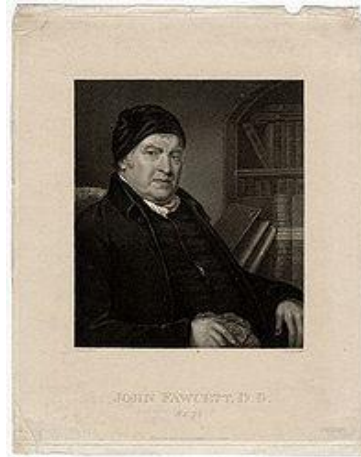


ROMANS

BY

JOHN FAWCETT



John Fawcett (1740-1817) was a Baptist British theologian, pastor and hymn writer.

In 1765, John Fawcett became pastor of a small Baptist church at Wainsgate in Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire, England. He served faithfully for seven years, despite a small income and a growing family much too large to be supported by his meager wages. It seemed only practical that he move to a church that paid a larger salary. When he received a call in 1772 to the large and influential Carter's Lane Baptist Church in London[1] he planned to accept the call.

After pastor John Fawcett had preached his farewell sermon at Wainsgate he and his family loaded up all their belongings to move to his new church in London. But, his parishioners begged him to stay and because of his bond with these fellow believers, he unloaded the wagon and made the decision to continue to serve God there instead of moving to the larger church. To commemorate this event he later wrote the words to "Blessed Be the Tie that Binds"[2], possibly his most famous hymn. He at first joined the Methodists, but three years later united with the Baptist Church at Bradford. Having begun to preach he was, in 1765, ordained Baptist minister at Wainsgate near Hebden Bridge, Yorks. In 1772 he was invited to London to succeed the celebrated Dr. J.Gill as pastor of Carter's Lane. The invitation had been

formerly accepted, the farewell sermon at Whinsgate had been preached and the wagon loaded with his goods for removal, when the love and tears of his attached people prevailed and he decided to remain. Fawcett sacrificed a London appointment and remained where he was loved and respected. His salary was £25 pounds a year.

From the circumstances of this incident Fawcett wrote his well-known hymn, "Blest be (is) the tie that binds", headed "Brotherly Love". In 1777 a new chapel was built for him at Hebden Bridge, and about the same time he opened a school at Breasley Hall, his place of residence. In 1793 he was invited to become President of the Baptist Academy at Bristol, but declined. In 1811 he received from America the degree of D.D. and died in 1817 at the age of 78. Dr. Fawcett was the author of a number of prose works in Practical Religion, several of which attained a large circulation. His poetic publications are:

Poetic Essays, 1767. The Christian's Humble Plea; a poem in answer to Dr. Priestly against the Divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, 1772. Three hymns in the Gospel Magazine, 1777. The Death of Euminio, A Divine Poem, 1779. Another Poem suggested by the decease of a friend, "The Reign of Death", 1780 Hymns adapted to the circumstances of Public Worship and Private Devotion, Leeds, G. Wright and Son 1782. They are 166 in number and were mostly composed to be sung after sermons by the author. Whilst not attaining a high degree of excellence as poetry, they are 'eminently spiritual and practical' and a number of them are found in all the Baptist and Congregational hymn books that have appeared during the last one hundred years. One of Fawcett's hymns, "Humble souls who seek salvation" with the heading, "Invitation to follow the Lamb", Matt 3:15) had the following note: "The author lays claim to this hymn, 'tho it has appeared under another name: he hopes that the insertion of it, and the following, (Ye saints with one accord) will give no offence to those of his friends who are differently minded, as to the subject to which they refer. Obviously someone's name had been wrongly given as the author of the hymn.

Fawcett's hymn in 'Spiritual Songs' is no. 267, "All fulness resides in Jesus our Head". The original text of this hymn is in Baptist Psalms and Hymns, 1858-80) The first line is "A Fulness resides in Jesus our Head" and is rendered in this way in G.V. Wigram's 1856 Little Flock Hymnbook, and in J.N.D's 1881 edition; also in W. Kelly's 1894 edition. T.H. Reynolds and W.J. Hocking's editions have "All fulness resides etc."

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ROMANS CHAPTER ONE

The apostle Paul wrote this excellent epistle while he was at Corinth, as appears from his sending it by Phebe, a servant of the church at Cenchrea, a port belonging to Corinth, chap. Rom. 16: 1. The epistle contains salutations from Gaius, an inhabitant of Corinth, and from Erastus, the chamberlain of that city, chap. Rom. 16:23. It is supposed to have been written about the year fifty-seven, or fifty-eight. The general design of the apostle in this letter is, to fix on the minds of those to whom he wrote, a deep sense of the excellency of the gospel; and to engage them to act in a manner agreeable to their profession, of it. He first shows, that the world stood in great need of such a dispensation, on account of the, deep depravity of both Jews and Gentiles; and the impossibility of any man's being justified and saved by his own obedience. He then states the method of justification and salvation revealed in the gospel, through the redemption which is by Jesus Christ. He proves, illustrates, and exemplifies this very clearly; and shows, that the evangelical doctrine is connected with sanctification and obedience. He speaks of the believer's experience, and inward conflicts; and then, at large, sets forth his character, his hopes, his privileges, and his security. Hence he is led to treat of thee sovereign mercy and love; of God, which he illustrates by the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles. He then applies the whole, by a rich variety of practical exhortations, precepts, and instructions, enforced by evangelical motives.

In a word, this part of scripture is of unspeakable value; and is, perhaps, the most methodical and systematical of any of the epistles of this great Apostle.

[ROM 1:1-4 PAUL, A SERVANT OF JESUS CHRIST, CALLED TO BE AN APOSTLE, SEPARATED UNTO THE GOSPEL OF GOD, 2 (WHICH HE HAD PROMISED AFORE BY HIS PROPHETS IN THE HOLY SCRIPTURES,) 3 CONCERNING HIS SON JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD, WHICH WAS MADE OF THE SEED OF DAVID ACCORDING TO THE FLESH; 4 AND DECLARED TO BE THE SON OF GOD WITH POWER, ACCORDING TO THE SPIRIT OF HOLINESS, BY THE RESURRECTION FROM THE DEAD:]

CHAP. I. Ver. [Rom. 1: 1-4]. *Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, & c.*] The Christian brethren at Rome are here addressed by Paul, once a persecutor of the church, but who now regarded it as his honor and happiness to be a servant of Jesus Christ, absolutely under his Command, and at his disposal; being called by his grace, and invested with thee character of an apostle in the church ; separated and appointed to the gospel of God, to preach it to the world, and to spend his" life in promoting it. That gospel, he tells them, is no new invention; but what was promised, and in some measure, declared and exhibited "by his prophets in the holy scriptures." This gospel is chiefly concerning Jesus Christ the Son of God; he is the sum and substance of it. He was " born of the seed and family of David, according to the flesh;" that is, with respect to his human descent: but he was determinately marked out and declared to be the Son of God, by that divine power which raised him from the dead, " according to the Spirit of holiness." *The Spirit of holiness intends, not the divine nature of Christ, but the Holy Spirit himself.* Reference seems to be had to the pouring out of the Divine Spirit on the witnesses of Christ's resurrection: for *the* apostle is speaking of the proof of Christ's being the Son of God, which was given by his being raised from the dead. The gift of the Holy Spirit, in so extraordinary a manner, to the witnesses of his resurrection, was a divine attestation to what they declared concerning it; thus he was

determined to be the Son of God with power, by the resurrection; which event was fully demonstrated by the Spirit of holiness, in the miraculous gifts which he bestowed, and the astonishing effects which followed. Christ was *proclaimed* to be the Son of God long before his resurrection, but by this he was *declared* to be so.

[ROM 1:5-7 By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among all nations, for his name: 6 Among whom are ye also the called of Jesus Christ: 7 To all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ.]

Ver. [Rom. 1: 5-7] ***By whom we have received grace, &c.*** Paul here takes in the other apostles, when he says, "We have received grace." They had received from the Lord Jesus Christ, who is full of grace and truth, all that grace which had been communicated in their regeneration, conversion, and sanctification, in common with other Christians; they had likewise received the apostleship, or the work and office of being the apostles of Christ, with suitable abilities for the same. The end for which they received this office, and grace to fit them for it, was, "for the obedience of faith." For true faith is attended with evangelical obedience. The end of the ministry of the gospel is, to bring men to the knowledge of Christ; to faith in him, and obedience to him. This, as if the apostle had said, is the great work which God is now carrying on in many Gentile nations; "among whom ye," the brethren whom I am now addressing, "are the called of Jesus Christ;" called into the fellowship of his gospel, and to a participation of all its blessings. I inscribe this epistle "to all that be in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints." I do not address it to the citizens of Rome in general; but to those who have been called, by divine grace, out of darkness into light; who may be denominated saints, or separated and sanctified persons, devoted to the service of God. Consequently, such appear to be objects of divine love, and interested in the blessings of salvation. To you, brethren, I write; and as I cannot but feel an affectionate regard for you, so I most fervently wish and pray, that "grace may be with you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ grace to sanctify your souls, and peace to comfort your hearts, and make you happy in your relation to one another. These blessings flow from the free mercy of God the Father, through the mediation of his Son Jesus Christ.

ROM 1:8-16 First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world. 9 For God is my witness, whom I serve with my spirit in the gospel of his Son, that without ceasing I make mention of you always in my prayers;10 Making request, if by any means now at length I might have a prosperous journey by the will of God to come unto you.11 For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;12 That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me.13 Now I would not have you ignorant, brethren, that oftentimes I purposed to come unto you, (but was let hitherto,) that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.14 I am debtor both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise.15 So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.16 For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.

Ver. [Rom. 1: 8-16]. *First, I thank my God through Jesus, &c.* I unfeignedly thank and praise that glorious Being, who is my covenant God and Father, through Jesus Christ, in behalf of you all, that your faith in his gospel is so steadfast, and produces such noble fruits, that it is spoken of and celebrated "through the whole world" and looked upon as a happy presage of the spread of the gospel through this extensive empire. For the God whom I serve with my whole soul, in the gospel of his Son, is witness to the ardor of my concern for you, and "how, without ceasing, I make mention of you always in my prayers," when I bow before him to supplicate his mercy; making request, if, by any means, God in his providence would open the way for my coming to you; and that I might, if agreeable to his will, have a prosperous journey to Rome. The apostle submits this to the will of God; and we know in what way it pleased the Almighty, in his mysterious providence, to bring him to that city: he was conveyed thither as a prisoner, and the voyage was full of dangers and disasters. "For I long to see you," as being some of those whom I esteem as the excellent of the earth;" that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift," such as light, knowledge, and consolation;" to the end that ye may be established "in your profession of the gospel, and adherence to the religion of Christ." That is, that I may be comforted together with you by the mutual faith both of you and me." I have great reason to believe that the advantage would be mutual; and that it would be for my comfort and improvement, as well as for yours. For I would not have you to be ignorant, my dear brethren, that I have been often purposing and contriving to come to you, though, by one means or another, I have hitherto been hindered; "that I might have some fruit among, you also," of my ministerial and apostolical labors, "even as I among other Gentiles" among whom I have labored. Yet I am so far from boasting of what I have done, that I consider, myself "a debtor both to the Greeks and the Barbarians; both to the learned and the unlearned." Duty and gratitude oblige me to do all I can for the salvation of souls. "So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that be at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ," but I glory in it; since it clearly appears that" it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jews, to whom it was first preached, and also to the Greeks," or Gentiles of every nation. It contains the most glorious display of the divine power in the salvation of men; convincing their consciences, enlightening their minds, and bringing them near to God, by repentance, faith, and obedience. "For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith."

ROM 1:17 *For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*

Ver. [Rom. 1: 17]. *The righteousness of God, &c.* This is not some inferior or subordinate subject, incidentally touched upon by the inspired writers, but the sum and substance of their heavenly message; that which constitutes the vitals of their system, and is the very soul of their religion. Let the reader observe the following, among many other emphatical expressions on this subject; which abound in the sacred pages, and run through them like a golden warp; while doctrines, blessings, privileges, and evangelical duties connected herewith, are, like a woof of blue of purple, of scarlet, and of every pleasant color, to allude to the ornaments of the sanctuary, so richly intermingled. "The righteousness of God by faith," Phil. 3: 10. "Righteousness by faith," Rom. 3:22 22. "Righteousness of faith," Rom.

4: 11. " Righteousness without works," Rom. 4: 6. "Justification by the blood of Christ," Rom. 5: 9. "Righteousness by the obedience of Christ," Rom. 5: 19. "Righteousness not our own," Phil. 3: 9. " Righteousness imputed by God," Rom. 4: 6, 10, 22. This righteousness consists in the perfect obedience unto death of that glorious Person, who is God, manifested in the flesh. Now this righteousness is "revealed from faith to faith," as the faith which receives it is capable of a continual increase. This is the doctrine of the prophet, Hab. 2: 4, " The just shall live," be accepted, and saved, "by faith," and not by any works of his own. The faithfulness of God reveals this righteousness in the scriptures, to the mind of every believing sinner.

ROM 1:18-21 For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;19 Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.20 For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse:21 Because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Ver. [Rom. 1: 18-21]. *For the wrath of God is revealed, &c.* No man can escape the wrath of God by his own works, nor by any means merit or deserve his favor. Here the apostle begins to open his main design, by showing that all men need that salvation which the gospel holds forth. The wrath of God intends, his indignation against sin and sinners. This wrath is revealed in the law, and in the threatening denounced against disobedience; as, follows, "against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men;" or, all ungodly and unrighteous persons, "who hold the truth in unrighteousness." The Gentiles are particularly intended, who had some knowledge of the existence of God, and of the difference between good and evil; but were far from living and acting according to the knowledge which they had. For "that which may be known of God," as that he is holy, just, righteous, and powerful, was " manifest in them; for God hath shown it unto them" by the light of nature, and the convictions of their own consciences, " For the invisible things of him are understood by the things which are made," all of which proclaim his attributes, " even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." Since, "when they knew God," as the great Former of all things, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful to him, as their constant Benefactor; "but became vain in their imaginations," &c.

ROM 1:22-32 Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, 23 And changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things. 24 Wherefore God also gave them up to uncleanness through the lusts of their own hearts, to dishonour their own bodies between themselves:25 Who changed the truth of God into a lie, and worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.26 For this cause God gave them up unto vile affections: for even their women did change the natural use into that which is against nature:27 And likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust one toward another; men with men working that

*which is unseemly, and receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet.*²⁸ *And even as they did not like to retain God in their knowledge, God gave them over to a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not convenient;* ²⁹ *Being filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers,*³⁰ *Backbiters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents,*³¹ *Without understanding, covenant breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful:*³² *Who knowing the judgment of God, that they which commit such things are worthy of death, not only do the same, but have pleasure in them that do them.*

Ver. [Rom. 1: 22-32.], *Professing themselves to be wise, &c.*] The Grecians; piqued themselves on their intellectual accomplishments. They termed all the rest of mankind barbarians. Yet even these sons of science, professing themselves wise, were in fact, egregious, fools. Not to enumerate the shocking immoralities which the poets ascribe to their deities ; not to insist on the gross idolatries which the common people practiced in their pretended worship ; even their philosophers, the most improved and penetrating geniuses, were unacquainted with the very first principles of true religion. Even they could not pronounce, with an unfaltering tongue, that there is one only living and true God. "The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord ; and thou shalt love," &c. From which it appears, that the unity of the Godhead is the foundation of all the divine commands, and of all religious worship. But the heathens in general "changed the glory of the immortal, incorruptible, and eternal God, into an image made like to corruptible man, and even to birds, and four-footed beasts, and creeping things," the very reptiles that crawl in the dust. They set up these, as emblems of the deity, and objects of worship. In consequence of this shameful and pernicious idolatry, God left them to sink lower and lower in their absurd methods of worship; and delivered them up to vile affections, "through the lusts of their own hearts," which continually grew more and more outrageous; so that they dishonored " their own bodies between themselves." For "they had changed the truth of God," taught them by the light of nature, " into a lie, and worshipped and served," with professed religious homage,, "the creature more than the Creator;" to whom, the highest veneration is eternally due, " and who is blessed for ever. Amen." It was for this cause, that God gave them up unto the most infamous passions; such as cannot be thought of without horror. For even their women," from whom some degree of modesty and decorum might have been expected, fell into practices" against nature: and the men, leaving the natural use of females, were inflamed with abominable desires towards each other, " receiving in themselves that recompence of their error which was meet." As they did not choose to retain God in their knowledge, they were delivered up to a reprobate mind; and fell into the most shameful; and detestable practices. The whole course of their actions showed, "that they were filled with all unrighteousness addicted to "fornication, wickedness, covetousness, and maliciousness." They were full of envy, and frequently guilty of murder; they were addicted to contention, deceit *in* their dealings, and other inveterate and evil habits. They were whisperers, they were back biters, and even haters of God, of his government, and all that is truly good. They were despiteful in their behavior to one another; they were proud of what they had, and boasters of what they had no just pretensions to. They were inventors and contrivers of evil things, making new discoveries in the arts of sensuality and mischief. They were

disobedient to their parents and superiors; and acted as if they were without understanding. They violated their promises, contracts, and covenants; and were without natural affection, or, in many instances, acted as if they were, even to their own children; being implacable and unmerciful in their resentments and quarrels.—This was the character which generally prevailed in the heathen world, among men, " who, knowing the judgment of God, that they that commit such things as these are worthy of death ; yet they not only did those things themselves, but had pleasure in those that did them." And when men have arrived at that height of wickedness, that they take delight in seeing others as vile as themselves, they show such a strong affection to vice as seems almost incurable. However, all this shows, what need the Gentiles had of the saving grace of the gospel.

Aspiration.] What reasons have we to be thankful, that in the gospel the righteousness of God is revealed; that the way of justification and sanctification is opened; and that sinners are taught to come to Jesus Christ, and to trust in him, through his righteousness and atonement. May this be realized in us; that we may say, in the language of humble faith, In the Lord have we righteousness and strength. And may we be helped to guard against those vices for which the heathen nations are here branded, and cultivate the opposite virtues, those of justice and temperance, benevolence and contentment, peace and charity, sincerity and humility. If offences arise, may we never be implacable; but be ready to hearken to terms of reconciliation. Preserve us from giving countenance to sinners in their evil ways, and may all our conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ.

CHAPTER TWO

ROM 2:1-14 *Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things. 2 But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them which commit such things. 3 And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them which do such things, and doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? 4 Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance? 5 But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; 6 Who will render to every man according to his deeds: 7 To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, eternal life:*

8 But unto them that are contentious, and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, 9 Tribulation and anguish, upon every soul of man that doeth evil, of the Jew first, and also of the Gentile; 10 But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile: 11 For there is no respect of persons with God. 12 For as many as have sinned without law shall also perish without law: and as many as have sinned in the law shall be judged by the law; 13 (For not the hearers of the law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified. 14 For when the Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these, having not the law, are a law unto themselves:

Chap. II. Ver. [Rom. 2: 1-14]. Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, &c.] The Jews disdained and hated the Gentiles, as profane, abominable, and utterly undeserving of God's favor; while they thought themselves a holy people, and justly entitled to all the privileges they enjoyed. The apostle begins here with an inference deduced from what had been said in the foregoing chapter, that those persons, whoever they may be, are inexcusable, who do the things for which they condemn others. "Thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest," or pretendest to pass sentence upon others: "for therein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest," in many instances," doest the same things." Dr. Whitby has proved, by many quotations from Josephus, that, the Jews of that age guilty of many of those crimes with which the Gentiles are charged in the preceding chapter. "But we are sure that the judgment of God is according to truth against them "that commit such things," whatever censures they may pass upon others." And thinkest thou this, O man, that judgest them that do such things, and still doest the same, that thou shalt escape the judgment of God? The wickedness of the Jews was enormous at this time; and, idolatry excepted, they copied the worst crimes, of the Gentiles, whom they despised; while their superior advantages rendered their guilt more aggravated. "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering Dost thou, who art a Jew, despise the riches of God's goodness and kindness to thee, whom he has so peculiarly favored? God had distinguished the seed of Abraham both by temporal and spiritual favors, though they had always proved rebellious; he still exercised forbearance and long-suffering towards them, and had at length sent the promised Messiah among them; and he ordered the first proposals of the gospel to "be made to them. But they, alas! Despised all this; "not knowing," says the apostle, "that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." It most certainly ought to operate in this way, and to have this effect. But if thou continuest to rebel "know, that by this hardness and impenitence of heart, thou art treasuring up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and the revelation of the righteous judgment of God." This righteous judgment is now under a veil, and disregarded, because unseen; but it will be hereafter set forth to view in all its terror, when "God shall render to every man according to his work," how unequal so ever the present dispensations of his providence may seem. He will, of his own rich grace and mercy, render the free reward of eternal life to all his servants, who seek for glory, and honor, and immortality, in the way he has appointed. These happy souls are distinguished by "a patient continuance in well doing." This is the character which they bear. But, on the other hand, to them " who are contentious," who perversely oppose the truth, and are obstinately disobedient to it, rejecting the way of salvation which God has revealed, he will tender indignation and wrath, with all that can be conceived to be meant by those awful terms; tribulation and anguish shall fall upon every soul of man that continues to do evil; to the Jew first, whose crimes are more aggravated, and also to the Gentile. But glory, honor, and peace shall be to every one that worketh good, from the right principles of faith and love; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. It is evident, the apostle did not mean, that either Jew or Gentile could be saved by his own works ; to suppose this, would be to suppose that he here advances a principle subversive of his own grand argument, through the whole of the epistle. His design is, to point out the characters of the saved; and to show, that obeying the truth, or believing in Jesus Christ, is necessary to salvation; and that the sincerity of faith is evidenced by well-doing. The apostle farther asserts, "that there is no respect of persons with God," in regard to the nation to which they belong. The obstinate and unbelieving Jew shall perish, and the Gentile, if brought to

repentance, shall be saved. This will be fully manifested in the approaching day of accounts. "For as many as have sinned without law," who never enjoyed the benefit of revelation, but have grievously sinned against God and the light of nature, in the manner described in the preceding chapter; they "shall also perish without law." Their not having had the law of Moses will be no reason why they should not be condemned.—The apostle then shows, that the disobedient Jews were in danger of perishing, notwithstanding their hearing the law; "for not the hearers of the Law are just before God, but the doers of the law shall be justified." There is no justification by the law, but on the ground of perfect obedience to it. And therefore justification must be looked for on another foundation, even that foundation which is clearly pointed out in the following chapter. The objection against the condemnation of the Gentiles, taken from their being without the law, is then obviated. "For when the Gentiles, who have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law," the things required by it," these, having not the law, are nevertheless a law unto themselves." The voice of nature is their rule; and they are inwardly taught, by the constitution of their own minds, what is right and what is wrong; what they ought to do, and what to avoid. "This shews the work of the law," in some of its most important precepts, which was originally "written on the heart;" and though sadly obliterated by sin, yet there are some remains of it even among the Gentiles; as appears from their outward conduct, and from the inward workings of their minds.

