

command supposes, that the inheritance and hope of believers, are out of the reach of their enemies ; that no man is beneath their love ; that their motives to exercise benevolence are strong and lasting ; that the most fervent charity is consistent with Christianity ; that persecution is not ; and that they who properly regard this injunction, are taught of God.

V. WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS, THERE WILL YOUR HEART BE ALSO. Matt. vi. 21.

All men are so dissatisfied with the past, and so straitened with what is barely present, that if they had no happiness in reversion, they would be miserable beings. This prompts them to lay up treasure for the future. Where that is, whether on earth, or in heaven, thither their hearts ascend, or settle. If this be true, it is a truth which gives a mortal blow to *disinterested love*. For we cannot love, with delight, what we do not prefer, nor can we prefer one treasure to another, without a real, or imaginary ground  
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of preference. When, therefore, we suppose that any pursuit of our's is no way connected either with earthly, or heavenly advantage, in it we have no rational satisfaction. What, then, is our *chief* treasure? Is it substantial, safe, everlasting, and worthy of our supreme delight? A serious question, truly. For love divorced from judgment, or destitute of understanding, is that perversion of order which none of us are able to defend, or have power always to enjoy.

VI. NO MAN CAN SERVE TWO MASTERS.  
Matth. vi. 24.

What is elliptical in these words, may, perhaps, be thus supplied. No man at the same time, or with equal alacrity, can serve two masters of opposite interests, and of adverse dispositions. One of the two must be renounced and despised.—Our Lord adds, Ye cannot serve God and Mammon. If ever there was an idol called Mammon, we might infer, as they could not serve God and Bacchus, nor serve God and Venus, neither could

could they serve God and Mammon : which, in plainer speech, is to say, that none can be a drunkard, an unclean person, or covetous, and a true servant of the living God.— When the mammon, or riches of this world, is obtained by fraud, secured by injustice, or consumed on our lusts, they who act in this manner are not religious. Yet how many have not only argued for the coalition which is here condemned, but have thought themselves sagacious in defending their extravagant folly ! But hitherto, every effort to discredit this maxim hath failed ; and, we may be confident, that every future attempt will be in vain. Artful and unprincipled men may be wise in their own conceit, may be applauded by a corrupt posterity, and prosper in the world ; but they must eat of the fruit of their own way, and be filled with their own devices.

VII. SEEK YE FIRST THE KINGDOM OF GOD, AND HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS. Matth. vi. 33.

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He who has no capital pursuit in view, is unstable as water; and such men, like Reuben, cannot excel. But when the *chief* pursuit of any man is some favourite portion of earthly felicity, his life becomes vicious, and his crimes inevitably produce vexation. These evils we shall avoid, in proportion as we esteem the wholesome advice which these words exhibit. This is not all; for as this advice is regarded, we shall engage in the noblest chace, in a manner that secures success. By this advice, we are encouraged, before all things, to seek the kingdom of God; not by the merit of *our* righteousness, but by the acceptance of *HIS*; not that we may walk according to the will of the flesh, but in the spirit of adoption.—This counsel, though admirably suited to the primitive Christians, and greatly revered by them, was not intended to be confined to the Apostolic age.—Without a warrant, it would be presumptuous in us to aspire to the kingdom of heaven; yet unless we seek it, as here directed, we practically renounce revealed religion in this world, and are left without  
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one ray of rational hope that when we leave it, we shall enjoy a better. On the other hand; if this kingdom, and this righteousness, are our *predominant* concern, such an addition of other things may be expected, as he who grants to us the kingdom thinks proper to bestow. As this is believed, we shall know how to abound, and how to suffer need; and shall certainly find, that godliness with contentment is great gain.

