; so far as the *Law* is under Christ, he is under the Commandment of *Christ*, and under the power of *Christ*, and under the displeasure of *Christ*, if he negligently sin against the *Law*; and unto Christ he runneth for pardon, and cleansing, and unto Christ he cometh for acceptance of his obedience: so that he hath no use of the *Law*, but unto Christ, and in and under Jesus Christ.

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But how is a Christian *not under the Law*?

So far forth as the *Law* is not under Christ; I mean, so far as it is without Christ freely justifying of us by his grace, so far a Christian is freed from under the *Law*. In one word, a Christian man under a Covenant of Grace, is not under a Covenant of Works; *Romans 6:14, You are not under the Law, but under Grace*: he meaneth, not under the *Covenant* of the *Law*, nor under the *power* and *authority* of the *Law*, as of their husband, *Romans 7:1,2,3,4*. The husbandly *Jurisdiction* of the *Law* is taken away; *The Law is not made for a righteous man*, 1 Timothy 1:9, that is, not the *Covenant* of the *Law*, for else we are under the *Commandments* of the *Law* to *Christ*, but the Jewish Teachers taught more, to wit, the *Covenant* of the *Law* unto Salvation: not but that the *Law is good, if a man use it lawfully*; he meaneth the *Covenant* of the *Law*: but how shall a man use it lawfully? for it is not given unto a righteous man; but he reckoneth up the breakers of every Commandment, and unto them it is given; *to the lawless, and disobedient; to the ungodly, and sinners; to the unholy, and profane; to murderers of fathers, and murderers of mothers; to man-slayers, and whoremongers; and to them that defile themselves with man-kind; to men-stealers, to liars; to perjured persons, and if there be any other things that are contrary to sound Doctrine*; the *Covenant* of the *Law* is given unto such (and unto none but such) to *convince* them of their sins against the *Law*, to *humble* them to the death, and to *drive* them out of themselves, and confidence in themselves. But how doth it appear that the *Covenant* of the *Law* is not given to the children of God? from hence it is manifest;

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1. Because a Christian man neither looketh for *Justification* and *Salvation* from his *Obedience* to the *Law*, nor feareth *Condemnation* though he fail in his *Obedience*; and this is a fruit of his exemption from under the *Covenant* of the *Law*: For if a man should look for Life by his *Obedience* to the *Law*, and fear condemnation by the breach of it, this would bring a man under

the *Covenant of the Law*; for the sanctification of the *Covenant of the Law*, is life to them that obey; and to them that disobey, death, and the curse. But a Christian looketh not for Life by his Obedience; and that is plain, *Psalm 143:2, Enter not into Judgement with thy servant, for in thy sight shall no flesh living be justified.* So *Romans 3:20, By the deeds of the Law there shall no flesh be justified, for by the Law is the knowledge of sin:* therefore no hope of Salvation from our Obedience to the *Law*. But methinks (you will say) a Christian may fear his *condemnation* because of his *Disobedience* to the *Law*. Truly this is a great snare, and this Doctrine will be scandalous to many a poor soul, but without cause: Indeed, if God give a man to be under the *Covenant of Grace*, and not to see it, then he may fear; but if a man know himself to be under the *Covenant of Grace*, then he doth not fear condemnation from his disobedience: notable to this purpose is the confidence of *David*, *Psalm 49:5*, where the Prophet calleth upon all people in the world to take notice of it, *Both men of high degree, and men of low degree: Wherefore should I fear in the days of evil, when the iniquities of my heels shall compass me about?* wherefore? truly if there be any fear in the world, one would think this might procure it, what should a man fear, if nor this? *David* professeth it, and would have all to know it, that there is

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no cause therein why a Christian man should fear, *Wherefore should I fear?* &c. though it should follow you to the stocks, or to prison, yet there is no cause why it should make you fear: *Men, that trust themselves in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his Brother, nor give to God a ransom for him, that he should live for ever, and not see corruption:* had *David* had nothing but the wealth of his Kingdom, he might have feared well enough; but here is his confidence, verse 15, *God will redeem my Soul from the power of the grave, for he shall receive me.* But will not this make a Christian wanton against God, and cause him to abuse his liberty to hardness of heart? no, no, brethren, this is the kindly melting of a godly heart, to consider a Redeemer's love drawing him from the power of the grave, and that he should by his sins pierce the Lord Jesus Christ; this melteth his heart more then all his other sins, specially considering the abounding Grace of God, which where sin hath abounded, grace aboundeth much more: thus when a man doth not look for life by his own Righteousness, but knoweth the Redemption of souls to be more precious then so; this showeth a man not to be under a *Covenant of Works*, and then his very iniquity shall not make him afraid: there is such a state in *Christianity*, and

let all men know it. But will it not make men think the worse of *Christian* profession? No, *David* will have all to know it, that they may see the difference between all worldly confidences, and the confidence of *Christians*; all their glory will leave them, to be like the Beasts that perish, and cannot redeem their souls, that the Lord only might be exalted.

2. As a Christian looketh not for *Salvation* by

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his obedience to the *Law*, nor feareth *condemnation* by his disobedience: so neither doth he seek for any *blessing* from his obedience, nor fear any *curse* from his obedience; he seeketh not for *blessings* from his obedience, and therefore if there be any promises of blessing made to any obedience, though God should help him to as much obedience as might be, he doth not look for any blessing from that obedience, *Romans* 4:4,5,6, *To him that worketh, the reward is not reckoned of grace, but of debt; but to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness, even as David describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works.* He looketh not for his blessedness from his works; though he should perform all the conditions to which the promises are made, yet he expecteth all his *blessings* from free justification, and union with the Lord Jesus Christ: *blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth not sin*, this is the blessedness of Christians. It is true, the Lord doth bless the workings of his servants, and accept them, *Matthew* 25:34,35,36, *The King shall say unto them on his right hand: Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, from the foundation of the world: for I was an hungry, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and you gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.* Thus Christ blesseth them: but they are not sensible of their good deeds, so as to expect blessings for their obedience sake, and therefore they make answer, and say, *Lord when saw we thee an hungry, and fed thee; or thirsty, and gave thee drink?* &c. neither do they fear the curse of God, or that their sins should separate

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them from God: those that are under the *Law*, are cursed indeed, if they do not continue in all things that are written in the *Law* to do them; but this curse is removed from the elect by Jesus Christ.

3. This also is a third effect of the freedom from the Covenant of Works; that a Christian doth not look for *conjugal comfort* from his obedience, nor fear *conjugal divorce* from his disobedience. In a Covenant of Works, it is with

a man, as it was with *Leah*, *Jacob's* wife, who expected love and fellowship from her husband, because of her fruitfulness, *Genesis* 29:32, when she brought forth her first born, she said, *Now therefore will my husband love me*; and when she brought forth her third son, verse 34, *Now this time will my husband be joined unto me*: but thus doth not a man under a Covenant of Grace; for when he hath done all he can, he is ready to say, *I am an unprofitable servant*, *Luke* 17:10, and doth not challenge God for any of his dealing with him: he seeth he deserveth not his daily bread, and so looks for no reward from his good works: though the Lord will graciously acknowledge his servants in what they do according to his will, yet they are not wont to plead any such thing; which is very observable in the practice of *Jacob*, *Genesis* 32:9,10, &c, *O Lord God of my Father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy Country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee; I am less then the least of all the mercies and truth which thou hast showed unto thy servant*. So he doth not press his performance of God's Commandment to procure blessing, but acknowledgeth his unworthiness, and looketh for Grace from the *Promise* of God. *Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother; for thou saidst, I will surely do*

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thee good. Nor doth a child of God fear divorce by his disobedience, though it have been very great. Sometimes the people of God have not only rejected the servants of God, but the Lord himself, 1 *Samuel* 8:7, but when *Samuel* had pressed hard upon them for their sin, chapter 12, and they were truly humbled, then *Samuel* said unto them (verses 20,21,22), *Fear not; ye have done all this wickedness, yet turn not aside from following the Lord, but serve the Lord with all your heart: and turn not you aside, for then you should go after vain things that cannot profit nor deliver (for they are vain) for the Lord will not forsake his people, for his great Name sake: because it hath pleased the Lord to make you his people, therefore fear you not, he will not cast you off*: So that (mind you) a poor Christian doth not fear divorce from his disobedience; for if we should look for blessing from the one, or cursing from the other, we were not under Christ, but under the Law: but he that is freed from the Covenant of Works, is freed also from expecting salvation, or fearing damnation from what he doth; he knoweth the Lord will hide his face from him if he do evil, but he knoweth the Lord will not cast him off for ever; yet he dares not commit sin, but being under Grace, he is the more affected if he shall at any time displease God, and procure chastisement to himself: and by this means the Lord doth mortify his distempers. On the side, if he do well, he will not say,

Now my husband will cleave unto me, and dwell with me; no, no, we are freed from the Law, *Romans 7:4*, which we were not, if we look for conjugal love from God, for our obedience to the Law: it is true, if a man be married to the Law, his obedience unto it will supply comfort unto him; but if we be dead unto

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the Law, we have no life in it, nor by it, but only in Jesus Christ, from whom we expect our comfort: indeed we are troubled that we should sin against the grace of God, otherwise we look not at our obedience or disobedience, to make us accepted or rejected.

4 And finally, the soul doth not claim his right unto any *conditional promise*, by his performance of the condition; nor doth he deny himself the blessing that the promise may reach forth unto him, though he be wanting in obedience to this or that Commandment: pregnant for this purpose is the example of *Jacob* (which we mentioned before) *Genesis 32:9,10*, who though he had a plain and a full promise of God, to do him good if he would return to his Country, and to his kindred, yet when he did return according to the word of God, he claimed not his interest in that promise, for that he had done as God commanded him, but *I am less then the least of thy mercies*; and yet he cometh unto the Lord for the performance of his promises, but not upon this ground; only for the sake of mercy and truth, *Deliver me I pray thee: for thou saidst, I will surely do thee good*, verses 11,12, So that (mind you) though the soul can make use of a conditional promise, and come to God for the blessing of it, yet not expecting it in the least manner, by virtue of his obedience: and truly this is the freedom of a Christian soul; whereas another man, if he have kept the Commandment, and performed the condition, he then looketh for acceptance from God: as if the Lord make this promise, that *he that confesseth and forsaketh his sin, shall find mercy*; this man confesseth his sin unto God, and forsaketh it, and therefore he looketh for mercy: but this is not the

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manner of God's people; and yet if they look for any mercy, it is in the way of God, but not because of their own goodness; their hope is in the faithfulness, and free grace of God: they may make mention to the praise of God, how he hath guided them, and carried them an end in his own ways; yet they challenge nothing from any thing that they have done, but put the Lord in mind of his free promise, that as of his free grace he hath freely promised: so from the same grace he may make good what he hath promised.

Use 1: If any therefore shall accuse the Doctrine of the Covenant of free Grace of *Antinomianism*, and say, it teacheth men freedom from the *Law* of *Moses*; and if they commit any sin, they plead they are not bound unto the *Law*; we see how false such an aspersion would be: for all the people of God know, that the Lord is an avenger of every such wickedness. There is none under a Covenant of Grace that dare allow himself in any sin; for if a man should negligently commit any sin, the Lord will school him thoroughly, and make him sadly to apprehend how he hath made bold with the treasures of the grace of God. *Shall we continue in sin, that Grace may abound? God forbid:* None that have a portion in the grace of God, dareth therefore allow himself in sin; but if through strength of temptation he be at any time carried aside, it is his greatest burden, 2 Samuel 12:8,9, compared 13, *Hath not the Lord (saith Nathan) done these and these things for thee? Wherefore then hast thou despised the Commandment of the Lord?* then *David* confesseth, *I have sinned*. It pierced him to the heart to consider it, that he should abuse his Neighbour's Wife, and kill her husband, and commit such

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wickedness against God, that had dealt so graciously with him. So that the children of the Covenant of grace will only tell you, that they are free from the Covenant of the *Law*, but not from the *Commandment* of it: for as it is given by *Jesus Christ*, and ratified in the Gospel; and as Christ hath given us his Spirit enabling us to keep it, we are under it so far, as to take our selves bound by the authority of it; and if we do transgress against it, we know it is sin in the sight of God, and therefore it is that the soul in such a case is sensible of the wrath and displeasure of God, whether it be his own sin, or the sin of his brethren: therefore he runneth unto God for mercy; which he would not do, if he did not know, that his desert according to the *Law* did utterly cut him off from mercy, else would he never pray for pardon of sin, nor rejoice when the Lord helpeth him to do that which is right and just in his sight, nor bless the Lord for strengthening him unto obedience, unless he thought it to be his duty: and therefore,

Use 2: It is of use also to teach the servants of God, how far they are *freed* from the *Law*; to wit, from the *Covenant* of it: so that they neither look for justification, nor salvation from it. And let it not be grievous to any soul, that a Christian should say, He doth not fear *condemnation* by his disobedience: he will be apt to fear in this kind, until he be assured of the favour of God; but when he knoweth his portion in the Covenant, then indeed he doth not fear *condemnation* by his sin, nor doth he think that the Lord will cleave

unto him because of his fruitfulness; he casteth not off his comfort, nor looketh at himself as divorced from Christ, because of his

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barrenness before the Lord; nor doth he look for his daily bread from all his obedience, but expecteth all goodness and blessing from the treasures of the free grace of God.

Use 3. This may also serve to teach men some kind of discernment of their own spirits, and state: if you look for Justification no longer then you are obedient, and fear eternal condemnation when you are disobedient; if you be afraid of divorce from Christ because of your sins, or if you look for any blessing, and challenge right to any promise, by virtue of any well-doing of your own; in such a case either thou art under a Covenant of works, or at the least thou art gone aside to a Covenant of works; and if ever the Lord open your eyes, and bestow his free grace upon you, you will know your redemption from such dependences as these be. I know a Christian man, that hath not been clearly taught the distinct differences of the two Covenants, may be misled into dangerous ways, that might tend unto the utter undoing of his soul; but it is a sin of ignorance, and the Lord will not leave his servants, but clear up his truth and grace unto them.

Use 4. May serve to teach the servants of God, that desire to walk in a way of constant comfort, how to build their faith and their hope: truly if they be grounded upon your own obedience, or righteousness, or sanctification; if they depend upon you, you will find your hearts ever unsettled: you may find comfort, as under the *Law* you shall; for if a man be married to the *Law*, the *Law* will cast in comforts upon him because of his obedience; but if you shall believe that Christ is yours, and comfort your selves because you have been by the power of the *Law*

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constrained to duties, and restrained from sin, and thereupon build your conjugal communion with Jesus Christ, you will find your souls full of sadness and fear ere long, specially if you have true grace in your hearts: and therefore it is the faithfulness and tenderness of the grace of God unto his people, that when Christians come into this Country, though they have been marvellous eminent in our native Country, they cannot pray fervently, nor hear the word with profit, nor receive the seals with comfort: they wonder what is become of their old prayers, and hearings, and Sacraments, and of their lively spirits in holy duties; truly the Lord hath disenabled them (as it were) from such things, because they did build their union and fellowship with Jesus

Christ upon them, that so they might know the freedom of the grace of God, *that justifieth the Ungodly*; then will the poor soul be glad to seek after the Lord Jesus Christ, and say (as the people of God sometimes did, Hosea 2:7) *I will go, and return to my first husband; for then was it better with me then now*: now the soul will plainly see and discern, that he closed not with his true Husband, when as he built so much hope and comfort upon his duties; therefore he will find himself weak, and dead, (as it were) to all spiritual duties, and can find no life in them, no comfort from them; and it is the marvellous goodness, and free grace of God unto such a soul, whom the Lord will not suffer to bless himself in his works; for if a man should lay the foundation of his comfort in them, and be ready as it were to take it ill, if he should not find God accepting his works; *Wherefore have we fasted, and thou regardest it not?* Isaiah 58:3. *If a man rejoice in the sparks which he hath kindled, this shall he*

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receive at the hands of God, to lie down in sorrow, Isaiah 50:11, whereas the light of God shall graciously break forth unto the servants of God, though they wait upon him, though they be for present in darkness, and see no light. Trust not therefore in any legal comforts, but wait upon the free grace of God, both to *justify, sanctify, comfort, and glorify* your souls; and this is the way of constant peace: and if the Lord do at any time check his servants, when they walk in by-ways; it is, that he may build them upon a surer foundation. So that their salvation will not lie upon their obedience, nor damnation be procured by their disobedience: this is the way of constant peace and safety unto all the *Israel* of God.

Question 7 This Doctrine may serve in the next place, to answer a seventh Question, touching the *necessity* of *Sanctification*. For it may be demanded, If the Lord will give *himself* unto the soul in the Covenant of his Grace, not only his attributes, but his *person*, all that is God is given by virtue of this Covenant; If God will give *himself*, not only to choose us to life and glory, but his *Son* to redeem us, and his *holy Spirit* to sanctify us, *Ezekiel* 36:27, what need is there of Sanctification: for if the *Holy Ghost* will dwell in us, he can take our wits, and understanding, and understand all our Meditations for us, without any such actual concurrence of ours, as might be requisite for that end; if the Lord giveth himself to be my *righteousness*, and *holiness*, what need I then these gifts of holiness? So that this in sum is the Question, If the Lord will give unto us himself, what need we these gifts to work any

thing, which God is much more able to perform then we can be? This springeth naturally from the Doctrine.

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Answer: Though the Lord giveth us himself, and his holy Spirit to dwell in us, yet is it needful that we should be indued with all the gifts of the Spirit of Grace that do accompany salvation. You will say, What need is there then that the *Holy Ghost* should dwell in us? or will not these carry an end our souls unto immortality? Truly we have need that the Lord should give us his holy Spirit to dwell in us, notwithstanding all the gifts of his grace, though they indeed are necessary conditions to be found in the souls of all God's servants, *Hebrews 12:14, Follow peace and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord.* As if he made it of absolute necessity to salvation, not only in another world, but for a comfortable condition in this world; *follow Peace and Holiness*, as if so be that they were ready to fly away from a man; and indeed the word doth imply no less: for *δεώκετε*, doth signify the pursuit of something that fleeth from a man, as peace will many times flee from one, and a man will have much ado to attain unto it, *Psalm 120:6,7, My soul hath long dwelt with him that hateth peace: I am for peace; but when I speak, they are for war:* it is not easily attained unto, therefore should not be suffered to depart, but held fast when it is enjoyed. And so for *Holiness*: the Apostle would have us make an holy kind of pursuit after it, as if it were still withdrawing from us; which cometh through the corruptions of our heart; for we are soon weary of holy Duties, as Prayer, or Conference, or the like: if Holiness be in any thing, it soon groweth wearisome to flesh and blood; but though our weak and feeble nature will be withdrawing us from holiness, yet the Lord would have us *follow* it, and pursue *it*; and so shall a man be withdrawn from the

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world, and from the temptations and bad examples thereof. Do not say, What, shall we be wiser then our Fathers? and, Is not Moderation best in all things? but consider what the Apostle saith, *Follow* still after it, even unto perfection; and his words do intimate the reason of it, *without which no man shall see the Lord:* for what is *Holiness* in its own nature? it is that which giveth God his due, as *Righteousness* giveth man his due. And this is a main ground why we are so slow in works of holiness; for were they of another nature, and did they serve our turns more, as we think, we should not then account them tedious; If I were to sit and tell money all day long, this is for my self (saith a man) and for my profit; and if it were for another, we should not

think the time long, it may be, at that work neither: but (mind you) when it cometh to any thing which doth concern the Lord, then it's so far above a man's reach, whatsoever we have to do in the things of God, that we should soon be weary of reaching forth our hands all the day long unto the Lord, and to be constantly for God, from God, and with God, in all our Actions: our base spirits are soon ready to be withdrawing from the Lord; therefore the Apostle biddeth us *follow after Peace, and Holiness, without which no man shall see God*: so that great is the necessity of Holiness, and worthy to be followed after: for though a man's own heart, and the world, and men, and Satan withdraw us from it, yet *follow* after it, for *without it no man shall see God*. There is a kind of holiness which some men have attained unto, many a fair day ago, but 'tis a thousand to one, whether it be the holiness which doth accompany salvation, for that Holiness is not easily attained unto; but

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the other will easily cleave close unto a man.

1 *Question*: Now if you shall ask me, wherefore the Lord will have us *pursue* after Holiness; and what needeth it, if the Spirit of Holiness dwell in me by an everlasting Covenant: if it did withdraw from us as it did from *Adam*, it was another matter; but though it may be quenched in us, yet *abideth* it for ever: what need then of gifts of Holiness?

Answer: That one word may be sufficient, which we find in 2 *Timothy* 2:21, *If any man purge himself from these evils, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work*. This showeth us why gifts of Holiness are requisite to be in God's people, namely that they might become meet instruments in the hands of God, and fitted unto every good word and work; therefore it is, that the Lord will have us to be filled with all the gifts of Righteousness, and fruits of his Spirit, that we might be more fit *Temples* for the Holy Ghost to dwell in: and this is the principal Reason of the Point.

2 *Question*: If then there be such gifts of holiness, what need the *Holy Ghost dwell* in us? is it not enough that he should shed abroad these things into our hearts? cannot the Lord carry an end the work of our salvation by these gifts?

Answer: There is need that the *Holy Ghost* should dwell in us, notwithstanding.
1. To *keep* these gift in us. 2. To *act* them in us. 3. To *witness* these unto our souls, for our comfort, and the good one of another. Some Scriptures for all these.

1. That there is need of the *Holy Ghost* to *keep* these things in us, 2 Timothy 1:14, *That good thing*

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which was committed unto thee, keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us. There is a very worthy thing committed to us, how shall we keep it? not by our own wit and wisdom, careful watchfulness, and faithfulness, (though such things ought not to be wanting) but the charge is, *Keep those things by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us*. We stand in need of *gifts*, to be fit instruments in the hands of God; we stand need of the *Spirit* of God, to maintain that which God giveth us: and though *Adam's gifts* were in perfection, yet not having the *holy Ghost* to *keep* them for him, they all fly from him as soon as ever he had tasted of the forbidden fruit, and left him naked and desperate. Therefore in the Covenant of Grace the Lord giveth the *Holy Ghost* to *keep* strong possession in his servants, against the strong man armed. This is the first ground why the *Holy Ghost dwelleth* in us.

2. It's the *Holy Ghost* that *acteth* the gifts given to us, and enableth them in us: for the *Holy Ghost* who keepeth possession, doth derive continued strength into our faith, which putteth life into all the gifts of God. And if you shall ask how *love*, and *patience*, and the rest of the gifts of God do work? The *Holy Ghost stirreth* up faith to look unto Christ, who returneth strength by his Spirit unto Faith; and so *faith worketh by love*, and by meekness, and by all the rest of the fruits of the Spirit. Thus the Spirit of God *acteth* according to what we read, *Romans 8:14, As many as are led by the Spirit of God, are the sons of God*: come to any holy duty, and it is the *Holy Ghost*, that leadeth you along, and *Acteth* in you: to *Ezekiel 36:27, I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and you shall keep my judgements, and do them*. And, *holy men of*

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God speak as they were moved by the Holy Ghost. It is the *Spirit* of God that *moveth* us to any good work, and that *acteth* the gifts of his grace in us.

3. The Spirit of God doth not only keep these gifts for us, and act them in us; but it is the same Spirit of God that *witnesseth* to these gifts, and showeth what gifts he hath given us; for such is the blindness of the nature of all the Sons of men, and it is a wonder to see, that generally Christians when the Lord first worketh these gifts in them, not one of a thousand but they think they are in a sad and fearful condition, & so they are very uncomfortable: but now lest that we should always mistake that which the Lord hath given us, *we have received the Spirit of God, that we might know the things that are freely*

given unto us by God, 1 Corinthians 2:12, he indeed taketh his own time to discover it, to some sooner, to some later; but this is his intendment, that he might honour his grace unto us, by all the rich and gracious gifts which he hath given us.

He doth also reveal unto us the duties which he helpeth us to do, *Romans 9:1, I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience bearing me witness in the holy Ghost, That I have great heaviness, and continue sorrow in mine heart: For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ, for my Brethren, my Kinsmen according to the flesh.* The *Holy Ghost* that wrought in him this brotherly-love, the same *Holy Ghost* beareth him witness that he doth not lie; and that he had continual sorrow in his heart, and that he could have wished to have been accursed from Christ, that they might be saved? it grieved him so much that the whole Nation should be destitute of the Lord Jesus Christ.

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Thus we see how great need there is of the *Holy Ghost* to *dwell* in us, to *keep* all the gifts of his grace in us, to *act* them according to his will, and to *discover* to us what gracious gifts the Lord hath wrought in us, and what duties he hath helped us to do, that we may be able to give account of them by the *Holy Ghost* that *dwelleth in us*, and beareth witness with us. So there is necessity both of the *gifts* of grace, that we may be fit Temples for the *Holy Ghost* to dwell in, and fit instruments for him to work by: there is need also the *Holy Ghost* should dwell in us, for the causes we have spoken unto.

And I might add this, to comfort us in all the changes that may come upon us: it is a strong Scripture which we read in *John 15:26, When the comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me,* (our Divines have no place of more clear evidence to prove the procession of the Spirit from the Father) both of what mighty redemption he hath wrought for us, and what grace he hath wrought in us. This the *Holy Ghost* shall testify, even he that proceedeth from the Father; this is the comfort of God's people. Thus see both these points opened to us.

3. *Question:* How may we then *employ* and *improve* this *Sanctification* which the Lord hath given us, and which he keepeth and acteth in us by his Spirit, and whereunto he beareth witness? How, or to what end shall we employ it, seeing the Lord undertaketh to do these things for us?