ROM 2:15-16 Which shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the mean while accusing or else excusing one another;) 16 In the day when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ according to my gospel.

Ver. [Rom. 2: 15; 16]. Their conscience—bearing witness, &c.] This was the case with the bulk of the heathen world. Conscience arraigned, and found them guilty. What did they do to appease it? This put them upon practicing abominable idolatries, and sometimes upon offering human sacrifices. Nay, this induced them to give the most scandalous and impious misrepresentations of the Deity. That they might sheath the sting of conscience, and find some pretence, some salvo for their own iniquities, they made even the objects of their worship, the patrons and precedents of their favorite vices; especially cruelty, intoxication, and lasciviousness. But as there are some evident traces of their knowledge of the law and will of God, on this principle will the grand process be conducted, in that solemn day "when God shall judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ, according to my gospel." The apostle does not mean that the gospel will be the rule of judgment unto all, because he is speaking of the judgment of the Gentiles, who never heard the gospel; but the sense is, that the judgment of the great day is declared and asserted again "and again in that gospel which Paul preached. The evident design of the apostle in these verses is, to convince all who read his epistle, that neither revelation, nor the light of nature, can save those who fail of obeying them; and therefore that the only way of salvation is by the grace of the gospel, and the redemption which Jesus Christ has obtained.

ROM 2:17-24 Behold, thou art called a Jew, and retest in the law, and makest thy boast of God, 18 And knowest his will, and approvest the things that are more excellent, being instructed out of the law; 19 And art confident that thou thyself art a guide of the blind, a

light of them which are in darkness, 20 An instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, which hast the form of knowledge and of the truth in the law. 21 Thou therefore which teachest another, teachest thou not thyself? thou that preachest a man should not steal, dost thou steal? 22 Thou that sayest a man should not commit adultery, dost thou commit adultery? thou that abhorrest idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? 23 Thou that makest thy boast of the law, through breaking the law dishonourest thou God? 24 For the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written.

Ver. [Rom. 2: 17-24]. Behold, thou art called a Jew, &c.] The apostle proceeds to combat the prejudices and the presumption of the Jews. He supposes them to rest their hopes of acceptance on the law, and to make their boast of standing in relation to God, as their covenant God. They thought themselves well acquainted with the divine will, so as to distinguish "the things that differed," and approve off those that were excellent, having been well instructed out of the law. They were confident, that they were qualified to guide and enlighten the blind and the ignorant, or such as they deepened foolish, and but babes in knowledge, in comparison with themselves. In these things they rested, without yielding a practical conformity to the precepts of the law, as if their work, where to instruct others, and not themselves. *But, says the apostle, " Thou that teachest another, teachest thou not thyself ?" Art not thou obliged to observe the precepts which thou givest unto others? " Thou that preachest that a man should not steal, dost thou steal Thou that sayest a man " should not commit adultery, dost thou indulge thyself in the practice of impurity ? It appears from Josephus, that at the time when the apostle wrote, some of the Jewish priest lived by rapine and oppression ; that some were guilty of acts of uncleanness, while others sacrilegiously robbed God and his altar, [Mal. 1: 8, 12, 13]. They abhorred idols and idolatry; but they were guilty of robbing God of what he claimed as his due, both by way of inward homage, and outward tribute. They boasted of the law," and gloried in it; and yet, through flagrant " breaches of that law, they dishonoured God." This is known to be a fact, as if the apostle had said; " for the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, or by your base conduct, " as it is written," [2 Sam. 12: 14]. Isa. 52: 5., Ezek. 36: 23].*

ROM 2:25-29 *For circumcision verily profiteth, if thou keep the law: but if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision. 26 Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision? 27 And shall not uncircumcision which is by nature, if it fulfil the law, judge thee, who by the letter and circumcision dost transgress the law? 28 For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: 29 But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God.*

Ver. [Rom. 2: 25-29.], For circumcision verily profiteth, &c.] The plea of the Jews for acceptance with God, on account of circumcision, is now considered. The apostle allows, that circumcision was profitable while it was in force, or before the abrogation of it; yet then it was only profitable when the law was kept. " For if thou be a breaker of the law, thy circumcision is made uncircumcision," and no account is made of it. And if, on the other hand, an uncircumcised person keep the righteousness of the law," though without any acquaintance with the book which contains it, " shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision ?" Is he not to be preferred to a circumcised Jew who breaks the law ? Most certainly. Therefore the confidence which is built on circumcision is groundless. Such a man, though, uncircumcised shall judge and " condemn thee, who, by the letter and circumcision," or under a pretended regard to these, " art a transgressor of the law ?"

For, in fact, the case is this, " he is not a Jew who is one outwardly," by mere name, nation, and religious profession; " neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh," and is merely ritual and ceremonial; " but he is a Jew who is one inwardly," in the secret recesses of his soul; and the true " circumcision is that of the heart," in the putting away of that inward impurity which is so offensive to God, Deut. 10: 16. and Deut. 30: 6., Jer. 4: 4. This is the circumcision which is " in the spirit," consisting in a change made there by the Holy Spirit himself, and not in an external conformity to " the letter " of the law, of which the worst of men may be capable. The person of whom I now speak is one, " whose praise is not of men, but of God," who knoweth the heart.

Aspiration.] Suffer us not, O Lord, rest in the externals of religion, or to make a vain boast of our relation to thee, while we are destitute of the power of godliness. But grant us the true circumcision of the heart, that we may love thee with a supreme affection, be subject to thy authority, and; sincerely obey thy commands. Amen.

CHAPTER THREE

ROM 3:1 *What advantage then hath the Jew? or what profit is there of circumcision? 2 Much every way: chiefly, because that unto them were committed the oracles of God. 3 For what if some did not believe? shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect? 4 God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged. 5 But if our unrighteousness commend the righteousness of God, what shall we say? Is God unrighteous who taketh vengeance? (I speak as a man) 6 God forbid: for then how shall God judge the world?*

Chap. III. Ver. Rom. 3:1-6. What advantage then hath the Jew?] *The Whole of the Old Testament implies and teaches, that the posterity of Abraham were peculiarly favoured of God, and distinguished from the heathen world by many privileges. The apostle clearly shows, that he did not mean to deny this, while he maintained that these outward privileges were not a sufficient ground of hope respecting justification before God, and eternal salvation." It is asked by the objector, " What advantage then hath the Jew ? or what profit is there of circumcision?" To which the apostle answers, " Much every way," or in all respects; " chiefly, because unto them were committed the oracles of God;" the law of Moses, the writings of the prophets, and the predictions concerning the Messiah. This, by the way, is a remarkable testimony to the divine inspiration of the Old Testament; the matters contained in it are " the oracles of God." It behoves us to consider, that the scriptures are committed to us also, as an invaluable treasure, of which we ought to make the most diligent use, for our own advantage, and for the advantage of all about us. " For what if some did not believe" these oracles of God, but rejected that Messiah which they held forth, " shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect ?" No. It could not make void the veracity and faithfulness of God in his promises concerning the Messiah; for the Father sent his Son at the appointed time, to be the Saviour of the world, according; to what he had promised. " God forbid " that any thought this should ever be entertained, that the veracity of God may be nullified by the unbelief*

of men. Let the blessed Jehovah ever be acknowledged to be true and faithful, though every man be "esteemed a liar," and unfit to have any confidence reposed in him; as it is written, "That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings," or in the words which thou hast spoken, "and mightest overcome when thou art judged," or called into judgment, Psalm 51. The word signifies, "that thou mightest carry the cause;" that they, who insolently dare to arraign the equity of thy conduct, may be put to confusion. David, in the passage quoted, acknowledged, that God was justified in the threatenings denounced against him by the prophet Nathan. This is brought in to prove, that God is always true to his word, whatever unfaithfulness may be found in men but it may be farther objected, if our unrighteousness give occasion to the more illustrious display of divine justice, will not God be unrighteous if he take vengeance on us for those actions which eventually set forth his glory? This objection the apostle introduced "as a man," who is an unbeliever, who wishes to justify himself, and find fault with the sentence of God against him. But the apostle rejects the thought with abhorrence, "God forbid," or, literally, "let it not be." Let it never be supposed that God cannot justly punish those crimes which make way for the display of his glory. "For how then could God judge the world?" The judge of all the earth will do right, Gen. 18: 25. And therefore he cannot be unrighteous in taking vengeance on sinners. The great truth of God's judging the world in righteousness should for ever silence all our doubtings of his justice, and all reactions upon the equity of his proceedings. The sentence of the supreme court, from whence lies no appeal, is not to be called in question. The apostle's argument stands thus, If God be unjust in punishing sinners, then he cannot be the Judge of the world: but he is the Judge of the world; therefore he is not unjust; and they are unjust and wicked who charge him with injustice. "He is a rock, his work is perfect; all, his ways are judgment; just and right is he."

ROM 3:7-8 For if the truth of God hath more abounded through my lie unto his glory; why yet am I also judged as a sinner? 8 And not rather, (as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say,) Let us do evil, that good may come? whose damnation is just.

Ver. [Rom. 3: 7-8]. For if the truth of God hath more abounded, &] The apostle is not speaking his own language; for he says, "I speak as a man," a wicked man, an objector, who makes this wretched use of the doctrine I have advanced. It is a most vile suggestion, an inference which at first sight appears too black to be urged, and fit to be cast out with abhorrence. The objector says, "If the truth of God hath more abounded to his glory, by means of my lie," that is, my falsehood and wickedness of any kind; if he has taken occasion to accomplish his own word, and the honour of his administration by what I have said or done, why yet am I also judged as a sinner?" Why am I arraigned for that as a crime, which God overrules for his glory? But sentiments of this kind, if admitted, would justify the greatest crimes in the world, and confound the nature of good and evil. "And not rather, as we be slanderously reported, and as some affirm that we say, Let us do evil that good may come." As if the apostle had said to the objector, Why do not you go on? Why do you stop here, and not rather say, as we are evil spoken of and unjustly reproached; for some ignorantly and audaciously "affirm that we say" and teach such doctrine as this, "Let us do evil, that good may come." This was a slander cast upon the preaching of Paul, and of his fellow apostles; and we find the same reproach is thrown out upon the ministers of the gospel, who advance the same truths, in later days. Ministers are charged with holding and teaching such things as they utterly, detest and abhor. Should this, be thought strange, when Christ himself was charged With being in league with Beelzebub? It is an artifice of the prince of darkness to cast dirt upon the servants of God,, to hinder their, usefulness, and to harden men hearts against the truth. But the apostle adds, "Whose damnation is just." That is, the condemnation of those is just, who thus asperse the pure

truth of the gospel, which is a doctrine according to godliness. As if the apostle had said, I will not reason further with such persons, but leave them to be put to silence by their own consciences, and to answer for their slanders before the judgment-seat of Christ.

ROM 3:9-19 *What then? are we better than they? No, in no wise: for we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin; 10 As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one: 11 There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. 12 They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one. 13 Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: 14 Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: 15 Their feet are swift to shed blood: 16 Destruction and misery are in their ways: 17 And the way of peace have they not known: 18 There is no fear of God before their eyes. 19 Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.*

Ver. [Rom. 3: 9-19]. What then? Are we better than they ? &c.] Are we better than they whose damnation is just? "Nay, in no wise." We, if dealt with in strict justice, deserve condemnation as well as the persons we have been speaking of. " For we have before proved both Jews and Gentiles, that they are all under sin." This is a melancholy but a certain and infallible truth ; a truth which admits of the clearest confirmation, both from scripture, and matter of fact. For such is the state of man by nature, " that it is written in a variety of passages which may be applied to the present purpose, to show that both Jews and Gentiles are corrupt, and naturally under sin, its pollution, guilt, power, and condemnation, " There is none righteous, no, not one," Psalm 14:1. The psalmist's words are, " There is none that doeth good;" from whence the apostle rightly infers, " there is none righteous for he that does not do good is not righteous. The words referred to are not always literally expressed, but the sense of the passages is given. " There is none that understandeth." This is rightly concluded from what the psalmist says, " The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men," took an impartial survey of them, " to see if there were any that did understand, Psalm 14:2; that is, that did understand the way of truth, their own duty, and real interest; but he found none, "There is none that seeketh after God." No one that seeks him chiefly, and in the first place; that seeks him with his whole heart, and worships him in spirit and in truth. " They are all gone out of the way;" or, "gone aside from the right path, or gone back from God and his commands, Psalm 14:3, and Psalm 53:3.

They are all together become unprofitable," as to the great ends for which they were created. So that " there is none that doeth good, no, not so much as one." The apostle is quite peremptory in his assertion; he does not satisfy himself with the universal particle none, but doubles the denial, "no, not one;" if there had been but one in all the fallen race, exempted from this depravity, God would have found him out, when he made the strict inquiry before mentioned. Even those who are now justified and saved were none of them righteous by nature. " Their throat is an open sepulchre, Psalm 5:9. Filthy, ill-scented, and unsavoury words

proceed out of their mouth ; what the apostle elsewhere calls corrupt, or rotten, communication, Eph. 4: 29. An open sepulchre discovers the filthiness which is within it. The damsel said to Peter, Thy speech bewrayeth thee. This is true of corrupt man. The impurity of his heart may easily be perceived by his conversation ; for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. " With their tongues they have used deceit, "while they have made fairest professions of friendship. "The poison, or venom, of asps is under their lips, while they utter the most infectious and fatal slanders; and the most shocking profaneness sometimes mingles itself with their conversation. Their feet are swift in running to mischief; and that too often to injure the lives, or shed the blood, of the innocent, Prov.1:16,18.,

They are so far from finding safety and happiness in their pursuits, that destruction and misery are in their ways. They often bring distress upon others, and inevitable destruction will fall upon them selves at last, if infinite mercy prevent **not**. " The way of peace with God, and of real felicity in the present or the future world they have not known," nor seriously regarded. To sum up all in one word, " the fear of God is not before their eyes they live without any true sense of his presence, any child-like reverence of his majesty, or love to his name. Psalm 36:1. "Now we know that what things soever the law saith," in such passages as these, " it saith to them that are under the law." They are under obligations to obey it, and, through disobedience, under its condemnation. They who are under the law are transgressors of it, and, as such, are liable to punishment; " that every mouth may be stopped," and that all pleas arising from human merit may be cut off. Hence all the world is become guilty before God." The apostle says, We know this to be true, and are fully assured of it. Hence the conclusion is drawn; " Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight;" that is, no person whatever. " The deeds of the law " intend works done in obedience to it, as performed by depraved and sinful men. The law is so far from discharging or acquitting such, that it condemns them, and stops their mouths, leaving them no plea which they can make before God.

ROM 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Ver. [Rom. 3:20], *By the law is the knowledge of sin* Far from being our justifier, it is our accuser. It arraigns and proves us guilty, demonstrates, beyond all possibility of contradiction that the very best among us have failed and come short of our duty; nay, that the very best among us ; have done wickedly; The law is undoubtedly a rule of conduct to all, and shows us what we ought to do, and what to avoid ; but it is not the condition of eternal happiness to any. "We can never expect justification by it, or by any acts of obedience to it.

ROM 3:21-26 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22 Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25 Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins

that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26 To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Ver. [Rom. 3:21-26]. *But now the righteousness of God, &c.* The evangelical system is most clearly opened in the following verses according to what had been laid down, chap, Rom. 1:17. That in the gospel, the righteousness of God," for the justification of a sinner, " is revealed from faith to faith." This is the righteousness which God has appointed, provided and introduced in the person of his Son, who is the end of the law for righteousness to every one- that believeth. It has no dependence on man's personal obedience, and therefore it is said to be " without the law." And yet this righteousness " is witnessed by the law and the prophets." A testimony is borne to the obedience, sufferings, and death of Christ, in the five books of Moses, even from the beginning of them, Gen. 3:15, and Gen. 15:6, &c. The prophets, Isaiah, Jeremiah, Daniel, and others, bore witness to that righteousness of God by which sinners are justified and saved.

The apostle tells us, not that God set aside his law and his justice, but that he set forth the blessed Jesus for " a propitiation through faith in his blood," with this express design, that he might declare his righteousness; might demonstrate, not only his clemency, but his justice, even that vindictive justice, the essential character and principal office of which is, to punish sin. This is evidently the import of the word " righteousness" in this connection, as farther appears from what follows: " To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness, that he might be just;" i.e. evidence himself to be strictly and inviolably righteous, in the administration of his government, even while he is the Justifier of the sinner that believeth in Jesus. The attribute of justice must be preserved inviolate. And inviolate it is preserved, if there was a real infliction of punishment on our Saviour. Nothing else thoroughly clear up this great evangelical paradox." Just, yet the Justifier of the ungodly." According to the apostle's doctrine, mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other. " All the divine attributes harmonize, every attribute is glorified, and not one superseded, no, nor so much as clouded. But this is by " the righteousness of God, which is by faith of Jesus Christ." Faith apprehends and receives this righteousness, which was wrought out, and brought in, by the Son of God. The believer owns the sufficiency, and views the excellency of it; renouncing his own righteousness, he submits to that of Christ, and rejoices in it. "It is unto all and upon all them that believe." It is imputed to them, and put upon them, as a garment. And " there is no difference " of Jew or Gentile, male or female, they being partakers of true faith. This righteousness is equally applied to one as to another. " For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God," in the equitable requisitions of his law. But all believers are " freely justified by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ." The riches of his grace are most wonderfully displayed in this plan of salvation. The blessing of justification, in particular, is the free gift of infinite grace and mercy, not only without the sinner's deserving it, but directly contrary to his deserts. This is strongly intimated by these emphatical expressions, " freely by his grace." But this grace is honorably exercised, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ, or through the ransom which he hath paid. He was set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood; for faith is the means by which we become partakers of the benefits of propitiation.

ROM 3:27 *Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith. 28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law. 29 Is he the God of the Jews only? is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also: 30 Seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith.*

Ver. [Rom. 3:27-30]. *Where is boasting then? &c.* There is not the least room or reason for it. "It is excluded," or shut out, and the key is turned upon it. "By what law? of works? Nay." He that fancies he obtains salvation by works may imagine he has some ground of boasting. But boasting is excluded by the law, or doctrine, of faith." Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law." The apostle does not mean a faith without works as *its* proper fruits; *for such* a faith is dead, and of no avail; but he means, faith without the deeds of the law joined to it in the affair of justification. "Is he the God of the Jews only?" They made their boast of him as such; "but is he not also the God of the Gentiles? To which the apostle answers, " Yes, of the Gentiles also." As appears by his calling them by his grace, and taking out of them a people for his name. What encouragement then have we Gentiles to draw nigh to him by faith and hope! External privileges were now no longer to be restrained and confined to the; J e w s " seeing it is one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the un-circumcision through faith." The Justified of them is the same; the matter of their justification is the same ;i.e. the righteousness of Christ, and the means of it, the same, namely faith. For the expressions, " by faith" and " through faith," are of like signification.

ROM 3:31 *Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.*

Ver. [Rom. 3:31]. *Do we then make void the law?* The apostle replies with a kind of zealous abhorrence, " God forbid?" Not content to deny this false insinuation, he maintains the very reverse; " Yea, we establish the law." Considered as the original covenant of life provide for its honor, by referring to the perfect obedience of Christ. Considered as a universal standard of duty, we enforce its observance, by the most rational, manly, and animating motives.

We are not under the necessity of obeying the law in order to establish our justification, or lay the foundation for our final acceptance. We are nevertheless engaged, by several other indispensable obligations, to regulate our conversation according to those sacred precepts. Because this is the most authentic proof of our love to the gracious Redeemer; "If ye love me keep my commandments." This is an evidence of our union with *our* exalted Head; "He that abideth in me, the same bringeth forth much fruit." This is the most effectual method of adorning *our* profession; Let your light so shine before men, that they seeing, &c. Say then, you that object to the evangelical system," Do we make void the law through faith? "Do we render it a vain institution, such as never has been fulfilled; nor ever will be? No; very far from it. This would be a flagrant dishonor to the divine legislator and his holy commandments; such as we would abhor, rather than countenance. On the contrary, " we establish the law," not only in the case just mentioned, as we receive it for a rule of life, as a lamp to our feet, and a light to our paths; but we establish it, as we expect no salvation,

without a proper, nay without a perfect, fulfillment of its injunctions; It may be asked, How can this be effected?" By softening it into a milder law, or an easier system? No; this were to vacate the law, to deprive it of its honors, and hinder it from attaining the due end, either of condemnation or of obedience. We establish the law by believing in that great Redeemer, who has obeyed its every precept, sustained its whole penalty, and fulfilled all its requisitions in their utmost extent. Thus the law is established by the gospel for ever, in its full efficacy and glory, being magnified and made honorable, through: the righteousness of Jesus. Its immutability, excellency, and efficacy, could not have been so fully shown, either by the perfect obedience of the whole, human race, or by the destruction of every "transgressor. All other schemes, of justification disgrace the law, or weaken its authority and obligation, as if its precepts were *unreasonably strict*, and its penalty unrighteously severe.

Aspiration.] What a dreadful picture is here given of men, in their fallen and depraved state! Their want of understanding in the great concerns of religion, and their unwillingness to seek God, and to serve him; their unprofitableness, and working of mischief, instead of doing good; their filthy, profane, slanderous, and lying words; their oaths, perjuries, and bitter reviling; their destructive courses; their ignorance of the way of peace, and their not having the fear of God before their eyes. How justly may the mouths of all be stopped, from making any plea for acceptance before God, on the ground of their own works? But glory be to thy name, O God of mercy, that thou hast not left mankind to perish in their sin and misery. The plan of salvation, which thou hast laid and revealed, is suited to the wretched condition of sinners, and adapted to glorify thine infinite purity, justice, mercy and grace. Help us, without delay, to fly for refuge to the hope set before us. Amen.

CHAPTER FOUR

ROM 4:1 *What shall we say then that Abraham our father, as pertaining to the flesh, hath found? 2 For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God. 3 For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness*

Chap. IV. Ver. Rom. 4: 1–3. What shall we then say that Abraham, &c.] Abraham was one of the most eminent of the servants of God, mentioned in Scripture; and if any of them had been justified by works, it might be supposed that he would have been so; If this had been the case, he would have had somewhat to glory of above others; but this is contrary to the doctrine taught, chap. Rom. 3: 27. Yet, even in that case, he would have had nothing to boast of in the presence of God; for no flesh shall glory in his presence. Beza's excellent note on this passage deserves particular regard: the substance of which is as follows. "From this single example of Abraham, which is deservedly selected from all the fathers, the apostle intended to draw a conclusion which would necessarily take in all believers. He considered him as the father of the church that he might properly reason from the father to the children. In whatever way he was justified, in the same way must all his believing children enjoy the blessing. But Abraham was not justified by any works of his own, but merely by faith in Christ, as revealed to him.