VIII. TAKE THEREFORE, NO THOUGHT FOR THE MORROW. Matth. vi. 34.

Without the word *therefore*, this text is liable to be perverted; and with it, unless we are careful, we may mistake our Lord's intention. Such thoughts for the morrow only are forbidden, as he had previously condemned; which, from the context, appear to be those which argue distrust in God, perplexity of mind, or something inconsistent with our duty, and the setting our affections on things above. *Difficult* as it may be to comply with this precept, yet, if we seek first  
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the kingdom of heaven, if we believe that God is our father, that what is necessary for us will not be withheld, and that sufficient to the day is the evil thereof, we shall find it is not *impracticable*.—That unbelievers should be anxious for earthly things, is the common consequence of infidelity; but that Christians should applaud such conduct, or envy such a situation, is a species of folly that must be ever offensive to God, and always injurious to them who are addicted to unbelief.

IX. JUDGE NOT, THAT YE BE NOT JUDGED. Matth. vii. 1.

This rule was given to individuals in their private capacity, and refers to those rash judgments which they are apt to pass, and sometimes willing to execute, on other people.—God is the Judge of all. Public persons have authority to judge of those cases which are properly brought before them. Every man has a right to judge for *himself*, in matters that affect his own conscience, and so far of the opinions of *others*, as may guide him

him into the path of duty ; but no man has a right to judge of the final state of his neighbour, or to compel him to think, or to worship, as he may please to direct : nor has A, if he loudly complains of B, any right to be a judge in his own cause. Let us, therefore, not attempt to confound the established order of things ; lest with what judgment we judge, we should be judged ; and with what measure we mete, it should be measured to us again.— This is a mortifying caution ; for, it supposes, nothing would be more unwelcome to us, on certain occasions, than to fall under the law of retaliation, or to meet with the counterpart of our own misconduct.

X. GIVE NOT THAT WHICH IS HOLY  
UNTO THE DOGS, NEITHER CAST YE YOUR  
PEARLS BEFORE SWINE. Matth. vii. 6.

It is ungenerous to reproach by opprobrious names, those who are not exactly of our sentiments, and who approve not of our modes of worship. But it is a silly thing to suppose, that all men are virtuous, or that some are  
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not so wicked, as to be out of the reach of moral reformation.—All excellence is relative; and that which cannot be relished, should not be obtruded. The turbulent and the stupid, will snarl and stare at the best advice. They will neither renounce their nature, nor abandon their habits, for any thing we can give them, or cast before them.—In public assemblies, all are welcome to attend; but in private addresses to individuals, the wisdom of the serpent is as needful as the simplicity of the dove. Thus circumstanced, to beware of men, is our duty: but to be indiscreet, is not only to expose ourselves to intemperate resentment, but to draw down on our best sentiments, misconstruction, and illiberal abuse.

XI. WHATSOEVER YE WOULD THAT MEN SHOULD DO TO YOU, DO YOU EVEN SO TO THEM: FOR THIS IS THE LAW AND THE PROPHETS. Matth. vii. 12.

If this is what the law teaches, as one branch of our mutual duty, and if this is what



what the prophets have confirmed, we may infer, that even this *one* branch of our duty will not be properly regarded, where the law is not revered, and the prophets are not believed.—Ignorance is neither the mother of devotion, of doctrine, or duty ; nor, indeed, is unbelief.—Let us then be attentive both to the law and the prophets ; and, as our knowledge of each abounds, we shall be convinced that between saying, *This is the law and the prophets*, and saying, *This is ALL that is contained in the law and the prophets*, there is an obvious difference, and the distinction is of importance. As our knowledge is augmented, we shall perceive, that the law, considered strictly as law, knows nothing of remission ; but of this, the prophets have much to say. Now, we would, not only that men should treat us justly, but kindly ; and among other instances of their compassion, that they should readily remit our daily offences. Will it not therefore follow, that without the doctrine of grace, we shall neither do all that to others which they wish, nor they all that to us, which we desire ; and that neither they

they nor we shall do what the Lord hath commanded to his disciples ?

XII. BEWARE OF FALSE PROPHETS, WHICH COME TO YOU IN SHEEP'S CLOATHING, BUT INWARDLY, THEY ARE RAVENING WOLVES. Matth. vii. 15.

