

MEDITATIONS

ON THE

COVENANT

OFFICE

OF THE

HOLY GHOST

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MEDITATIONS ON THE PERSON, WORK, AND COVENANT OFFICES OF GOD THE HOLY GHOST

I.

When our blessed Lord, after his resurrection from the dead, appeared to his disciples at the sea of Tiberias, and after they had dined, put that solemn, that heart-searching inquiry to Peter—fallen, fallen, but now restored Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" and drew from his heart and lips that warm, that affectionate reply, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee," the gracious Redeemer, as if to show how that love was most clearly to be manifested, thrice said to him, "Feed my sheep." To feed Christ's sheep, then, was, in Peter's case, to be both the test and the privilege of love. But to all who love the Lord as sincerely, if not as warmly as Peter, it is not given to feed his sheep, at least not in the same sense as intended by the risen Redeemer in the charge thus laid on the chief of the Apostles. All indeed, or nearly all, who love the Lord, may minister to his people; but all ministration is not ministry. The former belongs to many, the latter to but few. The cup of cold water given in the name of a disciple; the tear of tender sympathy when we weep with those that weep; the kind word which when spoken in season is so good; the gentle yet firm reproof, whereby a snare of death is sometimes broken; the godly example which often speaks more pointedly and more loudly than any uttered words; the earnest warning when danger is foreseen approaching one to whom we feel specially united; the wise counsel, asked or offered, under perplexing circumstances; the tried yet unbroken friendship of years, again and again displayed in word and deed; the thousand nameless offices demanded by a sick bed or a long and painful affliction; the liberal hand where God in his providence has furnished the means, and the prayerful heart where he has denied them; all these, and they might easily be multiplied, are instances of Christian ministration as distinct from Christian ministry; yes, of that ministration of which the Apostle speaks: "And not holding the Head, from which all the body by joints and bands having nourishment ministered, and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God." (Col. 2:19.) But although the members of the mystical body of Christ thus mutually ministered to each other's comfort and edification, though, alas! in our degenerate day, love having waxed cold, this communication of nourishment by joints and bands has proportionally declined in strength and efficacy, yet this is not the same work as that given to Peter. The ministry of the word; the preaching of the gospel; the overseeing and ruling of the flock, all which offices of a spiritual shepherd are implied in the charge, "Feed my sheep,"

point to and enforce a distinct, a higher privilege than any private ministrations, however blessed to the profit or comfort of the members of Christ. This is committed in an especial manner to the servants of God. (1 Cor. 4:1; Eph. 4:11, 12; 1 Thess. 2:4; 2 Tim. 2:2; 1 Pet. 5:1-3.) But as in the flock of Christ there are "lambs" as well as sheep, the gracious Lord said also to Peter on the same occasion, "Feed my lambs;" even those lambs whom, as so weak and feeble and yet so tenderly loved, he gathers with his arm and carries in his bosom. (Isa. 40:11.)

"Feed, then, my sheep; feed my lambs," was the charge given to Peter; but not to Peter only, for he himself, writing in after days, well-nigh thirty years after the Lord had thus commissioned him, speaks as one who shared his office with others: "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed. Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." (1 Pet. 5:1, 2, 3.) Nor less clear is Paul in his parting discourse to the elders of the Church at Ephesus: "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:28.) But we need not enlarge on this point. The appointment by the Lord of a Christian ministry under the gospel dispensation is so clear that none can doubt it who have the least belief in, none deny it who have the least reverence for the word of truth. The more difficult, the more trying point is *who* are the men thus called to the work of the ministry, and *what* are their necessary qualifications? Does not the Scripture warrant us in laying down at least the following? As they have to feed Christ's sheep and lambs, they must be able to bring forth meat for men as well as milk for babes; (1 Cor. 3:1, 2; Heb. 5:12-14; 1 Pet. 2:2, 3;) for to be pastors according to God's own heart, they must feed his people with knowledge and understanding; (Jer. 3:15;) which assumes that they know the truth for themselves in its purity and power. They must also "take forth the precious from the vile," (Jer. 15:19,) that they may be "as God's mouth," speaking with authority in his name. To love, then, the Lord from some manifestation of his Person, some display of his grace, some view of his glory, for if we have neither seen him nor heard him, if we neither believe in him nor love him, how can we set him forth as the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely? to love his people for his sake as members of his mystical body; to know his truth by some sweet experience of its power; (John 8:32;) to have some spiritual understanding of