Therefore all his children are justified, not by their works, either preceding or following their faith, but by faith alone, as having respect to the promised Seed. "For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." Christ, in the promise, was the object of his faith, so that Abraham became interested in him, and in that righteousness which he engaged to perform; which righteousness was imputed to him, as if he himself had personally satisfied divine justice, and perfectly answered all the demands of God's holy law.

ROM 4:4-5 Now to him that worketh is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. 5 But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness.

Ver. Rom. 4: 4,5. Now to him that worketh, &c.] The worker, here, is one that worketh upon nature's principles, and with selfish views; who seeks righteousness by his works. Now if the reward is reckoned to him for his works, it must be a debt, it must be his due, as wages are due to a hireling. This must have been Abraham's case, had he "been Justified by works." But to him that worketh not;" we are not to understand this, as if the person intended did not perform good works; but he worketh not from such principles and with such views as the other; he worketh not to obtain life and salvation by his works, or to seek justification by his doings: But he " believeth on him that justifies the ungodly;" he casts himself on the free grace of God in Christ, and humbly trusts and relies upon that for all his salvation. Thus " he believes on him that justifies the ungodly:" not that such continue to be ungodly when they receive justification; for they are changed, renewed, and sanctified, at the same time that they are justified, 1 Cor.6: 11. But they have been ungodly; and they come to God as sinners, absolutely unworthy in themselves of any favor. They bring no work for which they claim a reward, but freely own their guilt and vileness. : And it is most certain, that God would not justify such persons, were it not for the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Now, though they were ungodly before, his justifying them constitutes them just and righteous; and he makes them holy by the powerful operations of his grace. Their being justified alters their state and character as it did Abraham's, who was before, a Gentile, and to whom the apostle refers. Such a man comes before God as a vile sinner, under a just sentence of condemnation; but, being enabled to believe the promise of life by Christ, "his faith is accounted for righteousness." It is not said, that, his faith is his righteousness, but that which he believes and embraces, is reckoned or imputed to him for justification, as if he himself had perfectly fulfilled the law. This the apostle calls, in the following words,

ROM 4:6 Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works,

Ver. Rom. 4:6. Righteousness, without works.] What or whose righteousness can be intended? Not the righteousness of angel? They are a superior class of beings, and have no such intimate connection with our nature. Not the righteousness of departed saints. This is the exploded error of popery, and furnishes the zealots of that cause with that chimera of folly, works of supererogation. Not any righteousness of our own; for it is said to be "without works," or, that in which no works of our own have any concurrence, or the least share. What other righteousness then can be meant, but the righteousness of our great Substitute, our Surety, and Saviour? "He took our nature, discharged our debt, and is therefore styled, "The Lord our righteousness." Paul, having illustrated his doctrine by the case of Abraham, now cites some passages from David in favor of it. "Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works." The apostle has showed great wisdom and judgment, in selecting these two examples. For let it be considered, that Abraham was the most illustrious pattern of piety among the patriarchs, and David was the most devout, the most zealous and seraphic, of the Jewish prophets and kings; "a man after God's own heart," 1 Sam. 13:14. If neither of these were justified by his own obedience, but each by an imputed righteousness; if both obtained acceptance with God, not as upright beings who might claim it, but as sinful creatures, who must implore it, the consequence is clear and plain; it is such as must strike every attentive mind, and must affect every individual person. David, the seraphic king of Israel, was not justified by his zeal for God, nor by his eminent services, but by that righteousness through which, iniquity is forgiven, and sin covered. When he describes the happy man, he describes him, not as having any claim to the divine favor, on account of deserving performances, or recommending properties; but as owing all his happiness to that grace which forgives iniquities, and blots out sin.

ROM 4:7-8 *Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. 8 Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin.*

Ver. Rom. 4: 7, 8. Saying, Blessed are they whose iniquities, &c.] God always imputes righteousness where he pardons sin; for the sinner is pardoned in virtue of his relation to Christ by faith, and of his atoning blood covering his sins. His offences are covered from the eye of divine justice, so as to be seen no more, nor ever brought forth against him, to his condemnation. "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord will not impute sin." He does not impute sin to him who believes in Jesus. He appears before the throne of God without fault, through the atonement and righteousness of Jesus. The Lord will remember his sins no more. The apostle proceeds to show, that the blessing of justification belongs to Gentiles as well as Jews; and that it is by faith, and not by circumcision.

ROM 4:9-17 *Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. 10 How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision. 11 And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also: 12 And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which*

he had being yet uncircumcised. 13 For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith. 14 For if they which are of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise made of none effect: 15 Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. 16 Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all, 17 (As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations,) before him whom he believed, even God, who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were.

Ver. Rom. 4: 9—17. Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision, &c.]

That is, are the circumcised Jews the only persons who partake of this happiness? Do not the Gentiles also share in this blessedness? "For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness." But the question is, "How was it then reckoned?—Not in circumcision, but in un-circumcision." This is undeniable. For it appears from the history of his life, that he was brought into a state of justification, at least, fourteen or fifteen years before he was circumcised; and, therefore, circumcision was no way necessary to his justification, but followed upon it Gen. 15: 6, compared with chap. Gen. 17: 25. "And he received the sign of circumcision that is, he received at the hand of God, the commandment of circumcision, which was a sign, or token, of the covenant made with him and his natural seed. It was a sign of the circumcision of the heart, Rom. 2: ult. And it was "a seal of the righteousness of faith." It was a confirmation of the sincerity of Abraham's faith, and a pledge of his being justified in the Lord his righteousness. And his circumcision was a seal to him, "that he should be the father of them that believe, though they be not circumcised;" that is, the father of believing Gentiles, who are justified and saved in the same way as he was; as it follows, "that righteousness might be imputed unto them also." Thus Abraham is said to be "the father of them who walk in the, steps of that faith which he had, being yet uncircumcised;" who walk by faith as he did, and tread in the same steps of holiness. "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the "world, was not made through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Abraham was an heir of the world, and of all things in it, 1 Cor. 3: 21. This promise was not made through the law, nor on account of obedience to it, but "through the righteousness of faith." Hence the apostle argues, "If they which be of the law be heirs, faith is made void, and the promise of none effect." That is, if men, on account of their obedience, were heirs of grace and glory, there would be no room for faith; and if men did not yield obedience to the law, then the promise would stand for nothing, or be of no effect. The apostle farther shows, that the law is so far from justifying sinners., that it denounces condemnation upon them; and, when the mind is awakened, it fills the heart and conscience with terrible apprehensions of the wrath of God, and a dread of the judgment to come. This is intended, when it is said, that "the law worketh wrath." If there were no law, there would be no transgression, nor any knowledge of sin. This is a plain case; a maxim which cannot be disputed. But there is a law given, which convinces men of sin, and condemns them for it, filling their minds with a sense of the divine wrath. Hence the apostle concludes, "that justification is by faith that it might be by grace; to the end that the promise might be sure to all the seed." "Faith receives all at the hand of God, and gives him all the glory. And the promise being by faith, and of grace, not at all depending on human works, " is sure to all the seed ;" namely, to the spiritual seed of Abraham ; not to that only which is of the Jews, but to " that also which is of the faith of Abraham;" i.e. the

Gentiles who are partakers of the same faith. "As it is written, I have made thee a father of many nations." Gen. 17: 4, 5. The Object of Abraham's faith is described, "Who quickeneth the dead;" referring to the dead body of Abraham, and the deadness of Sarah's womb, and the quickening of the dead bodies of men at the resurrection." And who calleth the things which are not" yet in being," as though they, were." He called the Gentiles a people, when they were not a people devoted to him, because, at a future time, they should be so.

ROM 4:18-25 *Who against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations, according to that which was spoken, So shall thy seed be. 19 And being not weak in faith, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sarah's womb: 20 He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; 21 And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform. 22 And therefore it was imputed to him for righteousness. 23 Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; 24 But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; 25 Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.*

Ver. Rom. 4: 18-25, &c. Who against hope believed in hope, &c.] Abraham believed God in his promise, that he should become the father of many nations, being assisted by supernatural power. He believed "in hope" of the fulfillment of that promise, by the power and grace of God. But, at the same time, this was "against;" hope;" that is, against all visible and rational grounds of hope; but inasmuch as God had said it, he was persuaded of the truth of it; "according to that which is spoken, So shall thy seed be." His faith rested on the promise of God. "And being not weak in faith, he considered not his body now dead." Insurmountable difficulties of nature appeared to be in the way, "when he was about an hundred years old," and Sarah in a condition unfit to bear a child. Abraham did not consider these things so as to distrust the divine promise "For he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief." Why should a believer stagger? The promise is made by Him that" cannot lie; his faithfulness is engaged to perform it, and with him all things are possible. The tenancy of unbelief is, to induce men to stagger at the promise, through the difficulties which lie in the way. But Abraham "was strong in faith;" he made no hesitation, or demur, being fully persuaded that it would be as God had said. And thereby "he gave glory to him." He well knew that, "what he had promised, he was able also to perform;" for with him nothing is impossible. "And it was imputed to him for righteousness because it rested on the promise, the power, and the faithfulness of God." Now it was not written for his sake alone," purely on his own account, "that it was imputed to him," but it was written "for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead." Here we see that true faith has a relation to "Jesus Christ, delivered up to death as a sacrifice for the offences of men, and raised again for their justification." Now it is evident, that Abraham's faith cannot be imputed to any other person; but what the apostle means is, that to which his faith had respect, the complete work of Christ, the promised seed, which will be imputed to those who believe in his name.

Aspiration.] May we be deeply sensible; of our state and condition as sinners, and remember, that the favor of God is enjoyed by none but those who are pardoned, and those to whom righteousness is imputed without works, through our gracious Redeemer's obedience unto death. Grant us, O gracious Father, a true and living faith in his name, that we

may rejoice with the gladness of those whose transgressions are forgiven, and whose sins are covered. Blessed be thy name; that we are not left to look for salvation by the deeds of that law which worketh wrath. Help us clearly to understand the way of life by Jesus Christy and with our whole hearts to acquiesce in, that divine remedy which thou hast provided. Let this great and glorious truth be most firmly believed by us, that thy beloved Son was delivered for our offences, to redeem us by his blood from final and everlasting ruin, and that he was raised again for our justification. Amen.

CHAPTER FIVE

ROM 5:1-6 *Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: 2 By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. 3 And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; 4 And patience, experience; and experience, hope: 5 And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. 6 For when we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the ungodly.*

Chap.5. Ver. Rom. 5:1-6. Therefore being justified by faith, &c.] The penman of this epistle delighted to dwell on the way in which sinners are freely pardoned, acquitted, and accepted before God, namely, by Jesus Christ. In a former chapter he uses these remarkable words, "Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ." One of these expressions might have served to convey his meaning. But he doubles his assertion, in order to give us the fullest conviction of the truth, and to impress us with a sense of its peculiar importance; "freely by his grace." It is impossible to find out a form of words that should more absolutely exclude all consideration of our own works and obedience, or that should more emphatically ascribe the whole of our justification to free grace. Indeed, the whole of our salvation is to be traced to the same source; and when our felicity is completed, the acclamation will be, "Grace, grace unto it" But this grace is displayed through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.

The Saviour's universal obedience, which commenced at his incarnation, was carried on through his life, and terminated in his death; all this, in its collective form, is the object of faith, and the foundation of hope. Thus Milton, Par. Lost. B. xii. 402, speaking of Christ, says,

*The law of Cod exact he shall fulfill,
Both by obedience and by love, though love
Alone fulfill the law; thy punishment
He shall endure, by coming In the flesh
To a reproachful life and cursed death;
Proclaiming life to all who shall believe
In his redemption,*

"Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Here the apostle proceeds to consider the happy effects of justification; among which, peace with God

stands in the first place. Reconciliation for sin being made, and a justifying righteousness brought in, the believing sinner is introduced into a state of peace and friendship with his offended Maker and Sovereign, and that "through our Lord Jesus Christ," the great Reconciler and Peace-Maker, who is himself our peace, having made peace by the blood of his cross. "By whom also we have access by faith." Christ is the only way of access to the Father, and of acceptance with him. Being the Mediator between God and men, he introduces us into his Father's presence, gives us audience at his throne, and renders both our persons and services acceptable to him. By faith in Jesus Christ, the comfort and advantage of this access is enjoyed. Another effect of our justification is, "we rejoice in hope of the glory of God;" even that eternal glory and happiness which he has prepared for his people. Of this glory, he has given believers a good hope through grace, and in this hope they are often enabled to rejoice, amidst the troubles and afflictions of the present state. Hence it is added, "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also." By tribulations are intended, the many afflictions of life, the persecutions of the world, the temptations of Satan, and whatever else may attend us of a trying nature. We look upon these as being the allotment of God's fatherly love to us, that we may thereby be enabled to glorify him the more; and we consider them as working, for us; a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. We know also, that, under the influence of divine grace, "tribulation worketh patience;" submission to the divine will, acquiescence in it, and meekness amidst injuries and provocations. Patience is daily increased by exercise. And this patience produceth such an "experience" of God's supporting goodness, and such proof of our sincerity and steady resolution, as we know are acceptable to the Lord. It produces a more enlarged acquaintance with our-selves, and with the truth and faithfulness of God. And this experience strengthens and confirms our "hope" of a future reward. And this hope does not make us Ashamed, through disappointment, because we have, in ourselves,, the foretastes of final happiness; for "the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us." This is sealed upon our hearts by the Holy Spirit, and diffused, or poured out, through all the faculties of our souls, so as to produce love, to his name, and delight in him and his service. "For when we were yet without strength," utterly incapable of delivering ourselves out of the depths of sin and misery, and of contributing anything towards, our recovery and salvation, "in due time Christ died for the ungodly he appeared in our world at the appointed season, to accomplish the work of our redemption; and this he did by giving his life for our lives, or by dying in our room; for he died in the room and stead of the ungodly." This is the exact meaning of the original words; they plainly intimate, that Christ rescued the lives of others, at the expense of his own.

ROM 5:7 For scarcely for a righteous man will one die: yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die.

Ver. Rom. 5: 7. For scarcely, &c.] Codrus devoted himself to death the Athenians, and Curtius threw himself into the gulf for the preservation of the Romans. But these died, being mere, creatures, and guilty creatures; whereas the dying Jesus was perfectly innocent, and supremely glorious.—These died only a little before their time; but Christ died, though he had life in himself and none could have taken it from him, had he not voluntarily resigned it. These died for their valuable friends, for their affectionate relations, for their native country; but Christ "died for slaves for enemies, "for the ungodly." They died an honorable death; but Christ submitted to the most ignominious execution, under the imputation of horrid crimes, and in the form of an execrable malefactor. In all these instances, as the heavens are higher than

the earth, so is Christ's love greater than their love, and his philanthropy more wonderful than their patriotism. The apostle intimates, that if a righteous man were about to be-unjustly put to death, there would scarcely be found a person who would die in his room ; though, perhaps, for a good man, who had been benevolent, and kind, and a blessing to his country, some would dare to die, in order, to save his life. But,

ROM 5:8-10 *But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. 9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. 10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.*

Ver. Rom. 5: 8—10. God commendeth his love, &c.] Shows it to the greatest advantage, in the highest perfection, with every circumstance of recommendation and endearment. The apostle uses a term, *sunisnsi*, which seems an image taken from the practice of tradesmen, when showing their goods; they point out their excellencies, and set, in the clearest light, whatever may bespeak their worth, or recommend them to the purchaser. Perhaps it may allude to the custom of sending, with some favorite and worthy person, recommendatory letters, in which his good qualities are described, and every thing is mentioned that may embellish his character, and render his presence acceptable. So God hath commended his love to our notice, in this great concern, "in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." And now, that being by divine grace brought to repentance, to believe in Christ, and to "be justified by his blood, they shall be saved from wrath through him." He that died for them, when they were enemies, will he not preserve them now when they are made friends? " For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life," The living and interceding Saviour will complete the purpose of his dying love, by savings to the uttermost, those who believe in him.

ROM 5:11 *And not only so, but we also joy in God through our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom we have now received the atonement.*

Ver. Rom. 5: 11. And not only so, but we also joy in God, &c.] The apostle here intimates, that he and his fellow saints, not only rejoiced in the hope of heaven, and gloried in tribulation for Christ's sake; but, says he, we joy in God, through Jesus Christ our Lord, by whom we have now received the atonement" or as in the margin, "the reconciliation." That this is the proper rendering of the word, is evident from the preceding verses. It refers to the peace made between God and the believing sinner, through the mediation of Christ, of which his atonement is the ground and foundation. And on this ground, we joy and rejoice in God, as our God, our Friend, our Portion, and our exceeding great Reward.

ROM 5:12-14. *Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned: 13 (For until the law sin was in the world: but sin is not imputed when there is no law. 14 Nevertheless death reigned from Adam to Moses, even over them that had not sinned after the similitude of Adam's transgression, who is the figure of him that was to come.*

Ver. Rom. 5:12,14. Wherefore, as by one man sin entered, &c.] Here the apostle proceeds to show, how man came to be in the condition before described, as ungodly, sinners, and enemies; to set forth the love of God in their redemption. The one man mentioned is the parent of mankind, who, when he represented his whole race, was guilty of disobedience, which is here expressed by different names; sin, transgression, the offence, &c. Sin entered into the world by him, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men for that all have sinned."

ROM 5:15-19. But not as the offence, so also is the free gift. For if through the offence of one many be dead, much more the grace of God, and the gift by grace, which is by one man, Jesus Christ, hath abounded unto many. 16 And not as it was by one that sinned, so is the gift: for the judgment was by one to condemnation, but the free gift is of many offences unto justification. 17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.) 18 Therefore as by the offence of one judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. 19 For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

Ver. Rom. 5: 15—19 But not as the offence, &c.] We need not wonder at the prejudices which many entertain against the doctrine of Christ's substitution in the room of sinners. It lies quite out of the road of reasons researches. It is among the wonderful things of God's law. This, the inspired apostle foresaw, and modeled his discourse accordingly. Like some skilful engineer, who, though he makes the whole compass of his fortification strong, yet bestows peculiar and additional strength on, those parts which he apprehends will be exposed to the fiercest attack? So Paul, the wise master builder, has inculcated, and re-inculcated this important point; has; enforced it with all the assiduity of zeal, and confirmed it by all the energy of expression. "If through the offence of one many be dead; the judgment was by one to condemnation. By one man's offence death reigned by one. By the offence of one "judgment came upon all men to condemnation; so, by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men to justification of life." That there may remain no possibility of mistaking his meanings or of eluding his argument, he adds, "As by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

The more we are humbled under a sense of our apostasy, the more we shall rejoice and triumph in our recovery. The apostle here draws a long parallel, or, rather, forms a strong contrast between them. He speaks copiously of our ruin by the first transgression that he may speak the more acceptably, the more charmingly, of the righteousness of Christ, imputed to all that believe, for justification of life. In that dark ground, he well knew, this fairest flower of Christianity appears with peculiar beauty; indeed, with all the beauty of consummate wisdom and glorious grace. The chief difficulty which perplexes the minds of some, in perusing these verses, arises from a misconception of the apostle's reasoning, in supposing that Adam and Christ represented exactly the same persons; But it is evident, that, while Adam is spoken of as representing the whole human race, Christ is held forth as representing his seed, or all who are brought to believe, and to receive his salvation.

[If by one man's offence death reigned, &c.] q. d. If one offence, committed by one mere man, made all his posterity chargeable with guilt, and liable to death, how much more shall the

manifold instances of the divine Redeemer's obedience in our stead his long, uninterrupted, and perfect obedience, how much more shall that be efficacious to absolve all his people from condemnation and punishment, and entitle them to the honors and joys of immortality? Especially, when the infinite dignity of his person is considered. This is the strain of the apostle's reasoning. The free gift, of which he speaks, not merely answers to the loss sustained by Adam's sin, but far exceeds it; it fixes all believers in a state of complete justification. If, by the original offence, death acquired the dominion over the whole human race; much they who, by faith, "receive abundance of grace and mercy," and are interested in "the gift of righteousness, shall reign in life by Jesus Christ," their head and representative. In many things the contrast between Adam and Christ is very striking and instructive. By the one, sin and condemnation entered; by the other, righteousness and justification. By the disobedience of one, many were constituted sinners; so by the obedience of one, many are made righteous, even all true believers, and are dealt with as such. Thus Adam was a type of our Lord, Jesus Christ, "a figure of him that was to come." It is very observable, that the apostle, throughout, dwells and insists on the circumstance One; he introduces it again and again, and can hardly prevail with himself to discontinue the repetition. His final conclusion, mentioned before, contains the sum of his reasoning, ver. Rom. 5:19, "As by the disobedience of one many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous."

ROM 5:20-21 Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: 21 That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ver. Rom. 5:20, 21. Moreover the law entered, that the offence, &c.] It discovers guilt and sin, and aggravates the enormity of disobedience, which is perpetrated against so express a declaration of the Divine Will; yet it has no efficacy to cure human depravity, though it shows and condemns man's abounding wickedness. "But where sin abounded, there does grace most gloriously super abound," even like the waters of a mighty flood, flowing far above the tops of the highest mountains of human guilt and depravity. So that as sin hath reigned," like a dreadful and most mischievous tyrant, "unto death; even so might grace reign," with benign authority, as regent on her superior throne, bearing down all opposition before her, and swaying her scepter, through the righteousness of Jesus Christ unto eternal life. How grace reigns in the sinner's heart is considered in the next chapter; its reigning in the justification and consequent salvation of sinners is here particularly intended.

Aspiration] O God, how fearful are thy judgments! We contemplate with solemn awe, with grief and sorrow, the entrance of sin into the world, and death by sin. And yet we desire to adore the riches of grace, in appointing the, second Adam to repair the ruin and desolation of the first. Thou hast set him forth as the propitiation for our sins, that, believing in his name we may receive the gift of righteousness, be delivered from all our aggravated offences, stand clear of every charge, and be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. May we be most earnestly solicitous to win Christ, and be found in him, not having our own righteousness

which is of the law, but that which is by the faith of Jesus Christ ; to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

CHAPTER SIX

ROM 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

Chap. VI. Rom. 6:1,2. What shall we say then? &c.] If justification depend entirely on the free grace of God, through the imputation of the righteousness of Jesus Christ; and if, where sin abounded, grace does much more abound, chap. Rom. 5:17,21, some may object, and say, What is the consequence of this doctrine ? May we not take occasion from hence to go on in a course of sin, that grace may be more exalted in our pardon? Are not men thus set free from all moral obligation? Are not the flood-gates of licentiousness thrown open? This objection is still continually made, where the same doctrine is preached which Paul taught. But he has shown just how to answer all such objections, and how to guard against all such abuses. He does not teach us to shun to declare the truth or to keep it out of sight; but, while he states it in the clearest and plainest manner, he points out the inseparable connection between justification and sanctification. He rejects the false conclusion, with the utmost degree of detestation, God forbid; let the thought of continuing in sin, that grace may abound, be for ever abhorred. The carnal and sensual man, has no part in that grace of which we speak; and as to the real believer, he is dead to sin. "And how shall we, who are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" To live in sin is, to live after the dictates of corrupt nature. But those who are dead to sin cannot thus live in it, though sin still dwells in them; and disquiets them. Christians, real Christians, are so dead to sin as not to obey it, nor fulfill their evil inclinations, any more than he that is dead fulfils the will of his former masters. They are dead to the pleasures and delights of sin, as dead man is to his former diversions. He that is dead is separated from his former company, converse, business, enjoyments, and employments. He is not what he was; he doth not what he formerly did; he hath not the will and inclinations he formerly had. Death makes a mighty change in a man; and sanctification makes a change in the soul, somewhat like it. In particular, it cuts off a man's former conversation with sin. "How shall we then, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?"