This caution is of great moment. Seldom, however, is it well understood ; very seldom is it properly regarded.—False prophets are false teachers ; and, like *Bar-jesus*, they withstand the truth, and seek to turn their hearers from the faith. Yet, while thus employed, false prophets would, in general, be thought to teach *purser* notions than the ministers of Christ. *Externally* they come to you, and to others, (for they are yet on their rambling tour,) uncalled ; and they choose to do this in sheep's cloathing ; because to the innocence of that harmless animal, they make the boldest pretences. But *inwardly*, they are ravening wolves ; the very reverse of what they seem ; voracious and highly injurious.—Our Lord was pleased to add, Ye shall know

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them by their fruits. An addition which, through the inadvertence of some, and the prejudices of others, has occasioned two mistakes. First, some have thought these false prophets are *easy* to be detected; whereas, when our Lord says, *Ye* shall know them, he speaks of the well-instructed, and of the well-inclined; and not of the ignorant, and unbelieving. Secondly, others imagine, that as these false prophets are to be known by their *fruits*, they are only to be judged of by their immoral behaviour; but he who is unable to perceive any thing unsound in their doctrine, will find himself a little too late convinced, if he only judges of them by their iniquitous actions.

**XIII. A GOOD TREE CANNOT BRING FORTH EVIL FRUIT; NEITHER CAN A CORRUPT TREE BRING FORTH GOOD FRUIT. Matth. vii. 18.**

The good tree, and corrupt tree, in this text, are not put for good, and corrupt men; but for ministers whose doctrines are whole-  
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some and noxious. A good minister will not intentionally, however he may be tempted, bring forth evil doctrine. But a bad minister, whatever pretences he may make of being almost, or altogether perfect, will seldom propagate sound doctrine: never, in its proper connection, and in an evangelical temper. —It is not their mission, whether internal or external, by which our Lord requires you to judge of ministers; but by truth and holiness; thus their errors and iniquities are to be detected. Only observe, that truth or error take the *lead*: and if, by the scriptures, you cannot, on religious subjects, distinguish the one from the other, you will find that, judging only by the holiness and iniquity of their conversation, you are liable to be repeatedly deceived.

I have now given as large a *specimen* of the sententious sayings of Jesus Christ, as the limits of this discourse will allow. In conclusion, I shall only observe, that whether they are regarded, or treated with contempt; whether we build, with the wise, our house upon

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a rock,

a rock, or, with the foolish, upon the sand, the rain will descend, the floods will come, and the winds will blow and beat upon the structure which we erect. In short, from above beneath, and on every side, we must expect to be tried and assaulted. God grant, that the trial of our faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, may, in every trial, be found unto praise, and honor, and glory, at the appearing of Jesus Christ! AMEN!

SERMON

S E R M O N XI.

PROPHETIC DECLARATIONS OF JESUS  
CHRIST.

JOHN xiii. 19.

NOW I TELL YOU BEFORE IT COME, THAT, WHEN IT  
IS COME TO PASS, YE MAY BELIEVE THAT I AM HE.

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**T**HE object which our Lord had in view, in pronouncing these words, was to confirm the faith of all his Apostles, excepting Judas. His apostacy is here predicted ; and in terms plain enough to make it evident, that the treason of this apostate was unconcealed. I speak, said our Lord, not of you all : I know whom I have chosen : but that the scripture may be fulfilled, He that eateth bread with me, hath lifted up his heel against me. Our Redeemer was pleased to add, Now I tell

you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may BELIEVE that I am *he*.

Faith in Christ, as the Son of God, and the only Saviour of sinful men, may be considered as a *positive* institution. For it is not a duty which can be discovered by the light of nature, or that can be learned from the moral law.

We are expressly told, the just shall live by faith; and, as plainly informed, that the law is not of faith, but the man that doth them, shall live in them.—The precepts of the law require *obedience*; and, if violated, the penal sanction of the law, demands the death of the transgressor. But, the promise of eternal life, supposes redemption by Jesus Christ, and cannot be enjoyed without *faith* in Him. The promised inheritance is of faith, that it might be by grace; and, that the promise of IT, might be sure to all the seed. To *believe*, therefore, that Christ is what he is, and to confide in him, as he is exhibited

exhibited in the scripture, is a matter of the most serious importance.