the mysteries of the kingdom of God; (Matt. 13:11;) to possess a gracious insight into the distinction between the precious and the vile, and power and faithfulness to take forth the one from the other; and to be favoured with a sufficient spiritual gift rightly to divide the word of truth, and preach the gospel of the grace of God with a measure of savour, unction, dew, and power; (2 Cor. 2:14; 1 John 2:20; Dent. 32:2; 1 Cor. 2:4; 1 Thess. 1:5;)—are not these scriptural marks of those highly favoured men whose commission it is to feed the Church of God? Now it is not for us to say who do and who do not come up to this scriptural standard. We have not been made judges either of men's graces or of men's gifts. We have rather to look to ourselves. "Take heed unto *thyself* and unto the doctrine," says the Apostle; (1 Tim. 4:16;) and again, "But let every man prove his own work, and then shall he have rejoicing in himself alone, and not in another. For every man shall bear his own burden." (Gal. 6:4, 5.) But whether we try ourselves and our own work or not, one thing is certain, that God will try both us and it: "Every man's work shall be made manifest; for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is." (2 Cor. 3:13.)

But the question may perhaps arise in our readers' minds, "To what is all this prefatory?" for they will naturally conclude that there is some aim intended by these remarks; that they are not mere scattered reflections without point or meaning, but are connected with some object to which they are but introductory. It is so. They have a bearing on the subject of the present article, and are intended as introductory to the Meditations which we propose, with God's help and blessing, to lay before our readers. The connection is this: There is a feeding of the Church of God by pen as well as by tongue; and, though we may seem to condemn ourselves, we cannot help expressing our belief that the qualifications are much the same. Not, indeed, that all who can preach can write. They may lack the ability or the opportunity; may be eminent servants of God, highly favoured and blessed in the ministry, and yet not be gifted with the pen of a ready writer, or may not be placed in a position to use it. Now, though we, in the providence, and, we hope, by the grace of God, have been enabled for many years to set forth his truth, both by tongue and pen, we do not, we dare not claim any large share in those qualifications to feed the Church of God which we have laid down from the Scriptures as necessary for that purpose. These qualifications may press us hard as they do others; but we must not lower God's standard to meet our own short stature, or debase his pure coins for want of a supply of gold from the heavenly treasury. Let God be true, but every man a liar. Instead, then, of laying any claim to these qualifications to feed the Church of God, we would rather see

their necessity, feel our want of them, and crave of the Lord to bestow them upon us, than assume to ourselves their possession. But this we can fairly say, that our aim and desire are, and have been for many years, to feed the sheep and lambs of Christ's flock; and that, being placed in a position whence we can reach by our pen many who truly fear God, whom we never have seen and never shall see in the flesh, we feel ourselves bound by every constraint of love to seek their spiritual good. Prompted, then, by this desire, we have sought in previous papers to lay before them some Meditations on the Person and covenant characters of the Lord Jesus Christ; and, as these have been received by them in a spirit of affection, we have been encouraged to commence a new series of thoughts on the Person and work of the blessed Spirit. Other reasons move us also to employ our pen on these heavenly subjects. In these days of error, it is most necessary that the children of God, who would not be entangled in the snares of the enemy, should be well grounded and established in the truth; and this by the teaching and testimony, work and witness of the blessed Spirit. For want of this heavenly instruction, how many who are weak in the faith or ignorant of Satan's devices are caught with some new view, some novel interpretation of a text, some subtle, plausible explanation of a passage in which, could they see into the real intention of the writer or speaker, they would at a glance perceive some abominable heresy couched. But when the truth has been made sweet and precious to the heart by an unction from above, and becomes endeared to the soul by being made the power of God unto salvation, there is communicated thereby a spiritual insight which, as if instinctively, detects error by the distaste which is felt towards it, as jarring with the Spirit's inward teaching. One so taught, to use a figure, is like a person possessed of a musical ear, who detects at once a false note, even where there has not been much, if any, musical education. Many of the dear family of God, as possessed of this heavenly teaching, feel who cannot argue, believe who cannot reason, love who cannot explain. These are ever feeling after truth, feeling for its power in their own hearts; and when this power is made experimentally known, when it comes as a gracious, heavenly influence into their souls, and drops with the dew and unction of the Spirit into their consciences, there is raised up and drawn forth thereby a living faith, a confiding trust, a silent witness within to its reality and blessedness, by which it is sealed, as with the very voice of God. In this divine witness to the power of the truth are couched all their hopes which anchor within the veil, all the tokens for good which, as so many waymarks, line their struggling, suffering path, all the comfort which supports them as a cordial under all their afflictions and sorrows in life, and all the confidence which they have in the Lord's faithfulness to his promises; for as the truth is thus sealed with a

heavenly unction on their breast, it gives them an assurance of an interest in it which makes it unspeakably sweet and precious, as a sure earnest of an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

If, then, our Meditations on the Person and work of the blessed Spirit should lead any of the dear family of God into clearer views of that heavenly Teacher and most benign Comforter, or in any way strengthen their faith, confirm their hope, brighten their evidences, establish their minds, draw forth their affections, and fix them more deeply and firmly in the truth, we shall not grudge the labour both of time and thought which it demands to, set it forth in any way adequate to its vast importance and divine blessedness.