Answer: If so be it, that the Lord Jesus Christ by his Spirit giveth us these gifts: It is our part then first to see that we do not rest in any sanctification,

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which doth spring from Christ, conveyed unto us by his blessed Spirit. The Spirit knitteth us unto Christ, and Christ unto us; he worketh faith in us to receive whatsoever the Lord giveth unto us, and by the same faith worketh all our holiness for us, 1 *Corinthians* 1:30, *Christ is made unto us of God, wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption*: therefore we are to see him principal author of all these things in us, and for us. This is the principal comfort of all, and the glory of all our safety; and so far as any of these lieth in our Sanctification, we ought to see that it be sanctification in Jesus Christ; and then it is sanctification in Jesus Christ, when the Lord giveth us to look unto the Lord Jesus in it, and to it in him; and as we look for our holiness to be *perfect* in Jesus Christ, so we look for continual *supply* of it from him: and this it is to make Christ our sanctification, when as whatsoever gift the Lord giveth us, we go not forth in the strength of it but in the strength of *Jesus Christ*. There may be a change in the soul, which may spring from a spirit of *Bondage*, and may captivate our consciences unto the *Law*, that may restrain us from sin and constrain us unto duties: but such holiness springeth not from *union* with *Jesus Christ*; for there may be a conscience of duty, without sense of our need of Jesus Christ: as it was with the Israelites at Mount *Sinai*, *Deuteronomy* 5:27, *Go thou near (say they to Moses) and hear all that the Lord our God shall say, and speak thou unto us, all that the Lord our God shall speak unto thee, and we will hear it and do it: they have well said, all that they have spoken, saith the Lord; O that there were an heart in them, that they would fear me!* and so forth. This I say, therefore, is the

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first thing to be attended unto; as ever you would make a right use of your holiness, see that it be such as floweth from Jesus Christ, and that there be not only an heart awed with the *Law*, but waiting upon Jesus Christ to be all in all in us, and to us: so shall we neither neglect the gifts of God in us, nor Christ, and his Spirit, but shall give their due honour unto all of them together.

2. This may also teach all Christians not to *trust* upon the gifts of their *Holiness*: though they do spring from the *Holy Ghost* himself, though they be such as are unchangeable, though they spring from Jesus Christ, and knit your souls in Union with him; yet *trust* not in the gifts themselves: the Lord layeth it down as the Apostasy of *Israel*, *Ezekiel* 16:14,15, *Thy renown went forth among the Heathen, for thy beauty, for it was perfect through my comliness which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God. But thou didst trust in thine own*

beauty, and playedst the Harlot, &c. Trust not therefore in any of these; but let all our confidence be in Jesus Christ, not in any of the gifts of his Spirit, whatsoever. For a little further opening of it.

1. Trust not in any *gifts* that you have received for the *performance* of any duty, for it is not the strongest Christian that is able to put forth a good thought, 2 *Corinthians* 3:5, *But our sufficiency is of God. He that abideth in me, and I in him, the same bringeth forth much, fruit: for without me ye can do nothing,* John 15:5. And the Apostle *Paul* cannot only not do any great matter by his own strength and grace, but nothing at all without Jesus Christ; and therefore he giveth us to understand, that *it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do,* *Philippians* 2:12, if therefore we have any new work to do, look to the Lord

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Jesus Christ afresh by Faith, that he may carry an end our works in us, and for us; otherwise it is not any strength or grace in us, that can produce any good work, word, or thought: And therefore (mind you) the Apostle maketh it a Principle of Christian Religion, that *The just man liveth by his Faith;* and he often mentioneth it, *Galatians* 2:20, *The life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God;* where he putteth it into his own experience: why? did he not live by Love, and Patience, and Zeal? &c. Yes truly, they were lively in him, if ever in any man, besides our blessed Saviour; and yet notwithstanding, he never attributed life to any of these gifts of his; but if he speak of his *Life*, he maketh this his Universal Life, *I live by the Faith of the Son of God, and I am able to do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me,* *Philippians* 4:13. This is the true saviour of a Christian spirit, that when gifts are at the highest, the heart is then at the lowest: 1 *Corinthians* 15:9,10. The Apostle *Paul* there acknowledgeth himself to be as one born out of due time; for (saith he) *I am less than the least of the Apostles, not meet to be called an Apostle, because I persecuted the Church of God; I, but by the grace of God I am what I am, and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain, but I laboured more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God in me.* This is truly spiritual sanctification, that when the soul is full of the *Holy Ghost*, and *gifts* of the *Holy Ghost*, yet he is like a man in great penury, as having nothing of himself: This is a marvellous spiritual poverty, and you shall ever find (and I desire the Lord would open the hearts of his people to know what I speak) that if Christians have fallen, their greatest falls have been in their most exemplary gifts. If you

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shall mark the sins of all the servants of God, they have been chiefly found in the very exercise of their best gifts. Let us take a little taste of them, that we may learn to use our gifts in the strength of Jesus Christ.

Abraham, a man full of *faith*, none went beyond him in Old or new Testament: yet if you read of any failing in him, it is in want of the acting of *faith*. What made him afraid not once, but the second time, that his wife would be taken away from him by *Pharaoh*? *Genesis 12:12*, by *Abimelech*? *chapter 20*, had not the Lord promised that he would bless him wheresoever he came? *Genesis 12:2*. He had so much of the knowledge and grace of God shining in him, that *Sarah* needed not have dissembled; and *Abimelech* (a poor Heathen), could say as much, *chapter 20:16*. *Behold, thy husband is a covering of the eyes to all that are with thee, and with all other; thus she was reproved*: as if he should say, Thou needest no shifts and lies for thy protections, and to be a vail unto thee: this a poor Heathen can discern, that such a man as hath God with him, needeth no other shifts nor covering to defend and shelter him. Thus we see that these great failings of *Abraham*, were proper acts of unbelief. *Moses*, a meek man, *none like him for meekness on the face of the earth*; there is, but one sin storied of him after he was called to the Government of that State, and this was his failing; *Hear now you rebels, Must we fetch you water out of this rock? So he lift up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice, Numbers 20:10,11*, they provoked *Moses* as meek as he was: sometimes, when *Aaron* and *Miriam* dealt as peremptorily with him, he was not moved from the meekness of his spirit: but now he falleth into *Passion*, and this was the very sin,

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for which the Lord excluded him out of *Canaan*, *Numbers 27:12,13,14*. It was the breach of his royal grace, *chapter 20:12*. *Because ye believed me not, to sanctify me in the eyes of the children of Israel, therefore you shall not bring this congregation into the Land which have given them*: which words show us the reason of his failing in the grace wherein he so much abounded, *because ye believed me not*. The Lord will have him know, that he must live by his faith in his *meekness*. If any man think himself to be a meek man, and nothing shall over-wrastle him there, if you believe not in God but in your meekness, your confidence will soon fail you. *Peter*, a man full of *courage*; and you read of two of his principal failings, and both in point of *courage*; he failed in the *high Priest's Hall* at the voice of a Damsel, and in the *porch* at the speech of another Maid? and the third time, at the voice of one that stood by, *Matthew*

26:69 *&c.* whereas afterward when he lived by faith, he became undaunted. Another failing of his in point of courage we read of, *Galatians 2:12. He feared those of the circumcision;* and whereas before he did eat with the Gentiles, when certain of the Circumcision came from *James*, he withdrew, and separated himself and *so dissembled, and others likewise with him, insomuch, that Barnabas also was carried away, with their dissimulation.* Thus the Apostle *Peter's* most eminent gifts did not bring forth their fruits. Know therefore, that the best of all your gifts, faith, meekness, courage, wisdom, love to your brethren, will fail, if you *trust* in them; and you will be most apt to fail there wherein you do most excel. If a man be *wise*, he shall fail in that point, and it may be in nothing so much, as in that, even in those things wherein he thinketh he walketh

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most wisely: and such an one will find most trials in point of his wisdom; and the like will be found in all other graces, and all to this end, to teach the *Israel* of God to know, that no man liveth by his wisdom, nor by any thing in himself, but by faith in Jesus Christ, whom God hath given unto his people; and who is only able to give new supplies of his *Spirit* unto his servants to act every gift which he hath given them. I might have mentioned the example of *Sarah*, a meek and a quiet godly spirited woman, subject and obedient to her Husband, and *called him Lord; whose daughter you are while you do well, 1 Peter 3:6,* and yet you know one of her greatest failings, was in point of *Reverence* to her husband, *Genesis 16:5, When she saw that she was despised in the eyes of her maid, whom she had given unto her husband, she said to Abraham, My wrong be upon thee, and the Lord judge between me and thee.* Where is the reverence of *Sarah* now? Will you have the daughters of *Sarah* to imitate her herein? What had her Husband done? There was no fault in him in this matter; she had no reason to tax him upon this point: it was her own counsel, *verse 2, that he should go in to her maid, that I may obtain children by her:* therefore there was no colour of any just complaint on her part: yet see, this meek-spirited woman failed in the point of her *meekness* herein, and did express no greater failing all her life long, that we read of: she was weak in faith once, but there was great reason, for that her womb was dead, and *her Lord* (as she called him) *was old also;* nor doth the Angel so much blame her about it: but that action wherein she most failed, was against that grace wherein she most abounded. And though every grace of the Spirit be of great force, when the

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Lord doth act and move it, yet let a man go forth in the strength of his greatest gifts, and if ever his heart fail him, it will be in them.

Think not when you have done all you can, that you are worthy of any thing, but say, that you are unprofitable servants: for though *Sanctification* be the way wherein the Lord will pour out all his blessings upon his servants, yet he doth require them to boast in none of their excellencies, but look at them all as freely given them of God: and consider that the right unto all springeth from fellowship with Jesus Christ, that so not only the *gift* itself is grace, but the *blessing* that followeth upon it is grace also. And suppose that we have attained all that we pray for, shall we then exalt our own gifts? No, but let us say with *Jacob*, Genesis 32:10, *I am less then the least of all the mercies and truth which thou hast shewed unto thy servant.*

Do not trust upon *gifts*, nor upon duties performed by those gifts, to reach the blessings; so look not for your justification from thence at all: for the Apostle is plain, that he looked not for any thing for his righteousness before his conversion, and after his conversion, he *counteth it all, as dross, and dung that he might win Christ*, *Philippians* 3:6,7,8. And for our *faith*; they are not to be trusted upon, as grounds of it: for all the gifts of our sanctification, are fruits of our faith; and therefore *faith* is said to *work by love*, *Galatians* 5:6. And so it doth by all other gifts of the *Spirit*; and if they be fruits of faith, then *faith* is not built upon them. And thus much for the second *use* which Christians are to make of their sanctification.

3. There is in the next place, a point of *witness* which this *Sanctification* doth yield, and the *Spirit* of God by it. The *water* beareth witness to the

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blood and the *blood* to the *water*, and the *Spirit* unto both, 1 *John* 5:6,7,8. A man's *own spirit* beareth witness also, *Romans* 8:16, *The Spirit of God beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the children of God*; and therefore as a witness of God unto our faith, we may lawfully hear what it speaketh; but this is the life of a true evidence, that all these gifts of God do not bear witness any further then a man seeth the Lord Jesus working them in him, and for him: for it is *faith* that maketh all the graces of the Gospel active, and it is a condition so requisite, that unless our works be of faith, and flow from it, they are not acceptable before God, *Hebrews* 11:6, for *without faith it's impossible to please God*; therefore unless faith carry an end our works, they are not works of holiness, such as should bear witness to the soul. Therefore the Apostle doth stir up the *Corinthians* unto this mainly, *Examine yourselves whether you are in*

the faith? 2 Corinthians 13:5, if he do exhort them to examination, it is in point of faith: and therefore some of our Divines, as Reverent Forbes of Middleburgh by name, who hath written a Sermon upon it “wherein he noteth this, that unless men find faith in their holiness, none of all their Sanctification will become a sound witness of the Grace of God unto them: but if faith be found, then you shall see Jesus Christ accepting you, and bearing in you, except you be reprobates.” There is a marvellous gracious witness, that sanctification giveth unto him that liveth by faith in Jesus Christ, if it be in Christ, and from Christ, and for Christ. This only is that sanctification which the Lord commendeth unto his children, to seek after it.

4. A fourth *Use* of our sanctification is, that the *Spirit* of God helpeth us by it in point of *rejoicing*

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and therefore it is that you shall see the servants of God, rejoicing in their holiness; so doth the Apostle *Paul*, *2 Corinthians 1:12, This is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience that in simplicity, and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in the world; he rejoiceth at what the Lord doth by him and with him. Let every man prove his own work, and so shall he have rejoicing in himself, and not in another, Galatians 6:4* But what is it that maketh the Apostle to rejoice before God? When he rejoiceth in his work before the Lord, you shall ever find him rejoicing at the Lord's *acting* these gifts in him and *blessing* him in his work: let us look upon two or three Scriptures for this end, *1 Timothy 1:12,13, I thank Jesus Christ our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry; who was before a blasphemer, &c.* this he thanketh God for: so that, mind you, as he seeth God *giving* him these *gifts*, and *enabling* him unto the work, so he blessed God in that behalf. You shall find him also blessing God, that had *prospered* this work of the Ministry wheresoever he came, *2 Corinthians 2:14, Thanks be to God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the savour of his knowledge by us in every place.* The Lord working in him, and for him, maketh him to triumph, and to over-wrestle all the difficulties which he meeteth withal. The Lord had given him gifts, and taught him to exercise those gifts, and doth accept him: and therefore he expresseth himself in a marvellous strong speech, *Philippians 1:20,21, I am in nothing ashamed, but that with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life, or by death: for to me to live,*

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is Christ; and to die, is gain: to me to live, is Christ; as if he had said, I have no life but *from* Christ, I put forth no act of life but *for* Christ: this is the sum of all his conversation; and if Christ be his life, then death will be his advantage, and Christ will be magnified in either. Thus we may see how the *Saints* of God have made use of their sanctification; they are careful to see that it flow from Christ; and yet when they have it, they dare not trust in their best gifts for the least duty, neither do they look for their faith from their best gifts, but they expect their best gifts to flow from their faith: they make use of the testimony of their holiness, when they see Christ in it, and saith in it, and the Spirit of God carrying them along in the ways and duties thereof: thus they see their holiness, and take comfort in it, and from the witness of it, as that by which the Lord dispenseth comfort unto his people, when they receive it from the hands of Christ, and by faith in him, by which they are taught of God, to carry an end their whole conversation in his name.

5. Furthermore, as we receive it from Christ, and trust not in it, but in Christ, and receive the witness of it in Christ, and in the holy Spirit of Christ; and as we receive joy and Comfort also, which the Lord doth minister unto us, in a sanctified course, by his holy *Spirit*: so we *grow up*, and *perfect* our Holiness, which we have received in his Name: there is *growth* in grace; this sanctification is not bed-rid; Christians are not as weak now as they were seven years ago, nor do they stand at a stay, but go forward in Christianity: and hereupon the Apostle exhorteth the *Ephesians*, *Ephesians* 4:6, to speak the truth in love, that *they may grow*

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up into him in all things, which is the head even Christ, implying, that men that enter into ways of Holiness, ought to grow on unto perfection in the fear of God. *The Righteous shall hold on his way, and he that hath clean hands shall grow stronger and stronger*, Job 17:9. And many sweet means the Lord hath appointed for this end; the communion of God's people tendeth hereunto, *Proverbs* 13:20, *He that walketh with the wise shall learn wisdom*: all the Ordinances of God are appointed for this end also, to beget and increase faith and holiness; therefore a Christian in the use of all these Ordinances doth not stand at a stay; but is still thriving and growing; and that not in his own strength, but in the strength of Jesus Christ, seeking for his acceptance & help in every duty he goeth about: and this is that which the Apostle *Paul* doth exhort the *Colossians* unto chapter 2:6,7, *As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him, rooted and built up in him, and stablished in the faith*. This ought

Christians mainly to attend unto; that as you see, the branch, the more juice it sucketh from the root, the more fruitful it is: so also it becometh the people of God, to know, the more need we stand in to be fruitful, the more need we have to derive a continual fresh supply from the Lord Jesus Christ, that by his Spirit, renewing grace in us, we may be enlarged, and carried an end in the ways of God: whereas otherwise the hearts of Christians would soon fail to go on in those things, wherein they desire to be growing up unto perfection. What is the reason that so many servants of God, are not so lively in their profession, as they were wont to be many years ago? Truly, we attend upon Ordinances, but it is only upon the outward act of them, and

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not upon *Jesus Christ* in them. This is many times wanting in the hearts of God's people; but truly if this be our constant frame, and we do not recover our selves, then is not our sanctification that which floweth from fellowship with Jesus Christ, and the Spirit of his grace; for you shall ever find this to be true, that there is no gift of Jesus Christ, nor sanctification accompanying salvation, but it doth knit us nearer and nearer unto Christ; for the more we are filled with true spiritual gifts, the more empty we are of our own strength, and of self-conceits, and so we ought to be; otherwise you shall constantly find this, that if the Lord do not preserve this empty frame in us, the more full we are of any gift, the more full shall we be of our own strength, and consequently we shall feel the less need of Jesus Christ; and if this be our constant frame, it will be a sad argument that our best sanctification will not endure, but fall away, unless we be knit unto Jesus Christ by the Spirit of his grace; for by all true sanctification, we are the more knit unto him: so that if any man would know whether the superscription of Christ and his image be stamped upon his sanctification, this you shall ever find to be the stamp of the grace of Jesus Christ; That the more you receive from him, the more need you stand in of him: insomuch, that notwithstanding all the gifts of the Spirit, there is not the ablest Minister of the New Testament, but (if your gifts flow from the Spirit of Christ, and knit you unto Christ) you will find as great need to cleave unto Jesus Christ, as ever you did the first day, when you came trembling into the Pulpit. If therefore we feel our selves full, so that the more we have received, the more sufficient we are; and go not about the

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duties we have in hand, in fear and trembling, but in self confidence; if this be our usual, and constant practise, it is but counterfeit Christianity: I

do not say, That the gifts are counterfeit, for they are from the Spirit of God, and men may by them be very serviceable to Church and Commonwealth: but this is certain, that the stronger and the more your gifts are if you sit loose from Christ, the emptier your hearts are of him. But you will say, May not a Christian be sometimes full of himself, and depend upon the strength of his own gifts? Yes, brethren, God forbid I should deny that, for the best Christians have gone astray in the exercise of their best gifts; and hereupon *Abraham* hath been wanting in *faith*, and *Moses* in *meekness*, and *Peter* in *courage*, and *Sarah* in her *modesty*; they have been so apt to trust upon those graces of God, wherein they have most abounded, that they have principally failed therein: but this you shall find, that if they have been over-taken once, or twice, as the burnt child dreadeth the fire; so they grow to be more sensible of their need of Jesus Christ, more fearful of departing from him, more careful to cleave unto him, that they might grow up in his name to all well pleasing in his sight. If therefore there be a sanctification that standeth at a stay in any man, it is a great suspicion whether it flow from fellowship with Christ, or no: if gifts be truly spiritual, a man shall ordinarily grow up in them. *Habenti dabitur*, Employ them, and multiply them; but if you have received gifts in your own strength, and you are now full of your own sanctification, truly this is but froathy work, and doth not convey true nor lively nourishment and comfort: but to him that in his most spiritual gifts is empty of himself, and only full of Jesus

 III

Christ; to live, or die, is his advantage. This is the use which I would commend unto you touching your Christian *Sanctification*. Thus we see sundry things have been cleared from this Doctrine concerning the Covenant of Grace. There remaineth another thing to be resolved, and cleared from the Doctrine: For if God in the Covenant of his Grace, do give himself to be a *God* to *Abraham*, and his seed, it is then to be enquired, 1. How God the *Father* giveth himself. 2. How God the *Son* giveth himself. 3. How God the *Holy Ghost* giveth himself: For these are the Fundamentals of the Covenant of Grace, and necessary to be opened for clearing the Doctrine of it.

3 *Question* 1: How God the Father doth give himself, to be a God in Covenant to *Abraham*, and to his seed; that is, to the faithful seed of *Abraham*?

Answer: By a threefold work doth God the *Father* give himself, in the Covenant of his Grace, to be a *God* unto *Abraham*, and to his elect seed.

1. The first Act of God, is by *Giving his own Son* out of his bosom, for the redemption of *Abraham*, and his seed. That is the first and Fundamental of

all the rest, that God doth put forth, or any other person in Trinity, for the applying of the Covenant unto the hearts of his people. And God in giving his Son doth give *himself*, John 9:14, and 10:30, *He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father*: and, *I and my Father are one*: if God giveth us his Son, he giveth us *himself* also: so saith the *Apostle John*, 1 John 2:23, *He that hath the Son hath the Father, and he that hath not the Son hath not the Father*. Herein hath God commended his love towards us, that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us; Romans 5:8, this

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is the love of God to send us his Son, that whosoever believeth in him, might not perish but have everlasting life, John 3:16. As God giveth us his Son so he giveth us all things else in his Son, Romans 8:32, for, *he that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?* So then this is the first and the great work of God, that he hath given his Son out of his own bosom; to take our nature upon him, to lead a miserable life, and to die a cursed death; and in him hath given all his *attributes*, his *mercy*, and *power* unto the sons of men; an undoubted sign that God intendeth to give *himself* in the Covenant of Grace unto his people, when he giveth Jesus Christ himself in that Covenant, as he doth say expressly, *Isaiah* 42:6, *I the Lord have called thee in righteousness, and will hold thine hand, and will keep thee, and will give thee for a Covenant of the people, for a light of the Gentiles*. Wherein we may see, that God giveth another, even that God the Father giveth God the Son: thus it is a gift of the Covenant that the Lord giveth Christ to be the foundation of the Covenant, and the chief blessing of it; in *chapter* 49:8. He speaketh to the same purpose, *In an acceptable time have I heard thee, and in a day of salvation have I helped thee, and will preserve thee, and give thee for a Covenant of the people, &c. No man hath seen God at any time, John* 1:18, nor can see him, nor will God the Father have immediate fellowship with any creature, *but the only begotten Son of the Father*. The Lord hath given him that he might *reveal him*. Thus we may perceive that the Lord is gracious, and marvellous gracious, in that he giveth us his dear Son, the second person in Trinity; and thus he saith to his elect, *I will be a God unto thee, and give*

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thee my Son, that shall redeem thee out of all distress, and danger: This doth the Lord for his people, and it is a clear evidence of his grace, and sheweth that his love unto his people is beyond all banks, and bottoms, for the Lord to give us his Son, and this Son so soon as he was promised; not the Lord only, but his people saw him afar off, *John* 8:5,6, *Your father Abraham*

rejoiced to see my day, and he saw it and was glad. For when the Lord Jesus Christ was promised unto him, *Genesis 17:16,17, and the Lord had said unto him, I will bless Sarah, and give thee a son of her; yea, I will bless her, and she shall be a mother of many nations, kings of people shall be of her; then Abraham fell upon his face, and laughed;* he did rejoice that the Lord would give him a Saviour out of his loins; how it could be brought to pass, it may be he knew not; but by a Spirit of Prophecy did he discern it much, no doubt. This is the first work of God in giving himself by Covenant; and this was done long ago, before we were born: he gave him in his eternal Counsel, when he did elect us in him; he gave him when he sent him into the world: but this is more, when he giveth *us* unto his Christ, by Covenant, and draweth *us* unto him, and giveth *Christ* unto *us* also: and this grace of God cometh nearer unto us; the other did leave us like Lambs in a large pasture: but now as he giveth *us* unto Christ so he giveth *him* to us, and both in present possession; and this the Father doth, *John 16:44, for no man, saith Christ, can come unto me, except the Father, which hath sent me, draw him: and every one that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me.* Now this *hearing*, and *learning* of the Father, is a strange kind of learning, which the Lord teacheth the soul by, when he draweth him unto

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Christ; an effectual Teaching, and powerful, *1 Corinthians 1:9, God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.* This is our effectual calling, and this is the Lord's giving *us* unto his Son, *John 6:37, All that the Father giveth me, shall come unto me:* all this is properly the work of the Father. Men are said to be well given, when they give themselves to their Books, to their works, and business: but this we may well say, that we are indeed well given, when the Lord giveth us unto his Son; for otherwise we are but in an ill state, which way soever we are given.

Question: If you shall ask how the Father giveth us, and calleth us, and draweth us to fellowship with his Son? (for they are Scripture-phrases, and all of them of like value in Scripture-sense).

Answer: In a word! The Lord draweth us unto his Son by his Spirit, and calleth us as by his Word, so by his Spirit also, and giveth us by his Word and Spirit unto Jesus Christ. In this thing I shall speak no more unto you, then what you have often heard, and I suppose long ago received, as, that the Lord calleth his people out of their sins, by the light of the *Law*, and by the Spirit of *Bondage* he setteth home the *Law* effectually unto the soul, and thereby draweth us from sin, and from the world in some measure, that we

have now no might to those things, which before we were full of delight in: whether they be sins against the *Law*, or sins against the *Gospel*; it is the Lord's usual dealing by his spirit, to set home sins against both; Inasmuch that thereby we come to be afflicted with some kind of trembling, and fear, and torment about our spiritual estate: and thus it was with *Saul*, (who afterwards was *Paul*) *Acts* 9:3,4,5,6, when Jesus Christ called unto

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him out of heaven, he all *trembling*, and *astonished*, said, *Lord what wilt thou have me to do?* So it was with the *Jailor*, *Acts* 16:29, after the Lord had shaken his heart with an earthquake, (which is a sanction of the *Law*, and a ratification of it) as all God's Judgements are) *He called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling to Paul and Silas*. Thus the Lord draweth men out of themselves, and their sinful ways, by a spirit of bondage, whereby they are greatly and deeply afflicted with fear; concerning which, the Apostle *Paul* saith, *2 Timothy* 1:7, *God hath not given us the spirit of fear, or bondage: but of power, of love, and of a sound mind, &c.* such fear also the Apostle *John* speaketh of, *1 John* 4:18, when he saith, *Perfect love casteth out fear, for fear hath torment*; which cometh from the sense of a man's state, whereby he is many times forced to cry out, and to say, *Wo worth my soul, that ever I was born*; for the Lord causeth me to possess all my sins, and presseth me down to the nethermost hell: this is one work of the spirit of *bondage*, by which the Lord draweth the soul out of it self, and its sins, though of itself the spirit of fear goeth no further then to shake a man's carnal confidence: but there is a further act of the spirit of *bondage*, according to that power which was given to the faithful witnesses, *Revelation* 11.

Besides this spirit of bondage, the Lord hath another work, which is called a spirit of *burning*; *Malachi* 4:1, *The day cometh that shall burn as an oven, and all the proud, yea, and all that do wickedly shall be as stubble, and the day that cometh shall burn them up saith the Lord of hosts; and it shall leave them neither root nor branch. This is a spirit of burning*; let us speak unto it a little. The Prophet saith, *It shall*

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leave them neither root nor branch. There are two things in the root.