If we cordially believe the gospel, we shall endeavour to obey it; and if our faith be unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, it will be that of which we need not be ashamed; it will be that which argues newness of life; that which makes it manifest we serve God in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter.

To produce proper confidence in himself as the Messiah, our Lord shewed his disciples why they should believe in him. He repeatedly urged the *miracles* which he had performed: and here he argues from that spirit of *prophecy* with which he was so eminently endowed.

The prophecies of, or concerning Christ, have been already regarded; now, his own prophetic declarations, some of them at least, are to be inspected. For in this, as well as in the preceding sermons, it is the subject,



more than a mere exposition of the text, which I request you to keep in view.

Let us then, in the first place, take some notice of the prophetic declarations of Jesus Christ; and, in the next, answer some of those objections which are thrown in our way; and then conclude this discourse by deducing such inferences as the subject seems to admit.

I. The prophetic declarations of Jesus Christ are numerous, and of great consequence. They may be divided into two classes: those which concerned himself, and those which concern the Christian church.

Of those which concerned himself, it is certain, that he foretold his own sufferings; both from the Jews and Gentiles, with many affecting, and almost incredible circumstances attending them; that his sufferings would be unto death, the death of the cross, at Jerusalem, by the treachery of Judas, and connected with the transient desertion of his Apostles, and with the temporary triumph of his enemies;

enemies ; that, in defiance of all their rage, and cunning, he would arise from the dead ; that it should be on the third day after his decease ; that the truth of his resurrection, however it might be opposed, would be invincible, and that, as it prevailed, he would be declared to be the Son of God with power.

The substance of these predictions you will not dispute ; and, that they have been accomplished you have no doubt. I proceed, therefore, to the second class, on which it may be proper to be a little more explicit.

II. Those predictions of our Lord, which concern the Christian church, relate chiefly to his Apostles, to the destruction of Jerusalem, the dispersion of the Jews, and the conversion of the Gentiles.

1. Of his *Apostles*, our Lord foretold, that *one* of them would be ruined by his own transgression ; that the *eleven*, though alarmed and dispersed at his crucifixion, should, soon afterwards

terwards he endued with power from on high, and become as bold as they had been timid, and as much addicted to an heavenly interest, as before the day of Pentecost they had been fond of an earthly establishment.—The fall of Satan, and the manner of his defeat, by the ministry of the word, and the wide diffusion of truth in the Apostolic age, he likewise predicted, with some circumstances attending the widest spread of the gospel which would have been omitted, had not our Lord been confident of their fulfilment. Luke x. 18, 19. Matth. xxvi. 13.

2. Of the destruction of *Jerusalem* he foretold, that it would fall by the hands of the Romans, though Judea was then a Roman province; that it would be utterly destroyed, so that one stone should not be left upon another; that this inevitable destruction should be designed and effected, before the then subsisting generation passed away; that when those Christians who lived to see the abandoned city compassed with armies, they might know its desolation was nigh, (though that  
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city had often been protected from similar invasions ;) and that their safety was connected with their flight ; that not a hair of their head should perish, and that whosoever should call on his name, in that calamity, should be saved\*.

3. Of the dispersion of the *Jews*, Moses himself had predicted this circumstance of their fortune, in terms of the greatest energy. He had told them—that they should be removed into all the kingdoms of the earth, and that they should be scattered among all people, from one end of the earth even unto the other—that, among the nations, into which they should be driven, they should find no ease, nor rest, and that they should be only oppressed and crushed alway—that they should become an astonishment, a proverb, and a by-word among all nations—and that their plagues should be wonderful, and of long continuance†.

\* Matt. xxiv. 2, 16, 28, 34. Luke xxi. 20, 21, xxii. 18. Acts ii. 21.

† Dent. xxviii.

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