ROM 6:3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

"Ver.3. Know ye not, that so many of us as were, &c.] We are, by baptism, put in mind, that, after attending to this emblem and example of the death of Christ, we should be dead to sin; and after the pattern of his resurrection, we should be raised up to righteousness. But the apostle goes farther than this; for he intimates, that by baptism Christ hath made us partakers of his death, that we may be engrafted into it: and as the graft receives substance and nourishment from the root into which it is engrafted, so they that receive baptism, in the

manner they ought, truly feel the efficacy of the death of Christ, in the mortifying of the flesh; and the effect of his resurrection, in the quickening of their spirit. Hence/says the apostle, you cannot be ignorant of it, that they who were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death, and, consequently, ought to be dead to sin. But there is a difference between being merely baptized in water, and being baptized into Christ, as real believers are in their baptism. This expression means, a being brought by baptism into more communion with Christ, and into a fuller participation of his grace and benefits. Such are baptized into his death; being immersed in water, as he was overwhelmed with sufferings and sorrows; and they express and declare their faith in his death, and in the benefits resulting from it. By the death of Christ they are justified; and their old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin may be destroyed, as ver. 6.

ROM 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

Ver. 4-5. Therefore we are buried with him, &c.] The proper manner of Christian baptism is here pretty clearly pointed out. "Baptism is a burial; the party is buried in the water, as a corpse is buried in the grave. This is called a being buried "with Christ," as it is a representation of his burial, as well as of his death, and of our death to sin. The apostle is still pursuing his argument, and showing, from the nature, use and end of baptism, that believers are dead to sin and, therefore, ought not to live any longer therein. This more fully appears from what follows; "that like as Christ was raised from the dead by glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life." By the glory of the Father is meant, his glorious power, which was eminently displayed in his raising up Christ from the dead. And as in baptism we profess to be dead to sin, so we profess to rise to a life of purity and holiness, called here, "newness of life." This implies, newness of heart; for out of the heart are the issues of life. The amiable Dr. Doddridge uses words to this effect, in his notes on these verses, It seems the part of candour to confess, that here is an allusion to the manner of baptizing by immersion; and if it were intended as a declaration of faith in the death and resurrection of Christ, as it is well known Christ died for sin, it would infer, an obligation to die to it, and rise again to a holy life, which is the main point the apostle aims at. Believers are not only dead, but risen with Christ, Col. 3: 1. They partake of such a resurrection as resembles his. Hence the apostle adds, "For if we have been planted together," or, as it may be read, "made to grow together," in the likeness of his death;" we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection," and shall rise up to a spiritual and new life, as he rose to immortal life and vigour. Believers are raised and quickened by a power and virtue flowing from Christ, and his resurrection, Phil. 3: 10, "That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection," so as, to share in the benefits, and feel and enjoy the fruits of it, to the glory of God, and his grace. "Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin may be destroyed."

ROM 6:6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

Ver. 6, 7. Our old, man, &c.] Were we to dissect human nature, we should find the leprosy of sin spreading itself through our whole frame; for which reason, it is styled by the inspired

writer, the "old-man." Old, because, in its commencement, it was early in the fall; and, in its communication to individuals, it is coeval with their being. Man, because it has tainted the body, infected the soul, and disordered the whole person. Moreover, this is called "our old man," because it is co-natural to us; it is in our nature, and abides in us. Now this is said to "be crucified with Christ;" so crucified, that it cannot exert its ruinous and destructive power over us. But the death of the cross was a slow death, and so is the death of the old man. The body on the cross gave many a violent struggle before it expired. The struggles of the old man are very sensibly experienced. Its lusts fight and war against the soul, 1 Pet. 2: 2. Yet crucifixion was a sure death. The crucified person was long in expiring, but he did expire at last. And this will be the case with the old man. A death-wound is given to it, and it shall never recover. Hence it is said, "that the body of sin," the same with the old man, "may be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Sin is the worst master that ever was served; and yet, alas! It has many servants, who yield to its dictates, follow its commands, and do its drudgery. But the followers of Christ are not henceforth to serve sin; "for he that is dead is freed from sin." In natural death, a person is freed from those laws and obligations to service, which he was under when living. The servant is then free from his master. So "he that is dead is freed from sin;" that is, dead in a spiritual sense, dead to sin. He is freed from the dominion of sin, from its servitude, and from its destructive power.

ROM 6:8-10 *Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9 Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. 10 For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God.*

Ver. 8-10. Now if we be dead with Christ, &c.] "We shall also live with him;" we expect to share with Christ in the complete holiness and glory of the heavenly world. This expectation lays an obligation upon us, to cease from sin, and to press on after universal holiness, "knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more." Death seemed, for a while, to have dominion over him, but that is for ever at an end; "for in that he died, he died unto sin once;" as a sacrifice for it, to satisfy divine justice, and to repair the honors of the law; "but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God, to his Father's glory, and to make intercession for us.

ROM 6:11 *Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord. 12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. 13 Neither yield ye your members as instruments of unrighteousness unto sin: but yield yourselves unto God, as those that are alive from the dead, and your members as instruments of righteousness unto God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you: for ye are not under the law, but under grace. 15 What then? shall we sin, because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. 16 Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?*

Ver. 11–16. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves, &c.] So reckon yourselves to be dead to sin, as never to return under its power any more, and account yourselves as being made alive unto God, that, in imitation of Christ, you may live continually devoted to the divine honor. Guard against the prevalence of sin, and the irregular inclinations of your minds; "let not sin reign in

your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof," or any of its licentious desires or demands. Neither yield ye the members, senses, or organs, of your bodies, to be employed as instruments of unrighteousness in the commission of sin; but, on the other hand, with holy affection and zeal, present yourselves unto God, as those who are spiritually alive, giving up all your powers and faculties as instruments of righteousness unto God, to be for ever devoted to him. Be armed with holy courage and resolution in doing this; for the tyrant, that had enslaved you, shall never regain his power over you. Be assured that "sin shall not have dominion over you. Shall not "lord it over you," as formerly; " for ye are hot under the law, but under grace." Let this consideration animate you to resistance in every instance; for ye are not under the covenant of works, but the covenant of grace. No spiritual strength is promised to the sinner, under the legal covenant, and therefore sin must have dominion over him. But the believer is brought from being under this covenant, to be under the covenant of grace, in which effectual help is ensured to him, to preserve him from falling under the tyranny of sin, and becoming a willing slave to it, though he may be sorely harassed, and severely tried. "But what then? Shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid." The idea must be rejected with the utmost abhorrence. The covenant of grace inspires the noblest hopes of success against sin and of complete victor over it. And is it possible that any one should take liberty from thence to offend God the more? "Know ye not," that to whom ye yield yourselves servants, to obey his commands, his servants ye are to whom ye yield that obedience, in the general tenor of your actions? Whether this be of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness. "But God be thanked, that though ye were once the servants of sin ;" this is to be spoken of as a state of bondage which is past and gone; since ye have given up yourselves to the service of the living God, and have most heartily obeyed his gospel.

ROM 6:17-23 But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. 18 Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness. 19 I speak after the manner of men because of the infirmity of your flesh: for as ye have yielded your members servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity; even so now yield your members servants to righteousness unto holiness. 20 For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness. 21 What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? for the end of those things is death. 22 But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness, and the end everlasting life. 23 For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Ver. 17-23, &c]. Which was delivered unto you; or, into which ye were delivered; intimating, that the minds of sinners, softened by humbling convictions, being pliant and ductile, under the powerful operations of divine grace, receive the stamp of genuine Christianity, being delivered into the mould of evangelical truth. The allusion is to liquefied metals taking the figure of some elegant mould, into which they are cast. This idea is beautiful and instructive.— God grant it may be realized in the reader of these notes! "Being then made free from sin," in its domineering power, "ye are become the servants of righteousness," to obey God in all holiness of conversation. I speak as a man," upon the common principle of human equity and justice, because of the infirmity of your flesh for I know to what weaknesses and temptations you are liable. Ye have, in times past, yielded your powers as instruments of sin, from one degree to another; but let it be now your care to give up all the powers and faculties you

possess, as servants of righteousness, to the practice of holiness and purity. "For when ye were the servants of sin, ye were free from righteousness," both in principle and practice, in heart and life. Let me ask you, "What fruit, what real and solid advantage, did you find in those things thereof ye are now ashamed?" You will answer, None at all; "for the end of those things is death." How great then is the change, which, through grace, ye have experienced? "For being made free from "the guilt and power of "sin, and become the humble servants of God, ye have your fruit unto holiness," in which you find great satisfaction and delight; and "the end you have in prospect is everlasting life." For the deserved wages of sin, its just and proper reward, is death: but, on the other hand, eternal life is not the wages or reward of human merit, but the free gift of God , through the atonement and righteousness of Jesus Christ, our adored Lord and Saviour.

Aspiration.] May we seriously consider, that we cannot be at the same time the servants of God, and the servants of sin. May we often reflect, how unfruitful the works of darkness were unto us, of which we hope we are now ashamed; and may our views be directed to that eternal life which is the free gift of God, through Jesus Christ. May it be glorious mark at which we are aiming continually, and may no one of us be disappointed at last. To this end. May we be ever solicitous, that our faith may be unfeigned, our love sincere, and our hope such as will not make us ashamed. Amen.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ROM 7:1 -3 *Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? 2 For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. 3 So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man.*

Chap. VII. Ver. 1-3. Know ye not, brethren, &c.] The apostle had observed, in the former chapter, that believers are not under the law, but under grace, Rom. 6: 14. And he here shows how their freedom from the law is to be understood, and upon what grounds it is founded. This is illustrated by the similitude of marriage; wherein the woman, during natural life, is bound by the law to her husband, bound to be his, not to depart from him, nor to marry another. But her husband being dead, she is free, being his no more ; so that she may, without the guilt of adultery, be married to another, and bring forth fruit to him. The apostle addresses himself to persons who knew the law, which law, by a common figure, he speaks of as a person, that liveth, and that dies. The word, liveth, is spoken of the law, and not of the man; and therefore it might be more properly translated, "it liveth." The bond of marriage, in a civil sense, is so strict, that nothing but death can break it; for marriage, by God's appointment, was to continue as long as life lasted. But the woman's husband being dead, she is no adulteress, though, she be married to another man, any more than if she had never been married at all. The apostle then applies the similitude.

ROM 7:4-8 *Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God. 5 For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death. 6 But now we are delivered from the law, that being dead wherein we were held; that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. 7 What shall we say then? Is the law sin? God forbid. Nay, I had not known sin, but by the law: for I had not known lust, except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet. 8 But sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence. For without the law sin was dead.*

Ver. 4-8. Wherefore, my brethren, ye, &c.] The law has a right of dominion over a man only so long as he lives under it; but ye, through faith, are become dead to the law, as a covenant which requires perfect obedience as the condition of life, and pronounces a curse for every failure. Ye are so dead to the law as to be freed from all obligation to obey it for acceptance and justification. Accordingly, ye have given up all hope of relief from it. This is said to be " by the body of Christ that is, by his crucifixion, who his own self bare our sins in his body on the tree, and redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us, I Pet. 2: 24. Gal. 3: 13. The end of this death to the law is, "that ye should be married unto another, even to him that is raised from the dead, that ye should bring forth fruit unto God." That, being united unto Christ, and interested in all-his unsearchable riches, ye may, by the supply of Iris Spirit, bring forth such fruit in your lives as will meet with his gracious-acceptance, and be honorable to his name. "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins did work in us to bring forth fruit unto death." When we were in our unregenerate state, the carnal desires and affections, which the law forbids, and which are condemned by it, did work in us, to bring forth fruit unto death. The apostle James exactly describes the rise, progress, and issue of sin, according to what is mentioned here, James 1: 13–15. " But we are delivered from the law," in the sense above explained, " that being dead wherein we were held," as a woman is by the law to her husband, " that we should serve in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter;" that is, in faith, in cordial love, and unfeigned gratitude, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, and not in a formal and legal way, according to the mere letter of the precept, " What shall we say then ? Is the law sin? God forbid." On the contrary, sin is discovered and made known by it. "I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust," concupiscence, or irregular desire, to be sin, "except the law had said, Thou shalt not covet." That perfect standard showed me the evil propensities of my nature. And "sin, taking occasion by the commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence, or thoughts, desires, and inclinations to evil. The law did not give this occasion; but the body of sin, dwelling in me, took the occasion. "For without the law, sin was dead." When I was without any knowledge of the spirituality of the law, sin lay as though it were dead, and I had no apprehension of danger from it.

ROM 7:9-11 *For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. 10 And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. 11 For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me.*

Ver. 9–11. I was alive without the law once.] q. d. I thought myself upright and holy, and entitled, by virtue of these qualifications, to life eternal. "But when the commandment came," shining in its purity, and operating with power," sin revived, a clear and lively sense of guilt

shot through my soul, like a piercing dart. I saw myself chargeable with many past provocations; I felt myself the subject of great impurity; in consequence of which " I died;" my vain conceits were all blasted; my presumptuous hopes expired; I could not but acknowledge myself justly liable to condemnation and death. I died as a Pharisee. Hence the law "entered, that sin might abound ;" not that the commission of sin might be authorized, but that the abundance of our sins might be manifested; that we might perceive the great multitude of our iniquities, and the greater impurity of our hearts, together with the utter imperfection of our highest attainments, and best services. Most surely the apostle here spoke literally of himself, and related his own experience. His object was, to show that the violated law of God can do nothing for a sinner, either to justify or sanctify him, and that a believer fails daily in his obedience to it, to his great distress and sorrow. He adds, "And the commandment which was ordained to life, the language of which was, " The man that doeth these things shall live in them," I " found to be unto death," because I had transgressed in instances without number. " For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me, and by it slew me." It was not the law, but sin, or depraved nature that deceived and slew him. The law is not the cause of death, but sin, and that only. The allusion is to the practice of a thief or robber, who decoys a man out of the right way, into some by path, and then murders him.

ROM 7:12-16 Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. 13 Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. 14 For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin. 15 For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. 16 If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good.

Ver. 12-16. Wherefore the law is holy, &c.] The whole body of the law, and every precept and commandment of it, is holy, and just, and good. It resembles its great Author, and is a transcript of his purity and perfection. It requires nothing more than what is righteously due to God and our neighbor, and what tends to the benefit of mankind. "Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid." No such conclusion can be admitted; It was not the law, but sin, that was made death unto me. "But sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good," this end was answered by it," that sin by the commandment might appear exceeding sinful." Macknight, after Beza, renders the words "a most exceeding sinner for he considers the term a substantive, and that sin is personified. The corruption of nature is meant, which is the source and parent of all actual sins and transgressions. The dreadful deformity of sin is discovered by the pure mirrour of the divine law. "For we know that the law is spiritual." It comes from the Spirit of God, and reaches to the spirit of man. It requires truth in the inward parts, spiritual service and obedience, supreme love to God, even with the whole heart and soul. But, says the apostle, I am conscious of a want of conformity to this holy law; for "I am carnal, sold under sin." From hence to the end of the chapter, many suppose, that the apostle speaks the language of an unregenerate man. But nothing can be more clear, than, that he speaks of himself in the first person, and relates his present experience. When he takes notice of his former state, and of his first convictions, he speaks of them as past; but here he speaks in the present tense. See ver. Rom. 7: 5-11. Besides, he speaks of his hating evil, delighting in the law of God, and serving it with his mind, which cannot be true of an

unregenerate man. We wonder indeed at the deep, strong, and debasing expressions which he uses concerning himself; but the reason is, because we are less spiritual than he was, and

Not so sensible of the evils of our own hearts. When he says, "I am carnal," he means that his nature was so, when compared with the holy and spiritual law of God. The Corinthians were called to be saints, and sanctified in (Christ Jesus, yet they were the subjects of much carnality; "Are ye not carnal; and walk as men?" 1 Cor. 3:1-4. The holiest man, when viewed in the glass of the pure law of God, is comparatively carnal. He adds, "sold under sin." He did not sell himself, like Ahab and others. He speaks of it as that in which he was not voluntary, nay, as that which was to him a calamity, and constituted the wretchedness of which he complained. "For that which I do I allow not." I feel a continual struggle between the flesh and the spirit. Yet he did not speak of any outward offence; for it was his continual care to keep a good conscience in the sight of God and men. But he speaks of the workings of indwelling sin, which are the real actions of the soul, together with the various frailties and infirmities which attended him. But these he allowed not. His sense of them, and concern for them, are expressed in the strongest terms. For what I would, that do I not." He earnestly desired, and fully determined, if possible, to do the whole will of God, and yield uninterrupted obedience to his law, in thought, word, and deed; but he continually fell short. He hated and abhorred sin, yet he knew he was not free from it, and this was his grief. But in all this, he consented unto the law, that it was good; and holiness was the choice and delight of his soul. He did not mean to excuse the weaknesses and failings which attended him; but his design was, to show that righteousness could not possibly be by the law. He likewise showed, by his own case and experience, that, by the grace of the gospel, a man's state and character are determined according to what habitually prevails in his heart and life. A wicked man feels some inward opposition to sin, from conscience, fear, and shame, yet sin habitually prevails and reigns in his heart and conduct. How contrary to this was the case of the apostle! The bent of his soul was to do good; but he failed of that success which he constantly aspired after. Hence he concludes, that, since he hated every failing, it was not himself, as a spiritual, and as a new man, that failed, but it was owing to sin that dwelt in him.

ROM 7:17-25 Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 18 For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. 19 For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. 20 Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. 21 I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 22 For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: 23 But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. 24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.

Ver. 17-25, &c. Sin that dwelleth in me.] O what reason have we to be humble! To review the catalogue of our actual transgressions, is a mortifying employ. But that which lays the soul in the lowest, abasement is, the conviction of inbred iniquity. A due crisis of this strikes at the root of human vanity, and cuts asunder the very sinews of self-conceit. Blindness in the understanding, impotency in the will, and disorder in the affections, these are not visitants,

but inhabitants congenial with our frame, and ingrained in our constitution. How then, O how can we be vain of our moral beauty, who have an hereditary defilement cleaving to all our faculties? Surely this must banish the Pharisee from our breast, and inspire us with the sentiments of that sincere penitent, "Behold, I am vile!" Or it must make us cry out with the leper, "Unclean! Unclean!" "For I know that in me," that is, in my flesh," as a fallen creature, and apart from regenerating grace," dwelleth no good thing." For, indeed, as renewed by grace, "to will is present with me;" I find an habitual willingness to, obey the law of God, but I am continually obstructed, in my earnest desires and endeavors to do it. "For the good that I would I do not," to the extent of my wishes; "but the evil that I would not, that I do." I persist in maintaining this continual conflict with my inward, enemies, but am not able to extirpate them; for, I find, that there is, as it were, a law imposed upon me, in this present state of warfare, that, when I am most desirous "of doing good, evil is present with me." The Almighty, no doubt, has wise reasons, for suffering me to be thus tried and disquieted. I see constant reason to be deeply humbled in his sight, on account of wandering thoughts in my devotions, the want of fervent love and gratitude, zeal and activity.—The apostle then speaks of his "inner man," and of its delight in holiness. The phrase is only found in the writing of Paul "The inward man is renewed day by day." A prayer is offered up for the Ephesians, that they might be strengthened by the Spirit in the inner man. In both, these places, manifest reference had to believers; and though the inner man primarily signifies, the soul, yet, according, to the apostle's use of the expression, it takes in also the, idea of a renewed soul, and answers to what is elsewhere called the new man," 2 Cor. 4: 16. Eph. 3: 16, and 4: 24. Col. 3: 10. Now, says the apostle, "according to the inner man, I delight in the law of God? I most heartily approve of it; I look upon it with complacency, and could rejoice to be conformed to it in the completest manner, and in the highest degree. Now any man might say with the heathen writer, "I see and approve the better, but follow ,the worse;" but to delight in the pure and holy law of God, to hate all evil, to love ail good, and to be deeply distressed at not being able to do, in a perfect manner, the good that is ardently loved, are all peculiar to regenerate persons, gracious and renewed souls, and can be understood of no other. But, till holiness is perfected, such a conflict as is here described must necessarily exist in the mind, where the law of: God is delighted in, and, sin is universally hated. Hence this holy man says, "I see another law, a law of vicious and irregular, inclinations, seated in the constituent parts of the old man, or depraved nature, which law " is contrary to the law of my mind and the tendency of this is, to bring me into captivity to the law of sin." Hence it is, that, with a kind, of holy eagerness, and almost of impatience, I cry out from time to time, "O wretched, man that I am ! Who shall deliver, me from the body of this death?" It is observable, that no persecutions, no stripes, no tortures, ever occasioned the apostle to complain in, any such way. It is thought he refers to that species of cruelty to which some were condemned, of dragging about with them a putrefying corpse, till they themselves expired. This, as if the apostle had said, is a fit emblem of my condition; this makes me cry, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me?" I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." I see my Deliverer at hand; he approaches; and he has inspired me with hopes of complete victory. "So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God," most willingly and heartily; though "in my flesh" I seem, in some measure, "to be subdued by the law of sin," which continually wars against the law of my mind. But, by and by, the conquest will be complete and everlasting.

Aspiration.