1. First is the root of *Abraham's Covenant*, which this people much trusted upon; & that is it of which *John Baptist* speaketh, *Now the axe is laid to the root of the tree, &c.* and this he spake (*Matthew* 3:9) after he had said, *Think not to say with your selves, We have Abraham to our father, verse 8.* So that all the confidence that they had in *Abraham's Covenant*, and *Temple*, and *Tabernacle*,

and such things, is burnt up; and so they have no root left them to stand upon. And this is one thing intended by the *root*. But

2. There is something more in it: for with this spirit of *burning*, the Lord by the power of his Spirit doth cut us off, from any power of our own natural gifts, or parts, and spiritual gifts also, whereby we thought to lay hold on Jesus Christ; and we are cut off hereby from all that confidence that we have in our own sufficiency, when once the Lord intendeth to bring a soul unto himself; for there is an usual presidence that we have of our own state: though the Lord have cut us off from hope in the righteousness of our parents; and from boasting of his Ordinances, yet we think there is some power still left us, and therefore we hope, and will seek, that the Lord may reveal himself to us in mercy and peace; but when the Lord cometh nearer unto us, he will show us how unable we are to take up the least good resolution: we shall be like bruised reeds, and not find our selves able to hold up our heads; for *Christ came to seek and to save that which was lost*. So that Christ will not seek us until we be *lost*; and therefore he saith, *Matthew 16:24, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and follow me;*

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and according hereunto it is, that those converts, *Acts 2:37*, do cry out, when they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto *Peter*, and to the rest of the Apostles, *Men, and brethren what shall we do?* Hence it is also, that the poor souls that came unto Christ, *Matthew 12:20*, were like bruised reeds that could not hold up their heads; for the Lord in this case bruise them, and layeth them low, that they see no more hope of mercy, no likelihood that God should show them any hope. Thus doth the Lord burn up the root of *Abraham's Covenant* wherein men trust, and the root of all our *self-sufficiency*; that now we find our selves dried up, and our strength consumed; that now we are not able to think, as of our selves, a good thought.

And again, The Lord by this spirit of *burning*; doth burn up all our branches also, how fair and green soever they have been; all our *fastings*, and *humiliations*, and *alms-deeds*, and *prayers*; such things as the Pharisees much boasted in, *Matthew 6:1,2,3*, &c, but these things are all burnt up. This is a spirit of *bondage*, partly as it worketh a *trembling* and *fear*, and partly as it worketh to the burning up of all the *hope* that we have in our selves. There is a spirit of *bondage*, I confess, that only worketh unto *fear*, and now all the hope is, that a man setteth upon reformation: but if the Lord love a man's soul, he will not let him stay there; but goeth further with him, and showeth him that his prayers and fastings are all empty, and fall short of the life and power of

Jesus Christ. I, but yet, the soul is not quite out of hope, though the *Law* cannot save me; if it cannot, I must get me to Jesus Christ then, and lay hold upon him for salvation: as if all were to be had by faith in Jesus Christ, if once he can lay hold upon him, and nothing else were required

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but faith in Jesus Christ, and my laying hold upon him. I see plainly (saith a man in this case) that there is no hope in me, as hath been rightly observed; and therefore he trusteth upon Jesus Christ, and giveth himself to Jesus Christ: but now if the Lord love thy soul, he will not suffer thee there to rest, the spirit of *burning* will not leave thee so. How comest thou by faith in Jesus Christ? Why? Thou tookest it up of thy own accord; thou thoughtest, all thy gifts and duties were in vain, and therefore now thou wilt believe in Jesus Christ; Is it so easy a matter? Can any man *come unto Christ, except the Father draw him?* And is thy faith any more than a resolution of thine own, when thou wast convinced of the emptiness of thine own gifts and abilities? When this spirit of *burning* hath blasted this thy faith also, and that by the clear evidence of the Gospel put upon it; now, saith the soul, I see that I am not in Christ: though I said, I would trust in Christ; yet I see it is *not everyone that saith, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven:* now I see it is not my faith that will reach Jesus Christ, it is not a faith of my own undertaking that will serve the turn; I see now Christ alone must work this great work in me, and Christ in the way of his own Ordinances; therefore I must look for it in his word, and in the fellowship of the Sacraments; therefore I will look up unto the Lord in all these, and wait for him, and seek him therein. And so the poor soul maketh account, that in time he shall find Jesus Christ in the Ordinances, and so hammereth out a faith from thence, and therein blesseth himself. Now (mind you) the Spirit of God (when the Lord God the Father will draw home the soul throughly to Jesus Christ) will *burn* up all thy confidence: for if thy

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soul be not utterly lost; so long as it hath any root, or power in itself: though I cannot work, I will believe; and if I cannot believe, I will wait that I may believe; and so here is still the old root of *Adam* left alive in us, whereby men seek to establish their own righteousness, whereof the Apostle *Paul* often maketh mention: This old root putteth forth itself, and will not suffer the soul to be wholly for Christ, and for Christ alone; and all because there is a spring of *Adam* still in the soul: whence it is that the soul is marvellous apt to have hope and confidence more or less from some virtue or power

in himself; therefore it is no small matter to be cut off from *Adam*, that's contrary to nature (*Romans 11:24*) as saith the Apostle: *For if thou wert cut out of the olive tree, which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree*; this is marvellous strong work, when the Spirit of God cometh to act contrary things to nature: for nature is fully possessed, that what God commandeth, I am able to do it: nature will not be persuaded to the contrary: If I hear God command any thing, I will do it, (saith a carnal heart) and if I cannot do it, I will believe; and if I cannot believe, I will wait that I may believe: this is still but nature. Now when the Lord cometh indeed to engraft us into Jesus Christ, this is quite contrary to nature. Why wherein is it so contrary to nature? I answer: whereas nature is active for itself, now it cometh to pass, that whereas a soul hath been stirring and busy in his own strength, at length the Spirit of God by the mighty power of his Grace, being shed abroad into the soul, doth *burn up root and branch*, not only the root of *Abraham's Covenant*, but all the fatness of the root of the wild Olive, by which

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we are fat, and lively to spiritual work, in our apprehensions; so that we work in our own strength, until the Lord come, and cut us quite down, and make us to see, that there is not in us the least good thought, as of ourselves; and therefore unless the Lord be wonderfully gracious to us, we cannot be saved: till it come unto this, the soul is not fit for Jesus Christ. Thus the Spirit of God may work powerfully in the hearts of men, and burn up their root and branch: and this a spirit of burning may do, and yet leave the soul in a damnable condition, for ought I know; and such as many a soul may be in, and yet never come to enjoy saving fellowship with Jesus Christ. Therefore as this is one arm of God stretched forth for the salvation of his people, when he draweth them home to Jesus Christ: so

2. Secondly, there is a further work of God, when he giveth the spirit of *adoption*, which reacheth beyond all the former work: he hath cut us off from our selves, and now we stand in a state quite contrary to nature; and if any saving-work be wrought in us, it is quite contrary to nature; if any thing fall upon the heart and soul of a man, to bring his will to this pass, to lie down at God's feet, that he knoweth not what to do; and yet whatsoever the Lord calleth him unto, he is willing if it were possible to be done; he would run through fire and water to do it: but he findeth himself unable to do any thing; and now he will tell you, that to believe is as impossible for him, as to build a world. Why then bid him *wait*: wait? saith he; I but I cannot wait;

and if I seek the Lord, I cannot find him: and I see others of the servants of God wrought upon graciously; but

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dead hearted I, nothing will work upon me. Now in such a case as this, the Spirit of adoption cometh into the heart of a Christian, and taketh possession of the soul for Jesus Christ, and so draweth the soul unto Jesus Christ, and maketh it there to stay, and there to lie down, and to be willing to be drawn yet nearer and nearer to Jesus Christ, and to be carried an end by him, to take all from him, and to give all the glory to him. This spirit of *Adoption* doth give a man a son-like frame, to lie prostrate at his Father's will: like unto the Prodigal son, *Luke 15:17,18,19*, who when he came unto himself, and saw how unable he was to provide for himself, and how unworthy he was that his father should do any thing for him; he came and lay down as it were at the feet of his father; for he is unable, and unworthy of any mercy: now this stooping of the heart unto God and yielding unto him to do with us as seemeth good in his own eyes, is such a prostration of the heart wherein the Lord hath taken possession of the soul, that now a man is led unto fellowship with Jesus Christ, that there is none in heaven but him, none in earth in comparison of him, that the soul desireth after: and now a man waiteth upon Christ, to see what he will do for him; and though he cannot tell you that he waiteth, yet he doth wait that he may be helped of God to depend upon him: thus he receiveth all from Christ, and giveth all unto Christ. This is the Father's drawing of the soul, which is expounded to be the hearing and learning of the Father, of which *John* speaketh, *chapter 6:45*, *He that hath heard and learned of the Father, cometh unto me*; which is, when the Lord hath drawn the soul out of his natural corruptions, legal reformations, pretences

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of faith, and waiting upon Christ in his own strength for faith if it be wanting: then when the soul doth lie at his feet to be disposed of according to the will of God, and is in some measure subject unto the Lord, though not so much as he could be desirous he were; and therefore now the soul doth not content and bless himself in his faith, nor any other gifts or works of his own; but yieldeth himself humbly unto the Lord, to work in him both will and deed, of his own good pleasure, and to teach him how to seek and wait, and believe, and long after Jesus Christ; these things he waiteth for: otherwise, until he be thus taught of God, the soul will always think that he can do something, & is not able to come out of himself, to an utter denial

of himself: but *if any man will come unto Christ, he must deny himself*, even all his own gifts, and parts, and good works whatsoever: for a man is never utterly denied, until there be nothing left of which a man can say, This I am able to do, or this is an excellent thing in me; and when it cometh unto this pass, then will the soul lie down at the will of God, and acknowledge that if the Lord would never show him mercy, just and righteous are his judgements. Now when the soul and will of a Christian are convinced of these things, as well as his judgement, that now he waiteth upon Christ, as well that he may be able to wait, and seek the Lord, as he doth for any other good thing from the Lord; he waiteth now upon the Lord for a poor spirit, and cannot perk up himself, as a bruised reed cannot do. Thus when it cometh unto saving-work, the will and soul of a man is so cast down, that a man cannot tell what to make of himself; but there he lieth, to see what the Lord will do with him, whether he will reach forth the

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hand of salvation unto him. In this case the soul is left utterly void, and hath in himself neither root nor branch; but seeth how unable he is to believe, or wait: nor can he tell whether Jesus Christ be his portion; and now doth the Lord take possession, and fill the empty soul. If you shall ask me how this *spirit* cometh into the soul, to make it thus to stoop unto Jesus Christ? You shall find that the Lord useth to convey himself unto the soul in some *word of promise* of the Gospel, that showeth unto the soul the riches of the grace of God in Jesus Christ: something or other is declared of *Jesus Christ*: This word being taught in the public Ministry of the Word, or brought to remembrance in some spiritual duty, as prayer, or conference, or the like (for I will not limit the holy One of Israel, yet) usually it is done in the Ministry of the Gospel; and though the Lord doth not limit himself, yet he doth limit us to attend upon the means, which he usually worketh by: but whatsoever the way be, this is the manner of God's working, he doth universally come into the soul, in some word or other of his grace: as for instance, that in *2 Corinthians 5:19*, *God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself*; or that in *1 Timothy 1:15*, *Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of which I am chief*. In some such word of God's grace, he cometh and putteth life into the soul, and maketh it somewhat quiet, and causeth it to see that there is hope in Israel; and the Lord is able to save me, and there is riches enough in Jesus Christ to save me. By such kind of work it is, that the Lord bringeth the souls of his servants effectually to Jesus Christ. And now hath God the *Father* given us unto Jesus Christ; and until now, thou never camest

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home savingly. This is the second act whereby God the Father giveth *himself* unto the soul.

3. The third *Act* or work of God the *Father* which followeth both these: So soon as ever the Lord hath given this *self-denying spirit* unto the soul, & hath made it like unto a bruised reed, or like a Traveller that is out of his way, & willing to take any man by the hand that will lead him into his way again; when the soul is in such a frame, now God the Father cometh by a third work of actual *reconcilement*: The first work, was of *conviction*: The second, was a work of *subjection*: And the third, of *reconciliation*. This is the third work of the Father: though there is in all these works a concurrence of the whole Trinity, yet some are more proper unto each person, as our *Catechisms* teach us, and we are not wont to scruple such expressions in them. God the *Father* created us; and we cannot expound it, but as God the Father created us at the first, so he doth again create you, or else if we acknowledge it in the one, and not in the other, we do God the Father wrong. Well, he is then reconciled unto us, having given us the Spirit of his Son, and now he doth pronounce us reconciled unto him: this is the work which is spoken of, *Romans 5:10*, *When we were enemies, we were reconciled unto God, by the death of his Son*. And this is the work of God the *Father*, according to that which is before alleged, *2 Corinthians 5:19*, *God was in Christ reconciling the world*, &c, now there are two *acts* of God, as fruits that follow hereupon, and both of them done at once upon the soul.

1. Act of God is *Adoption*, whereby he maketh us his Children; as *Galatians 4:4,5,6*, *When the fullness of time was come, God sent forth his Son made of a*

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woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law; that we might receive the adoption of sons: and because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. And *as many as received him, to them he gave power to become the sons of God*, *John 1:12*. So that now we are *brethren* of Christ, and the *sons* of the eternal God. *Adoption* is properly the work of the *Father*: but Jesus Christ being the natural Son of God, we must be knit unto him, before we can be accounted sons.

2. Act of God is *Justification*, It is *God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?* *Romans 8:33,34*. This is the Father's work, and it is principally attributed unto him to forgive our iniquities, and to reconcile us in Jesus Christ. And look as it is in our natural being; so soon as ever we have received natural

life from *Adam*, we become the sons of *Adam*, and his sin is imputed unto us: so it is in the new birth; so soon as ever the life of *Christ* is shed abroad into our hearts, so soon are we *heirs* with *Christ*, and the righteousness of the second *Adam* is imputed unto us now to our justification, as was the sin of *Adam* before to our condemnation.

Use 1: The Doctrine itself is but an Use. But I desire that we may all of us apply it unto our selves. It will be helpful unto us for our instruction; to teach us how we came to saving fellowship with God in Jesus Christ, and wherein lieth our spiritual union with Jesus Christ, and how it is wrought and obtained: and this is necessary; for as it hath been observed by others, so we may now gather it from what we have heard, that there be four sorts of men, that fall short of this union with Jesus Christ.

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1. You have some that bless themselves in their natural state; it may be they are rich, and honourable among men: well, they bless themselves in that state, and will never go any further.

2. There is another sort, that are convinced of the danger of their natural estate, they dare not rest there, and hereupon they fall to reformations, and so to duties of humiliation, and the like; wherein they find such a blessed change, and so much comfort, as doth satisfy them: and indeed the Lord doth comfort men in their reformations; for God will have no man lose by him, *Matthew 6:2,5*, *Hypocrites have their reward for their alms, and for their prayers. Herod when he heard John, reformed many things, and heard him gladly, Mark 6:20*, here was a great change, and doubtless much comfort: yet these men never had the work of God the *Father*, to burn up all that they have received by any strength of their own.

3. A third sort go a step beyond these: They have been convinced, that they went forth to reformation in their own strength: they plainly see it, and discern it; and therefore they know that it is impossible to be saved by the righteousness of the *Law*, and that it is not of works neither, of one kind, nor of another: They are convinced, that faith only must do the deed, and upon this ground they will take up faith to believe in Jesus Christ for salvation; and that faith which formerly they have pitched upon their good duties, they will now pitch it upon *Jesus Christ*: but still it is the same faith, for the root is not yet *burnt* up, their old corruption still remaineth in them: and so here is your old faith translated from one object to another; it was fastened before upon *duties* and

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reformations, and now upon *Jesus Christ*: And now a man is ready to plead, and say, If God had not loved me, he would never have set me upon such reformations, nor have enlarged me with such comforts as he hath done, if he had not been well pleased with me in Jesus Christ: but though he may be sometimes burnt up touching his hope in reformation, yet he will translate his *faith* to *Jesus Christ*: but how came you to do that, brother? Why, I saw my hopes in my own reformation would not serve my turn, and therefore I believed in *Jesus Christ*; and now shall nothing draw me from Jesus Christ, nor pull me from my confidence: for I have built upon some word of God, and some *promise* of his unto such reformation as I have set upon; and is not this true faith in Jesus Christ? This is far from true faith, it is no other but a strong fallacy whereby the Devil doth cheat men; and in truth, this faith is but a faith of a man's own making, that I may so speak; it is no more but a spirit of *burning* at the best, that hath burnt up his confidence in his own works, and taught him to resolve to believe on *Jesus Christ*.

4. There are a fourth sort, that fall far short of Jesus Christ also, and yet go beyond all these: they go beyond *works*, and beyond this *faith* also which we have spoken of, which was not a lively faith in Jesus Christ, whereby we are justified; but men justify themselves by it, God doth not justify them: now this fourth sort come plainly to see that their faith is shaken, and they dare not look God in the face, to justify the truth of their faith before him: It is true, many an heavenly spirited man cannot tell what will become of him, nor can

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he tell whether his faith be found: but many an hypocrite also is so far convinced, that he cannot tell what will become of him, nor can he say that his faith is right, nor that he is able to believe: what saith the soul now in such a case as this? He will say, I see it is not my *reformation*, nor my *faith*, that will serve the turn: what is it then? I see that now I must *wait* upon Christ that I may believe, and unto him must I *seek* for help. Is not this soul in a state of everlasting fellowship with Jesus Christ? Truly this is that which the Lord many times bringeth the souls of his servants unto; but he leaveth them not here, if he mean to do them good. For I would examine again, how camest thou to wait upon Jesus Christ? Thou hast been driven out of conceit of thy former faith, and so hast been forced, and hath seen a necessity to wait upon Jesus Christ for faith, or else thou canst not believe: force of argument hath constrained thee thus far. If thou hast taken up a course of

waiting only upon this ground, here is a spark of *old Adam* still kept alive in thee: thou art *able* to seek, and wait upon Jesus Christ, and yet I cannot promise thee that thou hast any part or portion in him. But a soul will say, Hath not the Lord made gracious promises to all those that seek for him? Hath he not said, that *all they are blessed that wait for him?* *Isaiah* 30:18, and am not I wrapped up hereby in a bundle of grace and peace? Mind you; there is no promise of life made to such as wait and seek in their *own strength*, who being driven unto it, have taken it up by their own resolutions; though I grant it is true, that every one that waiteth for, and seeketh the Lord aright, is driven unto it by the Lord: but if ever the Lord

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mean to save you, he will rend as it were the caul from the heart, I mean, he will pluck away all the confidence that you have built upon, as a man would rend the entrails of a beast from him: so the Lord will bring you to a flat denial of your selves, and that you have neither good will nor deed as of your selves; and you know not what God will do with you; but this you know, that whatsoever he doth, he is most righteous. When the Spirit of God cometh as a *Comforter*, he will not in this manner *convince* the soul of a man, that he hath heretofore hung upon his *reformations* for hope and comfort; but now he is brought plainly to see, and flatly to deny, that he had not so much as one drop of the fatness of the true Olive in him, when he most trusted unto his own excellencies. Now a man being thus far brought on, doth not only deny himself in his *Judgement*, but in his *will*, and is ready to say, as *David* sometimes did; *If the Lord say, he hath no pleasure in me, here I am, let him do unto me as seemeth him good;* the Lord is righteous in all that cometh upon me: this only the soul hath for his support in such a case, the Lord is able to do all for me that I stand in need of: If he show me no mercy, he is *just*; if he be gracious, I shall live to praise him. Now when a man's *will* is thus subdued, that he hath no *will* of his own to be guided by, but the will of God, this is true *brokenness* of heart, when not only the *judgement*, but the *heart* and *will* is broken. The soul being thus convinced that neither his working, nor believing, nor waiting, nor seeking as of himself will do him any good, there is no mercy that he can challenge for any goodness of his own; then cometh the Holy Ghost in some declaration of God's free Love, and taketh possession of the heart,

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and then the soul beginneth to pant after *Jesus Christ*, and nothing in heaven but him, nor in the earth besides him: The soul being thus wrought

upon, beginneth to put forth itself towards the Lord Jesus; but the Holy Ghost had taken possession before, and so helpeth our infirmities, *Romans* 8:26 27, he alone must help us, and no other: observe it I pray you, for it is most necessary to know it to be impossible, that a *conditional promise* should save the soul. A man is convinced that there is no condition will quiet his spirit until the grace of God in Christ be manifested to him. This is the first Use.

The second Use may give light touching a controversy, if it be stirring in the Country, I know not whether it be, I fear it is, and yet hope that if matters were rightly understood, there would be no material difference: for if the Question be not about *grace*, but about the *discerning* of grace, you will find that differences which tend unto the discerning of grace, will be of much less dangerous consequence then the other; for thereupon lieth the very foundation of a Christian man's safe estate. How far there is difference in the Country, I cannot give an account; but I desire that you may all understand what I say.

1. *Question:* If you demand, upon what grounds cometh the soul to close with Christ aright; whether upon a *conditional*, or upon an *absolute promise*? And are they not both free?

Answer: I Answer, It is true, they are both free; but when God is said to do any thing to a work, as to apply a promise to a work, it is not so properly said to be a promise of grace: but I will not enter into Dispute: This you will find to be true; that

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take a soul that is in union with Christ, and apply all the Promises to him, he will make you this answer, before the Spirit of Grace cometh into him, he is clear in this, that there are none of all the Promises of God belonging unto him, till the Lord who hath broken him do bind him up again; for his heart will tell you that his duties and reformations have been such, as have kept him from Christ. You will say, I hope you trust upon *Christ*: I, will he say, with that saith by which I trusted upon works before. If you tell him of *promises* made to faith, he will say, But not to mine, that hath only sprung from my own *reformations*. Consider, all you that search the word of God this day, when the soul cometh to deny that it hath true faith, what promise can it apply unto that which it denieth it self to have? A soul will be ready to refuse promises, even when the Spirit of God hath taken possession; but then it is his sin: yet all the time before, there is no reason but that the soul should refuse to apply Promises; when there was nothing but a power of the

Spirit of Reformation, and till we be cut off from the *old Adam*, we shall be ready to quarrel and snarl that the Lord should deal thus with us; and why did he suffer *Adam* to fall? and put upon us such a *Law* to obey, and then condemn us for that which we were never able to perform? Truly there is nothing to help in this case: but the Lord will take away thy crabbed spirit, he will make thee to lie flat at his feet, and to say, if he will kill me, here I am; and if he will save thee, he will make thee content to receive all from Christ; and to be willing that he should do with thee that which is good in his own eyes. And what can help a soul now, but only an *absolute promise*? Whereby the soul is raised to

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look to the Name of that Christ, whom he hath all this while blasphemed and persecuted. Thus we see upon what terms and grounds any one is jealous of building his comfort upon *conditional promises*, and why we are so loath to say, that *sanctification* is an *evidence* of a man's *justification*; it is because men may produce sanctification, and promises unto it when it is but legal righteousness. Yet some men will say, I have been driven out of my own legal righteousness, and now I rest upon Jesus Christ, and may I not take comfort in such faith, and sanctification flowing therefrom? I confess faith in Christ, and sanctification flowing from it, are precious treasures; but how comest thou by them? If thou knowest not how, I cannot but think that thou stolest them, and camest not by them in the right way: you will say, Well, though I have no righteousness, nor faith of my own, yet I can wait upon Christ: How camest thou by *power* to wait upon Christ; Here is a branch of the *old Adam* still springing forth afresh; thou art confident in thine own strength, and worth; and if God deal otherwise with thee then thou expectest, thou wilt be apt to wrangle with the Lord, so far wilt thou be from stooping to his will. Search the Scriptures, and see if it be not the truth of God. See whether it be thy qualifications taken up upon unjust grounds, that will save thy soul; thou hast not been drawn far enough all this while: if thou sayest thou hast been drawn to *reformation*, and *faith*, and *waiting*; If thou hast been indeed drawn, it is a comfortable sign; but truly the Promises do not belong unto thee, until thou art brought unto a flat *denial* of thy self; and thy *will* be made to lie prostrate before the will of God, and is unable to satisfy it self in any thing besides *Jesus Christ*; the want

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of either of which, will leave a man still a member of *old Adam*; that either he will cavil with God, or else will go away, and be jolly, and frolic, and

free of Spirit, though he knoweth not what the Lord will do for him: which is a plain sign that the Spirit of God is not there, and then there is no condition of which it can be said, This is the spot of God's children, This is the seal of the servants of the Living God. If then the Spirit of God come upon the wings of a *promise*, it is an *absolute promise*; and then you must not wonder, if we be thus afraid that men should build their faith upon *conditional promises*: if men build their consolation upon conditions of obedience, hypocrites have gone beyond it: if you have trusted in your own faith, hypocrites will plead that they have gone beyond that also; for they have waited upon God that they might believe. And therefore see the reason why we do so much mistrust the building of our faith upon promises made unto conditions in us. And I have given you the grounds from the word of God: for I should be a Traitor to the Lord Jesus, if I should speak from any other grounds. And though it be true (which I have formerly said) that the fruits of the Spirit of grace in the heart of a Christian, as *Faith*, and *Patience*, and *Love*, cannot be denied to be evidences of a good estate; yet let it first appear from whence they come: first draw near unto God in Jesus Christ, and when any are brought on to Christ by self-denial, such men's faith and love are indeed evident tokens of salvation and communion with Christ; but until men be thus brought on, they can have no Evidence from such graces. Therefore you see why we are so fearful to build our faith upon *qualifications*; for any self-denying soul will tell you, that no

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promise will serve his turn to build his faith upon, but some such as speaks of God's wonderful and free grace: if there be any promise made unto faith, he will find himself very unable to apply it, until the Lord by some word of his free grace hath wrought faith in him.