I. The first place demanded in our Meditations on the blessed Spirit is the *Titles* which he wears in the word of truth, for these form an essential part of the testimony which is borne to him from heaven, and as such they shed a clear and blessed light on his Person and work. Titles, as given and used by man, may be or may not be of any real value. They may be true evidences of character, or perjured witnesses—a faithful description or a rank imposition. They cannot be taken in themselves as undeniable marks, for there are "flattering titles" (Job 32:21) to mislead our judgment as well as faithful titles to guide or confirm it. But the titles which God gives of things in heaven, or things on earth, or things under the earth, are infallibly true, and are intended by him as expressive of his unerring knowledge and sure testimony. This, therefore, stamps a peculiar weight and value on the titles given by him to the blessed Spirit in the word of truth.

1. The first of these titles which demands our careful consideration is that of "the *Spirit*."

This title expresses three things: 1. His *divine nature*, for "God is a Spirit," (John 4:24,) that is, as well expressed in the first of the 39 Articles, "Without body, parts, or passions," essentially a pure incorporeal Spirit as distinct from any material, divisible substance; and therefore, as eternally and intrinsically possessed of Godhead, the Holy Ghost is termed "a Spirit." But 2, it expresses the *mode of his subsistence* in the blessed Trinity, as proceeding from the Father and the Son in a mystical, incomprehensible manner by spiration, as the breath proceeds from our body. This is a deep mystery, above all comprehension, and therefore beyond all explanation; but as he is declared by our blessed Lord to proceed from the Father, (John 15:26,) is called "the Spirit of the Son," (Gal. 4:6,) and "the Spirit of Christ;" (Rom. 8:9;) and as

sometimes the Father is said to send him and sometimes the Son, (John 14:26, 16:7,) faith gathers the conclusion that in a mysterious, inexplicable manner the blessed Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. As a type, therefore, and representation of this mode of his divine substance by spiration, or breathing, God, at the first creation of man, breathed into Adam's nostrils the breath of life; (Gen. 2:7;) and so our blessed Lord breathed on the Apostles when he said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost." (John 20:22.) But he is called also "the Spirit," 3, to express his *mode of operation* on the hearts of the people of God, which is compared in scripture to a breath, or the movement of the wind: "Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain that they may live;" (Ezek. 37:9;) and so, on the day of Pentecost, in his miraculous descent on the Apostles, "suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing, mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting." (Acts 2:2.)

2. But as we shall have occasion to speak more upon this point hereafter, we pass on to another title given to him in the word of truth. He is, then, emphatically and by way of eminence called "*the Holy Spirit,*" or "*the Holy Ghost.*" * This is his special title in the New Testament, though we find him so designated in the Old; as, "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me;" (Psa. 51:11;) "But they rebelled and vexed his Holy Spirit;" and again, "Where is he that put his Holy Spirit within him?" (Isa. 62:10, 11.) But he bears this title chiefly for two reasons: 1. First, to indicate the *eternal and essential holiness* of his nature, as opposed to and distinct from an unclean spirit; for as God absolutely is "Holy," and so declares of himself, "I the Lord your God am holy," (Lev. 19:2,) and as the Son is called "the Holy One of Israel," (Isa. 43:3, 14,) so is the blessed Spirit termed "Holy" in respect of the infinite holiness of his divine nature. Thus the seraphim in the temple, as seen in vision by the prophet, cried one unto another, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts;" holy the Father, holy the Son, holy the Spirit; (Isa. 6:3;) their threefold ascription of holiness, designating the three Persons in the blessed Trinity, and the oneness of title, "the LORD of host," the Unity of the divine essence. But he is also called "the Holy Spirit," 2, as the *source and fountain of all holiness*, it being his peculiar covenant office and prerogative to communicate and breathe, operate and produce it in the hearts, lips, and lives of the people of God.

* The only difference between the words "Spirit" and "Ghost," they being precisely the same in the original, is that "Spirit" is derived from a Latin word and "Ghost" from a Saxon one.