*What different powers of grace and sin
Attend our mortal state!
We hate the thoughts that work within,
Yet do the works we hate.*

CHAPTER EIGHT

ROM 8:1 *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death.*

CHAP. 8: Ver. 1, 2. *There is therefore now no condemnation, &c.]* What is here asserted is plainly an inference from something going before; and it seems to be more immediately from the last verse of the Seventh chapter, where the apostle thanks God for deliverance through Jesus Christ, from the guilt and power of sin. But our views may be carried, back to the apostle's whole discourse on this subject. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." He does not say, There is nothing in them which deserves condemnation, but, through the infinite mercy of God, in Christ Jesus, there is no condemnation to them;" or as it may be read, "there is not one condemnation to them;" not one sentence of condemnation from God against them; which is the same as saying, they stand acquitted or justified before God, from every charge. For though they were condemned when they were in a state of sin and unbelief, there is no condemnation to them "now;" they being in Christ Jesus, by a living faith. For though to be in Christ may sometimes only signify making profession of his name, as John 15: 2, here it is to be understood of being in him, in such a sense as none but true believers are; as 2 Cor. 5: 17, "If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature." Hence the character of the person spoken of is described; "they walk not after the flesh," or according to the dictates of corrupt nature, but they walk after the spirit; they are habitually influenced by the new principle communicated in regeneration, and by the teaching and guidance of the Holy Spirit of God. "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death." It is evident, that the apostle Paul frequently uses the term "law," for that which has great power over us. So he speaks in this verse of the law of sin, and the law of death. By the law of the Spirit of Christ, I should suppose he means the commanding power of the Holy Spirit in the soul of a sinner, changing and renewing his mind, by which he is set free from the dominion of sin and death. Thus the contrast is plain; and the sense is, The power of the Holy Spirit, in his gracious operations, hath delivered me from the power sin, which leads to death. "For what the law could not do " Christ himself hath done.

ROM 8:3 *For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:*

Ver. 3. *The law is weak;* is incapable of furnishing us with a title to the heavenly felicity, not through any defect in its precepts, but "through the flesh;" i. e. through the inability of

our degenerate nature. Therefore says the apostle in another place, "If there had been a law given which could have given life," Gal. 3: 21. It is the same way of speaking, and intended to denote the very same impossibility which is implied in that speech of Jehovah to Abraham, "If a man can number the dust of the earth," Gen. 13:16. As the law was inadequate to man's necessity, God was pleased, in infinite mercy, to send his own Son, to assume our nature, and appear "in the likeness of sinful flesh." Though he was perfectly free from sin, he became subject to those infirmities to which, through sin, we are liable. And he was made sin, or a sin-offering, "that sin might be condemned in his flesh," and that thus God might show his abhorrence of sin in the sufferings of his Son, to the end that believing sinners might be pardoned and justified through him, in a way honorable to the divine perfections. I am indebted to the Rev. Mr. Scott, for several hints introduced here, and in some other places, extracted, by his kind permission, from his excellent Comment. Macknight justly observes, that the law was not weak or defective in itself; but it was weak through the depravity of man's nature, which it had neither power to remedy, nor to pardon.

ROM 8:4-6 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 5 For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

Ver. 4 - 6. That the righteousness of the law, &c.] The righteousness required by the law seems to be intended here; the righteousness which is necessary to free us from condemnation. And this righteousness being "fulfilled in us," seems, by the nature of the argument, to mean, the righteousness which was wrought by Christ our Head and Surety; and is imputed to us through faith in him, as if it had been wrought out by ourselves. For though divine grace renews our hearts, and brings us to obey the will of God, yet our obedience is always defective, and cannot be said to fulfill the righteousness of the law. But the necessity of personal holiness is still maintained, both in this verse, and the following; for the persons interested in the blessing of justification are such as "walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit;" the sense of which has been given before. These, and none but these, have vital union with Christ, and are freed from condemnation. For as to those who are after the flesh, under the direction, power and dominion of fleshly principles, they "mind the things of the flesh;" they relish, they pursue, and take pleasure in worldly, sensual, and carnal things. "But they that are after the spirit," who are under the guidance and dominion of the Holy Spirit, follow after things of a spiritual nature; these are the things which they savour and relish, and in which they delight. Their minds are most occupied about such things as pertain to the welfare and salvation of the soul, and will endure for ever. They are most solicitous about the enjoyment of God's favor, a renewal after his image, and living to his glory. The characters of men are thus distinguished, from whence it may be concluded what their end is likely to be. "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." Or, as it is in the margin, "the minding of the flesh is death; but the minding of the spirit is life and peace." If a man be carnal in his prevailing disposition, judgment, and affections, he is dead in sin, and under condemnation; but the man of a spiritual mind is alive to God, and at peace with him.

ROM 8:7-8 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. 8 So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God.

Ver. 7, 8. *The carnal mind is enmity.*] Not an enemy, but enmity itself, Against what? Against sin? That were a noble antipathy. Against the world? That were a laudable disaffection. No, but against God, and his law. Amazing perverseness! To be enmity against God, who is a Being of boundless benignity, and of consummate goodness; enmity against his law, which is the transcript of his amiable perfections, and the complete model of all holiness and purity, this is awful! The carnal mind disdains control, is averse to the service of God, and bent on sinful indulgence; and hence it rebels against the authority, the precepts, and the government of God, The heart of man must be changed by divine grace, in order to a due subjection to the divine will; " *for the carnal mind, destitute of renewing grace, is not subject to the law of God, nor indeed can be.*" Thus we are taught the necessity of efficacious grace, in the conversion of a sinner. And it likewise follows, as the apostle observes, that "they that are *in the flesh,*" in an unregenerate state," cannot please God," They cannot be considered as free from condemnation, and in a state of friendship and acceptance with the Almighty.

ROM 8:9-11 But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. 10 And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

Ver. 9 - 11. *But ye are not in the flesh, &c.*] Ye are not carnal, but spiritual men, and in a state of grace, "if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." For the indwelling of the Spirit is that which distinguishes a saint from a sinner. He dwells in believers, as the spirit of illumination, as a sanctifying Spirit, a comforter, and the Spirit of adoption. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." He is the Spirit of the Son as well as of the Father; and he in whom the Holy Spirit does not dwell, as a sanctifying and renewing Spirit; does not belong to Christ, has no union with him, nor relation to him; and if he lives and dies in that condition, the great Judge will disown him at last. "But if Christ be in you," by his Holy Spirit and sanctifying grace, though the body be mortal, and must die because of sin, yet the soul is alive to God, and shall live for ever, a life of glory and blessedness because Of righteousness;" not the man's own righteousness; for that cannot entitle to life; but the righteousness of Jesus Christ is meant, through which grace reigns unto eternal life, chap. 5: 21. What Mr. Locke, and Macknight, say on these verses, will not, I presume, satisfy the minds of impartial inquirers. "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you," by his quickening and sanctifying operations, he who raised up Christ, as the first fruits of them that slept, " shall also quicken your mortal bodies," and raise them up from the grave at the last day, by the energy of that divine Spirit who has taken up his abode in you.

ROM 8:12-18 Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after the flesh. 13 For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die: but if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live. 14 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. 15 For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified

together. 18 For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

Ver. 12 - 18. *Therefore, brethren, we are debtors, &c.*] The doctrine of Christian liberty is no licentious doctrine; but the; more and the greater the favors are which we enjoy, we are the more obliged to grateful obedience. We are not debtors to the flesh or under any obligation to it, by any means; for it has always been, and is still, an enemy unto us. But we are debtors to God, and under the greatest and highest obligations to him, on all accounts. For notwithstanding your external profession, if any of you are still in a state of nature, "and live after the flesh, ye shall die. This is evident from the constant testimony of scripture in other places. And so far as real believers give way to those fleshly lusts which war against the soul, they will find deadness, dullness, and barrenness prevail in their minds. "But if ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live you will prove yourselves alive to God by Jesus Christ, and your spiritual life will abound in proportion to your progress in sanctification. Yet this can only be by the Spirit, without whose gracious agency no progress in holiness can be made. "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." They are led from the path of error, of sin, and impurity; led into the knowledge of the truth, to humiliation, faith, love, and holy obedience. They, and they only, are the children of God, by a new birth, in which "they are brought into some conformity to the likeness of their heavenly Father. " For ye Have' not received the spirit of bondage again to fear." Some understand this of that comparatively servile spirit which ran through the whole of the Mosaic economy. The Spirit of God is a free Spirit, or the Spirit of liberty, Psa. 51: 12. And where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is, liberty. But a man's own spirit is intended by the spirit of bondage, which prevails when a sinner is under legal convictions. The words imply, that these believers had been under a spirit of bondage, as appears by the term "again." But "ye have received the Spirit of adoption." The Holy Spirit of God is intended, who is, in ver. 16, distinguished from their own spirits. He discovers, applies, witnesses, and ratifies the blessing of adoption. Hence it follows, "whereby we cry, Abba, Father." Abba is the Syriac word for Father: and the Holy Spirit produces in believers of different nations and languages the tempers and affections of Children; and leads them to call on the Father, and to worship him in spirit and in truth. "The Spirit itself beareth witness that we are the sons of God." This supposeth the case to be, at times, somewhat doubtful; but the witness of the Spirit is to establish and confirm it. For his testimony with our spirits, or, as Vulgate Latin reads it, "to our spirits," to our hearts, our understandings, and our consciences. This is done, by his gracious illuminations, by applying the truths and promises of "God to the heart, and shedding abroad the love of Christ there, as well as by leading the mind to contemplate the characters given of the children of God in the scriptures. " And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ." This is molt amazing! Heirs of the eternal inheritance, nay, heirs of God himself, who is the Portion and Exceeding great Reward of his children; who are joint-heirs, or fellow-heirs, with Christ himself. It is through him, that they are heirs of God and of glory, and along with him they will enjoy the inheritance. But, before this, they must expect to suffer with him; and therefore the apostle adds, " if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." If we are enabled patiently to suffer with him and for him, after his example, and for his sake, we shall be more confirmed in the hope of being glorified with him. But there is ho reason to shrink at the prospect of any trials we may have to meet with in his service; for I reckon that the sufferings of the present time are not

worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed to us, and accomplished in us." This glory at present exceeds our most enlarged conceptions, and can never be fully known, till it be enjoyed. The following verses have been generally thought, and not without reason, as difficult as any part of the epistle. The question is, what we are to understand by "the creature, the whole creation, and every creature." Some understand these expressions of the whole visible creation, others of mankind in general; while some others think, that the apostle is speaking of the Gentile world.

ROM 8:19-23 For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God. 20 For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope, 21 Because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. 23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.

Ver. 19 - 23. For the earnest expectation of the creature, &c.] Mr. Scott suggests some very instructive ideas, on this subject, part of which I shall beg leave to adopt, as I have not yet met with any thing which appears to come nearer to the apostle's meaning. The whole creation may be said, by a strong figure, to wait with earnest expectation for that important period, when the children of God shall be manifested in the glory which is prepared for them. Of this the apostle speaks in "the foregoing verse: "For the creature is made subject to vanity." The apostasy of man has brought disorder into the world; but this vanity or disorder is by a kind of constraint, through, the guilt and rebellion of man. Every thing almost seems perverted from its intended use. The inanimate creatures are pressed into the service of man's rebellion. The luminaries of heaven give him light; but by that light he accomplishes many wicked purposes. The fruits of the earth are sacrificed to his luxury, intemperance, and ambition. This is a fact which cannot be denied. The bowels of the earth are explored for metals, from which arms are made for public and private slaughter and revenge; or, otherwise, they are ransacked to gratify his avarice and ostentation. The animal tribes, through man's sin, are subject to pain and death; and the sufferings of many of them are greatly increased, by the cruelty of those in whose drudgery they are employed. But God intends to rescue his creation from this state of disorder, to which he has permitted it to be subjected "in hope" of that period, when there shall be New Heavens, and a new earth, wherein righteousness shall dwell, 2 Pet. 3: 13. At present, "we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain," in every part of it, like a woman in her pangs, expecting, and, as it were, longing for deliverance. The miseries of mankind, as well as the state of the inferior creatures, indicate the world to be in such a situation, as is not intended always to continue. "And not only they, but ourselves also, groan within ourselves waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." We, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan under manifold pains, conflicts, and afflictions, but particularly under the disquietude arising from indwelling sin, "waiting for the adoption, when our bodies shall be raised from the grave, incorruptible, immortal, and glorious, fashioned like unto Christ's glorious body. Then sin, Satan, death, and misery, will be banished from the world; and that

saying will be accomplished, "Behold, I make all things new," all pure, beautiful, orderly, and happy.

ROM 8:24-27 For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? 25 But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it. 26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. 27 And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Ver. 24–27.] For we are saved by hope, &c.] We are supported and comforted under present troubles, by the hope of what God has absolutely promised. This implies, that the object is distant; for that which we already see and enjoy cannot be called the object of hope; "for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Yet in doing this, we find ourselves subject to many weaknesses and imperfections. We have, however, this blessed privilege," that the Holy Spirit helpeth our infirmities," so that we are not left to sustain them alone; for he lends us a helping hand" (so the word signifies) under all the burdens we have to bear. The blessed Spirit particularly assists us in our devotions; for we are subject to so much ignorance and darkness, that, in many cases, "we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us," by guiding our minds to suitable petitions, and exciting in us fervent affections, which are sometimes signified by "groanings which cannot be uttered." But our most secret desires are all known to God ; for he who searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the spirit," the temper and disposition of the soul, as under the influences of the Divine Spirit, who "maketh intercession for the saints," or manages their affairs, as the word signifies, "according to the will of God.

ROM 8:28-31 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. 29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. 30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. 31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

Ver. 28–31. And we know that all things work, &c.] This is another privilege which must be added to the rest, that though our afflictions lie heavy upon us, and our, burdens may continue long, we most assuredly know, that they shall be overruled so as to promote our real advantage. Every occurrence of Providence, even the worst thing that can befall us in the present state, are wisely and kindly ordered for our good. These occurrences may seem sometimes so dark and perplexing, that, in our haste, we have, been ready to say, "All these things are against me," Gen. 42: 36. Yet it is one the , established maxims of faith, not only that all things hereafter shall be for good, but they do at present co-operate in their connections and issues, to promote the spiritual and eternal welfare of "them that truly love God, and are the called according to his purpose;". For such are the called of God, not

according to their own works, but "according to his purpose and grace, which was given them in Christ Jesus before the world began," 2 Tim. 1: 9. For thus stands the holy connection of God's sovereign and merciful purposes, respecting the salvation of men; "those whom he did, foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son." His kind thoughts were towards them from the beginning, according to the good pleasure of his will, Eph. 1: 5. And of his free love, he predestinated, or appointed, them to be made conformable, in due time, to the blessed image of his dear Son, in holiness here, and blessedness hereafter; "that he might be the firstborn among many brethren," or be the prince, ruler, and chief of a numerous family; for whom he rose as the first begotten from the dead, that they might rise to glory after him, Col. 1: 18. Moreover, these are the several links in the golden chain of our salvation, which we are raised from the depths of sin and misery to the height of celestial glory and felicity. The whole is of God, and his distinguishing, grace; for it appears, that "whom he did predestinate," as before expressed, "them he also called," by his almighty power, out of darkness into his marvelous light. Arid whom "he thus called, them he also justified," acquitted from guilt and condemnation, through the righteousness of Jesus Christ; and whom he justified, them he also glorified," in the heavenly world, in conformity to their glorious Head and Redeemer. There is such a certainty in these events, that they may be considered as if they had already taken place. What shall we then say to these things? Instead of opposing them, or raising objections against them, How shall we sufficiently admire them? Or what can we wish for more, to encourage our patience and hope, or to excite us to humble obedience? "If God be for us, who can be against us? If he be on our side, to secure our eternal happiness, the malicious designs of our enemies will be of no avail.

ROM 8:32-39 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? 33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Ver. 32-39, &c. He [that spared no his own Son, &c.] The sense of this text may be learned, from what God said to Abraham, Gen. 22: 12, "Thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me." So God did not spare his beloved Son, because he did not withhold him; "but delivered him up for us all," to the hands of justice, and to the sorrows and agonies of death, even the death of the cross. The punishment due to our offences was inflicted on him, without the least abatement; full satisfaction was demanded for them; and the whole payment of our debts was insisted on, without the least abatement, that the law and justice of God might be fully satisfied, while his people are completely saved. Nothing could be so great a display of his love, as this. "How then shall he not with him freely give us all things?" All things subservient to our truest happiness. Our sins, alas! Have been many and great, and we have deserved the condemnation threatened in his holy law; but who shall lay any thing against us at the bar of God? "It is God himself that justifieth us," whose judgment is according to truth.

He justifieth us, who is the party offended by sin; he absolves us from guilt, and accounts us righteous, through the atonement of Christ; and he will abide by his own sentence, and suffer none to reverse it. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died," to expiate our guilt, and rescue us from condemnation; "yea, rather, who is risen again" for our justification. Shall he undo the purposes of his death and resurrection? He is now sitting at the right hand of God, and is our Advocate before the throne, "making intercession for us," and answering all accusations brought against us. "Who then shall separate us from the love of Christ," who hath chosen us, redeemed us by his blood, called us by his grace, and freely pardoned all our offences? Shall tribulation, in any of its forms, part between Christ and us, wean our hearts from him, or, in any degree, lessen his regard for us? Shall sickness, shall pains, shall poverty, losses or disappointments in life, have this effect? No. Shall any persecutions, for the sake of Christ, separate us from his love? Shall famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword, produce this effect? No, We have reason to expect many of these calamities, as it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are," on account of our relation and adherence to thee," counted . as sheep for the slaughter;" but shall these things shut us out of the Redeemer's love, or alienate our hearts from him ? Psalm 44: 22. "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us;" that is, we triumph in the prospect of a certain and glorious victory, and shall be unspeakable gainers by these conflicts. "For I am persuaded," that neither the trials nor snares of life, nor the agonies of death in any form whatever; nor evil angels, principalities or powers; nor present changes, nor future scenes of trial; nor the height of prosperity, nor the depth of adversity, nor any other creature or thing which might be mentioned, "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

"Aspiration] O Lord, we would earnestly desire to see and know our interest in these inestimable privileges. May thy Holy Spirit bear witness with our spirits, that we are thy children, and consequently the heirs of bliss. May we give full evidence of the sincerity of our love to thee; for to such as love thee all things work together for good. Being interred in the redemption of Christ, no charge of condemnation can be exhibited against us, since he died for our sins, and ever lives to intercede for us in heaven. Grant us a measure of that holy confidence which is here so fully and largely expressed, that we shall be more than conquerors at last, and that nothing shall ever be able to separate us from thy love, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

CHAPTER NINE

ROM 9:1 I say the truth in Christ, I lie not, my conscience also bearing me witness in the Holy Ghost, 2 That I have great heaviness and continual sorrow in my heart. 3 For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh:

Chap. Ver. 1—3. I say the truth in Christ, &c.] The apostle is now intending to enter more particularly into the subjects of the rejection of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles and he thought it necessary, in the first place, to testify, in the most solemn manner, his sincere attachment to his countrymen. "I say the truth in Christ; I lie not," in what I now declare; my conscience bears me witness in the Holy Ghost," that I am sincere in my affection to the Jewish nation. Their unbelief, disobedience, to Christ, and consequent rejection, are subjects which excite in my mind much disquietude and grief. "For I have great heaviness and continual

sorrow in my heart, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh," when I think of what hath happened, and will happen, to them, in consequence of their opposition to the gospel. Inasmuch, that if it would be of any real advantage to their best interests, "I could wish myself accursed from Christ for their sakes." No one can suppose his meaning to be, that he could be content to be delivered up to everlasting misery for them. It would be utterly unlawful, on any consideration whatever, to wish to be eternally miserable, and to become an implacable enemy of God, as all who perish will be. And therefore the sense appears to be, that he could submit to be an anathema, "after the manner of Christ," or after his example. He could be satisfied to be exposed, like the suffering Redeemer, to all the execrations of an enraged people, and even to the accursed death of crucifixion, itself, that his kinsmen, the Jews, might be thereby delivered from the guilt they had brought upon their own heads, and become entitled to the blessings of the Messiah's kingdom.

ROM 9:4-9 Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; 5 Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen. 6 Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel: 7 Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. 8 That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed. 9 For this is the word of promise, At this time will I come, and Sarah shall have a son.

Ver. 4—9. Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth, &c.] It greatly affected the apostle's mind to consider, that the distinguishing favors shown to this people should terminate in their rejection, Because of their unbelief and rebellion. "Who are Israelites," the descendants of that holy man, who, as a prince, had power, with God, and prevailed. "To whom pertaineth the adoption;" by which is meant, the national adoption, which constituted them, as a body, the children of God, and his first-born. "And the glory," the ark of the testament, the tabernacle, the temple, and the glory of God. which shone there. "And the covenants;" namely, the covenants made with Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David. "And the giving of the law," on mount Sinai, containing the revelation of the divine will respecting the conduct of men. "And the promises;" these were given originally to them, concerning Christ and his salvation. "Whose are fathers?" They were honorable by their descent from the ancient patriarchs, who walked with God, and were high in his favor. And, finally, "of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all" angels and men, being their" Creator, Upholder, and Governor, and who is "God blessed for evermore, Amen." The expression, "after the flesh," or "as concerning the flesh," implies that he had a far higher and nobler nature. This text undeniably proves, that the apostle meant to bear witness to the proper Deity of Christ, as one with the Father, and equally the object of universal and everlasting adoration. All these particulars served to heighten the apostle's concern for this people. He was filled with heaviness and sorrow of heart, when he considered, that persons who had been partakers of such favors should, on account of their rebellion against God, be rejected, and given up to ruin. We hence learn, that it becomes us to have a most earnest and compassionate concern for our fellow sinners, whom we apprehend to be going on in the way to destruction. The apostle Paul discovers the spirit and disposition of a true follower of Jesus, and shows himself to have the mind that was in his divine Master, who, when he beheld the city of Jerusalem, wept over it, and said, "O

that thou hadst known, even thou, in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace! But now they are hid from thine eyes." It may likewise be remarked, that the "knowledge we have of the sovereignty of God; in his dispensations towards mankind, should be no hindrance to our endeavors after the conversion of sinners. The secret purposes of God are no rule of action to us. Indeed, we know nothing of the extent of his gracious purpose. It may, for any thing we know to the contrary, comprehend every man now living. Who can say it does not? The secret things belong to God; but those that are revealed, to us and to our children. God " commands all men every where to repent;" and he requires "His gospel to be preached to every creature. Nay, he has sworn by himself, that he delighteth not in the death of the wicked, but that wicked turn from his way and live." Nothing is more certain, than that the ruin of those that perish is of themselves. No divine decree is the cause of any man's destruction. "His own iniquities shall take the wicked himself, and he shall holden with the cords of his sins." The very heathens were left "without excuse," as the apostle declares. The rejection of the Jews was the direct consequence of their obstinate unbelief; and "how shall we escape if we "neglect so great salvation?" For he that believeth not shall be damned." The apostle observes, that the Word of God will not fall to the ground; for "they are not all Israel," or true Israelites, "who are of Israel; neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children." Ishmael was the son of Abraham, but it is said, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called." So that "they who are the children of the flesh are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

ROM 9:10-13 And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; **11** (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth;) **12** It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. **13** As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.