Use 3. You may see here the unsafeness of any such building; as when we are convinced of our sins, then we seek for some qualification in our selves, and think that the Holy Ghost applieth some promise made to such a qualification; and so we lay hold upon Jesus Christ: a most unsafe building, in my understandings; for we cannot reach any gracious qualification, until we have first received *Christ* in the Promise; and then we must look up unto him to bring us unto the promises, and to apply them to us. It is not possible that a corrupt tree should bring forth good fruit: but first make the tree good, and good trees we cannot be, till we be ingrafted into *Christ*: which is indeed the ground of my great fear, and solicitude, and the reason why I dare not be so unfaithful, as to set men in a way of faith, or any other qualifications,

thereby to conclude their safe estate, before they have received Christ in a promise. Indeed, when a man's soul is wounded, and convinced of some heinous sins, the Promises of God in such a case may support his soul; but do not lead a man in such a case to see his faith, or any other qualification, therein to satisfy himself: but if I would help and comfort such a soul, I would declare to him what the Lord hath done for us in *Christ*; I would show him all the treasures of the rich grace of *Christ*; I would set in order before him, how he loveth freely without any deserts in us; I would tell him how freely the Lord Jesus Christ doth

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invite men to come to him, that have neither money, nor money's worth: and if the Lord take delight to do him good, and to do him good by my mouth; he will convey his Spirit of grace in some such word as I have spoken unto him; but if the Lord do not breath by his Spirit in my words, then I would advise him to go and talk with some other Christians, I would not limit him to any one brother; but let others also tell him, what Christ hath done for their souls; it may be the Lord may thereby convey himself: and I have sometimes known this in experience that when some have spoken scornfully of the free grace of God, yet when the same hath been held forth, their spirits have been subdued to stoop unto it; so great is the power of the word of God's free grace, set home by the Spirit of God; and the meditation thereof doth serve greatly to the firm rooting of the peace of God's people.

Use 4. The fourth Use, is to such a soul who is brought home to fellowship with *Jesus Christ*, and actually justified; being first adopted, he is reconciled to God, and is become the son of the most High, and hath all his sins pardoned, both past, present and to come. It is a ground of much Consolation to such a soul who hath the Holy Ghost dwelling in him, he cannot rest till he find the free grace of Jesus Christ revealed to him by his holy Spirit, in some promise thereof; for Christ himself hath said, *That the Spirit of truth will take of mine, and show it unto you, John 16:14.* There is strong consolation laid up for all those that cannot rest without the manifestation of the free grace of God unto their souls: other things will not satisfy them, the Lord doubtless will withhold no good thing from such.

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9 *Question:* We now proceed unto the ninth *Question*, which is, How doth God the *Son* give himself unto *Abraham*, and to his seed, in an everlasting Covenant and union that shall never be dissolved?

Answer: In three acts or works about *Abraham* and his seed.

1. First, in giving Christ, God doth give himself; and therefore here is the *Son's* work, to come, and *take our nature upon him*: For the *Father* gave him for that end, and the *Son* came to fulfil the will of the *Father*; and that is the *Son's* work, even the true distinct work of Christ. It properly belongeth unto the *Son*, to be our actual Redeemer from all sin and misery.

2. As the *Father* draws us to the *Son*, and reveals the *Son* unto the soul; so doth the *Son* reveal the *Father* also: *John* 1:18, *Matthew* 11:27.

3. As the *Father* doth accept us in his *Son*, as justified by his righteousness, so the *Son* doth preserve us in this estate, even to his heavenly Kingdom. These therefore are the three works of the *Son* in the Covenant of Grace.

He takes *our nature* upon him for our redemption.

He *reveals* the *Father* to us.

He *preserveth* us in the *Father* and in *himself*. Let us speak something to each of these in particular.

1. For the first of these, That he *took our nature* upon him; the Apostle saith, *Hebrews* 2:14, &c, *For as much as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself took part of the same, that through death he might destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil, and deliver them who through fear*

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of death, were all their life time subject to bondage, &c. Therefore it was truly said, *Isaiah* 9:6, *unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given*, &c. He took our nature upon him, lived a miserable life, died a cursed death; this is the proper character, and work of the *Son*; and thus he is made an horn of salvation to us, *Luke* 1:69, and all this floweth from the everlasting *Covenant*, as also *Zechariah* Prophesied, *Luke* 1:72,73, *To perform the mercies promised to our fathers, and to remember his holy Covenant, the oath which he sware to our father Abraham: By him we have redemption through his blood*, *Ephesians* 1:7, *Colossians* 1:14, *He gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works*, *Titus* 2:14. This then is the first work of the *Son*, to *Redeem* us: And the very phrase of *Redemption* doth imply a double state of those that are redeemed, without which it cannot be understood, to wit,

The state	{	whence	}	
	{	and	}	they are redeemed,
	{	whereunto	}	

Even from a state of *bondage*, unto *Christian liberty*; this is found in all redemption properly so called: It findeth us in *bondage*, and setteth us in a state of *liberty*, *Hebrews* 2:14,15 *He took our nature upon him, that he might deliver them, who*

through fear of death were all their life time made subject to bondage. And this third thing also is implied (in the word Redemption) with both the former, namely, a certain *price* by which we are redeemed from bondage unto liberty. In a state of Bondage we were under the *Law* and curse of God, but *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law:* Galatians 3:13, and now *sin shall no*

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more have dominion over us, for we are not under the law, Romans 6:14, that is, not under the *Covenant* of the Law, though we lie under the *Commandment* of it in Christ: we were sometime under the bondage of sin, under the guilt and strength of sin; but by Christ we have redemption, even the forgiveness of our sin: and as the *Law* was the strength of sin; so *sin* was the strength and sting of *death*, 1 *Corinthians* 15:6, but now, *O death where is thy sting! O grave where is thy victory! the Lord hath delivered us from him that hath the power of death,* Colossians 2:15. Hebrews 2:14, and *from this evil world:* Galatians 1:4 and *from the wrath to come,* 1 *Thessalonians* 1:10, so then this was bondage we sometimes lay under, when the Law of God pressed heavily upon us the conscience of sin even unto death: both first, and second death; and both *Law*, and *sin*, and *death* delivered us unto the power of *Satan*, and held us under the wrath of God; the world turned to be our enemy in all the blessings and crosses of it: from all these bondages Christ hath redeemed us; and it is a marvellous work in the eyes of all that enjoy the benefit of it.

If you shall ask, what Ransom the Lord did pay, that we might be redeemed?

The answer is given, in 1 *Timothy* 2:5,6, *There is one Mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all, &c,* so that he himself is the Ransom. I will not stand disputing whether he gave his *active*, or *passive obedience*, or both; The Text is large, *He gave himself*, from the height of glory to become a mortal man, not sinful, but by imputation; so that from first to last he *gave himself*. Consider him therefore from his first taking our nature upon him, and, all is but one

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ransom; for his very *active* obedience was *passive*, and his *passive* obedience was *active*; if he had not been active in his sufferings, his sufferings had not been satisfactory, therefore he willingly laid down his life; *No man taketh it from him, but he layeth it down of himself,* *John* 10:17,18, else had not his death been of any sweet smelling savour to the Lord: forced death is no acceptable sacrifice.

Again, on the other side; his *active* obedience was *passive*; he suffered himself to be closed in his Mother's womb, and when he was born he suffered

himself to be laid in a manger: and although being God over all, blessed for ever, he was subject to no Law, yet now he suffered himself to be obedient unto his Father: now for great Princes to live in other Dominions, to observe their Rules, and be guided by their Laws, it is a suffering. This did the Lord Jesus; for he had a special commandment to observe both *Law*, and *Gospel*, and in this the Divine Nature doth suffer as much, as for the Creator to become a creature, and to take upon him the terms of hardship which become a creature: It is no debasement unto Angels, nor unto Saints, to be obedient; but for the Creator to be obedient unto the Law of God given unto the creature, in this he greatly humbleth himself; when he saith, *Thus it behoveth us to fulfil all righteousness, Matthew 3:15*. And this is such kind of passion as hath all things tending to satisfaction in it. And by all this you may see, that from the first to the last the Lord Jesus is a *Ransom*; take him in his Cradle, and he is a Ransom; take him throughout all the course of his life, and he is *passive*, and in all his sufferings he is *Active*: He went up and down doing good, and suffering evil all his life long; and thus he is a Ransom: but

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above all, when as he came to wrestle with the wrath of his Father, he did therein exceed all the rest of his sufferings: It was much indeed for the Son of God to make himself a *servant*; but when he that is the Son of the eternal God, and in regard of his God-head equal with the Father, shall now stand to wrestle with the unsupportable wrath of God, and to cry out, My soul is in an agony unto the very death, and through anguish thereof to sweat drops of blood; and though his heart as it were seems to recoil, so that *if it were possible he desires the cup might pass from him*, yet he is carried before *Pontius Pilate*, and is there condemned, and afterward suffereth the death of the *Cross*: this was the chiefest part of the ransom, which the Lord did intend to pay to the justice of his Father; wherein he did also undergo the very pangs of *Hell* for our sins, and so gave himself a Ransom for us. And had not all this been, we should never have been redeemed from the terrors of the Law. Thus therefore did the Lord *give himself*, in *taking* our nature upon him, and giving himself unto a state of *bondage*, from a state of liberty, to redeem us unto liberty from a state of bondage under the curse of the *Law* of God, even unto liberty from *sin*, and *death*, and *Satan*, and this *World*, and from the *indignation* of the most High: A wonderful deliverance!

But as it is in all other liberties; so this *Christian liberty* doth stand in: two things: First, As in *removing* some *bondage*, and *burdens*: Secondly, So it carrieth with it some such *privilege* and *enfranchisement* as whereby we claim some

liberties which others cannot reach unto: and those the Lord Jesus hath dearly paid for, by suffering

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his Father's wrath, which did so drink up his Spirits, that I believe he died not by the pains of his body, for he died before his time; but the wrath of God did swallow him up principally, though his bodily pains did help it forward. Now by this means we have *access unto the Lord, and into this grace wherein we stand*, Romans 5:2, and that with *boldness, and confidence*, Ephesians 2:12, even *to enter with boldness into the holiest by the blood of Jesus*, Hebrews 10:19. Hereby we have *liberty* to call God *Father*, and to come unto him as to a *Father*, and to expect all *blessings* from him for this life, and for a better, both *wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption* from all miseries and dangers, even from death to life, even life eternal; besides all blessings of the Kingdom of grace here below: All *Church-privileges, and Commonwealth-privileges*, hath the Lord purchased for us by his blood: great and large are the liberties which the Lord hath purchased for us, that are recorded every where in Scripture. So that *if the Son shall make you free, then are you free indeed*.

2. Now for the *second work* of the *Son* in this everlasting Covenant. Presupposing the Lord God the Father to have drawn the soul unto the Son from all *confidence* in the *world*, and in his own *righteousness*, and in his own *returnings* unto God by believing through his *own power*, from *confidence* in his own *resolutions*, and his own *waiting upon Christ*; and from all *confidence* in *privileges*, and *power* of nature, and grace received; now it may be all this while the poor soul knoweth not who it is, that hath wrought all this work in him, and for him; it may be he is so far to seek in this, as that he knows not whether it be the Lord God the Father,

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or the work of some enemy to deceive him: though he all this while seeth his need of Christ, and hath none in heaven but him, none in earth in comparison of him, of the want of whom he is sensible; yet the soul knows not whether all this humiliation, which is wrought in him, come from the wrath or mercy of God, and whether God hath not in all this, given him only a taste of the very torments of Hell, and the pledge of them, to his everlasting perdition.

Thus may the poor soul be afraid, notwithstanding all this gracious work wrought in him, above all the power of the creature: though the Lord hath not said much of it unto him, yet he hath done it? and happy we that ever the Lord hath owned us so far.

Now here is the special work of the *Son*, he doth *bring us* back again to the *Father*, and *reveals* what the Father hath done unto us, even his rich grace that hath taken all this pains with us; for *as no man knows the Son, but the Father: so neither doth any man know the Father, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him, Matthew 11:27*. So that the Lord Jesus doth *enlighten* the soul, by the anointing of his blessed Spirit, to see what it is that the Lord hath done for him in mercy; which heretofore he thought was done in wrath: whence the soul begins to see the *Father's love*, even the goodness of a God in what hath passed upon him, far beyond what he could have asked, or thought for; And therefore now begins with some more hope, and liberty to call God *Father*: for from this work of the *Son*, there doth arise the two characters of a Son in the soul, both which are comprised in this one, that is liberty: and there is a double liberty wherein a son

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doth stand: 1. First, He hath *ease* from all his doubtful *fears*, or at least from a great part of the burden of them; some refoculations, some kind of quietness falleth upon the heart of a wearied sinner, whence the heart is eased beyond his thoughts; although as yet his comfort stands rather in expectation, then in actual fruition; as our Saviour saith, *Come unto me all you that are weary, and heavy laden, and I will give you rest, Matthew 11:28,29*. He doth not promise *sudden rest*: He will give you *present ease*; but learn of me, for I am meek and lowly, and you *shall find rest* unto your souls. The Lord will give rest unto the souls of his people; at the present he gives them ease, and an expectation of much more plentiful fruition of rest and peace, which they have begun to taste of.

And how doth the Lord ease the soul in such a case, so as that they feel the burden a great deal lighter? How doth the *Son* quiet and still, and refresh the soul? Is it by the sight of his own hungering and thirsting after righteousness?

What saith the Lord in such a case? Or how doth he satisfy the soul? He telleth us plainly where our satisfaction is, *John 7:37,38,39, If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink*: So that if a man thirst, how shall he satisfy himself in his thirsting? This is the main question in many a soul; May I not draw consolation out of this, that I do thirst after the Lord Jesus?

You shall find, that the Lord doth not bid me go satisfy my self by seeing my thirst: If a man shall say, I am exceeding thirsty, and I shall tell him that he is a man of a healthful constitution, because a man in a Frenzy is thirsty, and knows it not; this will not satisfy his thirst.

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How therefore comes the soul to be freed of his burdens? He thirsteth after Christ, and none of all the creatures can quench his thirst; therefore our Saviour proclaims this in the last and great day of the Feast, when most of the Jews were present (for this Feast lasted eight days) *If any man be now athirst*, and not satisfied with all the Ordinances they had now enjoyed: he doth not send them back again, nor doth he bid them satisfy themselves with their own thirstings; neither doth he tell them that their blessedness lieth in that they do thirst (though there be a blessedness in it) but how then shall they be satisfied? *Let him come to me and drink.*

So that this is the *Christian liberty*, which the Lord brings us unto, when he works in us unquenchable desires after Christ: if you would comfort a soul, and tell him you do thirst after Christ: and that you could not have done if Christ had not wrought in your soul; you say true, and there may be more in such a soul then he is aware of; yet Christ is not wont to leave the soul to quench his thirst with his thirst: but you will say, Is not hungering and thirsting a sign of health? For a surfeited body doth not hunger: true: yet the Lord doth not direct the soul to content himself with his own act; but, *Come unto me.* But will the Lord Jesus give him drink? He promiseth that he will; *Let him come to me and drink:* And he saith moreover, *He that believeth on me, out of his belly shall flow rivers of water of life: this he spake of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified:* so as that which now the Son doth, is not the proper characteristic work of the Spirit; but Jesus Christ doth come unto the soul, and comfort it in some

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measure; and, which is a second degree of liberto, giveth some liberty of *hope*, that the Lord will at length be pleased to fill him with his blessed Spirit, which the Lord did more abundantly pour out upon the Disciples after his Resurrection; And there is yet a more abundant fulfilling of all, when he doth come unto the proper work of the Spirit; and therefore he distinguisheth his own work, from the work of the Spirit, *John 14:16,17,18* and *6:7,13.* he saith of himself; that *He will not leave them comfortless:* but he putteth this difference between his own work, and the work of the Spirit, *John 16:25,* *Hitherto I have spoken to you in parables; but the time comes, when I shall show you plainly of the Father:* yet he had spoken much unto them, and told them that *he loved them*, and that the *Father loved them;* but all is but a kind of parable in comparison of what the Lord will farther reveal, when he doth more fully

send forth his Spirit into their hearts. In the meanwhile himself setteth on some word or other of his grace, whereby he gives the soul such a taste of himself (more then reprobates can have) as makes him thirst after more and more of Christ, until he be satisfied with the riches of the grace of God.

3. Thirdly, When the *Son* hath thus brought us unto the Father, and showed us his fatherly love towards us as he saith, *John 16:26,27, I say not, that I will pray the Father for you, for the Father himself loveth you.* Then doth he keep us in this estate: And (which is a farther work of the Son) for this purpose will send us his *holy Spirit*, as he told his Disciples, *John 16:7, It is expedient for you, that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.*

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Thus as the *Father sent the Son*: so will the *Son* send the *Spirit*; and in the mean while he doth preserve us until the Spirit come; and then he preserveth us by his *Spirit*. Now sometimes he makes his people tarry longer, before he send the Spirit in this kind of dispensation (but we leave the times and seasons thereof, unto the free purpose of the grace of God) but I say, meanwhile the *Son* preserveth us, *John 6:39, This is the Father's will, that of all that he hath given me, I should lose nothing.* So *John 17:12, Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost.* He keeps us in a waiting frame of spirit, so that we cannot but thirst after him, and long for him, and mourn for the want of him; and then a *bruised reed shall he not break, and a smoking flax shall he not quench until he bring forth judgement unto victory*, *Matthew 12:20.* Thus hath the Lord Jesus promised to keep us, and this he doth perform.

1. Partly, by praying for us, *Luke 22:31,32, Simon, Simon, Satan hath desired to have you that he may sift you as wheat; but I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not:* so *John 17:11,20,21,22,23,&c. Holy Father, keep through thy own Name, those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are, &c.* and this is the eternal efficacy of the *Son*, whereby every believing soul is kept until he do find fullness of accomplishment of his spiritual desires: and though we may be many ways wanting in prayer for ourselves, yet he will give us his Spirit to pray within us with sighs and groans that cannot be expressed.

2. And as he will keep us by his prayer: so secondly, by his *ruling Providence*; for *all power is given unto him, both in heaven, and in earth*, *Matthew 28:18,* and this power he doth employ to preserve

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his servants from all the delusions of the sons of men. The Prophet *Ezekiel* complains of some, that thrust away, and shoulder out the people of God, *Ezekiel* 34:21,22, &c, but, saith the Lord, *I will set up one shepherd over them, and he shall feed them, even my servant David: verse 23 & 25, They shall dwell safely in the wilderness, and sleep in the woods.* None of all the delusions of Antichrist, none of all the power of Tyrants, not all the flattering world, nor all the persecuting world shall be able to shoulder off the Saints of God from him, 2 *Timothy* 1:12, *I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day:* and the Lord Jesus engageth both his own power, and his Father's power for this end, *John* 10:28,29, *I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall they pluck them out of my hand: my Father which gave them me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.* Thus have you seen how *Jesus Christ* gives himself unto *Abraham*, and to his seed, to become one with us, to lead a miserable life, and die an accursed death, thereby to redeem us from all our enemies unto a state of *liberty*, by an invaluable price, even by himself. And having thus had the *Father* drawing us unto Christ, (though the *Father* said little unto the soul who had been about him all this while, and so leaves the soul in no small distress) as the *Father's* work is *Power*, so the *Son's* work is *Liberty*; and he revealeth to us our redemption; and reveals it so, that the soul is set in an earnest longing after Christ, (in whom there is a way to the *Father*) and great mourning after him, hungering for him; so that nothing in heaven nor earth can satisfy him; in which case, the Lord doth give

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such strength and constancy unto the soul, in looking towards Christ, as encourageth him to expect refreshing in the end, though at present he looks at all that he hath attained as a parable in comparison of what he would further enjoy in communion with *Jesus Christ*: but it often befalls the servants of God, as it did the *Disciples* of Christ; they were put unto new demurs, and doubtings: *We thought* (say they) *it had been he that should have restored the Kingdom to Israel,* *Luke* 24:21, (these were *Simon*, and *Cleophas*) if it had not been He, where was the comfort and blessed hope of rest, which thy looked for in *Jesus Christ*; we thought it had been *he*; a sign it was a demur, and dispute in them, whether it was God's grace in them, or Christ that had been with them, yea, or no: whilst they are at this debate in themselves, *Jesus* himself comes unto them, and reproves them for their unbelief, and chargeth them to tarry at *Jerusalem*, and there *to wait for the promise of the Father.* And

thus doth the Lord Jesus teach us to *know* the *Father*, and reveals him to us by strengthening us unto all such holy duties as he calleth us unto: and though we be many times afraid to pray, to hear, to come to Christian conference; yet the Lord will not suffer us to refrain, but we must pray, and confer, and hear; and when we have all, he teacheth us to know, that it is not in all these, as of themselves, to work any thing in us; nor doth he suffer us to content ourselves in any thing wrought in us; but causeth us to thirst after more of himself in every Ordinance, until the *Spirit* comes in a plentiful measure, according to all the latitude of our desires after Christ Jesus.

Use 1: Now for the Use of this; in the first place,

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If so be the work of the *Son* be such a work of redemption, then certainly our state is a state of *bondage* before we be thus redeemed; yea, it is such a state of bondage, as wherein we lie bound under God's *Law*, and under *sin*, under God's *wrath* and *curse*; under the *Devil* and *death*, and under the power of this *world*; and all these enemies have *power* over us, to carry us captive unto sin and misery: so that great is the misery we lie under, if we knew our misery, few know it, but are ready to say, with those *John* 8:33, *We were never in bondage to any*: oh poor hearts! then were you never redeemed to this very day: if thou never yet knewest thy *bondage*, thou never yet knewest thy *Redeemer*; the Lord will never so dishonour his own work, as to pay so great a price to work so great redemption, for those that never knew what it meant: nay, first he will teach them their *bondage*, verse 34, *He that committeth sin is the servant of sin; therefore if the Son make us free, we shall be free indeed*; but otherwise we cannot be free.

Use 2: Secondly, it may teach all those that are under bondage, where your *liberty* and *hope*, and spiritual *redemption* lies: *Isaiah* 45:22, *Look unto me, and be you saved, all the ends of the earth*: look unto him.

Objection: But may I not look at such good desires, and hungerings and thirstings, and mournings after Christ, as are in me, to satisfy my self with them?

Answer: Alas, you may look long, and it may be much ado to kindle a spark of comfort? it may be you may get out a spark, but then it is but a sparkling light, neither will the Lord suffer his servants to fasten the satisfaction of their souls there: shall a man that is hungry look to his hungering and thirsting? Will that satisfy him? It is indeed a sign of health, but it will not satisfy him: so

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neither will spiritual hungering and thirsting: therefore he saith, *Come unto me*, if you mean to *find rest*: it is not a man's weariness that doth set his bones at rest; but, *Come unto me, all you that are weary and heavy laden*, Matthew 11:28, there hath he laid up our peace; in *coming to him* we shall find ease, even a certain secret refocilation at least, that will strengthen us to bear temptation; so as that you may see the Father's love, and you may also see your own hungerings and thirstings; for unto such the Lord calleth us, and that puts a great deal of difference between a great deal of common work, and such as is wrought by God's efficacious drawing of us home to Jesus Christ. Take you an hypocrite, and if he begin to mourn for Christ, and the like, he satisfieth himself in these things; but is this the way of the working of God's almighty power, to bring men unto something that is in themselves? Is it not his effectual calling of us unto Christ? doth not Christ say, *If any man thirst let him come to me and drink?* Otherwise all is but unprofitable work, until you *come* unto Christ; so far as Christ is there, so far there is life; if we be drawn unto him, that as he beginneth the work, so he is the end of it in us; and the soul cannot rest but in cleaving unto him, then there is something more then flesh and blood hath revealed. So that this is the way that God calleth his servants to walk in, namely, to *look* unto Christ to *turn unto this stronghold*, Zechariah 9:12, *By his blood he hath delivered his prisoners out of the pit, wherein there is no water*: our strength lieth not in our own hungering, and thirsting, and poverty though there be truth in these; and everlasting truth, by reason of the Spirit that wrought them, and the blood that bought them; yet your stronghold is

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not in them, but in the rock of Israel; he is the horn of salvation to his people: so that I would advise every poor soul, in whom is wrought any mourning after Christ, through sense of your need of him, make the Lord Jesus your strong hold. And this is the true work, and way of the *Son* of God to bring you to the Father; and the more you find the Lord Jesus, the more you shall discern the gifts that are given unto you, and the comfort and power of them: not that I deny that Jesus Christ doth open unto the soul, what he hath done for him, *John* 6:69, *We believe and are sure that thou art Christ, the Son of the living God*; so *John* 16:30, but he doth not show them for this end, that you should satisfy yourselves in them, but still come unto him: what though you have many gracious promises that promise many future consolations? it is, that you should seek unto the Lord, in whom they are laid up; and unto

the Father of Jesus Christ, that promised them, in whose hand it is to make them all good unto us: thus in all this doth the Lord train up his servants unto an heavenly and Christian frame, and if the soul should rest in any work he doth, or gift he hath received; it is a strong jealousy the work is not found: for if it be of the grace of God, and in truth, it will still lead the soul to look up unto Christ; and the soul cannot quench his thirst in it, but comes to the Father, and earnestly beggeth, that out of his Fatherly love he would give him Jesus Christ: this is the Spirit and way of a true-hearted Christian.

Use 3: Thirdly, This may teach Christians, that are in such a way as this, to hold on in that way: for truly it is a way of comfort through the grace of God, *Isaiah 43:1, Fear not, O Israel, for I have redeemed*

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thee; none of the redeemed of God need to fear, *Luke 1:74, We are delivered, that we might serve him without fear:* It is in the Lord Jesus that the Apostle doth so triumph, *Romans 8:31, &c., who can be against us? who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's Elect? who is he that condemneth? it is Christ that died, &c,* and hereupon he triumpheth, saying, *Who shall separate us from the love of God? &c.* and though we may say, that he was grown to a greater measure of strength than we now speak of; yet this is the work of all the *Israel* of God, to hope in the Lord, *in whom is plenteous redemption, Psalm 130:7.*

Use 4: Fourthly, This may serve to teach us to wait upon the Lord, for this his plenteous redemption; and to bless his name for it when we find it: *Psalm 103:4, Bless the Lord O my soul, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, &c.* Let us learn to serve him with thankfulness, and to grow up therein, for this is the great redemption, wherewith the Lord hath redeemed us to himself: he that hath thus redeemed us, will still redeem and deliver us, *2 Corinthians 1:10, he that hath done this, will not leave us, until he hath finished all his thoughts of peace towards us.*

Use 5 In the fifth and last place, let it exhort us to stand fast in all our Christian liberties: they cost dear; and we are redeemed from the *Covenant* and *curse* of the *Law* of God (from the *Laws* of men much more, that are not according to God) be not therefore servants to lusts and passions, to the world & to the Devil: let us tread the world under foot; seeing God hath redeemed us, let us walk as his redeemed ones, redeemed from all errors of mind and judgement; *standing fast in all that liberty, wherewith Christ has made us free, Galatians 5:1, and be*

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not again entangled with the yoke of bondage: it was a bondage that we were in before, and a bondage greater then either we or our fathers were able to bear; let us therefore stand fast in our liberty.