3. He is called also *"the good Spirit."* "My Spirit is good." (Psa. 143:10.) "Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them." (Neh. 9:20.) This title expresses the supreme and essential clemency, benignity, kindness, tenderness, pity, compassion, and bounty of the blessed Spirit, all of which, as partaking of and sharing in all the perfections and attributes of Godhead, he possesses infinitely in himself. "Why callest thou me good?" said the blessed Lord to one who called him, "good Master." "None is good, save one, that is God." (Luke 18:19.) Meaning, not that he was not himself God, but that God is infinitely, essentially, and supremely good, distinct from and above any goodness of man, such as the ruler took him to be. This "goodness" therefore of God, "leadeth to repentance;" (Rom. 2:4;) as touching the inmost springs of the heart, and melting the soul under a felt sense of his most undeserved clemency and loving kindness. So "the good Spirit," as essentially and supremely good, bends in love and pity over the family of God, and by his benign operations on their heart softens and melts them into contrition and love.

4. He is also called *"the Spirit of truth."* Thrice is he so termed by the blessed Lord in his farewell discourse to his disciples, (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13,) and he bears this title as supremely possessed of truth; as containing it in himself as a divine Fountain; as animating it in all his communications with his vital breath; as revealing it in the Scriptures; as applying it to the heart, and sealing it with his own gracious and most comforting, establishing witness on the conscience.

5. He is called also *"the Comforter,"* as consoling the tried and tempted, distressed and afflicted children of God, by dropping words of peace into their breast; as revealing to them the Son of God, in his beauty and blessedness, boundless grace, and heavenly glory; as applying the promises with unction and power to their wounded spirit; as taking of the things of Christ and showing them to their soul; as shedding the love of God abroad in their heart and sealing them to the day of redemption.

6. He is also called *"the Advocate,"* as the word translated Comforter may be rendered, being in this sense the "Paraclete," or inward Intercessor at the throne of grace; for "he helpeth their infirmities" and intercedeth for them and in them "with groanings which cannot be uttered." (Rom. 8:26.)

Most of these titles will come again under consideration, and we shall

therefore not dwell longer on this part of our subject, but proceed to two other points of deep and vital importance, namely, the *Deity* and *Personality* of the blessed Spirit. These two points are intimately connected, and fit, as it were, into each other; but we shall consider them separately.

II. The *Deity* of the blessed Spirit is so connected with the Trinity, that it can hardly be separated from a consideration of that vital, that glorious truth. If he is God, he is such a Person in the Trinity; for there are not three Gods, though there are three Persons in the Godhead. We cannot be too clear, too precise, too decided here. Three distinct Persons in one undivided Godhead is a truth which so lies at the foundation of all divine revelation, whether external in the word or internal in the soul, is so the life of every doctrine, the substance of every promise, the force of every precept, the strength of all faith, the foundation of all hope, and the source and object of all love, that to be unsound there is to be unsound everywhere. It is, indeed, a heavenly mystery, and, as such, is beyond all understanding, and therefore beyond all explanation. It is, indeed, not contrary to reason, but above it; and therefore is to be apprehended by faith, not comprehended by sense; to be reverently adored, not curiously pried into; to be received from the testimony of God, not the tradition of men; to be felt, not reasoned about; to be realised, not speculated upon; to be enjoyed, not trifled with; to be fed upon, not looked at; to be cleaved unto as a matter of vital experience and personal salvation, not held as a mere doctrine or the leading article of a sound creed; to be daily lived upon as the life of the soul, not gazed at in the dim distance as a shadowy inexplicable mystery, of which we have heard by the hearing of the ear, but have never tasted nor handled for ourselves. The Trinity, therefore, assumes and involves both the *Deity* and the *Personality* of the Holy Ghost, for if a Person in the Trinity, he must be a divine Person, and if a divine Person, he has a substantial existence, and is not a mere covenant title, a shadowy name, a breath, an influence, an *afflatus*, or an emanation.