Ver; 10 - 13. And not only this, &c.] When Rebecca had conceived, and was with child of twins by our father Isaac, "while the children were not yet born, and neither had done good " to deserve the divine favor, "nor evil" to forfeit it, the Governor, of the world, as an act of his divine sovereignty, made a distinction between them, according to his good pleasure, " that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth " things into being that do not yet exist, and disposeth of all things according to his own will. It was said unto her, "The elder shall serve the younger," or, that the posterity of Esau , should serve the descendants of Jacob, though Esau, was the first-born, Gen. 25:23. As it is also written in another place, Mai. 2: 3. "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." The meaning of which is, I have greatly preferred' Jacob to his brother Esau. Compare Gen. 29: 31. Luke 14: 26, John 12: 25. It is observable, that the apostle does not here speak of the eternal state of Jacob and Esau; nor does he speak so much of their persons, as their posterity as both the prophecies show, which the apostle quotes in support of his argument, Gen. 25: 23. Mal. 1: 2, 3. As if it had been said, I have bestowed many peculiar privileged upon the posterity of Jacob, which have not been granted to the offspring of Esau, whose habitation I have laid waste for the dragons of the wilderness, while that of his brother has flourished in the abundance of all good things.

ROM 9:14-32 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. 15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 16 So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. 17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. 18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. 19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? 20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? 21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonor? 22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: 23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, 24 Even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles? 25 As he saith also in Osee, I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved. 26 And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God. 27 Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved: 28 For he will finish the work, and cut it short in righteousness: because a short work will the Lord make upon the earth. 29 And as Esaias said before, Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we had been as Sodoma, and been made like unto Gomorrha. 30 What shall we say then? That the Gentiles, which followed not after righteousness, have attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith. 31 But Israel, which followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness. 32 Wherefore? Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law. For they stumbled at that stumblingstone;

Ver. 14 &c. What shall we say then?] Is there unrighteousness with God, in the sovereignty of his dispensations and proceedings? God forbid that we should admit such a thought. "For he saith to Moses," Exod. 33: 19, when the people of Israel had deserved immediate destruction, "I will have mercy on whomsoever I will have mercy, and compassion on whom I will have compassion." I will dispense acts of pardon according to my own good pleasure." No man shall have any reason to arrogate any thing to himself; for salvation "is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." That holy and blessed Being sometimes shows his power and his Wrath on those who have long persisted in hardness and impenitence. Thus he saith unto Pharaoh, Exod. 9: 16, "For this same cause have I raised thee up, that I might shew forth my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout the earth." Pharaoh's heart was hardened in impenitence, till at last he brought down the wrath of God upon his guilty head. We must conclude then, that God hath mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he leaves under the power of hardness and impenitence. This is a fact so visible before the eyes of all, that the truth of it cannot be called in question. "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he then find fault? Why doth he blame men for their obstinacy? "Who hath resisted his will?" This the objector daringly says. But to this I answer, O thou vain conceited ignorant man, who art thou that repliest in this manner against God thy Maker? Dost thou dare to charge his proceedings as arbitrary and unjust? Remember the infinite distance that subsists between him and thee, a poor short-sighted,

creature, who art but of yesterday, and knoweth nothing. "Shalt the thing formed say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" Remember how the great God represents the case, Jer. 18: 4-6. "Hath not the potter power over the clay of the same lump, to make one vessel to uses, of honor, and another to dishonor?" Hath he not power to break it, and to form it anew as he pleases? What right hast thou then to find faulty if God at last resolve to manifest his wrath and his power, having endured with much long-suffering those who by their sins and repeated rebellious render themselves vessels of wrath, whereby they bring upon themselves destruction? Shall he be accounted unjust in punishing them who deserve punishment, after he hath borne long with them? And if, on the other hand, he make known, in the most glorious and endearing manner, the riches of his glory on "the vessels of mercy," the objects of his special love, whom he had, by his gracious purposes, "afore prepared unto glory; even us whom he hath called by his grace, "not of the Jews only, but of the Gentiles also;" is there any room to find fault with this procedure? Remember what he saith by the prophet Hosea, chap, 1: 10, "I will call them my people, who were not formerly my people; and her beloved, who was not beloved. And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said to them,. Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God." This brings us to the point which I have all along had in view, the calling of the Gentiles. You may recollect that Isaiah crieth concerning Israel, with great earnestness and tender affection, " Though the whole number of the people of Israel be as the sand of the sea, yet only a remnant of them, shall be saved," while the bulk of them shall be cut off for their crimes. "For now the Lord is finishing and cutting short his work "among that people, in righteousness," because " a short work will the Lord make upon the earth," "Isa. 10: 22, 23. Conformably to this, the same prophet says in another place, " Except the Lord of Sabaoth had left us a seed, we should have been as Sodom, and made like unto Gomorrha." To conclude this discourse; "what shall, we say then? That the Gentiles, who, a little while ago, were shut up in ignorance, and followed not after righteousness, have now attained to righteousness, even the righteousness which is of faith" in Jesus Christ;" but Israel, who followed after the law of righteousness, hath not attained to the law of righteousness." But wherefore was this? "Because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law ;" for the plain and certain fact is, "they stumbled at that stumbling stone mentioned by the prophet, Isa. 8: 14, and 28: 16. " Behold I lay in Zion, &c. Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

CHAPTER TEN

ROM 10:1-3 Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved. 2 For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge. 3 For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God.

Chap. 10: Ver. 1-3. Brethren, my hearts desire, &c.] The apostle knew that the doctrine which he had advanced in the preceding chapter would give offence to the Jews, and perhaps to the Jewish converts at Rome and elsewhere; he therefore repeats the declaration of his regard for them. "Brethren, my hearth desire and prayer to God for Israel is, that they might be saved," What is the matter of our prayer, should first be our heart's desire. It is as if the apostle, had

said, This the most affectionate desire of my whole soul, in the accomplishment of which I should find the greatest satisfaction, "that Israel might be saved." This is my supplication before God, which I am daily and importunately repeating; their salvation I as sincerely wish as my own. My prayer is, that it would please God, notwithstanding present melancholy appearances, to avert his threatened judgments, to bring the Jews, to repentance, and to engage their hearts to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only way in which they can be saved from ruin. "For I bear them record, that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge;" and, consequently, it leads them into the most fatal mistakes. I see, with deep concern, the danger in which they are, while they resolutely oppose the kingdom and salvation of the promised Messiah; for they, being ignorant of the holiness and justice of the divine character, and of that righteousness which God has provided for the justification of sinners, "go about to establish their own righteousness," as the ground of their acceptance with God. As such, they do not, they will not, "submit themselves" to that righteousness which is revealed in the gospel from faith to faith, Rom.1: 17. Yet the apostle most earnestly prayed for them; and that view of the divine purposes, which he has represented in the former chapter, did not at all damp the ardor of his mind in desiring and seeking their salvation.

ROM 10:4-5 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth. 5 For Moses describeth the righteousness which is of the law, That the man which doeth those things shall live by them.

Ver. 4-5. For Christ is the end of the law, &c.] He was the mark and scope of the ceremonial law; it was fulfilled by him, it was accomplished in him; and, as such, he put an end to it. All its sacrifices and rites were to cease when he appeared," who was the substance of those shadows. But most certainly the apostle here means the moral law, which requires strict obedience as the condition of life. Hence he says, in the following words, Moses thus describes the righteousness of the law, " That the man that doeth those things shall live by them." But if he do them not, according to that law, he must die. This is invariably the voice of the law; it is the ministration of condemnation and death, in case of disobedience. Now Christ is the end of this law; not as a rule of life; in its nature it cannot, in that sense, be made void; it is established, or confirmed, by the gospel. Its voice will always be, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart." But the adorable Redeemer is the end of the law to every believer as a covenant of works, and as a cursing, condemning law, Gal. 3: 13, "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us." He is the fulfilling end of the law, so as to furnish a righteousness, answerable -to all its- demands, for every one that believeth. By fulfilling it, he brought in an everlasting righteousness which justifies the sinner in the sight of God. He suffered the penalty of the law by his death, and thus the whole righteousness thereof is fulfilled by him. He performed what the command required of us, and suffered for our disobedience to it. This, says the apostle, is for the benefit of every one that believeth. His righteousness becomes theirs; they are put in possession of it by imputation; in consequence of which they are completely justified, and have a legal title to life eternal.

ROM 10:6-13 But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise, Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? (that is, to bring Christ down from above:) 7 Or, Who shall descend into the deep? (that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead.) 8 But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in

thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. 12 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. 13 For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Ver. 6-13. The righteousness which is of faith speaketh, &c.] "Say not in thine heart, Who shall ascend into heaven? that is, to bring down Christ from above," to teach find instruct us, and to atone for our offences; " or, who shall descend into the deep ? that is, to bring up Christ again from the dead for the glorious Redeemer hath already descended from heaven, to accomplish the work of our salvation ; and he hath, in a triumphant manner, already risen from the dead, in full proof of the completeness of his mediatorial work. "And the word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thine heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach," Deut. 30: 11—14. The self-condemned sinner, therefore, needs not to perplex himself how righteousness is to be obtained. He needs not say in his heart, Who shall ascend into heaven, to bring down one who shall introduce such a righteousness. The work is already done. Nor needs he inquire, Who shall descend into the grave, to bring back the crucified Saviour from the dead; for that is already done. And, the ministers of God are sent to preach this doctrine every where. Yea, it is in the mouth of every one who professes to know the truth, and in the heart of all that believe. The sum of it is, "That if thou shalt Confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and believe in thine heart, with that faith which is of the operation of God, that the Father hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." The apostle evidently speaks of faith unfeigned, which worketh by love to God and man. When such a confession was made amidst all the opposition and danger of persecution, and humbly and steadily maintained, there was little reason to doubt of the sincerity of him that made it. "For it is with the heart," with the understanding, the will, and the affections of the soul," that a man believeth unto righteousness" for justification, " and it is with the mouth that confession is made unto salvation," in an upright and conscientious manner. For in speaking of Christ, "the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed," disappointed, or put to confusion., This is true of every one, without distinction; for there is no difference in this important concern, between the Jew and the Greek; since " the same Lord of all is rich unto all that call upon him." He displays his riches of grace and mercy unto all that seek him, and implore his saving benefits. For, according to the words of the prophet, Joel 2: 32, "Whosoever, shall call on the name of the Lord shall be saved." Whosoever he be, who, from a sense of his sinful, miserable, and helpless state, shall apply to the Lord Jesus Christ, and call upon him for mercy and salvation, he shall most assuredly be delivered from sin and wrath, and advanced to eternal blessedness. How could a larger grant, a more free and encouraging declaration, have been made!

ROM 10:14-15 How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!

Ver. 14, 15. How then shall they call on him, &c.] q. d. What has already been said is sufficient to justify us in preaching the gospel to the Gentiles. All believers call on the name of the Lord Jesus, and they who thus seek help from him shall find it. But how can any call upon him who have not believed in him? Or how can they believe in him who have never heard of him, who he is, and What he has done? "And how shall they hear without a preacher?" The necessity of the gospel being preached to the Gentiles may be plainly inferred from these inquiries. And how shall any preach unto them, except they be expressly sent for that purpose? As to us, who are employed in this work, our minds were so contracted by the common prejudices of our nation, that we should never have thought of carrying the gospel, among the heathen nations, if God had not particularly charged us to do it. But the command was positively given, Mark 16: 15, according to what is written by the prophet, Isa. 52: 7, 8, "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" It is pleasant to hear the messengers, pleasant to see them, pleasant even to view the steps they take in this important work, and the tract of ground over which they pass. In such strong, terms as these, the necessity and utility of the preaching of the gospel have been set forth. It may, however, be said,

ROM 10:16-18 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? 17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God. 18 But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world.

Ver. 16-18. But they have not all obeyed the gospel, &c.] All who hear the gospel do not obey it. For ministers may preach it in its purity, yet there will be no success in bringing men to the obedience of faith, unless divine power accompany the word. For the prophet Isaiah saith, "Who hath believed our report? The report of the person, the sufferings, and the salvation of Jesus, is here intended. Faith, generally speaking, is produced in the hearts of men by the hearing of this report, which is brought to them by the faithful preaching of the Word. This is the expedient which God has appointed, and which he chiefly owns and blesses, for that purpose, " Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the; word of God for it is that which is to be preached, heard, and believed. It may be asked, "Have they not heard? Have not the Jews had repeated opportunities of hearing the gospel report? " Yes verily;" the ministers of God it may be said," their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world." The gospel had been generally and extensively diffused. The Jews had almost universally heard it. The voice of the gospel to them may be compared to the voice of the luminaries of heaven, which all may hear, Psa. 19: 4. In every city, the first care of the apostles was, to address the Jews, and to deliver their message to them. And therefore their unbelief did not arise from a want of the means of instruction, but was rather the effect of their obstinacy, and their fixed enmity against the truth.

ROM 10:19-21 But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you. 20 But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me. 21 But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hands unto a disobedient and gainsaying people.

Ver. 19-21, &c. But I say, Did not Israel know? &c.] Did they not know that their impenitence and unbelief would be the occasion of their being cast off; and of others being called in their stead? Could they be ignorant of this, after all that had been said to them? "Moses saith, in the name of God, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation will I anger you." I will show special favor to them whom ye have despised, and held in contempt. The language also of the prophet Isaiah is very bold on this subject, and ought to have been attentively considered by the Jews; his words, in God's behalf, are these, "I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest to them that asked, not after me," Isa. 65: 1, 2. I was found as a Saviour, called upon, and worshipped acceptably, by those who, a little while before, had not so much as inquired after me. But, with relation to Israel, he saith, in the words following, "All day long I have stretched forth my hands," in the most affectionate and importunate address, "to a disobedient and gainsaying people." Thus the prophets plainly foretold that the Gentiles should be called, and the Jews rejected; and the apostle was not to be blamed for asserting the same thing, however mortifying it might be to the men of that generation.

Aspiration.] We bless thy name, O Lord, for the publication of thy gospel among Gentile sinners. We would earnestly pray that the voice of thy ministers, who now proclaim the glad tidings, may go forth unto all the earthy and their words unto the ends of the habitable world. May thy word have free course, may it run and be glorified, that its ministers may not have so much reason to complain and say, Who hath believed our report? We have stretched out our hands all the day long to a disobedient and gainsaying people. May thy arm be revealed, and thy gospel every where be made the power of God to salvation. Amen.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

ROM 11:1-6 I say then, Hath God cast away his people? God forbid. For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, of the tribe of Benjamin. 2 God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel saying, 3 Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life. 4 But what saith the answer of God unto him? I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal. 5 Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace. 6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

Chap. 11: Ver. 1-6. 1 say then, Hath God cast away his people] The apostle Had shown how the perverseness of the Jews, and the calling of the Gentiles, had been foretold in prophecy; but, says he, "do I say then, that God hath totally rejected all his people "of the Jewish nation, so as to have mercy on none of them ? " God forbid:" if I should say this, I should absolutely exclude myself. "For I also am an Israelite, of the seed of Abraham, and of the tribe of Benjamin:" It is a certain truth, that God hath not cast away his people whom he foreknew," and had chosen to salvation. "Know ye not what the scripture saith "to this purpose, in the

account that is given us of the life of Elijah? 1 Kings 19: 14. When that prophet pleaded with God against Israel, he had a remarkable answer. The prophet said, in despondency of mind, "Lord, the children of Israel have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life" also, that they might take it away. Murderers are sent after me from place to place; for they seem resolved that there shall not be one of thy worshippers left in the whole land. "But what saith the answer of God to him?" Surely you must remember it: "I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal." Thus, the Lord secured a remnant unto himself in these sad times of declension. And in like manner, " even in this present time also, there is a remnant according to the election of grace," whom God hath reserved to himself, and made them to differ from others. This was not because they were more deserving of favor than others; but it was entirely owing to the sovereign good pleasure of God "And if by grace," then it could not, in any sense, be pretended "to be of works," either performed or foreseen. If in any degree it were of works, it would not have been of entire free favor. Grace must be absolutely distinct from a reward, conferred in consequence of a work performed. The reasoning of the apostle on the subject appears to be entirely decisive. Grace signifies entirely free and unmerited favor, as proceeding from the mere good pleasure of God, Eph. 1: 5, 6. Luke 12: 32; and that without any worthiness in its object, to lead to it. The merit of works, according to the apostle's reasoning, is utterly inconsistent with the nature of free grace. These things are so entirely contrary the one to the other, that they cannot be mixed or blended together; salvation, from first to last, must be simply of the one, to the exclusion, of the other, as the moving cause. If it be of works or of debt, then it is not of grace, Gal. 4: 4. But that declaration is absolute, " By grace are ye saved not of works: lest any man should boast," Eph. 2: 8,9.

ROM 11:7-16 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded. 8 (According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day. 9 And David saith, Let their table be made a snare, and a trap, and a stumblingblock, and a recompence unto them: 10 Let their eyes be darkened, that they may not see, and bow down their back away. 11 I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy. 12 Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them the riches of the Gentiles; how much more their fulness? 13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office: 14 If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, and might save some of them. 15 For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of the world, what shall the receiving of them be, but life from the dead? 16 For if the firstfruit be holy, the lump is also holy: and if the root be holy, so are the branches.

Ver. 7-16. What then Israel hath not obtained, &c.] That people had not obtained justification unto life, because they clave to their own devices, and rejected the gospel of Christ; but the chosen remnant had obtained it, of infinite grace and mercy; and the rest were so blinded by their own prejudices and unbelief, that they were rejected of the Lord, as a punishment for their sin. A just and holy God, in his righteous judgment, gave them up. "According as it is written, Isa. 29: 10. Deut. 29: 4, Isa. 6: 10. God hath given them a spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear." When their obstinacy came to a

certain degree, he abandoned them to their own stupidity and folly; and these "continue unto this day," as is evident to every observer. The divine word is verified by matter of fact, which cannot be denied. The prophetic imprecation of David is applicable to them, which was primarily spoken of Judas and his descendants, Psalm 69: 22, 23. See Acts 1: 20. "Let the blessings of their table become a snare to them; and that which should, according to its original design, have been the means of their happiness, let it become a trap, and an occasion of stumbling. Let their eyes be darkened," or remain under the darkness which they have chosen rather than light; and "let their back be continually bowed down " under oppression, as a just punishment for their having rejected the easy yoke of Christ, Lev.26: 13. But the apostle would not be misunderstood. He did not Mean, that the Jewish nation had so stumbled as to rise no more "Have they stumbled that they should fall ?" that is, so fall as never to be recovered? "God forbid," I mean no such thing; as that they should be finally excluded from all farther share in the blessings promised to their fathers, and ensured to them by covenant. Two things are to be considered in this mysterious dispensation; the first the bringing in of the Gentiles; and the other, the restoration of the Jews in due time. "Through their fall, salvation is actually come unto the Gentiles;" which is to them a most happy event. The future consequence of this will be, "to provoke them to jealousy or emulation," They will hereafter be excited to desire the blessings of the Messiah, when they see so many of the heathen nations enjoy them. The other thing therefore to be considered is, the recovery of the Jews. This will be a most important event. "For if the fall of the Jews be the riches of the heathen world, and their diminution the riches of the Gentiles," by the spread of the gospel and its blessings among them; how much more shall the bringing in of the whole fullness of the Israelites' nation be to the enriching of the world and the church of God! I speak to you Gentiles now, and I do it with tenderness and affection. Since "I am the apostle of the Gentiles," I think I ought to magnify mine office; if by any means I might excite to emulation those who are "my brethren according to the flesh, and might save some of them." I know the divine purpose respecting their conversion will be accomplished in due time; and I foresee that many happy consequences will follow upon that event. "For if the casting away of them be the reconciling of so great a part of the heathen world to God, what shall the recovery and the receiving of them be, but "life from the dead?" It will be followed with such a general spread of the gospel, and advancement, of the religion of Jesus, as will be the occasion of great rejoicing. The hope of this will not end in disappointment. The conversion of a few of the Jewish nation may be looked upon as an earnest of the conversion of all the rest. These may be considered as "the first fruits" of the glorious harvest, devoted to God. And " if the first fruits be holy, the lump represented thereby is also holy;" or to be, in due time, presented unto the Lord; and if the root may, in some sense, be considered as consecrated to him, doubtless, the branches at length will be so consecrated," when the happy change shall take place of which I am speaking.

ROM 11:17-21 And if some of the branches be broken off, and thou, being a wild olive tree, wert grafted in among them, and with them partakest of the root and fatness of the olive tree; **18** Boast not against the branches. But if thou boast, thou bearest not the root, but the root thee. **19** Thou wilt say then, The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in. **20** Well; because of unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith. Be not highminded, but fear: **21** For if God spared not the natural branches, take heed lest he also spare not thee.

Ver. 17-21. And if some of the branches be broken off & c.] A lesson of humility may here be learned by thee, O Gentile believer. "If some of the branches be broken off," as we see in the present case, "and thou, being a twig of a wild olive tree, art grafted in among them that remained and with them "partaker of the root and fatness of the olive tree," be cautious that thou do not "boast against the natural branches." Consider that thou art but a worthless twig, taken from a wild olive; and if thou shouldst be inclined to think highly of thyself, remember, "that thou bearest not the root, but the root thee." Thou hast received many benefits from the establishment made with Abraham's seed; but they have received none from thee. Perhaps thou wilt still object, and say, "The branches were broken off, that I might be grafted in and therefore I may glory over the Jews as they once gloried over us Gentiles. Remember, I am not now speaking of the eternal salvation of the soul, but of the external privileges of religion; which are of great importance, and promotive of mien's best interests, when it pleases God to make them effectual. But thou, who enjoyest these external privileges, shouldst remember, that the Jews lost them through unbelief; the natural branches were broken off because of this; and "thou standest by faith. Be not high minded, but fear." Be humble, be cautious, be watchful; lest thou shouldst provoke the Lord to deprive thee of the privileges thou dost enjoy; "Let him, that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall," 1 Cor. 10: 12.

ROM 11:22 Behold therefore the goodness and severity of God: on them which fell, severity; but toward thee, goodness, if thou continue in his goodness: otherwise thou also shalt be cut off.

Ver. 22: Behold therefore the goodness and severity, &c.] "On them who fell, severity." For wrath is come upon them to the uttermost, both with respect to things civil and religious; and they are living monuments of God's justice. "But towards thee, goodness," in admitting thee to a participation of these privileges, "if thou continue in his goodness," and dost not abuse it, nor walk unworthy of it. "Otherwise thou also shalt be cut off." The threatening has been awfully executed in many Gentile churches, on account of sin, in Asia, Africa, and Europe. The candlestick has been removed out of its place, and the gospel and its privileges taken away. This may serve to awaken fear and caution. For though the eternal interests of the real and true children of God are secure, the continued enjoyment of religious privileges is connected with a suitable and becoming conduct in those who are favoured with them. The Lord threatened several of the seven churches in Asia with the removing of the candlestick from among them, if they repented not; and this he has done long ago. The lukewarmness of the Laodicean professors was so offensive to him, that he threatened to spue them out of his mouth, Rev. 3: 16.