10 *Question:* We come now to the tenth *Question*, How God the *Holy Ghost* gives himself to *Abraham*, and his elect seed, in the Covenant of Grace? For if God give himself, he doth not only give his nature, but his *persons*: God the *Father* gives himself, and God the *Son* gives himself, and God the *Holy Ghost* gives himself unto the people of God: *John 14:16,17, I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knows him, but ye know him: for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you: if then the Holy Ghost be given, as well as the Father, and the Son, How is he given? Or how doth he give himself unto the Church, and unto all the Israel of God?*

Answer: There be four several *Acts* or works whereby the *Holy Ghost* is given to the Church, and to his people: for though the Lord Jesus pray the Father for him, and the Father sendeth him, and the Son also sendeth him, *John 15:26*, yet the *Holy Ghost* himself doth come upon his people, *Acts 2:2 &c*, and he comes by a fourfold act.

1. First, by *indwelling* or *inhabitation* in the Church.
2. Secondly, by an act of *Sanctification*.
3. Thirdly, by an act of *Revelation*? and therefore he is called a Spirit of *Revelation*, and that is proper to the *Holy Ghost*.

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4. Fourthly, by an act of *Consolation*; and therefore he is called the *Comforter*.

1. First, for *Inhabitation*, so saith the Apostle, *Ephesians 2:22, You are builded together in Christ, for an habitation of God through the Spirit*; in this respect also it is, the Apostle demandeth of the Corinthians, *1 Corinthians 3:16, Know you not that you are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?* so in the place fore-alleged, *John 14:16,17*, and when he saith, dwell in you, it noteth the constancy of his being in them; he will abide in his dwelling place; *1 John 2:27*, the anointing there promised, is the Spirit; and great is the necessity of his *in-dwelling* in us, for two principal reasons.

Reason 1: The first is taken from the necessity of our *union* into one mystical spiritual body with the Lord Jesus; which by this means is firmly and inviolably wrought, *1 Corinthians 6:17, He that is joined to the Lord is one Spirit*; in as much as that one Spirit who dwelleth in Christ without measure, dwelleth

in us according to our measure; and so we are all one mystical body: and I cannot tell how better to compare it, than to a musical instrument, wherein though there be many pipes, yet one blast of the bellows puts breath into them all; so that all of them at once break forth into a kind of melody, and give a pleasant sound to the ears of those that stand by; all of them do make but one Instrument, and one sound, and yet variety of music. So is this very case: look at all the living members of Christ, they are all compacted together, and set into one stock, and root; by which means it comes to pass, that though they be many thousands, yet they all make a melodious harmony in the ears of the Lord of Hosts: therefore for the combining of us into

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unity of one Spirit, necessary it is, that the same Spirit that breathes in the human nature of Christ should breath in us all: and though the divine Nature of Christ be God, the human Nature is finite, and yet hath the Spirit above the capacity of the creature; and this same Spirit doth act, and guide, and move all our affairs in him; and (which is wonderful) it comes to pass, that the same Spirit breathing in Christ and in us, we have not only a measure of Spirit to do one duty, but he doth concur with us in all spiritual duties which we undertake according to him; for *without him we can do nothing*, John 15:5. This is the first reason of the *inhabitation* of the Spirit, to keep alive spiritual union between Christ and us; therefore is there one Spirit in us all.

Reason 2. Secondly, another end of this *inhabitation* of the Spirit, is to keep *possession* for the Lord in our hearts against all adversary power; for if the Lord should leave his gifts only to keep possession there, the devil would make very hard work with the best gifts that we have received: he blasted all the precious gifts that *Adam* had received, which were more perfect in degrees than any we receive; and yet when all the powers of darkness and gates of hell are banded together against *Jesus Christ* and his servants, there is not the least of the servants of God that falleth away finally: and the Apostle *John* gives the reason of it, 1 John 4:4, *Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them, because greater is he that is in you, then he that is in the world.* Neither are we *preserved* by faith only, but *by the mighty power of God*, 1 Peter 1:5. The *Spirit* it is that setteth the *Faith* awork, and *Christ* it is that setteth the *Spirit* awork, to keep us unto his heavenly kingdom. And from this possession of the Spirit

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there comes a garrison, as it were, to be kept in our hearts, whereby our souls are kept alive; so that the Spirit doth not only shed abroad his gifts into

our hearts, but he keeps our hearts in a sweet frame of sanctification, 2 Timothy 1:14, *That good thing which was committed to thee, keep by the Holy Ghost, which dwelleth in us*; that goodly *depositum*, his *Evangelical Gift* that did accompany his own salvation, and the salvation of the Church, he must keep it by the *Holy Ghost that dwelleth in us*; otherwise our gifts would soon vapour out into smoke and ashes, whether it be faith, hope, zeal, patience, courage, or whatsoever else is requisite for the salvation of God's people: the Spirit by his power dwelling in us, acteth, and preserveth them: *the sons of God are led by the Spirit*, Romans 8:14, nor is this a confining of the Spirit of God unto poor houses of clay; *Solomon's Temple* could not contain him; no, not the heaven of heavens, he dwelleth above all heavens unmeasurably, yet *he dwelleth also with him that is of an humble and contrite spirit*, Isaiah 57:15, though it were a poor kitchen-boy that hath such a spirit, he dwelleth there, *to receive the spirit of the humble*. As those that dwell in earthly houses, there they take up their rest, and lay up their treasure; and there they delight to converse: even thus doth the Spirit of God; and it is a wonderful Indulgence of the most High, that *dwells in temples made without hands*, so to be pleased to dwell in the sons and daughters of men, to make good his own eternal counsel for their salvation. There is I Confess also some kind of presence of the Spirit of God even in hypocrites, that are only fitted to some work of God, and therefore only attain to some work of common Grace, but not such as doth

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accompany salvation: you will find this difference between them, and God's own children; the Spirit of God indeed comes upon them, as he did upon *Saul* 1 Samuel 10:10, so that he prophesied; and more then so, he doth sometimes continue with them for a season, and sojourneth a while in them, according as sometimes it is said, Jeremiah 14:8, he is *like a stranger, or a wayfaring man, that tarrieth for a night*; thus we read, 1 Samuel 16:14, *The Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and an evil Spirit from the Lord troubled him*; a sign the Spirit of God had been with him before. So *Zedekiah*, when he smote *Micaiah*, on the cheek, and said, *Which way went the Spirit of God from me, to speak unto thee?* 1 Kings 22:24, a sign it may be that he had sometimes found the Spirit of God, but now he was departed: however it be, the Spirit of God is in them but for a season, until he be grieved by them, and then he doth depart; and indeed did never bestow any regenerating grace upon them, but only fitted them for some kind of service for his Church, or the Commonwealth. So likewise *Jehu*, and *Judas*, and *Demas*, did much for a season, by the Spirit of God: he did enlighten their minds, and open their mouths, and

gave free passage to their administrations; and you may sometimes wonder how men have been assisted in the pulpit both in prayer and preaching, that have been notorious in wickedness: thus it pleaseth God to come and sojourn in them, and work great works by them, such as may be of great use among his people, and may leave themselves without excuse: but you see where the difference lieth, even as it lay between the anointing of *Saul*, & *Jehu*, *David*, & *Solomon*; the anointing of *Saul*, was with a Vial of Oil, & of *Jehu* with a box of Oil,

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1 *Samuel* 10:1,2; 2 *Kings* 9:1, The word in the Original is the same in both places, and it was not empty Ceremony; God's Ceremonies are accompanied with gifts suitable unto them: his Spirit came upon them both, and they did mighty service in their times; but when *David* was to be anointed, God commanded *Samuel* to fill up his horn with oil, in 1 *Samuel* 16:1, and in like manner did *Zadok* unto *Solomon*, 1 *Kings* 1:39. Now an *horn* is not of a brittle Metal, but a *glass* is soon broken; the *horn* is the beauty and power of the Beast: so that when the Spirit is conveyed in the *horn* and power of Jesus Christ, it now giveth beauty and strength to the soul, and is not dried up nor broken in pieces, but abideth in the Saints unto the heavenly kingdom. This is the first work of the *Spirit* of God; he doth give himself unto his people in a way of *inhabitation*: dwelleth in them, and unites them to Christ, and keeps them from being drawn away from God, by men or Angels, (I mean evil Angels) and preserves alive all their gifts and graces; and acts and quickens them, so as may be for the edification of those that are with them in Church and Commonwealth.

2 Secondly, As the *Spirit* of God gives himself in a work of *Inhabitation*: so doth he give himself in a work of *sanctification*: and that is a work usual in all our Catechisms, [*the Holy Ghost doth sanctify and preserve us.*] Let us look into some places of Scripture for the proof of it, 2 *Thessalonians* 2:13, *God hath from the beginning chosen you, through sanctification of the Spirit*, &c, he chose us to be saved through a course of sanctification: it is not the cause of *election*, but the way of *salvation*, in which the Spirit leadeth us so 1 *Peter* 1:2, *Elect according to the foreknowledge of*

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God, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience. So that it is the Spirit that *sanctifieth* us to be obedient: and a notable place to this purpose have we in the delivery of the Covenant of Grace, *Jeremiah* 31:33, *I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts*; he means, the law of

holiness and righteousness; and he will so write it in the hearts of his people, that it shall be carried an end with power in them: accordingly doth the Apostle testify concerning the Corinthians, *2 Corinthians 3:3, Ye are manifestly declared to be the Epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart:* it is the Spirit of God therefore that writeth these laws in our hearts, and leaveth an impression of some measure of power to be guided by them; *He worketh in us both to will, and to do, of his own good pleasure*; he stampeth upon the soul such gifts of his grace as make us serviceable in our course to his heavenly Kingdom: and hence it is, that we read, *Ezekiel 36:27, I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, &c,* this is a spirit of sanctification. To make it somewhat more plain; The Spirit of God is said to be our *sanctifier*, partly as he doth work the work of the two other persons, and partly as he worketh his own work; though in all these works they all concur, yet they have several characters, wherein they more peculiarly shine forth: what ever work any of the persons do, they do by the *Spirit*; and yet he doth a peculiar work, wherein though they concur, yet he is eminent in it. It is the proper work of the Father to draw us unto Christ: *John 6:44 & 1 Peter 1:3, Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to his abundant*

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mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope; that is the proper work of a *Father*, to *beget*; he *sheddeth abroad the Spirit upon us through Jesus Christ our Saviour*, *Titus 3:6*, thus doth the *Holy Ghost sanctify* us, as the *Father* doth *regenerate* us, and shame us to be new creatures; though it be the *Father's* work in us, yet he worketh it by the Holy Spirit. And for the work of the *Son*, the proper character of a son is *liberty*, a servant is in bondage; a child in the way of child-like liberty may expect much from his Father: this the Lord Jesus properly giveth, *Matthew 11:28, Come unto me, and I will give you rest*; freedom, and ease of Conscience he gives his servants: and how doth he work this ease and liberty, but by his Spirit? the same Spirit that is in him, dwelleth in us, and breathes a kind of liberty in us, which it hath from Jesus Christ: *For where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*, *2 Corinthians 3:17*, and where he is, you may see the soul hath liberty from the anguish of Temptations: so that, is there any ease? any liberty? It is from Jesus Christ the Son of *liberty*, who hath spoken some peace unto the soul. Thus the *Father* doth *reveal* the Son in us; and in point of *sanctification* the *Father* doth *regenerate* us, but it is by a spirit of regeneration; the Son redeemeth us into

liberty by a spirit of liberty; he comes in the Father's name, and in the Son's name, to carry on that work, which they have in hand in the Saints John 14:26 and chapter 15:26, *the Father will send him, and I will send him*; and the *Holy Ghost* doth kindly work all, to make us regenerate sons unto the Lord: these things he doth in their name; he doth some things also in his own name, though from their power also: now though both these are sanctifying works; there is a third work of *sanctification*

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which is proper to the Spirit; this was foretold by Christ, *Acts 1:8, You shall receive power after the Holy Ghost is come upon you*: they were the sons of God before, and free sons before, set at liberty by the Spirit of the Son; but there is yet more to come; *you shall receive power after the Holy Ghost is come upon you*: so this is the proper sanctifying work of the Spirit, to give a *further power* in sanctification; he doth imprint a character of power upon our sanctification, that we have not only *power* to be called the sons of God, nor to be free sons of God, but powerful also, 2 *Timothy 1:7, the Lord hath given us the Spirit of power*: when the Spirit worketh this, he worketh his own proper work. And as there is such a kind of threefold degree in a spirit of *sanctification*: so there is a kind of semblable work; that is found in hypocrites in some measure; for as you read of the Holy Ghost his coming upon them, so shall you find mention made of their *sanctification*, *Hebrews 10:29, they are said to tread under foot the blood of the Covenant; wherewith they were sanctified*: so Matthew 20:16, *Many are called, but few are chosen*; doth he mean, by the outward call of the word? truly you shall find, that the context will carry you much farther then so; for consider upon what occasion our Saviour speaketh it: there was a certain rich man, that would have forsaken all, and followed Christ, but he found it too costly; but *Peter* said, *We have forsaken all, and followed thee, what shall we have therefore? verily, saith Christ, Ye that have followed me in the regeneration, (meaning, in the regeneration of the world) shall sit upon twelve thrones, &c* but many of those that do forsake much, *shall be last; and the last shall be first, for the Kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain householder, that hired*

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men into his vineyard: and some he hired early in the morning, some at the third hour, some at the sixth, some at the ninth, some at the eleventh; and when he comes to reckon, he payeth every man a penny: they that bore the heat of the day, expected to have received more; whereupon the Lord Jesus gives this as one answer, *Many are called; but few are chosen*: they may be called to forsake brethren, and sisters, and fathers, and mothers, and that out

of conscience unto Christ; and much they have done for Christ; they have laboured for Christ, and born the burden and heat of the day; they had a calling to come into the vineyard, and there they have wrought; and yet of these, few are chosen: so that it was not a mere verbal calling, no, here is a kind of strong spiritual calling; which did prevail to withdraw them, from all the comforts of this life, so far it was effectual: and yet these were not chosen: so that there is a *sanctification*, that doth not flow from God's eternal election; and therefore it is not to be despised that the Apostle doth add, Romans 8:28, *To them that are called according to his purpose*; otherwise there is a calling, that comes from God's *purpose of free grace*; and then it carrieth them along no farther than to do some outward service for God; they may do much harvest-work, and yet not be called according to purpose: so then we see there is a calling and sanctification, that reacheth unto them that are but common hypocrites; whence it comes to pass, they will work much according to it, for *sanctification* is that which worketh *from God*, the *things of God*, and *for the glory of God*; this is sanctification in the proper meaning of it; and this you shall find in hypocrites: For they will work *from God*, Matthew 7:22, *Have we not prophesied in thy*

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name, and in thy name cast out devils; they knew their own name would not reach it, therefore they will make God their efficient cause: and it is a great word, which the Lord spake unto *Jehu*, 2 Kings 10:30, *because thou hast done well in executing that which was right in my eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart*; thus he wrought the things of God, and pretended the glory of God, *verse 16*, and which is more wonderful, that they should for the sake of Jesus Christ do many things *Matthew 19:29*, and these not chosen, and such as shall be last in the recompense; and what is yet wanting in these men's sanctification? is the change of their heart wanting? truly, not altogether; for the Lord gave *Saul* another heart, 2 *Samuel 10:9*. But mind it, though it was somewhat altered in *quality*, yet not in *substance*; it was not a new heart, not an heart of flesh, for that is peculiar to the Covenant of Grace; they want that self-denying faith that is found in all new hearted Christians, whereby they deny even themselves, *Luke 9:23*, for a man to be all *from Christ*, and all *in Christ*, and all *for Christ*; this is wanting to these *moral sanctifications* that are found in men. But wherein then is the defect of their sanctification discovered? in this: Take you a man sanctified, as *Saul*, *Jehu*, *Judas*, *Demas*, these were men of good account; Samuel had a good esteem of *Saul*; and Jonadab bears *Jehu* record, that his heart was upright

with him; the Disciples mistrust themselves rather than *Judas*; and *Paul* ranketh *Demas* with *Marcus* and *Aristarchus* his fellow-labourers; yet in all these here was no self-denying faith; for he that comes to Christ, and closeth with Christ, must *deny himself*; so then in this these men do show themselves different

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from the chosen of God, they come not to Christ with a self-denying heart; they seem to work all in the name of Christ; yet they still work in their own power and strength, or at least they work *for themselves*. You read of some, that took delight in the Lord, *Isaiah* 58:2,3, and yet if God do not hear their prayers, they are offended; a sign they wrought in the sense of the worth of their own works: so also those in *Matthew* 7:22, *Have not we prophesied in thy Name?* they do expostulate with God, why he should cast off them; they expected a bountiful reward for the works they had done: they wrought *from* themselves and *for* themselves: and so those many that were called, *Matthew* 20, they had denied father, and mother, and wife, and children; and therefore they looked for great reward, having born the burden and heat of the day: and this is the proper character of an hypocrite, he doth challenge his reward out of the worth of his work; whereas the chosen ones of God are taught to say, *When we have done all that is commanded us, we are unprofitable servants*, *Luke* 17:10, this is one difference in the rise of the work.

Again, there is a difference in the work itself: God's chosen ones work the *will of Christ*, and not their own, though their will also goeth along with it: others work the will of Christ, as far as it will stand with their own: *Jehu's* zeal did root out *Baal*, and the house of *Ahab* freely; he drove on furiously, for it was an act of his own ambitious heart to settle his own Kingdom: this he aimed at, no further would he go; *from the sins of Jeroboam the son of Nebat he departed not*,

And Lastly, Hypocrites will out-shoot Christ

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in his own bow; they will aim at their *own ends* in Christ's works: *Jehu* will root out *Ahab*, and *Baal*, but it is to establish his own kingdom; to walk in all the Lord's Commandments he did not regard: while God's will accomplisheth his will, he goeth along with it, but no farther. Thus we see there is a work of sanctification under a Covenant of works, such as whereby men have another heart, and many gifts of courage, and wisdom, and zeal, and power come upon them for the service of the Church; and yet you will find that they will work *from* themselves, and *for* themselves; and for God

they will not work beyond their own ends; and though they seem to walk with him for a while, yet you shall soon see the Lord will take one course, and they will take another.

3. We now come unto a *third work* of the *Holy Ghost*, in which he doth give himself as God unto his people; for in all these works he doth work as God, and so expresseth himself: this work is *Divine revelation*; he doth reveal himself like a God in the soul, that so you may acknowledge his presence, power and truth: a very clear place we have for it, Ephesians 1:17,18, &c, *I cease not to make mention of you in my prayers that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, &c*, mark how the Apostle doth consider God in regard of his most eminent glory, and power; as he is the God of Jesus Christ, and the Father of glory, *That he might give us the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him*; that is, of the Father, Son and Spirit: *That the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his*

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inheritance in the Saints, &c mind what Divine revelation here is, see how gloriously God is set forth that *giveth* it, and also the *gift* that is given: and these things the Apostle prayeth not only for glorified and transcendent Christians, men of renown; but for all the *Ephesians*, for all ordinary Christians among them; he would have none of them destitute of a Spirit of wisdom and revelation: and what should this Spirit do? it should *enlighten* the organ, even the eyes of their understanding, otherwise it is beyond the power of created gifts, to reach the clear discerning of the mysteries of the Kingdom of God, as they are dispensed in the Gospel of Christ: and as in all sight there is the *Organ*, and the *Medium*, & the *Object*, the *eye* is the *organ*, the *air* is the *medium*, the *thing seen* is the *object*: so the Apostle here prays, that the eyes of their understanding might be enlightened, far above the capacity of Reason, yea, above the capacity of the spiritual gifts, which they had received; for he desires that a spirit of wisdom and revelation might be given them; though the Lord had blessed them with all spiritual blessings already; they had believed, and had been sealed; yet here is something more to be attained, they want a further enlightening by the clearing of the word of God, which is the *medium*, by which we discern all things therein: and for the *Object*, he doth express what it is; *that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints: and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward which believe, &c*, these things the Apostle prayeth that the

Spirit would reveal, even the hope that God hath laid up for his Saints: *glorious things are spoken of the church of God*; great and glorious hopes are prepared for them, and they are

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begotten unto them, even *to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled*; that by virtue of our calling we might have fellowship with God the Father, & with his Son Jesus Christ, 1 *John* 1:2,3, Some degree of fellowship we have already; but the hope of that which is to come, is beyond all our comprehension, and beyond what any created understanding can search into the depth of: and yet we may see much in the hope of preservation, and quickening to that which is good: in the hope of God's turning all things to the best for us; we may see much of the rich and plenteous redemption which God hath wrought for us, and what goodness of God is reserved to every poor servant of his, and what is the riches of his glorious inheritance in his Saints, and *what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, even that mighty power, which he did put forth to bring us to believe, that ever he should bring such hearts as ours were, to be enlightened, to see the blessings of his heavenly calling, to be called unto fellowship with the Father, and with the Son, and with the Spirit, and with the Church of God in all the promises of God, and gifts of grace, and duties of sanctification: our calling is to be exercised in them all, until at length all their enemies be subdued, and death at length swallowed up in victory: This the Apostle prayeth for, that their eyes might be opened to behold all these mysteries. And thus doth the Holy Ghost clear up our understandings, and the Scriptures whereby we understand, and the objects which are to be understood by us, even the riches of grace here bestowed upon us, and laid up in heaven for us.*

Question: But how doth the Holy Ghost work these things? indeed they are unconceivable mysteries, better felt than told.

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Answer: The Spirit doth reveal himself partly in *witnessing* unto our spiritual estate, and partly by *revealing* all other counsels of his truth needful for us to know in this our age and time wherein any Christian man liveth.

Touching our *estate*, He is called a *witness*, 1 *John* 5:6. *It is the Spirit that beareth witness*; because the Spirit is truth: there are six witnesses mentioned in that text: *three in heaven, the Father, the word, and the Holy Ghost: three in earth, the Spirit, the water, and the blood*; but it is the Spirit that beareth witness in all these.

But doth not the water and the blood bear witness? truly they do, but it is in the hands of the Spirit: and that is plain by the 9 *verse* wherein the Apostle giveth us to understand, that if any thing be confirmed by any of those witnesses, it is the witness of God, because indeed the Spirit witnesseth in them all.

Objection: You will say, Doth not a Divine work yield a Divine Testimony? and are not the *water* of sanctification, and the *blood* of justification Divine works? and will they not reach a Divine Testimony?

Answer: It is not a Divine Testimony, unless the Spirit of God bear witness in and by it: for are not the heavens and the earth Divine works, which the power of the creature cannot reach unto? all are Divine works, even to the least hairs of our head; for we cannot make one of them, white or black: and yet an argument from the creature is no Divine Testimony, unless the Spirit of God set it home: if it be from the least work, when the Spirit of God beareth witness in it, there is a powerful Testimony: the *Magicians* of *Egypt* do profess,

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when *Moses* brought the Plague of Lice, that *it was the finger of God*; when as in greater works they did not acknowledge it, but thought they could do the like: and what was the reason that they were confounded in the Lice? truly, because the Spirit of God would on purpose breathe in that work to confound them in so mean a creature: all which showeth us thus much, that it is not in the power of Divine works, though they be never so immediate, that are able to work Divine faith in us, unless the Holy Ghost breathe in them; and then, though it were but some *creeping work* or *word*, it would breathe a strong testimony to some former work of God: so that it is the *Spirit* of God, that doth make *Divine Testimony* both in heaven, and in earth: otherwise howsoever the judgement may be by some means convinced, yet a lively faith will not be wrought. To speak something unto particulars: the *Father* beareth witness and the *Son* beareth witness of himself, and many *great works* which he wrought, bear witness of him all his life long. Take you now the *Father's work*, which is to *draw* the soul unto Christ, through a Spirit of bondage to make us sensible of our need of him; for every man that hath heard and learned of the Father, comes unto Christ, John 6:44, and no man can come unto Christ, except the Father draw him: so Matthew 16:17, *Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven:* so Galatians 1:15,16, *When it pleased God to reveal his Son in me;* now though there be the work and witness of the *Father*, yet doth he not work them

immediately, but by his *Spirit*, as he saith expressly, 1 Corinthians 2:9,10, *Eye hath not seen, nor ear hath heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of*

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man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him: but God hath revealed them unto us by the Spirit, &c. In like manner, when the *Father* discover *Christ*, unto us, and draw us unto Christ, it is by the *Spirit* that he doth these things.

When the *Son* bringeth on the soul unto Christian *liberty* (for *liberty* is the property of the Son) and *reveals* the Father's love unto the soul, *John* 16:27, a son-like spirit doth this; it is the *Spirit of his Son that maketh us cry, Abba, Father*, Galatians 4:6, 7. *Also the Spirit beareth witness*, by a testimony from itself, which it doth set on more clearly, then either of the former testimonies; according to *John* 16:25, *The time comes, when I shall speak no more to you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father*: He comes with power, and speaketh peace more plentifully unto the soul, *Acts* 1:8, *Psalms* 85:8, *Isaiah* 57:19. All which showeth us, that the Spirit setteth on his testimony with more clearness, power, and certainty unto the soul; therefore he is called the *unction* by which the Saints *know all things*, 1 *John* 2:20, by his testimony we have more full assurance of all things concerning our spiritual estate. It is he also that doth bear witness *in the water*, and *in the blood*, for otherwise though the Spirit be never so much broken in the sense of sin, as *David's* was, and he saw it, *Psalms* 51:17, it was the Spirit that gave him to see it, and yet he still begs the upholding of the *free Spirit*, verse 12, for without him, neither the *water of sanctification*, nor the *blood of justification* will clearly establish the heart in the peace of God: *Faith* itself is not able to beget more assurance of *faith*; nay, it is not all the *word* of God, that is able to put life into faith, though the whole word

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of God beareth witness unto faith: wherefore is the *word* excluded from the number of the *witnesses*? all is carried home unto the soul by the word; whether the *Father* reveal the *Son*, or the *Son* reveal the *Father*, all is by the *word*: likewise also whatsoever the *Spirit* doth reveal, it is by the *word*, *John* 14:26, *He shall bring all things unto your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you*: he makes the *word* take deep impression upon the soul: but the word of God of itself, doth not testify, though it be the counsel of God: for the Lord would not have his people to scramble out a testimony from the word, nor from his works; for they will not afford it, unless the Spirit be in them: but when the Spirit doth accompany them, then will the soul find matter to

build upon; otherwise though sanctification may convince a gainsayer, yet Divine *faith* is only wrought by the *Spirit* breathing in the word of life. Thus have we seen that it is the Spirit that beareth witness (in all the six witnesses) unto the state of a Christian.

It is the Spirit also that beareth witness unto all things else that are needful for us to know in our times, 1 John 2:20, John 14:26, *The anointing teacheth you all things*: the Comforter shall teach you all things. Great is the power of the Spirit to beget and increase faith, by the *word* of God and by the *works* of his providence, he causeth the soul to trust in God, and to say, He that hath delivered me out of six troubles, will not he deliver me out of the seventh? otherwise if the Spirit do not set in, though judgement be convinced, yet the heart is not enlarged to believe: *David* could not gainsay *Nathan*, when he told him from the Lord, that *God had put away his sin, he should not die*; yet still he

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prayed for *mercy*, Psalm 51:1, and for *establishment* with God's free Spirit, verse 12, and, *Make me to hear the voice of joy and gladness*, verse 8, why? had he not heard it already? it was a most gracious word that *Nathan* spake; true, but he is not yet clear in it; it is that *Holy Ghost*, that must make him to hear the voice of joy and gladness: otherwise, though a man hath much experience of God's goodness to him, and sits and talks of the wonderful things that God hath done for him, to the warming of the hearts of all that hear him; yet the soul cannot reach that abundant satisfaction, which he doth desire, till at length the Lord comes in some Ordinance of his, and beareth witness freely of love bestowed upon us; and such a testimony will marvellously settle and establish any soul in the world: so that it is the *Spirit* that beareth witness unto faith, and nothing can do it but the *Spirit* only; and yet if the *Spirit* should breathe out of the word, it were but a delusion, Isaiah 8:20, *To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to that, it is because they have no light in them*: And therefore the Lord couples his *word*, and his *Spirit* together; Isaiah 57:19, *I create the fruit of the lips, peace, peace*: though it be *creating* work, yet it is by the fruit of the *lips*: so likewise Isaiah 59:21, *My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words that I have put in thy mouth shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, from henceforth and for ever*. Thus the Spirit of God in the word is mighty to begin, and mighty to *carry an end* spiritual work in the soul. Now the ordinary manner of the *revelation* of the Spirit is, if he reveal God's free justification of us, it is by revealing his free grace in a *promise* not

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made to works, no not to *faith* itself, but rather as a thing to be created by the word of a *free promise*: unto *sanctification* indeed he doth bear witness in any promise; as, if the question be about *Abraham's sanctification*, how the Lord reveal it? we may see Genesis 22:12, *By this I know that thou fearest me, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son from me*: but for his *justification*, the Lord had revealed that in another promise, *Genesis 15:5,6*, wherein God brought him forth, and bids him, Look now towards heaven, and tell the stars, if thou be able to number them: and he said unto him, *So shall thy seed be*, and among them he shows him that seed, that shall be *a blessing unto all nations*: this is a thing beyond his capacity, but *this he believed, and it was counted unto him for righteousness*: now in this the Lord reveals nothing but his free grace, without any respect unto any goodness in *Abraham*: faith was in him before, and had put forth itself: *by faith when he was called, he went out, not knowing whither he went*, Hebrews 11:8, but a man is justified not by the *habit* of faith only; but by every *act* of faith, and as often as this is revealed, so often is the grace of God revealed unto the soul: for it is nothing that God seeth in *Abraham*, for which he doth reveal his *justification* to him; but this he doth freely of his grace; and so *Abraham* receives it, Romans 4:5,6 &c. *To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted to him for righteousness*; which shows us, that *Abraham*, looks at himself as an ungodly man, when he considereth his *justification*: not but that *Abraham* was now godly in Scripture account before, but *he looked at him that justifieth the ungodly*:

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as *David* describeth the blessedness of the man, to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works: for thus the Lord setteth it home unto the heart without works, saying, *Blessed is the man whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered*; so it is *free blessedness* that the Lord reveals unto the soul: and lest you should think, that these things were peculiar to *Abraham* and *David*, &c. he tells us, verses 23,24, that *it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, &c.* As it was with the Father of the faithful, so it is also with all believers, which are his children: that as *he considered not his own body that was dead, nor the deadness of Sarah's womb*: so neither should we consider this or that in our bodies, or souls; for if we were thus and thus *fitted for justification*, then the reward would be of *works*, and so a *debt* unto us: now though works be there, when justification is again and again revealed, yet it comes not into sight, for a double reason;

Reason 1: First, Because when the Lord appears as justifying the soul, he sits upon a throne of *justice*, and a throne of *grace* together, not accepting any righteousness but that which is complete, and adequate, Romans 3:26, *To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus:* it is not justice for God to pronounce a man just upon any other righteousness, besides the righteousness of his Son, for *if God should mark what we have done, no flesh living should be justified in his sight:* Psalm 143:2, but through the righteousness of Christ, which is perfect, the Lord justifies every one that believeth in him; & that act of faith whereby a man taketh hold on Christ, & receiveth Christ, that is it which quieteth the soul: for

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it is not meet that the Lord should justify any simple work of mine: for if the Lord should justify me so *mine own clothes would defile me:* and if I should come before him with any work, which he hath wrought in me, to be accepted for it, this would be preposterous, and out of place: for he will have a full righteousness to accept me, before he will pronounce me righteous: and therefore I am first called to his Son; for as there is no more required to make me a sinful man, but that I be found in *Adam:* so there is no more required to my *justification*, but that I should have *union* with the *second Adam.*

Reason: 2. Secondly, As the Lord doth sit upon a Throne of *justice*, when he justifies a soul, so he doth also upon a Throne of *grace*, Romans 3:24, *We are justified freely by his grace;* therefore he will not justify any man upon works, lest they should boast before him; and therefore you shall find it to be true, that if the Lord be to declare his acceptance of the sanctification of his people, he will not do it in respect of the worth of their works, but according to the grace of his promise.

Objection: But is not my *sanctification* a *work* of free grace? and doth one grace hinder another? such is *Bellarmines* reason against justification by grace: what? (saith he) doth grace fight against grace? if we say, We be justified by our works, it is grace that gives us those works, and a will unto them; thus doth he confess.

Our Divines answer is, That if our justification be of grace, it is not of works; and if it be of works, it is not of grace: so in like manner, it the Lord do show himself in a matter of grace, let all our works be silent; for if *Abraham* hath *whereof to glory*, it is

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not before God: so then, if grace appear, it is not in our works; and therefore if God do speak any comfort unto *sanctification*, he will put his servants quite off from the conceit of their own holiness. Thus we find it, 2 Samuel 7:18, *Lord (saith David) what am I, or what is my fathers house? &c.* though at that time the Lord took notice of his sanctification; and so indeed it is usual with the faithful, when the Lord pronounceth any mercy to them, they see no reason in themselves why the Lord should vouchsafe it: as you see when the light of the Sun shineth upon a candle, it damps the light thereof; so it is in this case, when the riches of God's mercy shineth upon the soul he is not so taken up in the consideration of his own works and holiness, because his heart is lifted up higher in the consideration of the grace of God: and yet let me say thus much; There is a kind of revelation that is under the Law, Ezekiel 18:5,6, *If a man be just, and do that which is lawful and right, and hath not eaten upon the mountains, neither hath lift up his eyes to the idols of the house of Israel, &c; he is just, he shall surely live saith the Lord God.* Thus a man is pronounced *just* upon his *righteousness*, that is to say, so far just as the Law declares him just: if either he keep the Commandment, or if he break the Commandment, and come and bring his Sacrifice, then his sin shall be forgiven him, *Leviticus 5:10,13,16*, somewhat suitable unto what we read, *Matthew 18:23,24,25*, when the servant was required to make payment to his Lord, and had nothing to pay; he falleth down and worshippeth his Lord, saying, *Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all; so out of compassion he forgave him the debt:* just as when the Lord

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taketh hold of a man by sickness, and is ready to expose him to death; then he cryeth, Lord be merciful to me, and I will become a new man, and all the world shall know it, and all my friends shall see it: then the Lord out of compassion delivereth him from his sickness, according to *Psalms 78:34,35*, &c when *God slew them, then they sought him, and returned, and enquired early after God; and though they did but flatter him with their lips; yet he being full of compassion, forgave their iniquity, and destroyed them not:* Thus the Lord may let men see, that he doth forgive them; and no small comfort sometime doth arise; and all this from some works they have done: but when the Lord revealeth himself graciously by his Spirit in our *justification*, he doth banish the sight of our works, so that the soul doth look at himself as the chiefest of all sinners, as not having so much as the crawling, or creeping of any work of *sanctification*; Yea, when the Lord revealeth to his people their sanctification;

the manifestation of his love unto their souls, upon that point, doth take them off from the sight of their own works; and move them to wonder that ever the Lord should manifest himself graciously, to such as they are.

Use 1: Now for the Use of this: Let me apply it to teach Christians not to be afraid of the word Revelation: you have heard of many that have attended to Revelations, that have been deceived: it is true; for the Devil himself, will transform himself into an Angel of light: he will be foisting in delusions, yea, many times when the soul waiteth for the revelation of God's mercy, the Devil will be apt to foist in such revelations, from whence many delusions may grow:

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but yet on the other side, let not men be afraid, and say, That we have no *revelation* but the *word*: for I do believe, and dare confidently affirm, that if there were no revelation but the word, there would be no spiritual grace revealed to the soul; for it is more than the Letter of the Word that is required to it: not that I look for any other matter besides the *word*. But there is need of greater light, than the *word* of itself is able to give; for it is not all the *promises* in Scripture, that have at any time wrought any gracious change in any soul, or are able to beget the *faith* of God's elect: true it is indeed, whether the *Father, Son, or Spirit* reveal any thing, it is *in* and *according* to the *word*; but without the work of the *Spirit* there is no faith begotten by any promise: the word of God, and all his works, may beget you some knowledge, if you be not mistaken in them: but to beget the *faith* of God's elect, that may be able to stand against all the powers of darkness, and to crush all the temptations of that wicked one; it is not all the *works* of God, nor all the *word* of God, of itself, that is able to beget such *faith*; if there be any, it is but an historical faith, a dead faith that is not able to bring the soul nearer to God.

I beseech you therefore consider of it, as a *mystery* of God indeed, yet marvellous plain in Scripture, as I conceive: That neither the *word* of grace, nor all the *works* of grace, are able to clear up the grace of God unto the soul: it is the *Spirit* of God that must do it; he must *reveal* the grace of God, if ever we see it, otherwise it is not possible that we should believe: for though we should attain unto *πληροφορία συνέσεως* fullness of knowledge, we shall not attain unto *πληροφορία πισεως* fullness of faith.

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As for our *works* in justification, the Lord will dash them to pieces, and cast them out of his sight: and though *faith comes by hearing*, yet it is the *Spirit* in the word, that maketh the New Testament a lively Letter; otherwise, as

not the *flesh* of Christ, so nor the *word* of Christ profiteth any thing, *it is the Spirit that quickeneth*; therefore look for this *revelation* of the Spirit to show you the need of Christ, and the Lord's offering and *presenting* Christ unto you, and his *drawing* your hearts to believe upon him; otherwise you neither can have any faith, nor can you discern any gift of God bestowed upon you.

Use 2: In the second place: Let this teach and exhort us not to look for any *revelation* out of the Word; for the Spirit comes in the mouth of the *Word* and the *Word* in the mouth of the Spirit: take heed therefore of all *Revelations* in which the Word of God is silent; for the Spirit of God will speak *Scripture* to you; when he comes, he will not bring a *new Gospel*, and *new Revelations*; but he always speaks in the Word of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, which is given unto us: therefore if any Spirit shall speak, and not according to the *Word* it is but a *delusion*: rest not therefore in any *assurance* nor *revelation*, unless thou hast a *word* for it.

Use 3: In the third, and last place; This may teach, and exhort us, in *Justification*, to look for no word, but such as holdeth forth some *absolute promise* of Free grace; for the Lord looketh for no work in our Justification, but the works of the Son; it is the work of his free grace to *justify the ungodly*: therefore if any man, having been in desperate anguish of soul, have built his faith upon some *Promise*

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made unto some such *work* as he findeth in himself; this is no other but a *legal righteousness*: for when the Lord doth pronounce Grace in a way of *Justice*, he will pronounce it unto that soul, that *is most ungodly*; and that he himself doth *justify him freely*; for example, take that promise which we read, Acts 10:43,44, *To him give all the Prophets witness, that through his Name whosoever believeth on him, shall receive remission of sins*: there is a promise of *remission of sins* unto them which believe. But was this faith in them before? Nay but *while he spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell upon all them which heard the word*: and this Holy Ghost it was that did beget that faith by this *Promise*, whereby they did receive the *Promise*. So in like manner, if the Lord do promise, that *he that confesseth and forsaketh his sin, shall find mercy*, Proverbs 28:13, if he doth manifest his free grace in such a promise to any soul, that soul will look at his *old confessions*, as marvellous poor works, and will not challenge this mercy promised, by virtue of them: for when the Holy Ghost doth apply a *conditional promise* to the soul, he doth work the condition by the *promise* in the soul: therefore when the Lord comes to testify his *acceptance* of our persons, it is freely of his *Grace*; and thou canst not build any thing thereof upon any

of thy works: and if he do acknowledge our *sanctification*, in any word of his grace; he will let us see, that every such *gift* or *work* of *grace* is *freely* given unto us; so as that we shall be ready after all this, to say with *David*, *Who are we, or what are our father's houses, that the Lord should ever accept such as we are, and such poor sacrifices as we offer unto him?*

Thus having spoken of three distinct Works

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wherein the Holy Ghost doth give himself unto the soul, to wit,

1. In a work of *Inhabitation*,
2. In a work of *Sanctification*,
3. In a work of *Revelation*;

It now remaineth, that we speak unto the fourth work, wherein the Holy Ghost gives himself unto the soul, and that is a work of *Consolation*. This is one of the great Characters of the *Holy Ghost*; and this the Lord Jesus doth in special ascribe unto the *Spirit*: John 14:16, *I will pray the Father and he shall give you another Comforter*: so verse 26, and this is no other but the *Spirit of Truth*, John 15:26, thus doth he style the Holy Ghost, the *Comforter*. Why? had the disciples no comforter before think you? was there no comfort in the *Father's* drawing them to Christ and revealing Christ in them? Matthew 16:17, was there no comfort in Christ his revealing the Father to them? doubtless there *is* comfort in all these works: the work of the *Father* mentioned in John 6:44, is the same with what we read, Isaiah 54:13. *All thy children shall be taught of God, and great shall be the peace of thy children*: though it be but *peace* for the *future*, yet *light is sown for the righteous* herein, and *gladness for the upright in heart*, Psalm 97:11, there is some ground-work of light and comfort in the *Father's* work, and some sparkles of it do appear; for the *Father* reveals the *Son*; and the *Son* is no sooner seen, but hope is seen, for *Jesus Christ is our hope*, 1 Timothy 1:1, and the hope itself (I mean the grace of *hope*) is a comfortable blessing: so that the soul hath supportance in the very work of our being drawn to Jesus Christ: and moreover, the *Father* addeth further comfort in his *justifying grace*, for by it *we have peace with God*, Romans 5:1, & chapter 8:34, it is *God that justifies*,

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who shall condemn? such gracious supports, and more then transient tastings of his mercy; not such as hypocrites may have, but such as do more or less stay with the Saints, and people of God: so that at the least, there doth ever remain a seed of *consolation* in the hearts of all those, whom God hath by his Spirit drawn home unto his Son.

And when the Son receives the soul, he doth amplify this comfort; he reveals the Father's work unto the soul, Matthew 16:16,17, Blessed art thou Simon Bar-Jona, *flesh and blood hath not revealed this unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven:* and Luke 10:20, *Rejoice in this, because your names are written in heaven.* So that there is consolation also in the work of the Son: but you shall find it true that it is by the *Holy Ghost* that both of them work, and that either of them comfort the soul, with those beginnings of consolation that afterwards break forth into more abundant riches of increase.

But what doth the Holy Ghost do more?

1. For Answer; He doth bear witness with a more *abundant measure* of consolation, Romans 14:17, *The kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost;* He doth so clearly reveal our acceptance through the righteousness of Christ, that from thence springeth peace unto the soul, which groweth up until it passeth all understanding, and bringeth us *unto joy unspeakable, and full of glory,* 1 Peter 1:8, therefore he is called by way of eminency, *The Comforter;* because when he comes, he doth so *clearly* ratify unto your righteousness to be in Jesus Christ.

2. Secondly, The *comfort* of the Holy Ghost, is more *constant* and *abiding;* as Christ (speaking of the *comfort*) promiseth unto his Apostles, John 16:22,

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I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice, and your joy shall no man take from you: not but that God may sometimes eclipse it, for the trial of his servants; yet ordinarily it is more *constant*, and leaveth faith even then more *constant* and *firm*, Nehemiah 8:10, *The joy of the Lord is your strength:* when the Holy Ghost taketh in hand to comfort his people, he doth abundantly *strengthen* them with his *consolations.*

3. Thirdly, As the *comfort* of the *Holy Ghost* is more abundant, and constant, so it is more *powerful*, Luke 24:49, *Behold, I send unto you the promise of the Father: tarry ye at Jerusalem, until you be endued with power from on high:* so Acts 1:8, *You shall receive power from on high, after that the holy Ghost is come upon you;* not by the *gift* of him nor by his *inhabitation*, nor by *sanctification*, nor by *revelation* only: but in the *power* of all these, that in the midst of strong oppositions, you might have *strong consolation:* therefore this is the ground of the Apostle *Paul's* thanksgiving, 2 Corinthians 1:5, and chapter 2:14, *For as the sufferings of Christ abound in us: so also our consolation aboundeth by Christ; and thanks be to God, who always causeth us to triumph in Christ.* Thus you see the truth of the point, that the work of consolation doth in special manner belong unto the *Holy Ghost:* yet for the further clearing of it, there is a

Question or two to be answered: There is mention made, Ephesians 1:13,14, of the *seal* of the *Spirit*: and of the *earnest* of the *Spirit*: Therefore it may be demanded, 1. *What is the seal of the Spirit.* 2. *What is the earnest of the Spirit.*

Question 1: What is the *seal of the Spirit*? for so he is called, Ephesians 4:30, *Grieve not the holy Spirit, whereby you are sealed unto the day of redemption:*

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so likewise there is mention made both of the *seal*, and *earnest* of the *Spirit*, 2 *Corinthians* 1:21, 22.

Answer: For answer hereunto, to speak properly what I conceive the Scripture to hold forth: I take the seal of the Spirit to be nothing else but the Spirit itself; as the *name* of *Christ* is often put for *Christ himself*: for you shall not read in Scripture, that it is called *the seal of the Spirit*, but *they were sealed by the Spirit*; *He hath sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts*, 2 *Corinthians* 1:22. So that as the *Spirit* is the *anointment*, and the *earnest*: so he is also the *seal*: when the *Angel* mentioned *Revelation* 7:2, is said to have the *seal of the living God*: it is meant of the *Spirit*.

Question: But, how is the *Holy Ghost* said to be a *seal*? and in respect of what workings of his is he so called?

Answer: I Answer, There is a threefold respect in which he is called, The *seal*; and he doth express the nature of a *seal* in them all.

1. First, He doth *confirm* and ratify all the gracious promises of God unto the soul, bearing witness in truth and power of them unto the soul, and thereby begetting and confirming faith in the soul; for the use of the *seal* is to *confirm*; and this is the principal work of the *Holy Ghost*, to *confirm* all the promises of God as an authentic *seal*. There is a place of Scripture, which being a little mistranslated leadeth (I cannot say into a little) but into a great inconveniency, Ephesians 1:13, *In whom after that ye believed, ye were sealed:* *Calvin* is much troubled about it, and so is *Piscator*: the truth is, it implieth thus much, that *in believing they were sealed?* this is the true English of those Greek words: so that it is the *Holy Ghost*, that comes

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in every promise of grace wherein *Jesus Christ* is conveyed unto the soul, and he setteth it home, and confirmeth it to the soul, by begetting faith in that grace, and so setteth to his seal that it is true to thee: and hence it is, that the *faith* which is wrought by the *Holy Ghost*, is said to be a *seal*, John 3:33, *He that hath received his testimony, hath set to his seal that God is true:* so then, the *Holy Ghost* setteth his seal to it, when he gives us faith; and thus he is the *seal*, as he doth confirm all the word of God's grace unto us: and hence it is

that *faith* is called *the spirit of faith*, 2 *Corinthians* 4:13. Calvin disputes this point at large, when he speaketh touching the *authority* of the word of God; which though it be none of the most learned, nor elegant of his works; yet I think there be so many plain arguments, that they may convince the most arrogant *Atheist*: yet to make him believe it you cannot, except the *Holy Ghost* set in to convince a gain-sayer, for it is the *Spirit* that gives the *seal* and confirmation of every word of the Gospel.

And to speak a little more plainly in this point: although the Apostle *John* (1 *Epistle* chapter 5 verse 7,8) speaketh of six witnesses, that bear witness unto Jesus Christ; yet you shall find this to be true, that there are none of all that do set it home unto the soul, but the Holy Ghost only: when the *Father* beareth witness, he doth it by the *Spirit*: 1 *Corinthians* 2:9,10, &c, *God revealeth the hidden things of his love unto us by his Spirit* &c. when the Son doth show us the *Father* and so setteth the soul at liberty, and easeth our consciences thereby, *The Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty*: 2 *Corinthians* 3:17. And it is the Spirit that setteth on his own work much more plentifully by

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the powerful efficacy of himself upon the soul, *Acts* 1:8, and for the *water*, and the *blood*, who applieth them? as for the *water* of sanctification, it is but a creature, and it is not in the power of any creature to beget faith: for the word of God itself cannot beget faith: can any work of God do it? no, no, it is neither the *blood* of justification, nor the *water* of sanctification that can beget faith, but the *Spirit* only: otherwise you will ever and anon suspect your faith, and your sanctification; and every Christian knows what I say, That if a man have nothing but his *works of sanctification* to trust unto, they will fail him, unless the Spirit of God do breathe in them, and testify the Lord's acceptance of you: All the *works of creation* though they may convince my judgement that there is a *God*, yet they cannot beget lively faith in me, unless the *Holy Ghost* set in with them; for the *word of God* cannot do it, no nor the *Sacraments*, though they be seals: but when are they seals? only then when the *Holy Ghost* is conveyed in them; and therefore we see why the *Holy Ghost* is called a *seal*, because he doth confirm our faith in the works, and word of God.

You will say, But may not a soul comfort himself, in the former experiences of God's mercy? True, but the *Holy Ghost* must then breathe in them: and his work it is also to *bring them to remembrance*, *John* 14:26, if he will reveal his loving kindness in these footsteps of his grace, then they do come in to

confirm your faith, otherwise both *word* and *works* are dead, unless the *Spirit* of God breathe in them: he it is that revealeth free grace, *justifying the ungodly*, and afterward will let you know the works of your sanctification: he teacheth, and none like him: 1 John 2:20,27, *You have an unction*

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from the holy One, and ye know all things, &c. and in this respect every Christian is a sealed one of God more or less: when as the *Angel* was sent to set the *seal* of God upon his servants, *Revelation* 7:2,3, he did not leave out weak Christians doubtless, but did *seal* all the servants of God. Christ is careful to keep his weak servants from inundations of evil; as well as others: so in *Ezekiel* 9:4, *The mark of God is set upon all that mourn for the sins of the times*: therefore in some work of this *seal*, the *Holy Ghost* is not wanting to seal all believers; otherwise thou couldest not believe, that the *Father* hath drawn thee to Christ, unless the Lord had revealed it; nor couldest thou believe, that the *Father* is thy *Father*, unless the *Holy Ghost* hath sealed thee; thou canst not know that thy *faith* is accepted of God, that thy *sanctification* is in truth, unless the *Spirit* of God do clear up these things unto thy soul: though thou hast many promises before thee, yet unless the Lord by his *Spirit* apply them, thou canst not see thy right in them.

Objection: But is not that my sin?

Answer: It is your sin; but it is such a sin, as the power of the creature cannot help you out of: for unless the Lord be pleased to discover *Jesus Christ* unto you, and your *faith* in him, and your deriving of your works from him; you will neither know your justification, nor your sanctification to be true: therefore there is a *sealing work* of God's *Spirit* upon the souls of his Saints, though this may be done before the *Holy Ghost* come to seal you in his own proper work; for you have many gracious workings of God about you, before he come to seal his own work in your soul.

2. The *second work* of the Spirit, in respect whereof

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he is called a *seal*, is his *engraving the likeness of Jesus Christ* upon the soul; for the Lord hath *predestinated us to be conformed unto the image of his Son*, *Romans* 8:29, and how come we to be so conformed? even by the *Spirit of God*, who writeth (as it were) *Jesus Christ* in our hearts as with the finger of the living God; and hence Christ is formed in us, *Galatians* 4:19, and this *image* of Christ the *Holy Ghost* writeth in us, by making us conformable unto the *death*, and *resurrection* of Christ; and unto that end, he doth breathe in both the *Sacraments*, *Romans* 6:4,5,6, for he is both a *Spirit of mortification*,

and *visitation*, so as that through him we do not only find sin mortified, but *do live by the faith of the Son of God*; and the Spirit it is that doth *preserve* these gifts, and *acteth*, and *stirreth* up our faith to look unto Christ: this is another use of the *seal*, not only to *confirm*, but to *conform*; so that *of his fullness we all receive grace for grace*, John 1:16, and *we live, yet not we, but Christ liveth in us*; and this *seal* the Holy Ghost doth set on more or less in every Christian, but in his own proper work he doth it with more *power*.