ROM 11:23-27 And they also, if they abide not still in unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graff them in again. 24 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: how much more shall these, which be the natural branches, be grafted into their own olive tree? 25 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. 26 And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: 27 For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.

Ver. 23–27. And they also, if they abide not, &c.] Hopeless as the state of the Jews seemed to be both with respect to their obstinacy and their misery, " if they did not continue in unbelief, they should be grafted in again;" for God was able to subdue their prejudices, to reconcile their mind&, and " to graff them in again." This may be known by what he has done for thee; for if thou wert cut off from the olive tree which is wild by nature, and wert grafted contrary to nature into a good olive tree, how much more shall these " which be the natural branches," to whom the promises do originally belongs gaffed into their own olive tree?" The operation will not seem to be so wonderful as that which has been wrought in thy behalf; though it will be an amazing display of divine grace and power. " For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery," that the lamentable blindness which in part has happened to the Jews will continue until "the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." From time to time, vast numbers of them will be gathered into the church; but about the time of the last great harvest of the Gentiles, the blindness will be removed from Israel; and they, being saved from their rejected and dispersed state, shall in a body, be brought to embrace the gospel. They shall then look unto him whom they have pierced, and mourn. " And so all Israel shall be saved " in the Lord, with an everlasting salvation; " as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob or turn the sons of Jacob from their impenitence, unbelief, and enmity to his kingdom and salvation, Isai. 59: 20, 21. The words in the Hebrew text are somewhat different from the quotation; but since Christ is here spoken of as a Deliverer to the Jews, it is all that was requisite to the apostle's purpose. The quotation corresponds more nearly with the Septuagint, the version which was perhaps most in use among the Jews at this time. It is added, "And this is my covenant which I will make with them, when I shall take away their sins;" i.e. I will bring them again into covenant with myself.

ROM 11:28-36 As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election, they are beloved for the fathers' sakes. 29 For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance. 30 For as ye in times past have not believed God, yet have now obtained mercy through their unbelief: 31 Even so have these also now not believed, that through your mercy they also may obtain mercy. 32 For God hath concluded them all in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all. 33 O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! 34 For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counsellor? 35 Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? 36 For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory for ever. Amen.

Ver. 28-36, &c. As concerning the gospel, they are enemies, &c.] The sense of these words seems to be, For, their obstinate rejections of the gospel, God hath rejected them, in your favor, that he might receive you, into his church in their stead. But as touching; "the election," that is, those whom God hath chosen of them, and called by his grace, " they are beloved for their fathers' sakes." God's gracious regard to their ancestors engage him to take care of them, till at length he recover and restore them as a nation, to be to the praise and glory of his grace. And this shall most assuredly take place; "for the gifts, and calling of God are without repentance." That is, he will never resume the gifts he has once bestowed; he will never retract the calls he has once given; nor act contrary to the plan he has laid in his wise and eternal

counsels. No unforeseen events can possibly arise, to cause him to repent of what he has engaged and promised to do. And as ye Gentiles "have not in times past believed God," but been shut up in ignorance and blindness, "yet have now obtained mercy through" the unbelief of the Jews; so they also, having been disobedient to the gospel, shall, through your mercy, obtain mercy, and not be utterly and finally ruined. The infinitely blessed God can illustrate and glorify his goodness, even by that which might seem most contrary unto it. For he hath concluded and shut all up in unbelief," for a time, that in a more remarkable manner, "he might have mercy upon all." God hath left both Jews and Gentiles, in their turns, under the power of unbelief for an appointed time ; that at length he might have mercy on them both, by bringing all nations to the knowledge of his salvation, through faith in Jesus Christ. In the view of these things, I cannot forbear crying out, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!" His views are unbounded and eternal. His reasons for every part of his proceedings are taken from himself; and his purpose is, to glorify his own perfections. His dealings with his creatures are full of wisdom, justice, truth, and goodness. But " his judgments are unsearchable, and his ways past finding out" by us feeble and short sighted creatures. "For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor," In forming the plan of his proceedings ? Or who can pretend that he hath first given any thing to him, or conferred any obligation upon him? Let him prefer his claim, if he has any to make, that he maybe recompensed again. But no such claim can possibly be made. For all things are" of him," as the original Author of them; all things are " through him," as the gracious Preserver of them; and "to him" are all things, as their ultimate End. "To whom be glory for ever. Amen."

Aspiration.] O THOU incomprehensible Being, may it be our present and everlasting employment, to render adoration, and blessing, and glory, to thee, Thy counsels are unsearchable. Clouds and darkness are round about thee, but justice and judgment are the habitation of thy throne, while mercy and truth go before thy face. Thou art continually doing marvelous things, which we understand not; but the little that we know of thee, and of thy ways, may justly lead us to cry out, O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! Amen.

CHAPTER TWELVE

ROM 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. **2** And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

Chap. XII. Ver. 1, 2. I beseech you therefore, brethren &c.] The doctrinal and argumentative part of this epistle is concluded, in an admirable manner, with the last verses of the preceding chapter; what remains of this excellent letter is chiefly of a practical nature. We should have very mistaken conceptions of religion, were we to look upon it only as a system of doctrines, and a guide to speculation. The religion of Jesus is designed to purify our hearts, and to reform and regulate our lives. The foundation of Christian practice, it is true, must be laid in divine

knowledge, and in the belief of the truth. We must first receive Christ Jesus the Lord, and then be concerned to walk in him. The exhortations in this chapter are short, but very pertinent and weighty. We have here a compendium of those rules which are most necessary for the ordering of our conversation, as it becometh the gospel of Christ. "I beseech you therefore, brethren." By the particle "therefore," the apostle would lead us to look back on all that he has said before, and to consider what he now presses upon us, as practical inferences deduced from the premises he has laid down. "I beseech you, by the mercies of God," which he has manifested in your choice to salvation, in your redemption by the blood of Christ, in the pardon of your sins, the justification of your persons, and in the many great and glorious privileges which you enjoy ; I most affectionately entreat you, " that present your bodies," or your whole persons, "as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." Sacrifices were only made of animals brought alive to the altar. The term translated "present," is the word by which the bringing of an animal to the altar to be sacrificed was expressed. The body is here, by a usual figure, put for the whole person. It is as if the apostle had said, Let all the members of your bodies, and all the faculties of your souls, be hereafter employed in the service of him, to whom you are under such infinite obligations. This is no other than a " reasonable service;" it is no more than what is due, just, and proper. It is suited to the circumstances of rational' creatures, and will be more acceptable to God than all legal offerings, which the sacrifice of Christ has now superseded. "And be not conformed to this world." In the general course of your temper, and actions, be careful that you be not conformed to the spirit, the sentiments, the customs, and practices of this world; but rather, as professing to be new creatures in Christ Jesus, " be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind," under the influence of the Divine Spirit on your hearts, that ye may know and: prove, in an experimental way, " what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God," which he has revealed in his word. Thus you will witness the happiness to be found in being subject to the holy will of God. And the transformation of your souls into his blessed image and likeness, the daily renovation of your judgment and affections, and your proving what is the good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God, will be effectual antidote against a sinful conformity to this vain, world. Paul next proceeds to recommend humility of mind, which he does, not by entreaty, but by apostolical authority.

ROM 12:3-6 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith. 4 For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: 5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. 6 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith;

Ver. 3-6. For I say, through the grace given, &c.] I now speak to every man that is among you, and warn him to beware of having high and lofty thoughts of himself. Let no one of your however eminent for rank, learning, abilities, or spiritual gifts think more highly of himself than is consistent with that lowliness of heart which the religion of Jesus requires, and which is so essential to it. Let him ever keep in mind who is the Bestower of that by which he is distinguished from others. Let him not overrate his abilities, nor over value the distinctions conferred upon him; but let him think " soberly," modestly and humbly, of himself, " accordingly as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith," and the degree of gifts, for general

usefulness. Let no man be immoderately pleased with himself as high minded persons generally are. Let him not glory in what he has received, nor arrogate that unto himself which he does not possess. "For as we have many members in one body, and all the members have not the same office," or use, but each one is appointed for its proper purpose; not exercising the same function, nor performing, the same operation, but every one that which, is peculiar to itself; the eye sees, but does not hear, nor taste; the ear hears, the hand handles, the foot walks; and the same may be said of the other members of the body; they have particular offices assigned them by the all-wise Creator; "so we, Being many are one body in Christ." The simile is thus applied. Particular believers, united together in fellowship, make up but one body, the church, of which; Christ is the head; and we are every one members one of another." This subject is considered more at large, 1 Cor. 12: 12. Eph. 4: 16. Believers, united together in love, should walk in holy fellowship" together, sympathizing with one another and helping one another. And "having gifts differing according to the grace that is given unto us," we should use them to God's glory, and for mutual benefit. The gifts referred to are not the effects of nature, the fruits of human power, diligence, or industry; they all proceed from the grace of God, who dispenses them as he pleases. "Whether prophecy let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith." By prophesying is meant, not so much foretelling things to come, as preaching the gospel. This is the sense of the word in many other places. Those who have the gift of opening and explaining the scripture ought to make use of it, in the fear of God, and in dependence on him. They should make preparation for it, (by reading, prayer, and meditation, that they may be ready to exercise this gift as opportunity offers; nor should any difficulty or discouragement deter them from it. It should be done "according to the proportion of faith;" or according to the measure of the gift which the man has received the light, knowledge, and experience which he has; for some have more, and others less.

ROM 12:7-8 Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; 8 Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

Ver. 7, 8. Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering, &c.] The word here used sometimes means the whole of the ministerial work, even the office of apostleship, Acts 1: 17, and 6: 4. But here it seems to mean, more properly, deaconship, or the office of ministering to the poor saints, 1 Cor. 16: 5. This office should be attended to with, diligence, care, and constancy. "Or he that teacheth, on teaching." Prophesying is divided into two parts, teaching, and exhorting; the one more particularly belongs to pastors, and the other to gifted brethren in the church, who are employed in teaching, Eph. 4: 11. Different branches of the ministerial work are intended by these terms. "Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation." That branch of preaching is intended, which particularly relates to Christian practice. The same persons were prophets, teachers, and exhorters, Acts 13: 1, and 15: 32. "He that giveth, let him do it with simplicity." He that gives of his own, or, performs acts of charity, should do them in simplicity of heart; and he that distributes the bounty of the church to her poor members should do it faithfully, and without partiality, 2 Cor. 8: 2, and 9: 13. "He that ruleth should do it with diligence? Ruling in the church of God requires watchfulness, integrity, patience, and diligence. "He that sheweth mercy should do it with cheerfulness with a free heart, and a pleasant countenance. "God loves a cheerful giver." Everything should be done in this way, without moroseness, without frowns, or sharp rebukes, which the sick, the poor, and necessitous could hardly bear.

Comfortable words, a pleasant look, and a cheerful countenance, might render the visit and the gift doubly welcome.

ROM 12:9-13 Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good. **10** Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love; in honour preferring one another; **11** Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord; **12** Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer; **13** Distributing to the necessity of saints; given to hospitality.

Ver. 9—13. Let love be without dissimulation, &c.] Let your love one to another, be sincere, and free from that deceit, and those unmeaning compliments, with which the world abounds. Let your whole temper and conduct be cordial, faithful, liberal, and kind. Let all your expressions of mutual friendship be as free as possible from flattery and unmeaning ceremony. Perhaps the words, ver, 10, may be justly rendered, "Delight in the tenderest brotherly affection to one another." See that ye love one another with a pure heart, fervently. "Abhor that which is evil." Through the power of divine grace, detest and dread every thing that is sinful. The word used by the apostle signifies the greatest aversion imaginable; a turning away from that which is evil, as what is the most loathsome, detestable, and abominable; a hatred of it, accompanied with horror. "Cleave to that which is good;" that is, to God, his word, to his people, his interest, and his ways. Cleave steadfastly to these objects, whatever opposition or temptations you may meet with. "Be kindly affectionate one, to another with brotherly love." Cultivate these tender affections of the mind with delight. Think so modestly and meanly of yourselves, that you may, "in honor, prefer one another." Let every one, in his turn, think better of his brethren than of himself. "Be not-slothful in any important business," whether sacred or civil; but let it be dispatched with vigor and cheerfulness, and without any loss of time. "Be fervent in spirit, serving the Lord." You are under the greatest obligation so to be, if you consider what a Master you serve. You should serve him, not with coldness and formality, which he detests, but with the warmest zeal, and the greatest delight. You, who are the servants of Christ, should always be "rejoicing in hope" of the heavenly inheritance; "patient in all the tribulations" which you may have to endure in your way to it; "continuing instant in prayer," that you may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need; "distributing to the necessity of saints," with a free heart, and a liberal hand, according to your ability and, particularly, you should be "given to hospitality," towards strangers, exiles, and travelers, in the cause of religion.

ROM 12:14-21 Bless them which persecute you: bless, and curse not. **15** Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep. **16** Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits. **17** Recompense to no man evil for evil. Provide things honest in the sight of all men. **18** If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. **19** Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. **20** Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. **21** Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

Ver. 14-21, &c. Bless them which persecute you, &c.] Give not way to resentment against your enemies. Never allow yourselves to cherish ill will to them, much less to utter bad wishes and imprecations against them, but pray heartily for their present and everlasting welfare. "Bless, and curse not," though provoked by, their bitterest imprecations against you. Maintain "that constant sympathy with your brethren, which may induce you to "rejoice with them" that are happy and "do rejoice; and to weep with them that weep," as being in trouble and adversity. Bear your part with them in their sorrow, as being members of the same body. "Be closely united in your regards for one another," and, as much as possible, be of the same mind and heart. "Be not wise in your own conceits; for there is more hope of a fool, than of one who is wise in his own esteem. "Mind not high things;" be not eager to rise to exalted stations in life; nor fond of the society of the great; but "condescend to men of low estate;" for it is chiefly among such that true religion, in its power and purity is found. The poor have the gospel preached to them, and the Son of God, when he sojourned on earth, spent his life chiefly among such. "Recompense to no man evil;" do not say, I will do to the man as he has done to me; for his injurious treatment of you will never warrant your returning the injury. "Provide things honest in the sight of all men." Be industrious, upright, and conscientious, in all your dealings, that no one may have the least reason to charge you with dishonesty. You may find it in many cases very difficult; but, "if it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men;" avoiding, with the utmost care, contentions and quarrels with those among whom your lot is cast. And I add, "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves" on those who have injured you, but rather give place to the wrath of an angry man; for God hath said, "Vengeance is mine;" it belongs not to you, but to me; and "I myself will re-pay the offender," Deut. 32: 35. This being the case, If thine enemy hunger, feed him; and if he thirst, give him drink," or do him all the good in thy power, Prov. 25: 21. "For by doing this, thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head," to melt him to submission, and induce him to drop his resentment, and to seek thy friendship. Thus, "be not overcome with evil," however provoking it may be, "but overcome evil with good." The victory will be most honorable and happy.

Aspiration.] Help us, O Lord, to cultivate the kind and social affections which are here so strongly recommended. Brotherly kindness, tender sympathy, true humbleness of mind, "distrust of ourselves, resolute regard for peace, and love to our enemies, which will melt down with kindness the hearts that once glowed with rage and resentment against us. We esteem these precepts of love to be worthy of our highest regard; may they be written on our hearts, preserved in our memories, and daily practiced in our lives. Amen.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

ROM 13:1-2 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. 2 Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

Chap. 13. Ver. 1, 2. Let every soul be subject, &c.] The apostle thought it necessary, in this letter to the Romans, to inculcate the duties which subjects owe to their magistrates; and to

testify to them, that the disciples of Christ were not exempted from, obedience to the wholesome laws, even of the heathen countries where they lived; nor from contributing to the support of the government by which they were protected, although it was administered by idolaters. Christians ought to submit to civil governors, in all things not incompatible with their duty to God. For no inferior governors can supersede the authority of the Lord of the universe. The Jews were strongly prejudiced against submission to heathen governors; but, says the apostle, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers," which divine Providence has established in the city or country where they live. "For there is no power but of God;" there is no legal authority but may, in one sense or other, be said to be of him. It is his appointment, that there should be magistrates to guard the peace of society; and it is his hand that raises them up to their exalted stations. And therefore it may be said, ' " The powers that be, or exist in the world, are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God he who, by an unjust resistance, endeavours to confound these ranks, and to oppose the authority of which lawful magistrates are possessed, withstands the ordinance and appointment of God for the benefit of society; and they who withstand this appointment shall receive to themselves Condemnation; as they endeavour to reverse the order which the Governor of the world has established. Our Lord Jesus Christ told Pilate, the Roman governor, that all the power which he had was given him from above, John 19: 11. Agreeably to which, the apostle here speaks of civil government, as the ordinance of God.

ROM 13:3-6 For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same: 4 For he is the minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for he beareth not the sword in vain: for he is the minister of God, a revenger to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil. 5 Wherefore ye must needs be subject, not only for wrath, but also for conscience sake. 6 For for this cause pay ye tribute also: for they are God's ministers, attending continually upon this very thing.

Ver. 3-6. For rulers are not a terror to good works, &c.] That, is, to them that do good works in a civil sense, who behave well in the towns, cities, and countries where they dwell; who observe good decorum among their fellow-subjects, not doing any injury to any man's person, property, or estate. But rulers are "a terror to the evil," who do injury to their fellow-creatures, in any of the above-mentioned respects. "Wilt thou not be afraid of the power?" Thou hast reason to be so, in consequence of the high authority with which magistrates are invested. "Do that which is good, and," according to the general course of administration, thou shalt have praise of the same. For the magistrate is "the minister of God to thee for good," and for the public benefit in general. "But if thou do evil," if thou art rebellious, impious, injurious, or addicted to any wicked thing, any thing inconsistent with the peace of society, be afraid; for the magistrate beareth not the sword in vain;" the power of punishing offenders is committed to him by the Governor of the world; "for he is a servant of God, a revenger, to execute wrath upon him that doeth evil." Nay, it is necessary to be-obedient to the laws and rulers of the country where we live, "not only for wrath," or from the fear of punishment, "but also for conscience sake," if we would preserve a conscience void of offence towards God and towards men. For this reason, ye pay tribute and taxes to magistrates, because they are God's ministers, attending continually to the affairs of government, and to the distribution of justice, that the people under them may live in peace and quietness.

ROM 13:7-10 Render therefore to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honour to whom honour. **8** Owe no man any thing, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law. **9** For this, Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. **10** Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

Ver. 7-10. Render therefore to all their dues, &c.] Be careful to render to all what is justly their due, even if you should have opportunities of defrauding them of the same. "Render tribute to whom tribute is due," respecting your persons or estates. And to whom "custom is due," for any article exported or imported, render that custom, readily and willingly. To those to whom "fear" or reverence is due, on account of their situation, their worth, or character, render reverence. Where civil "honor" and respect are due, on account of office or rank in life, withhold not that honor or respect, even should there be no personal merit in the party in question. Be careful to discharge all your honest debts in reasonable time, that, if possible, you may "owe no man any thing," except the debt of love, which is due from one man to another. The observance of this precept will be often attended with considerable difficulty, in some circumstances; but care should be taken to make honorable payments of all debts, when such payments may be reasonably expected. Take the first opportunity to balance accounts with all who have demands upon you. I would also strongly recommend it to you, to regard the precept of "loving one another." For he that it loveth another hath, in some sense, fulfilled every thing that the law requires with respect to him. For these precepts, "Thou shalt not commit adultery, Thou shalt not kill, Thou shalt not steal, Thou shalt not bear false witness, Thou shalt not covet; and if there be any other commandment," any other rule prescribed in the word of God, "it is briefly comprehended in this saying, namely, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself." This precept should be engraven on all your hearts, so as to regulate every affection and action. Put yourselves, as it were, in the place of your neighbour, and, supposing a change of circumstances, treat him as you could reasonably desire to be treated yourselves. It is plain to every one, that "love worketh no ill to our neighbour," but will put a man upon doing all the good he can to him; and, therefore, "love is the fulfilling of the law that is, respecting our fellow creatures.

ROM 13:11-14 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. **12** The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness and let us put on the armour of light. **13** Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. **14** But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Ver. 11-14, &c. And that, knowing the time, &c.] It is a perilous time; we are in the midst of enemies and snares; and it behoves us to consider how long we have heard and professed to believe the gospel, as well as how little time we have to continue in this world. It is high time to awake out of sleep," to shake off sloth, dullness, and inactivity. The day of release from our

warfare approaches fast; for " our Salvation is nearer than-when we first believed; and, therefore, our term of remaining usefulness cannot be long. We have complete salvation in view; yet a little while, and we shall enter the promised rest. This consideration should serve to animate and quicken us in the way. "The night is far spent," the dark and gloomy state of the present life is almost over; "and the day is at hand," the day of perfect light and glory. "Let us, therefore, cast off the works of darkness," all those works which only suit a state of ignorance, in which we were employed before our conversion, which were works of darkness. And "let us put on the amour of light," that beautiful and shining amour of God, the amour of righteousness, which will be at once our ornament and our defense. "Let us walk honest as in the day," acting in an open, honorable, and graceful way;" not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering, or luxuriousness, and wantonness, nor yet in strife and envy." All which are scandalous, and inconsistent with the Christian character and a profession of this gospel. On the other hand, " let us put on the Lord Jesus Christ," and be concerned to be clothed with all the virtues and graces which composed his character, that we may be as like him as possible, in every particular in which he is the object of our imitation. Let the same mind be in us which was in him, and let us endeavor to walk even as he walked. Then we shall be far from "making provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts and irregular desires."

Aspiration.] While we rejoice in our deliverance from the condemning sentence of the law, may its precepts be endeared to our hearts, as the rule of our conversation. May we love our neighbors as ourselves, and then we shall do no kind of evil to any man. Help us, O God, to shake off all dullness and drowsiness in our Christian course; and in the view of the near approach of our salvation, may we be excited to diligence and activity. With conscientious care may we cast off the works of darkness, and be earnestly solicitous to be clothed with the armor of light, imbibing the spirit, and copying after the example, of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

ROM 14:1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

Chap. XIV. Ver. 1. Him that is weak in the faith receive, &c,] Some of the Jewish converts had such a veneration for the ancient ritual, that they considered the meats forbidden by Moses as unlawful to be eaten by Christians; and they looked upon the days which were, under the former dispensation, ordered to be kept holy, as days which; still should be sanctified. The Gentile believers, on the other hand, scrupled not to eat any kind of food which was proper to be eaten, without distinction; and, excepting the Lord's day, the day on which he rose from the dead, they esteemed every day alike. On these accounts, prejudices arose in their minds one against another. These prejudices the apostle here endeavors to remove. "Him that is weak in the faith," or in the doctrine of faith," receive ye." This is meant of one who had but little light and knowledge in the truths of the gospel, and particularly of what concerns Christian liberty, or a freedom from the ceremonial law. Receive him, notwithstanding his weakness, into your friendship, into your affections, and into fellowship in the church. But, at the same time, be on your guard against "doubtful disputations," about those points in which

the weak and those who are stronger, in the faith are not agreed; for doubtful disputations would be prejudicial to mutual peace and love.