3. The *third work*, whereby the *Holy Ghost* doth express the nature of a *seal*, is in *distinguishing* the Saints from other men, *Revelation 7:2,3*, the servants of God were sealed, and in *sealing* them he doth *conceal them*, as a seal doth, so that *the world knows them not*, John 14:17, and 1 John 3:1, we are called *the sons of God, therefore the world knows us not*, &c, and the more the Spirit doth *distinguish* a man from the wicked of the world, the less they do discern him to be a gracious man; the more lively Grace is, the more it is hidden from the world: as men grow more in godliness, so they grow more and more to be

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suspected by the world: this is *sealing work*, to *distinguish*, and yet to *conceal*: these things doth the Spirit of God, as a seal upon the hearts and consciences of his people: he *begetteth* and *confirmeth* all their *faith*, more or less: he doth *conform* them to the image of Christ more or less; he doth also *conceal*, and *distinguish* them from the world.

Question 2: The second Question needful for the clearing of this point, is, *How is the Holy Ghost an earnest?*

Answer: For Answer, He is called an earnest in two respects. 1. First, As he bindeth the bargain between God and the soul; he doth confirm all the *promises* of God to us, and fasteneth them upon our hearts, & setteth our hearts with an unmoveable faith: God having given us his *Spirit*, doth give us all in him, for he *bindeth* our *union* with Christ, and our *relation* to the *Father*; the *Covenant* of God's grace unto us, and *us* unto it; the *Gospel* to us, and *us* unto the *Gospel*.

2. Secondly, He is an *earnest*, as he is the first fruits of the payment: if a man give a pledge, he meaneth to take his pledge again: but if he gives money in *earnest*, he meaneth not to take that again, for it is part of the payment, and the whole is but a greater payment of the same kind: so in like manner, what is all our inheritance? surely a fullness of the *fruition* of God the *Father*, and of *Jesus Christ*, and of the *blessed Spirit* of God; this is all our inheritance that we look for in another world: Ephesians 1:14, *He is the earnest of our*

inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory: here we have but a little portion of the Spirit,

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a little *earnest-penny*; but this little portion is an *assurance* unto us, that he will make it up, until we be able to receive no more.

Use 1: Now for *Application* of this Point; let it first teach us, how to speak of the *seal of the Spirit*, all those that desire to speak the language of *Canaan*: no man hath part in Christ, but he hath the *seal of the Spirit* also; for if the *Holy Ghost* had not given thee Christ in this or that *promise*, thou couldst never have believed it. True it is indeed, there are many Christians, yea, and sealed Christians, which are not sealed with the proper work of the Spirit, I mean with that full *consolation*, and *universal conformity* to God's *image*; every Christian hath not received that measure of *power*? but every Christian waiteth for it, and is *sealed* by the blessed Spirit, having set home some word of God's grace, wherein *Jesus Christ* is brought unto the soul.

Use 2: In the second place, let it teach us thus much; that it will come short of bringing us unto Christ, if we lay claim to a *promise* of God by any *work of grace*, such as we can have before we have the *seal of the Spirit*; I mean such a *work of the Spirit*, as wherein he doth come in with *power* upon the soul above the power of the word and works of God; for they are both creatures: and unless the Lord come in with his immediate power, above the power of any Ordinance, all that you have received amounteth not to the *faith of God's elect*, and unless it be the *Spirit of God* that *enlighteneth*, we have received no *saving light*: and when he doth come to *seal up* Jesus Christ unto our souls, he ever speaketh in some *promise of the free grace of God*; for the Lord *justifieth* no man upon an *imperfect* righteousness, but in that work doth ever declare himself to be *just*,

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and a justifier of him that is of the faith of Jesus: Romans 3:26, therefore seeing in this work, he sitteth upon a throne to declare his own righteousness, there is no place now for our righteousness to appear; hence it is, that if he justify, it is freely by his grace, Romans 3:23, thus God dealt with *Abraham*, when he showed him the innumerable stars of heaven, and told him, so shall thy seed be: *He believed God, and it was imputed to him for righteousness*, Genesis 15:5, it was the free grace of God, which he mentioneth unto him. But suppose the Lord should reveal a *work* unto you (as a work there is in every soul that is *justified*) if you should see any *work* in your soul, yet unless the *Spirit of God* should above the power of the work *breathe* in it, it is not

possible that it should beget a *Divine Faith*; it is only the work of the *Spirit* of God: it is he also that shows you your *acceptance* with God and that manifesteth your *sanctification*, and makes it a sign unto you of your *justification*: otherwise neither *word* nor *work* can set on a *promise*: with *power* upon the soul, until the *Holy Ghost* confirm it, it is his immediate work.

Objection: What then? doth the *Spirit* do this immediately without the word?

Answer: No: if he speak *peace* unto the soul, he ever doth it in some *word of promise*; and if he testify our *acceptance*, it is in some *word*; and in that respect, it is mediate: but he doth set on a power above the word, and in that respect I call it *immediate*; & therefore if a man shall seek to hammer out anything by his own knowledge, though he may add to his knowledge, yet he can do nothing to the begetting of faith, unless the Lord come in by a *power* above the *word*: and when he doth speak in any *word* of

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his grace, he doth not in the first place speak to you of your *own righteousness*; but first *convinceth* you, that you are a chief sinner: as when he said to *Saul*, *Why persecutest thou me?* when he sends his *Spirit*, it is *first to convince the world of sin*, (John 16:8,9, &c.) and what? of your *Sanctification* next? no, of your *Justification* next; *he will convince the world of righteousness*; that is, of *his righteousness*; and afterward *of judgement*: and that is sometimes put for *sanctification*, Matthew 12:20, *A bruised reed shall he not break, and smoking flax shall he not quench, until he bring forth judgement into victory*. But it is the *Spirit* that doth all this, and therefore let not men deceive themselves in any conclusions that they can make; for their *enlightened conscience* is but a *creature*; and unless the Lord come in with a greater light, than your *conscience* will afford you, all will be but lost work unto your souls; you will build but Castles in the air, which in time of temptation will vanish away.

Use 3: In the third place, this may teach all the servants of God, that have received in any measure of the *first fruits* of the *Spirit*, to know, that they have received an *earnest* of an everlasting possession; that *Spirit* will never leave you till you become a full vessel, and running over: if he have given you one *promise*, he will give you more; and if he have given you *Christ*, *he will with him give you all things* else.

Use 4: In the fourth and last place; it may teach us, That if we have received *Christ*; and our hope be in him, never to rest until we do more fully and clearly see that the Lord is our God; until the *Holy Ghost* do fill your hearts with more *power*, and stamp more of the Image of *Christ* in you: grow more

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and more sensible how dead and insufficient you are unto any thing that is good: be meek, and lowly in heart; think meanly of yourselves: you cannot *pray* you cannot *preach*, you cannot of yourselves *perform* any Christian duty; it is Christ that must work all our works for us: know therefore, that if you be lively and active, it is because *your life is hid with Christ in God*; he it is that stirreth up your faith to look up unto Christ, to expect all help from his hand. Sometimes you must look to be *severed* from the *world*; and the more clear the truths of God are unto you, the more they are hidden from the world; for if a man cannot look upon a candle, how shall he look upon a torch? and much less upon the shining Sun. Therefore it behoveth all the servants of God, to grow up in the *power* of God, and the strength of his might; not holding forth insolency of Spirit, nor uncharitable censoriousness; such things are far off from expressing the Spirit of Christ; but it is the part of the servants of Christ, to be *faithful, meek, lowly, humble, and courageous* in the ways of the Lord; and when you have done all, be contented to be counted *the off-scouring of the world*; as 1 Corinthians 4:9, for it must be the part of all that fear God, to take heed that you give none occasion to any to speak evil of us: for if we do consider the great hope of our *calling*, how should it cast holy shame upon our faces, that we walk so unworthy of our calling! for if there be any work of God upon our hearts it is no transient work: if God begin, *He will perfect until the day of Christ*: The work of Grace is an incessant work; but as in the first *creation*, the *Spirit* of God *hatched* upon the face of the waters, till the work of *Creation* was perfected: so doth the Lord by his *Spirit* in his Saints; he doth

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not leave *hatching* in their hearts till he hath separated *light* from *darkness*, and made every thing fruitful in the soul. We must not rest therefore in former weak beginnings; but if we be born of God, and under a Covenant of grace, we must look to grow up in all well pleasing unto God, that we may not be strangers to any of all the heavenly works of the grace of God, but that we may grow up to abound in fruitfulness in them all.

Thus having explained, how the Lord gives himself in a Covenant of grace unto *Abraham*, and to his *seed*; we now come unto the *second part* of the *Doctrine*; which is, that *he received Abraham and his seed to be a peculiar people unto himself*; which although we have spoken somewhat unto in the opening of the point, let us further premise these three things, before we come to the Use of it.

1. First, That the Lord did take *Abraham*, and his *seed* to be a *peculiar people* unto himself.

2. Secondly. *How* did he so take them to be his people?

3. Thirdly, *Who* are meant by those, *Whom he did so take, to make them a peculiar people unto himself?*

1. For the *first* of these, That he did so take *Abraham* and his *seed*, &c. we find it plain in Deuteronomy 7:6,7,8. *The Lord thy God hath chosen thee, to be a special people unto himself*, &c. and verse 8, *Because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers*. The like we read in 2 Samuel 7:23,24, *Thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel, to be a people unto thee forever; and thou Lord, art become their God: and this mercy*

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doth he magnify toward them, when they had no thoughts of him; but as he sometimes called his *Apostles*, when they were *mending their nets*, so he called his people *Israel*, when they were *making bricks in Ægypt*, then he said to *Pharaoh*, *Let my people go*; and again, *If thou slay my son, my first born, I will slay thy son, thy first born*; and as he sometime took *Abraham* himself out of *Chaldea*: so he took his *seed* out of *Egypt*, that they might serve him in the *Wilderness*.

Question 2: Now secondly, If you shall ask, *how* the Lord called them?

Answer: I answer, chiefly two ways.

1. First, By *solemn outward Covenant*; and that partly in the loins of *Abraham*; and partly in mount *Sinai*; and yet more solemnly in the plains of *Moab*, Deuteronomy 29, for that was a *Covenant of Grace* wherein the Lord promised to *circumcise their heart, and the heart of their seed*, Deuteronomy 30:6.

2. And secondly, In one word, by this *Covenant* he doth *draw them into union with himself, and with his Son*: from whence it comes to pass, that we have *communion* with him, both *relative*, in *adoption*, and *justification*; and *positive*, in *sanctification*, and in fullness of time, perfect *glorification*.

Question 3. In the third place, What is meant by *Abraham, and his seed*? doth God call all the seed of *Abraham* into a *Covenant of Grace* with himself?

Answer: The answer is shortly this, *Abraham* doth here principally stand as the *father of the faithful* and so received *Circumcision* as the Father of the faithful, not only of such as were *Circumcised*, but also of such as were *uncircumcised*. The *Covenant* he received when he was *uncircumcised*; and the *seal* when he was *circumcised, that he might*

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be the father of the faithful among *Jews* and *Gentiles*: and all the *Jews* are not the seed of *Abraham*, but *the children of the promise are counted for the seed*: for they are the seed unto whom the *promises* are made; and he saith it not, *unto thy seeds, as of many: but To thy seed, as of one, even Christ*, Galatians 3:16, so that unto *Christ*, and unto all those that have the *seed of Christ* in them, is this Covenant made.

Objection: You will say unto me, But is it made unto the *carnal seed also*? have they no portion in the Covenant of grace; was not *Ishmael* circumcised as well as *Isaac*? and is it not said, *unto them were committed the covenants of God*? Romans 9:4, so that *both the Covenants* were committed to them that fall away from God: and hath not God said to those that were circumcised, *Though Moses and Samuel stood before me, yet my mind could not be towards this people?* and the Lord rejecteth them, Jeremiah 15:1 and 6, ult and 7:29, and yet, these (whom God rejecteth) were made partakers of the seal of the *Covenant*: would God call them to the *seal*, and not to the *Covenant*? would he call them to profane the *Covenant*? the point is weighty; shortly and plainly to speak something to it.

1. First, they had their part in the *Covenant of grace*: this they had, that they were all called to the *solemn receiving of the covenant*, Deuteronomy 29:10 to 15. *Ye all stand this day before the Lord your God, &c. that thou shouldest enter into covenant with the Lord God, &c.* this was the *Covenant of grace*: now thus far are all the carnal seed of Christian Parents, called into the *outward fellowship* of the *Covenant*.

Objection: But why would God call them to the *outward*

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fellowship of the covenant, and *seal* of it, and meanwhile not give them the *blessing*, and *kernel* of the *Covenant*? this is weighty and considerable; how it standeth with the faithfulness of God.

Answer: For answer, The *Blessings* of the *Covenant* are not *far* from them: for there are *two sorts* of *blessings*. Some do consist in the *outward letter* of the *Ordinances*; the *Gospel* of grace, the *Sacraments*, and *seals* of it; and sundry *common gifts* of the Spirit that are plentifully dispensed in the fellowship of the Church; besides a *liberal* and *bountiful use* of the *creatures*; for they are all serviceable to the People of God: and all these things do flow from the *Covenant of grace*, which God hath made with their Fathers. When as *Abraham* had understood that God would establish the *Covenant* with *Isaac*, and thereupon made a sad prayer unto God, that *Ishmael might live in his sight*,

Genesis 18:18,20, the Lord answereth him; *As for Ishmael, I have heard thee, behold, I have blessed him, and will make him fruitful, &c.* and (which is wonderful) he had the *liberty* of all the *Ordinances* until he cut himself off from them. Unto this Covenant belong those *gifts*, which the Lord bestows on men from the blood of Christ, *Hebrews* 10:29, so that is not a mere *blank*, for by it here are sundry *spiritual*, and *outward blessings*; the *patience* and *bounty* of God is abundantly poured out upon carnal seed of Christian Parents, as in the wilderness, when the displeasure of God was ready to kindle against that carnal generation, and he was ready to cut them off; he remembered the covenant of his mercy to Abraham, and oft times spared them: so that if you see much *patience* extended to the Children of Christian Parents, and many

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gifts bestowed upon them, whereby they become very serviceable sometimes in the *Commonwealth*, sometimes in the *Church*; know, that all these things spring from the *Covenant* of God with their *Fathers*.

Objection: I, but if the very *life* and *kernel* of the *blessing* be wanting; if *Ishmael* do not live in Jesus Christ, what will all these *blessings* do him good? will they not aggravate his damnation?

Answer: For answer, mind you this, that the Lord may be justified; he doth not only call them to *Church liberty*, and *fellowship*; nor only bestow upon them sundry *gifts of grace*, and great *bounties*, and manifold *preservation* from evil: but likewise he doth *offer them the sure mercies of David*: for so God doth distinguish the *sure mercies of the Covenant*, *Isaiah* 55:3, *Incline your ear, and come unto me, hearken and your soul shall live, and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David*: wherein you see the Lord putteth it upon such terms, that if the soul come not by it, it is because he *would not*: not that any can come when they will as by the power of their own will; but this the Lord will leave upon the children of Christian Parents, that they shall not say, that *God forsook them, until they have forsaken him*; and that, when there lay no necessity upon them, but voluntarily they did *despise the grace of the Covenant*: for do but observe the causes wherefore the Lord hath discovenanted the children of gracious Parents.

1. The *first* that ever fell off from the Covenant of grace made with *Abraham*, it was *Ishmael*: and what was the ground of it? he *mocked Isaac*, *Genesis* 21:9,10, what *mocking* was it? in regard of human frailty? no, no; it was a plain *persecution*,

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and that implies such a *persecution* as was cast upon him in respect of the *Covenant of grace* made with him; as if he should say, *Here is the child of Promise!*

or the like, insomuch that *Sarah* could not endure he should tarry any longer in the house; for this was not *human frailty*, but *human insolency* against the Covenant; whereas happy he, if he might have fallen under the wing of it.

2. The *second* that you read of, who *fell* from the *Covenant*, fell not upon those terms; but the love of *worldly sensual blessings* did choke the affections of *Esau* toward the Covenant of grace, which was the chief blessing of the first born in the days of *Abraham* and *Isaac*; but he coming in hungry, selleth his *birthright* for a mess of red pottage, Genesis 25:31, &c, *Thus Esau despised his birthright*: so this sort of children despise the grace of God, not out of a malicious frame of spirit, but they are choked with the *cares of this world*; and the best seed that was sown in them, becomes unfruitful: and this is the case of all the good husbands of the world that despise the *Covenant of grace*; for when once a man is taken up with the profits and pleasures of this life, he then cares not a rush for the Covenant of grace: mount *Sion* is not now commodious for him, so profanely do they undervalue the Covenant of grace in comparison of sensual lusts: and do men thus fall from the Covenant of grace, because it is a duty above the power of nature? no, no, the very common gifts they had, might have restrained the one of these from *mocking*, & the other from selling his birthright for a mess of pottage: it is evident that the children of Christian Parents, when as they come to fall off from God, they do not fall upon such things as they are not able to prevent; but

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either they scorn and persecute the things of God, or else they prefer sensual lusts before them.

3. A *third way* whereby the children of Christian Parents *fall* from the Covenant of grace, is a *self-confident cleaving* unto those gifts of grace, which by the Covenant they have received: besides these causes of their falling from the Covenant of grace, I have observed no more in Scripture nor have I found any more in mine own experience. When men are invested with many spiritual blessings; sweetly endowed with many sprinklings of the blood of the Covenant, whereby they come to be great in *knowledge*, and sometime excel in a *spirit of prayer*, and some are good at one thing, and some at another; and being full of such *gifts*, it may easily come to pass that they may grow so confident of these, that they will not subject themselves unto the *righteousness of God* in Christ Jesus. And this was the rejection of the whole house of *Israel*, Romans 10:3, *They being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God*: and hence the *Covenant of grace* is unto them turned into a *Covenant*

of works; they are now become the children of the *bond-woman*, and not the children of the *free-woman*: for they that have their faith in *themselves*, and not in *Christ*, they fall under a *Covenant of works*. So that (mind you) the Lord is just and righteous in all these his dispensations.

I said before, God did receive *Abraham* and his *seed* into this Covenant: I mean the *faithful seed*; and they are received into the *second sort of blessings* of the Covenant, which are truly saving: for the Lord receives them into *inward fellowship* with his

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Son, so as that they shall be *justified*, *sanctified*, and *glorified*. But are the *carnal seed* then rejected? no, but they partake in many bounties of God, and grow up and live in his sight; what? in the enjoyment of *outward blessings* only? no, of *spiritual blessings* also: I, but the Lord gives them not the spiritual blessing of *saving grace* by the Covenant: doth he not? and why is it? not because he doth not *offer* it to them: but because they *fall off* from it upon such terms, wherein there lay no *necessity* upon them, that they should so fall off: *Ishmael* needed not have mocked *Isaac*; *Esau* needed not have *sold* his *birth-right* for a mess of pottage: never let them pretend the *necessity* of *corrupt nature*; *corrupt nature* putteth no such necessity upon us, to sell away such blessings upon such terms. And for others that trusted in their *own righteousness*, had not the Lord convinced them, that it was not their *own righteousness* that could save them? did not *David* say, *If thou Lord mark iniquity, Lord who shall stand?* Psalm 130:3, and *in thy sight shall no flesh living be justified*, Psalm 143:2, so that, it is not the blindness of man's nature that excuseth, but this flows from a *malignant*, and *affected self-confidence*: therefore now they are justly disinherited: for the *Jews* were not rejected until it was made plain to them, that their righteousness would not stand before the Lord; therefore saith the Apostle, Acts 13:46, It was necessary that the word of God should first have been spoken unto you; but seeing you put it from you, &c. & he had said before, They contradicted and blasphemed; and why was it necessary that the word should be spoken unto them? truly, that God might be *faithful* in his *Covenant*; for if all the children of Christian Parents, may not have *liberty* in the *means of grace*, then the Lord should be wanting to

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his *Covenant*: so that if they be *Jews* by nature, the Lord is bound by *Covenant*, that they shall not for want of means perish: nor upon such grounds as are far above the *nature* of creatures to reach unto: for though it be above the power of the creature to *repent* and *believe*, yet it is not above the power

of nature to *abstain* from *profaneness* and *malignity*, and such strong, *confidence* in their legal righteousness; therefore doth he call them to *Church-privileges*, and *common gifts* and *graces*, things that are above the power of nature to reach unto: and he doth also *preserve* them from many evils, and *tenders* unto them the *sure mercies of the Covenant*: but if they will malign it, and cast it behind their backs, and choose other things before it; such degenerate children of godly Parents, their blood shall be upon their own heads.

Use 1. The Use hereof in the first place, may serve to *justify the righteousness of God*, in the *confusion* of the *children* of Christian Parents: if thou seest any child of the godly perish, write upon him, He is either a *persecutor*, or a *worldling*, or a *presumptuous hypocrite*; otherwise he had been an heir of grace: The spirit of God dealeth fairly, and sweetly, and comfortably with them: whence it is that they are often times sweetly *trimmed* up with many good *gifts* and *parts*, that you would wonder to see how forward and dexterous they are in their places: and how comes this? is it not from the *faithfulness* of God's *Covenant*, that we might see and say, That on God's part, there was no want unto his salvation, but it was his own ungracious gracelessness, that *cast off* grace in the means of it? let *Ishmael* perish, and *Esau* perish, and all civil *judiciaries* perish; and their blood will be upon their own heads, the Lord

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and his throne is guiltless; it's not for want of grace offered unto them: for though he had not purposed to save them merely of grace: yet he meant to let them see, that he did not only deal *justly* with them, but also *graciously* in some kind. What a warning should this be to the children of godly Parents! take heed what you do, *Ishmael* had a godly Father, and *Esau* both godly Father and Mother; therefore bless not yourselves in that. Take heed also that you rush not upon another rock: for you will be ready to say, Notwithstanding the fair *Covenant*, which I am under, I cannot have *grace* unless God *work* it in me: stand not with God upon those terms; for either God will bring you home unto himself, or else you shall fall upon such terms, as that God will take you by the throat one day, and make it appear that you did *forsake* the *Covenant* of grace, upon such grounds, as many a Reprobate in Hell would never have parted with it upon the like: either you do *malign* the grace of God, or are *profane*, or else you stand upon your own righteousness, and stablish that; and then your heart begins to rise against your parents: and you think yourself wiser then seven men that can render a reason; or if you break not out upon these terms, then you will begin to see that God hath enlightened your mind, & to seize upon your heart; and then you see that you can do

something, you can pray, and you can *hear with profit*, and the like: and hereupon you come to build an undoubted *hope* of salvation, you believe upon this that your soul is wrapped up in a bundle of life and peace: and if any man come to shake your foundation, you are like a stone-wall that beateth back all: therefore if thus you fall off, the Lord and his throne is guiltless, and you are justly miserable:

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it is the *blood* of the *Covenant* that did *sanctify* you; but it will not save you, because you did not look to be *justified* by it: so that as you have *despised* the *Covenant* of God, you are now cut off from the saving *fellowship* of it, which else the Lord had called you to enjoy. It was not the *Jews crucifying* the Lord of life and glory in their ignorance, that cut them off from God; for notwithstanding that, Christ prayed for them, Luke 23:34, *Father, forgive them, they know not what they do*: but when they grow *malignant*, and *despise*, and *contradict*, and *blaspheme*, Acts 13:40,45,46, and *put off from them the word of life*, now they are cast off. Therefore let all the children of Christian Parents understand it, and the danger of it; do not think that you shall be saved, because you are the children of Christian Parents, but take heed of *scorning* of Religion, and of *high-prizing* the *world*: and if you be forward in spiritual *gifts*, take heed of blessing yourselves in them: for if you have anything of *your own* to build upon, you will in time *tread under foot the blood of the Son of God, wherewith you were sanctified*, if you be not justified by it: *work out* therefore *your salvation with fear and trembling*; otherwise by one means or other you will fall off from God, upon such base and unworthy terms, whereby it will appear that the Lord is *just* in *rejecting* you, and you justly *left* in a state of perdition.

Objection: You will say, But what shall we think of *Infants*?

Answer: *Peter Martyr* saith, If they die when they are *Infants*, they are certainly saved. I cannot say it so fully, nor have I anything against it: this I can say, That they are *holy*, for so saith the Scripture, and therefore they are in the *Covenant*

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generally: sometimes *Parents* may *cut off* the free passage of their *Covenant* from their *seed*: though God give them one child and another, they are not greatly sensible what need the poor *Infant* standeth in of a *Covenant* of grace; they do not *believe* for their children, nor *humble themselves* in respect of them; and then no wonder if the child miscarry through the unbelief of his *Parents*.

Otherwise I do not know whether ever God reject any upon other grounds, then what we have already laid down.

Use 2: In the second place, for Use, It teacheth all the servants of God, that are *under the Covenant*, to be careful to bring up their *children* under the wing of the Covenant: it may be some of you have sold away great estates from them; these were but the appurtenances of the birth-right: but if you have parted with great inheritances for the *liberty* of the Ordinances, you do your children no wrong: for as ever you desire that they may have a share in the Covenant, bring them under the Ordinances of the Covenant, for *faith comes by hearing*, Romans 10:17, *Received you the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?* Galatians 3:2, and this is the *door* of the Covenant, Jesus Christ believed on, John 10:7,9; Acts 14:27, therefore whatsoever inheritances you sell, if it were the inheritance of a Kingdom, bring them to the Ordinances of God, if they cannot be brought to them: and so you have done your part; and then if your children's blood be upon their own heads, through their own forsaking of the Covenant, the *Lord is guiltless*, and his *Covenant guiltless*; they have forfeited

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their birth-right, which is not to be bought again for many worlds.

Use 3: In the third place, seeing that, as the *receives* the faithful *seed* of *Abraham* into the Covenant of his grace, and in like manner *taketh* not only you, but *all of yours* by virtue of the Covenant: and seeing that the Lord doth in giving himself, give us *all his Persons, Attributes, Ordinances, Providences*; for he is the Lord of hosts, and therefore *all that is Gods is ours also*: It will follow semblably that we must be *as God is*, and our *children* as *his children*; and our *servants* as *his servants*; and our *wits*, and *parts*, and *authority*, and *power*, and *times* must all be for God, and not for ourselves: moreover, all that is in our *Churches* is for God, Canticles 7 ult, *As our gates are all manner of pleasant fruits both new and old, which I have laid up for thee O my beloved*.

Now from hence two things follow.

1. First, Here is a ground for *family-duties*; for if all that I have must be the *Lords* (for he takes me as he gives himself) then it is for us to *give up* all our *relations* unto him, as much as lies in us: we can do nothing but *set* them *before the Lord*; but it will be requisite that we should *constrain* them to duty, *pray* with our children and servants, *teach* them the will of God; *restrain* them from wickedness: *I know Abraham*, saith the Lord, *That he will command his children and his household after him, and they shall keep the way of the Lord, &c.* Genesis 18:18, and the Lord commandeth Parents to bring up their children

in the *nurture and admonition of the Lord*, Ephesians 6:4, we must therefore teach them to *know the God of their Fathers*, as *David*, 1 Chronicles 28:9, *And thou Solomon my son, know thou the God of thy father*,

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and serve him with a perfect heart, and with a willing mind, &c, and so old *Lois and Eunice* were careful to train up *Timothy* in the knowledge of the Scriptures from a child: this the Lord requireth of us; as ever we look to have right in his Son, he will have right in *our sons*: if we have right in *his Spirit*, he hath right in *our spirit*; if you have any right in *his servants*, he hath right in your servants: and therefore use the means to draw them home to him, and leave the blessing unto the Lord: but if Parents be watchless in conveying the *blessing* to their *children*, and *children careless* in receiving it; God is faithful, and his Covenant faithful, though they fall short of it.

2. Secondly, This also follows, that as God betrusteth us with any gifts, or parts, or talents: with *honour, wealth, health, strength, beauty, liberty*, or what else soever: if the Lord have given us any blessing, it is wholly his, for we must *be unto God*, as we would have him *be unto us*; and therefore the Lord took it unkindly from his people, Hosea 2:8, *That the corn, and wine, and oil, and silver and gold, which he had given them, they prepared for Baal. Israel is an empty vine, when he bringeth forth fruit unto himself*, Hosea 10:1, so likewise he taketh it ill, Ezekiel 16:20,21, that *they took his sons, and his daughters and sacrificed them unto Moloch*: so sometimes men count it a gentile thing to train up their children to *idleness*, and other *vanities*; whereas in truth it is as if they trained them up to *Moloch*: and this the Lord doth abhor, and will sadly require it in his own time. If therefore we must give up ourselves and ours unto God; then here is a foundation for *family-duties*, and also to *improve ourselves*, and all that we have, wholly

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to advance the glory of the grace of God in Jesus Christ: else we pluck asunder the *Covenant of grace*.

Use 4. In the fourth place, If the Lord in this Covenant receive us to be a peculiar people unto himself, something we are to learn in the *manner* of the *performance* of all holy *duties*; for as we are still to be doing in the use of means to help our knowledge, and faith; so in all let us still be expecting from the Lord to *lay hold* upon us and ours, and to *receive us*: for our hope standeth more in God's *receiving us*, then in our *giving ourselves* unto him; rest not therefore in all the good means that you use, for that will not hold unless the Lord be pleased to *receive us*, and ours, John 6:37, *All that the Father gives*

me shall come unto me: so that unless the Lord *give* our children to his Son, though we devote them to him; it is a question whether he will take them or no: look we up therefore unto the Lord, that he may take them graciously unto himself: the Prophet exhorteth *Israel* to *return unto the Lord*, Hosea 14:1, 2. But how shall they return? not unless the Lord *take away their iniquity, and receive them graciously*; and thus the Prophet teacheth them to pray: so that they do not stand upon their own reformations, nor look to this & that which they can do; no, no, *take with your words, and say, Take thou away our iniquity*; otherwise we shall never get it out: he also must *receive us graciously, and so shall we render unto him our selves*, and all that we can do. This is the way of the *Covenant* of grace; whatsoever duties the Lord requireth to be done on our parts, let us look unto him in all to receive us and ours, otherwise we and ours shall soon turn our backs upon God, and upon his *Covenant* which

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he hath so graciously invited us unto in Jesus Christ.

We now come to the third and last Branch of the Doctrine; which is, That *the Lord took the chief of Abraham's seed, the Lord Jesus Christ, to be the mediator and surety of the Covenant between God and Abraham*: this is expressed, Galatians 3:16. *To Abraham and his seed were the promises made: he saith not, And to his seeds, as of many, but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ*: so that he is the chiefest of the seed with whom the *Covenant* is established, as also the Prophet *Isaiah* testifieth, chapter 42:6, and 49:8. *I will give thee for a covenant of the people, and a light of the Gentiles*, and the Apostle speaketh fully, when he saith, Hebrews 8:6, that *he is the mediator of a better covenant*: and a *surety of the Covenant*, Hebrews 7:22. Christ is therefore the chiefest of the seed, and the *Mediator* and *Surety* of the *Covenant*.

Now a Mediator he is between both parties; partly in respect of his *person*, and partly in respect of his *Office*.

1. In respect of his *person*, as he is God and man, he is a *fit person* to be the ground of our *union* with God, and to maintain our communion with him: for what is a Mediator? but a middle person to bring two persons, that are at difference into one? now Christ as he is God-man, is most fit for this work.

1. First, To be the ground of our union: for being God-man, he hath united both the differing natures into one? so he is a middle person, and fit to be the foundation of our *union*, and therefore he is called Immanuel, *Isaiah* 7:14, *That is, God with us*.

2. Secondly, By his *person* he is fit to *maintain*

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our *communion*; and there are two things requisite unto that:

1. First, The *removal* of all *offences*; and Christ is most fit for that: for as he is the Son of *man*, he is most fit to *suffer* all punishment due unto sin; and therefore as man *he became sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in him*, 2 Corinthians 5. ult, And as he is *God*, so he is fit to *overcome sin*, and to prevail against the *wrath* of God.

2. Secondly, He is fit to *communicate* all the good things of God unto us: as *God*, he is fit to bestow upon us all spiritual comforts, and heavenly gifts and blessings: as *man*, he knows what is most fit for the spirit of man, and so he is fit to *communicate* unto us all the good things of God: he hath *suffered* himself, and hath been *tempted*, and so he is fit to *succour such as are tempted*, Hebrews 2:17,18, thus he is a *fit Mediator* in regard of his *Person*.

2. Secondly, He is fit to be a *Mediator* in respect of his *Offices*; he is a *Priest*, a *Prophet*, and a *King*; and in all these Offices he doth properly, and lively exercise the Office of a Mediator.

1. First, As a *Priest*, He doth offer *Sacrifice* for us, *Hebrews* 9:12, even *himself*, *Hebrews* 10:10, *He gives his life a ransom for many*,

Matthew 20:28, and he doth not only thus give all this, but *apply* it also unto us, as it belongs unto a *Mediator* for to do. And as a *Priest* he doth *sit at God's right hand, and makes intercession for us*, *Romans* 8:34, and *if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father which is Christ the righteous; by him God reconcileth the world unto himself*, 2 Corinthians 5:19, thus *he taketh away the sins of the world*, *John* 1:29, and becomes a *propitiation for us*, *Romans* 3:24,25, these things he doth as he is a *Priest*.

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2. Secondly, As he is a *Prophet*, he *teacheth us all things*, *Acts* 3:22, whatsoever things he hath done and suffered for us, those things as a *Prophet* he teacheth us.

3. Thirdly, As a *King*, he doth *apply* all this grace unto us, *subduing* us by his Spirit unto himself, and all the creatures unto us. God by him as a *Mediator*, doth *bring us on* effectually *unto himself* by the mighty power of his Word and Spirit, and keepeth us with himself in spotless communion unto his heavenly kingdom. These *Offices* give him *power* and *authority* to do it, as also *faithfulness*, and *mercy*, according unto his tender compassion on our necessities. Thus we see how the *Lord Jesus* is a *Mediator*.

In particular, he is a *Mediator* of the *Covenant* between God and us, and that in a threefold respect.

1. First, Because he is the *Messenger* of the *Covenant*: thus he is called, *Malachi* 3:1 he did first *publish* it unto our *first Parents*, *Genesis* 3:15, and unto *Abraham*, and by all the holy *Prophets*, and in the days of his flesh, and by the *Apostles*, and their successors, unto the end of the world.

2. Secondly, He is called the *Mediator* of the *Covenant* as he doth *ratify* and *confirm* the *Covenant* by a threefold *seal*.

1. First, By his *blood*: for a *Testament* is *confirmed* by the *death* of him that *made* it, *Hebrews* 9:15,16,17, he is the *mediator* of a *new testament*, that by means of *death*, &c, that they which are called, might receive the *promise* of *eternal inheritance*. He made it *sure* on *God's part*, and on *our parts* he doth *seal* it up with his *blood*, that it might be *confirmed* unto all *Generations*: and as no man altereth a

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Testament after a *Testator's death*, so this is *unalterable*.

2. Secondly, As he hath *confirmed* it by his *blood*, so also by his *Spirit*, *Ephesians* 1:13,14, &c, 4:30, *Grieve not the holy Spirit*, whereby you are *sealed* to the *day* of *redemption*. Christ is the *Angel* that ascended out of the *East*, having the *seal* of the *living God*, *Revelation* 7:2,3 And look as it was the manner of the *Priest* of old, to *sprinkle* the *blood* of the *Covenant* upon the *book* of the *law*, and upon the *people*: so doth the *Lord Jesus* *besprinkle* us, and that which is *taught* us, with his *blood* and *Spirit*, and thereby begetteth the experience of the favour of *God* in our hearts, and *sealeth* it up unto us.

3. Thirdly, He doth *seal* it by the *seals* of the *Covenant*, which are *Baptism*, and the *Lord's Supper*: so it is here said, *He gave him the covenant of circumcision*, which was a *seal* of the *righteousness* of *faith*; instead whereof he hath given us *Baptism*. And by the *Lord's Supper* he *sealeth* it; for that is the *blood* of the *new Testament*, *Matthew* 26:28, by all these means he doth *confirm* the *Covenant*, *Daniel* 7:27.

3. Thirdly, He is not only the *Publisher*, and *confirmer*, but also the *Prince*, and the *Head* of it; for you shall see that in all *Covenants* there are some that are *Princes* of the *Covenant*, as we read, *Daniel* 11:22, where speaking of the league between *Egypt* and *Assyria*, he makes mention of the *Princes* of the *Covenant*. So in this respect the *Lord Jesus* is called the *Covenant* itself: *Isaiah* 42:6; 49:8, as being the *Head* and *Prince* of it; and that implieth two or three things:

1. First, if he be the *Prince* of the *Covenant*, then all the *Covenant* is *first made* with him, *Galatians* 3:16,

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To Abraham, and to his seed, even unto Christ: and to the *Church* his mystical body in him, and under him; and therefore *all the promises are in him yea and in him amen*: 2 Corinthians 1:20, that is to say, all the Promises, and all their conditions are fulfilled in him; as he saith, *It behoveth us to fulfil all righteousness*, Matthew 3:15.

2. Secondly, He doth *inherit* the *blessings* of the *Covenant*, so far as his blessed nature is capable of them; he hath received the crown of inheritance of all the blessings both of this life and of another, *Matthew* 28:18, he sitteth at Gods right hand; having led captivity captive, he treadeth down Satan under his feet; therefore,

1. First, He hath *fulfilled* all the *conditions* of the *covenant*; as this is one part of the *Covenant*, *The redeemer shall come out of Sion, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob*; as the Apostle, *Romans* 11:26, expoundeth the words of the Prophet, *Isaiah* 59:20, for he *fulfilleth* in us all the conditions of the *Covenant*: he it is that *turneth* us to the Lord, and undertaketh to do all things in us and for us.

2. Secondly, He doth *communicate* the *blessings* of the *Covenant* to us, having himself exactly fulfilled the Conditions of them.

3. He doth *apply* the comfort of the *Promises* unto us, and having done all these things, he leadeth us still to wait upon him for further and further blessings in his Ordinances: Thus we have seen in particulars how the *Lord Jesus* is the *Mediator* of the *covenant*. He is the *Publisher* of it, the *confirmer* of it, by his *blood*, by his *Spirit*, by the *seals* of the *Covenant*: he is the *Prince* of it, and hath received all the *promises* from God; they are accomplished in him, he hath *fulfilled* all the

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conditions, and *received* all the *blessings*, and *applied* them unto us, and wrought all things in us, and for us, and still leadeth us on unto further and further fellowship with himself.

Use 1: For the use of this point; in the first place, it is of *refutation* unto the *Popish Doctrine*, that hath devised *other Mediators* besides *Jesus Christ*: they come unto God in the *mediation* of *Saints* and *Angels*, and pray to them, to pray for them in Heaven; and look that by the virtue of their prayers they shall be saved: and whereas the Scripture is plain, 1 Timothy 2:5, there is *one Mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus*: yea, (say they) one Mediator of *Redemption*, but many of *Intercession*: whereas (mind you) it is the work of a *Mediator*, not only to do that which may prevail for the *obtaining* of peace; but he must *apply* it also, or else he hath not brought us unto *union* and

communion with the *Father*. And when they make *intercession* unto *Angels* for the virtue and merit of their prayers, it doth evacuate the *mediation* of *Jesus Christ*: for bring in other Mediators, and you weaken him in his Office. A sign they trust not in him, and therefore are accursed when they put confidence in other things, *Jeremiah* 17:5.

Answer: But you will say, Do we not pray the *Saints on earth* to pray for us?

Objection: It is true we do so: and Christ hath bidden us, and given us patterns to pray one for another: but if we in this Country should pray to a friend in *England* to pray for us, it were *Idolatry*: *Paul* indeed doth write unto the Churches to pray for him, but not unto the *Saints* or *Angels in heaven*.

2. We do not *depend* upon their prayers, that by

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the *merit* of *them* they should prevail: but we look at it only as a *way*, wherein the Lord calleth us to *wait upon him*: so as that when we have done desiring, we look for all blessing from *Jesus Christ*, even then when we beg the prayers of our friends. When as God was angry with the friends of *Job*, because they falsely accused *Job*, chapter 42:7,8, he bids them *take a sacrifice, and go to Job, and he shall pray for you; for him will I accept*: but must they now trust upon *Job*? or upon his acquaintance with God? no verily, but upon the Lord *Jesus*, who was held forth by the *Sacrifice*. So that though we crave the help of our brethren's prayers, yet the Lord doth not allow us, to make our friends *Mediators* between Christ us; we look not for any thing *from them*, but *from the Lord Jesus Christ alone* in that way. Now they look at *Mary* as able to command the Lord *Jesus* (*Jube Mater Filium, command thy Son,*) and when they pray to this Saint and that Saint, they look that the right and merit, and efficacy of their prayers shall carry all an end: whereas they need a *Mediator* themselves; and therefore they cannot by their own right be *Mediators* unto us. But that we might the better understand the *mystery of iniquity*: do not they make the *Saints* and *Angels* the *Mediators* of their *Redemption* also? what is the ground of the *Popish indulgences*? have not they a *treasure of Church-merit* which they boast of? and therefore have they power, as they say, to grant pardons, and to *apply* the *merits* of the *Saints* unto this and that soul: now (mind you) he which is a *Mediator* of the *pardon* of my *sins*, is a *Mediator* of *redemption*, and *justification*, and this is the dangerous gulf into which the *Popish Religion* sinketh many millions of souls.

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Use 2: The second Use, Is of *Instruction* how to make an *holy use* of all the *gifts* of God's grace, and *duties* of God's worship; this Doctrine will properly hold it forth; for here is as dangerous a rock for our souls to be split upon, as is amongst them: for we also may be subject to the like danger, in making our *own righteousness* our *mediators*, as they be in making their *prayers*, and *merits* of their *Saints* their *Mediators*: if we shall make any *graces* in our hearts the ground of our *union* with God, we have forgotten that *Jesus Christ* became God and man, and that he only is a *fit person* to *remove* all *offence*, and to *communicate* all *good things* from God unto us: if we shall say within our selves, Were I but thus and thus *humbled*, the Lord would accept me, and all the blessed promises would be mine; if I could but *pray* as such a Christian can, then I know the Lord would accept me. This may be a piece of *refined Popery*, but it is *Popery* at the very bottom: if we look unto our *graces*, or *duties*, to bring us unto *union* with Christ; or if we think that by the *right* of *them*, *communion* shall be maintained, we have forgotten our *Mediator Jesus Christ*, God and man; for if *he* be our *Mediator*, he doth work both these for us: these things cannot *bring* us unto *Christ*, for they all flow from him; if therefore we have no other *union* with *Christ*, than that which flows from *them*; we are not united unto this very day. But you will say, Cannot our *gifts*, and *works* maintain this *union* when it is true? if they can *uphold* it, they are in *part Mediators*: that they do *uphold* it by *merit*, no *Protestant* will say: neither is there any right, or power in them to do this; and therefore to trust in them, is to put confidence in the arm of flesh; and though it be not so gross as

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Popery, yet it tends unto the like dishonour of *Jesus Christ*. It was a faithful saying of the Apostle *Peter*, and worthy of all acceptance, when they saw the people ready to attribute much unto their *holiness*, Acts 3:12, &c, *Ye men of Israel*, (saith *Peter*) *why look ye so earnestly on us, as if we by our power, or holiness, had made this man to walk? the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, the God of our fathers, hath glorified his Son Jesus*, &c, so it is not in the power of the best spiritual gifts or works, to make a *creple go*: much less is it in their power to make a *feeble soul stand upright*; but the God of our fathers glorifieth his Son *Jesus*, in doing all this work for us: for he is our *only Mediator* of *reconciliation*, *redemption*, and *intercession*; and if we look for any such virtue, power, or right in any other means under heaven, we deprive Christ of the *Office* of a *Mediator*. There is an *Opinion*, as I hear, stirring in our native Country, that though none of our works give us *merit*, *right*, or *power* to reach

the *blessing*, yet they give us *fitness*. Now truly this is but an *English word*; in *Latin* we call it *congruity*: and this the *Papists* come unto, that when they be driven hard unto it, they will acknowledge that we have no *merit of condignity*, but only *merit of congruity*: therefore in truth it is plain *Popery* in English: it is true indeed, there is a *fitness*, but it lies not in *doing*; it is *such a fitness*, as whereby the soul judgeth itself *unworthy* of any grace: and now the creature being emptied of itself, is *fit to receive* mercy from God; it is now fit to receive all from Christ. Consider therefore, I beseech you, what kind of *use* God calleth us to make of all *gifts* and *works* of grace; do not think we cry down *sanctification*, because we do not put it into *Christ's Mediatorship*, because we do not *shut* Christ out of *heaven*

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and out of his *Office* by it; for we give it *his* honour: if we give it this honour of *mediation*, we cannot come to God, but we must be united: you will say We cannot be *united*, till by *faith* we have *uniting*. Is *faith* then a *Mediator* between Christ and us? can there be no *union* with *Christ*, unless we bring *faith*, and *repentance* with us? truly then we must have *Mediators* to bring us unto Christ: but doth not the Gospel require *faith* and *repentance* in all that be in Christ? true: but how comes a man by the *faith* and *repentance* of the Gospel? Zechariah 12:10, *I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, a Spirit of grace, and supplication; and they shall look on him whom they have pierced, and mourn for him, &c.* This *looking* is *faith*, and this *mourning* is *repentance*; thus Christ seeth us before we see him, and *because we are sons, God hath shed abroad the spirit of sons into our hearts*: Galatians 4:6,7, and hereby we come to see him, and more and more of him; and this is the way of the Gospel of Jesus Christ: First, *We have him*, and him *drawing* us, and *fitting* us by his *Spirit*, whereby we come to *see* him; and then we *mourn* over him for all the wrong we have done him; this is that *faith* and *repentance* that flows from Christ, and then brings us unto him: if it flow not from him, but first brings us unto him, it is not the *faith* and *repentance* of God's elect, nor that which the Gospel holds forth: First take Christ, and then you have all things in him.

Again, As nothing can first *bring* us unto Christ: so neither will it be able to *maintain* our *communion* with him: for as he is the *door*; so he is the *Surety* of the *Covenant*, he is the *Publisher*, and *Confirmer*, and *Prince* of the *Covenant*; and he *receives* and

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keeps all the *blessings* of the *Covenant* for us. You will say, What then would you have us to *neglect repentance?* and *faith?* no, no, brethren; but exercise yourselves in all *godliness,* 1 *Timothy* 4:7 but let it be *godliness* then; let it not be *righteousness only,* but *godliness;* even such as springeth from fellowship with God in Jesus Christ: but when you have done all you can, do not think that this will give you rest: be not deceived; you will not find that your souls are any thing nearer to God, when you have prayed constantly morning and evening: indeed if the Lord strengthen your faith, and give you comfort, this is effectual; but it is because you did not rest in the Letter of the duty, but you did *exercise* your self unto *godliness* in a way of *faith,* and *by faith the walls of Jericho fell down,* and the walls of *Jerusalem* are built up: and so make account that your *godliness* must be *exercised* to fetch all from Christ, otherwise that which you have will not uphold you; when you have done all you can, wait upon him to speak a word of comfort to you in his own way, for his own names sake: and so shall you indeed *exercise* the *gifts* of God as not abusing them, and so exercise *godliness,* as not to talk of it, but to *practise it;* and so use it as it ought to be used, as fit to be an *handmaid,* but not fit to be an *husband:* fit to be serviceable unto Christ, but not fit to jostle him out of his Kingdom.

Use 3: In the third place, this is a ground of much *strength unto faith,* and *encouragement* unto all the duties, and fruits of faith; that the Lord hath made such a *Covenant* as this is; an *everlasting covenant,* *stablished upon better grounds,* *in the hands of a better mediator;* that is, so fit to *bring* us unto God, and to *maintain union* and *communion* between God

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and us; to remove all offences, and quicken our spirits towards God: it is our strength to rest upon this rock of Israel; *this is indeed eternal life,* John 17:3, when we can say to *Saints,* and *Angels,* We know you not, and to our *own righteousness* and all the *duties* of it, We know you not, in point of *mediation:* but *Jesus* we know, and his *righteousness* and *mediation* we know: as for other things, bring them in their places, but if you bring them in point of *mediation,* they will keep us from closing with Christ. Therefore such as desire to maintain and to see maintained firm and full *communion* with *Jesus Christ,* let the *Lord Jesus only* be their *Advocate,* and *Righteousness,* for it is he that worketh all our works for us, and in special this main work of making & maintaining *peace* for us: if then we rest not on what we are or do, but look unto Christ for our acceptance, and know that we are unprofitable without him; then

do we not abuse our gifts, and duties, but use them as fruits of Christ's *mediation*: if we look at them as *causes* of our *mediation*, we do utterly evacuate the *mediation* of *Jesus Christ*; neither can we *continue* in that state, without the same hand of grace: for even the *Angels* in heaven (as is generally received) stand *confirmed* in *Jesus Christ*: if therefore they could not stand firm were it not for *Jesus Christ*, much less shall the sinful sons of men come unto *union*, or *stand* firm in *communion* with God by their best graces; but when you have done all, your *union* will be broken, if the Lord doth not both begin and perfect it to immortality. Yea, even then when you are full of all the power of the most High, and of all heavenly *consolation*, it is *Jesus Christ*, that maintaineth

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your *union* with himself: therefore let creatures know that they are creatures, and let them look at the *gifts* bestowed upon them, and *works* done by them, as the way, which the Lord hath given them to walk in. Say not, We have all we look for, nor think we ourselves fit to be accepted of God: it is a Popish delusion; it is not all our endeavours or duties, that will *maintain* us in *communion* with God one hour to all end. Thus you see that all these things are as they are, you have done but your duty in them all, and but a piece of that neither, and you have neither *power*, nor *right*, nor *fitness* in yourselves to stand in God's sight. In the meanwhile, this is a point of much *consolation*, that the Lord had laid up the *promises* in a safer hand than our own, so as that now there is no fear of breaking between God, and *Abraham*, and his faithful *seed*, for the Lord hath promised to take us to be his people, and given *Christ* to be the *Mediator* of the *Covenant*; then he will see this *Covenant* maintained, and perfected, and all the *blessings*, *promises*, and *treasures* of it accomplished to us from day to day: do but know him, and be acquainted with him, and it will be of effectual power to root out all the diffidence that is in us; *look* upon *Jesus Christ*, and *wait* on him; and yet neither can we *bring* our *waiting* unto him, but it is our part to be convinced of our own *poverty*, and *insufficiency*; and then all our power, and help, and hope, is in maintaining our fellowship with *Jesus Christ*: wait upon him, that he may carry an end the whole work of a *Mediator* for you, and that he may never leave you, till you be settled in heaven, nor then neither; for even the *Angels*

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in heaven would not be steadfast, but that the Lord hath laid a sure foundation in a *middle person*, that he might *unite* God and the *creatures* together. There is comfort in knowing this though we have but little experience of

it, because there is comfort laid up in it: therefore that we might not ravel out our time in vain, know we, that there is an *Aliquid ultra*, something further to be sought after, besides what we have found in ourselves: we sometimes hear of *conditional promises*, but as the *Lord Jesus* is the *first* and *last* in other things, so in the *Covenant*, he is the *first and last condition*: he doth *first bring* us unto God, and so to the *right* of the *Covenant*; and when we are *in Christ*, we cannot be active of ourselves, nor keep our peace with God but through him: if you stay in any thing that you can do, you have forgotten that Christ is the *last condition*; you have no *right* unto the *Covenant* before you *have him*; you have *no condition* of the *New Covenant*, unless you *have him*. But when I have *Christ*, have I not now the *condition* in my self? which the promise requireth? truly you have not, for *Jesus Christ* is the *last condition*, as well as the *first*; and if your *right* unto the *promise* be not maintained by him, you forfeit the promise, as soon as you lay hold of it: you must therefore look back again unto Christ, not only to *give* you the *right* unto the *promise*, but the *accomplishment* of it; otherwise you may stay many a seven years, if you look for it in your own works: though thou hadst right in Christ, and fellowship with Christ, and shalt look for comfort from thine own duties, thou mayest look

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till thine eyes fail, and not find it. *Christ* is the *first*, and the *last* in the *Promises* he gave you; the *Yea*, and he must be the *Amen*: therefore know, that in all the duties you perform, you must, as it were, be dressing a meal for *Jesus Christ*, *Luke 17:7,8,9,10*, and be content to feed *after him*, and *upon him*, who is the *beginner* and *maintainer* of the *Covenant* for us; and will perfect all the powerful blessings of it, *in us* and *for us*, in his own time.

FINIS