ROM 14:2 For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.
3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.

Ver. 2, 3. For one believeth that he may eat all things, &c.] That he may eat all things indifferently that are good for food. But another, who is, in this respect, weak, "eateth herbs" not only express his humility and self-denial, but to guard against the defilement that might attend the eating of those animals which | were forbidden by the ceremonial law, or of those clean animals which were not killed and prepared according to the Jewish manner; therefore he rather chooses to live upon herbs. But "let not him that eateth" all kinds of food freely "despise him that eateth not" of those animals which were formerly prohibited; let him not be despised as a weak and superstitious man. And let not him that eateth them not judge and condemn him that eateth them; "for God hath received him into his family, and put him among his children; and those whom God hath received, we should not presume to reject.

ROM 14:4-9 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand. **5** One-man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. **6** He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. **7** For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. **8** For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. **9** For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

Ver. 4-9. Who art thou that judgest another? &c.] Thou wouldest think it an indecent thing to meddle with the domestic servant of thy neighbor. He is accountable to his own master, and not to thee, and must stand or fall according to his determination. And if we speak of a true servant of Jesus Christ, though he be but weak in the faith, "he shall be holden up" "in his Christian profession;" "for God is able to make him stand." Suspend therefore thy censures of him, and leave him to his own Master. What has been said about the distinction of meats may also be applied to that of days. A Jewish convert "esteems one day above another;" as the day of the new moon, of the yearly fast, &c. another man, converted from among the Gentiles, having no regard to the Jewish institution, "esteemeth every day alike." As to this, I would only say, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind," and go on in his own way, without hindrance," or censure, from others who differ from him: "For he that regardeth a day," in this peculiar manner, regardeth it to the Lord," because he concludes it to be his will that some respect should be paid to the Mosaic institutions. And, on the other hand, he who is differently minded thinks it is his duty to regard every day to the Lord, and to serve him with a fervent

mind on one day as well as another. So he that eateth freely of whatever is set before him eateth to the glory of the Lord; " for he giveth God thanks " for the Common bounties of his providence; and "he that eateth not " the food which the law of Moses forbids, still acts on the same principle, and " giveth God thanks " for what he eats; And while such a religious disposition as this prevails in the one and the other, there is no room for censure, or for one brother to be prejudiced against another; " for none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself," but unto God, and this certainly is what we are obliged to do, as we have devoted ourselves to him. It is our prevailing concern, that while we live, we may live unto the Lord; and when we die, we may die unto the Lord;" to his honor and glory, in hope of being for ever with him. "So that whether we live or die," this is our happiness, that we are the Lord's," the objects of his love and favor; " for to this end Christ both died, and rose," and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and the living ; not only the Lord of his people in this present world, but in that unchangeable state into which they pass by death; for the inhabitants of both worlds are subject to him, in consequence of what he has done, as Mediator.

ROM 14:10-13 But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. 11 For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. 12 So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God. 13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

Ver. 10-13. But why dost thou judge thy brother? &c.] Why dost thou censure him for not observing those precepts ,by which thou thyself to be bound ? "Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother for observing them?" This disposition to judge and censure one another is very blamable; "for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ;" there we are all to take our trial; therefore let us judge nothing before the time. It is written, "As I live, saith the Lord, surely every knee shall bow unto me, and every tongue shall confess to God." Let us keep this in our eye, "that every one of us shall render an account of himself to God." And "let us not judge one another any more, but judge this rather," for, it is a matter of great importance, " that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way," or do any thing to wound his mind, or to mislead him, in any thing whatsoever.

ROM 14:14-16 I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean. 15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. 16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of:

Vet. 14-16. I know, and am persuaded, &c.] I know, and am fully satisfied, "that there is nothing unclean of itself." No kind of food, by which the human body may be nourished, is unlawful to be eaten under the present dispensation. But to him who, in his scrupulous conscience, esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean he will contract guilt by allowing himself to use it, while he hath an inward apprehension that it is unlawful. And the use such meal may also be forbidden to thee, when the eating of it is injurious to others. For instance, if thy" brother be grieved, wounded, and emboldened to commit sin, by observing the liberty which thou takest, " thou dost not walk charitably," if thou persistest in that course.

Thou hast not a proper degree of concern for thy brother's peace and comfort. "Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died." Let him not be injured, ensnared, or brought into perplexity and distress, by seeing what liberties thou allowest thyself. He is the purchase of the Saviour's blood, and his welfare should be dear to thee. "Let not then your liberty," which is good in itself, be evil spoken of, or be blamed for being the occasion of mischief to others.

ROM 14:17-23 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. 18 For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. 19 Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. 20 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. 21 It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak. 22 Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. 23 And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

Ver. 17-23, &c. For the kingdom of God is not meat, &c.] The religion of Christ does not consist in these external things. It neither prohibits nor enjoins the meat or drink in question, nor is taken up with such inferior matters; but it consists in "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost;" in the righteousness of faith, and true holiness of heart and life; in spiritual peace of mind, and a peaceable temper towards others; and in those divine consolations which the Holy Spirit inspires. "And he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God," whether he abstains from the things in question, or allows himself in the use of them; and, in the main part of his conduct, he will be approved of men. "Let us therefore " not consult our own particular humors and inclinations, but "follow after the things that make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another." Let none allow their own indulgence in any kind of food to destroy, hinder, or counteract " the work of God," in the conversion of sinners, and the building up of his church, " All things indeed are pure in themselves," as has been before observed; yet that meat is evil to a man which he " eateth with offence," contrary to his own conscience, or as ensnaring to the conscience of another. In this view, I will be free to tell you, "that it is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak though this is a more rigorous self denial than is any where enjoined upon us, yet, in some cases, it may be requisite." Hast thou faith," in an enlarged degree, so as to be acquainted with the extent of Christian liberty? "Have it to thyself before God;" without making any show or parade of it before others. " Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth who if entirely easy in what he does, and has a quiet conscience, while he uses lawful enjoyments in a prudent and lawful way. But who really, in his conscience, "doubteth " of the lawfulness of certain meats "is condemned if he eat them, " because he eateth not of faith; for whatsoever is not of faith is sin for a man should abstain from what he apprehends to be wrong, though his apprehension be founded on a mistake.

Aspiration.] Since, O Lord, we must all give an account of ourselves to thee, may our whole souls be brought into subjection and obedience to thy will. May we exercise candour towards our brethren, and a tender care to avoid every thing that might give unnecessary offence to

any of them. May we never allow ourselves" to do any thing which we suspect to be unlawful, lest we should offend thee, and bring guilt on our souls. Amen.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

ROM 15:1-4 We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification. 3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me. 4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Chap. XV. Ver. 1-4. We then that are strong, &c.] It is allowed, that those who understood the nature and extent of Christian liberty were generally stronger in faith, and sounder in judgment, than their brethren who were more scrupulous. But, for that very reason, they ought to bear, or to bear with, the infirmities of the weak, and not to consult their own humors, nor seek only to please themselves. They ought to exercise self-denial with respect to them, endeavoring to promote their welfare, and to keep up communion with them. "Let every one of us please his neighbor for his good unto edification." This is the temper of mind which Christianity requires. It is the way to win the hearts, and gain the affections, of all around us. The example of our divine Master should be kept in view in this respect y "for even Christ please not himself." "He renounced his own ease, and his own reputation, for the love which he had to those whom he came to save. He constantly exposed himself to the reproaches and reviling of wicked men, and patiently endured the contradiction of sinners against himself: "As it is written, The reproaches of "them that reproached thee," O my Father," fell on me;" I have felt them in all their weight. I put you in mind of these words, as if the apostle had said, "because whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning and instruction," as well as for the promoting of our patience and consolation; that we, through patience and comfort of the scriptures, "might have an assured and joyful hope," in this day of our tribulation. In the midst of the trials to which we are constantly exposed, we may find something in the sacred writings which will suit our case, and may be serviceable to promote our best interests.

ROM 15:5-7 Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: 6 That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God.

Ver. 5-7. Now the God of patience and consolation, &c.] Having mentioned patience and comfort, the apostle reminds us, that they both come from God, and, by his own example, teaches us to pray for them. May the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one towards another, that you may have the same mutual affection for one another, according to the example of Christ Jesus; that " with one mind and one mouth," or with united hearts and voices, " ye may glorify God, even the" Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,"

who hath sent his beloved Son into the world, to unite our hearts in love to one another, and to engage us in worshipping and serving him. Christianity is an endearing bond, which should cause "all differences to be forgotten." Wherefore receive ye one another," and embrace one another, with mutual love, " as Christ hath received us," without distinction, " to the glory of God." And his glory will be greatly promoted by our affectionate regard for one another.

ROM 15:8-12 Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers: **9** And that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. **10** And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. **11** And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people. **12** And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.

Ver. 8-12. Now this I say, that Jesus Christ was, &c.] One end of Christ's coming into the world was, to unite Jews and Gentiles in one church. He assumed human nature of the seed of Abraham; he submitted to circumcision, and he exercised his personal ministry among the Jews, and therefore is called the minister of circumcision. He likewise commanded his disciples to preach the gospel first among the Jews, beginning at Jerusalem. He thus fulfilled the prophecies and promises made to the fathers of that nation. On all these accounts, it would be very wrong for the Gentile converts to despise the Jews, or to think meanly of them. But then it must be observed, on the other hand, that, some time after the ascension of the Lord Jesus, the gospel was, by the special appointment of God, extensively preached among the Gentile nations, and that with very great and astonishing success; that they, being turned from darkness to light, " might also glorify God for his saving mercy," as it had been foretold by the ancient prophets, Deut. 32: 43. Psalm 18: 49, and 117: Isaiah 11: 1-10. The Gentiles are often called upon, in the Old Testament, to join with the Jews in worshipping the God of Israel. "For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing praises, to thy name." The Gentiles were to be called to partake of the blessings once peculiar to Israel. "Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people." And David saith, "Praise the Lord, all ye nations; and repeat his praise, all ye people." The glorious privilege of admission into the church should engage the Gentiles to glorify God for his mercy to them. Isaiah, speaking expressly on this subject, says, " There shall be a root from the stock of Jesse, and one arising to rule over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust," expecting all their salvation from him. What reason then have the Jewish converts to think meanly of the Gentiles? It would be unreasonable to despise them. They should rather be affectionately received, embraced, and loved, by the converted Jews, as fellow-heirs with them of the same blessings and privileges.

ROM 15:13 Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Ver. 13. Now the God of hope fill you with, &c.] It had been foretold by the prophet Isaiah, that the Gentiles should trust or hope in the Redeemer, who was to reign over them. And hence the apostle took occasion to pray, that God, the author and object of hope, might fill the saints with abundance of joy and peace, through faith in the Redeemer. May " he fill you with all joy and peace in believing " the promises of his grace in Christ, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." Every word here is full of meaning. The apostle

seals all his preceding exhortations with prayers, as Beza observes, that the Lord would bestow on them the things which he commanded.

ROM 15:14-17 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another. 15 Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly unto you in some sort, as putting you in mind, because of the grace that is given to me of God, 16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost. 17 I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ in those things which pertain to God.

Ver. 14-17. And I myself also am persuaded of you, &c.] That ye are full of that goodness which I have been recommending; that kindness, that affection, which ye ought to manifest one to another. I am likewise persuaded that your knowledge of divine subjects is extensive, and that God has given you such abilities, "that ye are able also to admonish one another," as occasions may require. "Nevertheless, brethren, I have written the more boldly," and with the greater freedom, unto you, particularly concerning the Gentiles, to stir up your minds to an affectionate remembrance of them; because of the grace or favor which is given to me of God; that I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering unto them the gospel of God; that the offering up, of the Gentiles to him, as a holy sacrifice, might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost, so plentifully poured down upon them, "I have therefore whereof I may glory through Jesus Christ, in things pertaining to God." I have no ground of glorying in myself; but in the unmerited favor of the Redeemer I desire to glory,

ROM 15:18-24 For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed, 19 Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ. 20 Yea, so have I strived to preach the gospel, not where Christ was named, lest I should build upon another man's foundation: 21 But as it is written, To whom he was not spoken of, they shall see: and they that have not heard shall understand. 22 For which cause also I have been much hindered from coming to you. 23 But now having no more place in these parts, and having a great desire these many years to come unto you; 24 Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will come to you: for I trust to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if first I be somewhat filled with your company.

Ver. 18-24 For I will not dare to, speak of any, &c.] Some teachers were fond of speaking of things which Christ had not wrought by them, but the apostle would not be guilty of this folly. The Redeemer had wrought wonderfully, by his instrumentality, "to make the Gentiles obedient in word and deed;" but he would arrogate nothing to himself as if it were his own work; for his divine Master had wrought whatever was done. The work had been accompanied with "signs and wonders, wrought by the power of the Spirit of God;" And, being thus supported, says the apostle, "I have fully preached the gospel of Christ, from Jerusalem, Antioch, and Arabia; in the east, and round about through Asia and Greece, even to the shores of Illyricum." It has been my endeavour to preach the gospel in those places "where Christ was not named, lest I should seem desirous of building on another man's foundation," to avoid the difficulties attending the first attempts to instruct the ignorant heathens. "As it is written, To

whom he was not spoken of, they shall see; and they that have not heard shall understand," Isaiah 52: 15. It is a satisfaction to consider, that multitudes have received from my labors the first knowledge they ever had of the method of salvation by Jesus Christ. Being thus employed, "I have been long hindered from coming to you;" but no more work of this kind remaining to be done in these parts, "and having had these many years a great desire to come to you," I am purposing, through divine permission, to fulfill my design. " Whensoever I take my journey into Spain, I will, if possible, come to you : for I hope to see you in my journey, and to be brought on my way thitherward by you, if I am first filled and satisfied with your company and conversation."

ROM 15:25-33 But now I go unto Jerusalem to minister unto the saints. 26 For it hath pleased them of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem. 27 It hath pleased them verily; and their debtors they are. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, their duty is also to minister unto them in carnal things. 28 When therefore I have performed this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will come by you into Spain. 29 And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ. 30 Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; 31 That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints; 32 That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed. 33 Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

Ver. 25-33, &c. But now I go unto Jerusalem, &c.] My first course must be directed thither, "that I may minister unto the saints "in that city;" for it hath pleased the churches of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor saints which are at Jerusalem," who have suffered so much affliction and persecution. This they have done with pleasure and readiness; but, indeed, they are debtors unto them; "for if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things," the blessings of the gospel, which first came from Jerusalem, "they ought to minister to them in carnal things," or in the inferior blessings of this world. Having therefore dispatched this business, and safely delivered to them this bountiful present, this fruit of the love of the Gentile converts, if I have a favorable opportunity, " I will come by you into Spain," " And I am sure," from what I have experienced in other place's, " that when I come unto you, I shall come in the fullness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ;" or, that a full and abundant blessing will attend my ministrations among you. But I know that, in the journey I am now about to take, I have great difficulties before me, having many implacable enemies to contend with. On this account, "I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus-Christ's sake, and for the love which the Holy Spirit hath manifested to you, in all that he hath done for you, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me; for great is the efficacy of united supplication. Pray for me, "that I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judea," those wicked and unreasonable men, who are full of enmity against the gospel and its ministers, 2 Thes. 3: 1, 2. "And that my service, may be accepted of the saints." For the collection came from the Gentiles; and the apostle questioned whether it would be welcomed by the Jews, as a token of Christian love; he was therefore concerned, that all those prejudices might be overcome, " That I may," after this, " come unto you with joy by the will; of God, and that we may be refreshed together." In the mean time, "may the God of peace be with you all. Amen."

Aspiration.] We see, O Lord, that our best desires may meet with many hindrances, and that our plans may be disappointed. But do thou enable us to persevere in the path of self-denying zeal and duty, leaving all events in thy hands. Thou canst accomplish the most important ends, by methods to us un-thought of. May we seek our comfort in thy favor; and may the God of peace be with us. Amen.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

ROM 16:1-10 I commend unto you Phebe our sister, which is a servant of the church which is at Cenchrea: 2 That ye receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that ye assist her in whatsoever business she hath need of you: for she hath been a succourer of many, and of myself also. 3 Greet Priscilla and Aquila my helpers in Christ Jesus: 4 Who have for my life laid down their own necks: unto whom not only I give thanks, but also all the churches of the Gentiles. 5 Likewise greet the church that is in their house. Salute my wellbeloved Epaenetus, who is the first-fruits of Achaia unto Christ. 6 Greet Mary, who bestowed much labour on us. 7 Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles, who also were in Christ before me. 8 Greet Amplias my beloved in the Lord. 9 Salute Urbane, our helper in Christ, and Stachys my beloved. 10 Salute Apelles approved in Christ. Salute them which are of Aristobulus' household.

Chap. 16: Ver. 1-10. I commend unto you Phebe our sister, &c.] I recommend unto you the bearer of this epistle, Phebe our sister, a servant, or deaconess, of the church at Cenchrea, requesting that you would receive her in the Lord, as becometh saints, and that you would assist her in any thing in which she may have need of your assistance. She is deserving of it; "for she has been an helper of many, and of myself in particular." "Greet Priscilla, and her faithful consort Aquila," who are now returned to Rome. They both, deserve the name of "my fellow laborers in Christ Jesus, as they have been ready to do their utmost to promote his cause in different places where I have been. They ventured their lives in protecting me at Ephesus, Acts 18: 1: 24–28, 1 Cor. 16: 19. They seemed willing to lay down their own necks," and to be beheaded, in my room. On which account, I as well as others, "all the churches of the Gentiles are under obligations to them, as well as myself." Greet them in my name, "with the church that is in their house," or the several Christians, of whom their family is composed, who are united together in the closest bonds of fellowship. "Salute also my beloved Epenetus, who is among the first fruits of Achaia unto Christ," and is therefore worthy of particular remembrance. "Salute Mary, who has taken much pains" to accommodate me and my companions when, we were providentially cast into her neighborhood, "Salute Andronicus and Junia, my kinsmen, and once my fellow-prisoners, who are of note among the apostles." They were in the number of the early converts to Christianity; for "they were in Christ," by a holy profession of his name, "before me;" I therefore respect them as my elder brethren. "Greet Amplias," whom I may justly call "my beloved in the Lord." " Salute also Urbane," or Urbanus," my fellow-helper in the gospel of Christ and, with him, Stachys my beloved and esteemed friend." " Salute Apelles," long known to be sincere, and faithful, and approved of Christ.

ROM 16:11-16 Salute Herodion my kinsman. Greet them that be of the household of Narcissus, which are in the Lord. 12 Salute Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labour in the Lord.

Salute the beloved Persis, which laboured much in the Lord. 13 Salute Rufus chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine. 14 Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and the brethren which are with them. 15 Salute Philologus, and Julia, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints which are with them. 16 Salute one another with an holy kiss. The churches of Christ salute you.

Ver. 11-16. Salute Herodion my kinsman, &c.] He is still dearer to me by the ties of grace than of nature. "Salute those belonging to the household of Narcissus," as many of them as are believers in the Lord Jesus Christ. "Salute those pious women Tryphena and Tryphosa," who, according to their stations, have " labored with commendable diligence in the service of the Lord. Likewise, "salute the beloved Persis," who has distinguished herself among the faithful handmaids of the Lord, "laboring much in her station to promote his cause." "Salute Rufus," a man of an approved character, and pay my respects to his excellent mother, to whose maternal care I myself am indebted. "Salute Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermas, Patrobas, Hermes, and all the brethren residing with them," as if every one of them had been particularly mentioned. "Salute Philologus, and Julias, Nereus, and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints that are with them, whom I sincerely love for the truth's sake, which dwelleth in them. And to show that this epistle has produced its intended effect, in promoting mutual love among you, "salute one another with an holy kiss," with becoming gravity and decency. All "the churches of Christ in these parts," having heard of your faith and piety, send their Christian salutations to you.

ROM 16:17-20 Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. 18 For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple. 19 For your obedience is come abroad unto all men. I am glad therefore on your behalf: but yet I would have you wise unto that which is good, and simple concerning evil. 20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen.

Ver.17–20. Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them, &c.] Have your eyes upon those persons " who cause divisions and offences" among you, and beware of them; for they act " contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned" of the true ministers of Christ. "Avoid such men," so as to have no intimate converse with them, nor even suffer them to continue in your communion, if they will not be reclaimed. For, whatever they pretend, " they serve not the Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches," or flattering forms of address, " they deceive the hearts of the simple," leading them into such snares as they are not at first aware of, But I trust their guileful arts will not be successful among you, " For your obedience to the rules of our holy religion is come abroad unto all men ; therefore, I rejoice on your account :" but, at the same time, I give you this caution, " that you may be wise concerning that which is good, and simple concerning evil." And you may be assured, that, though the enemy of souls may annoy and assail you in various ways and forms, " the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly," together with all his agents, and make you more than, conquerors. The grace of, &c.

ROM 16:21-27 Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen, salute you. 22 I Tertius, who wrote this epistle, salute you in the Lord. 23 Gaius mine host,

and of the whole church, saluteth you. Erastus the chamberlain of the city saluteth you, and Quartus a brother. 24 The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen. 25 Now to him that is of power to stablish you according to my gospel, and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, 26 But now is made manifest, and by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God, made known to all nations for the obedience of faith: 27 To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever. Amen.

Ver. 21-27, &c. Timotheus my workfellow, and Lucius, &c.] Timothy my dear fellow-laborer saluteth you, and likewise Lucius, or Luke, and Jason, and Sosipater, my kinsmen. "I Tertius, or Silas, who wrote this epistle," as the apostle Paul dictated it to me, "do also affectionately salute you." "Gaius, who is my host," and indeed who is forward in every act of hospitality to the whole churchy saluteth you. "Erastus, the chamberlain or steward of the city, salutes you, and so does Quartus a brother. You have my repeated good wishes, that the richest and the best of all blessings may attend you, and ever rest upon you, even that "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ may be with you all. Amen."

I would sum up all, in ascribing praise and honor to the bountiful Bestower of the blessings of which I have been writing so largely; "to him that is able to stablish you according to my gospel, even the preaching of Jesus Christ, as our glorious Saviour and Redeemer, according to the revelation" which God has now been pleased to make of the "mystery, which was kept secret since the world began," and never before so fully unfolded; but which is now made manifest, in a way answerable to the writings of the prophets, and according to the commandment of the everlasting God, and is published to all nations for the obedience of faith. "To God only wise, be glory through Jesus Christ for ever Amen.

Aspiration.] May we be thankful that the way of salvation is now clearly made manifest in the open publication of the gospel, and that we are among those who are called by that gospel to the obedience of faith. O that this call may be effectual with respect to every one of us; that we may most heartily embrace the truth of Christ, and yield willing obedience to his authority. And may we be helped to ascribe all possible honor and glory to the only wise God, through his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.