The scriptural proofs of the *Deity* of the blessed Spirit may be thus arranged:

1. He is named *in union with the Father and the Son*, as one with them in power, authority, grace, and glory, and yet as distinct in his divine Personality. Thus, in the charge given by the blessed Lord to his disciples just previously to his ascension: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all, nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Matt. 28:19.) What can be more plain than this testimony to the *Deity* of the blessed Spirit? The solemn ordinance of baptism is commanded to be

administered in the name of the Father, in the name of the Son, and in the name of the Holy Ghost. "The name," that is the authority and power (Acts 3:16; 4:7, 10) of Father, Son, and Spirit, is thus declared to be one, and therefore their nature and essence must be alike and equally one. Can we think for a single moment that any created being, however high, any angel or seraph, however bright and holy, or that any name inferior to Deity could have been associated by our Lord with the name of the Father and of the Son? Or can we believe that a mere title, a virtue, an influence, a passing, fleeting breath, could be ranked as of equal dignity and authority with the other two divine Persons of the sacred Trinity? A similar argument may be drawn from the apostolic benediction: "the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." (2 Cor. 13:14.) Grace, love, and fellowship! From what can these three precious gifts come but from three co-equal, co-eternal Persons in one undivided Essence? If the Son give grace, and the Father give love, and the Holy Ghost give communion, surely these three divine Persons must be equal in dignity and power, and yet are but one God. So, at the baptism of our gracious Redeemer, the three Persons of the sacred Trinity all appeared in open manifestation—the Son in the water, the Father speaking with an audible voice from heaven, and the Holy Ghost descending in a bodily shape like a dove. (Luke 3:22.) Similar proofs, on which we need not now enlarge, may be drawn from Eph. 2:18; Col, 2:2; 2 Thess. 3:5; Rev. 1:4, 5; in all which passages express or implied mention is made of the three Persons in the holy Trinity.

2. The *names* given in the Scripture to the blessed Spirit afford another clear proof of his Deity. Thus he is termed "Jehovah," that peculiar, that incommunicable name, which belongs solely to the great and glorious "I AM." Who but the LORD, that is Jehovah, the Lord God of Israel, spake by the prophets? "And he said, Hear now my words: If there be a prophet among you, I the Lord will make myself known unto him in a vision, and will speak unto him in a dream." (Num. 12:6.) "And the LORD spake by his servants the prophets." (2 Kings 21:10.) But we are expressly told that "prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." (2 Pet. 1:21.) So David declared on his dying bed: "The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." (2 Sam. 23:2.) Similarly the prophecies that went before of Judas, are declared by Peter to have been spoken by the Holy Ghost: "Men and brethren, this Scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost by the mouth of David spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus." (Acts 1:16.) So in that solemn warning given in the Epistle to the

Hebrews, the Apostle says, "Wherefore as the Holy Ghost saith, To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness." (Heb. 3:7, 8.) When Paul, too, would close his warning word to the Jews at Rome, he said, "Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive." (Acts 28:25, 26.) But these were the words spoken by the Lord to Isaiah when he had that glorious vision of the LORD of hosts, to which we have already referred.

II.

Necessity is a severe but wise and salutary Teacher, and as such has had, in all ages, much to do with the spiritual education of the family of God, and with that heavenly training, whereby they are made meet for the inheritance of saints in light. She meets them at the very beginning of their course; for who ever effectually fled from the wrath to come but under her compulsive strokes, or really sought for refuge in Jesus, until her sharp hail had swept away the refuge of lies, and her rushing waters had overflowed the hiding place? (Isa. 28:17.) "Compel them to come in," was the command to his servant of the lord who had made a great supper; (Luke 14:23;) and in the same spirit all who, knowing the condemnation of the law, seek for a refuge in the Son of God, cry out in the language of the hymn:

"Jesus, my soul's compelled to flee
From all its wrath and curse to thee."

And as Necessity was thus present at the birth, having much to do with the sharp throes and keen pangs of the soul in its first travail, so has she a large share in the whole subsequent education of the child of God, rarely, if ever, laying down her rod of office until the death song is sung, "O death, where is thy sting! O grave, where is thy victory?"

How plainly can her teachings be traced all through the Scriptures. How deeply indebted to her lessons, for instance, were the Old Testament saints, whose experience of sorrow and suffering is recorded in the word of truth. David hunted like a partridge upon the mountains, with but a step between him and death; Hezekiah on his sick bed, with the sentence of death in body and soul; Manasseh taken among the thorns; Jonah in the whale's belly;

Jeremiah in the low dungeon; and not to enlarge, that great cloud of ancient witnesses who had trial of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover, of bonds and imprisonment, who, "being destitute, afflicted, tormented, wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens, and caves of the earth;" (Heb. 11);—all, all found Necessity the best of all teachers, and one whose lesson could neither be contradicted nor disobeyed. Nor did she close her school with the close of the Old dispensation, or cease her instructions when life and immortality were brought to light, and the gospel was made known to all nations for the obedience of faith. As now, so then none began aright who did not begin in her school. There the publican first felt his need of that mercy for which he cried so earnestly in the temple. There the prodigal, as perishing with hunger, began to long for the bread of his father's house. There the thief on the cross learnt the first letters of, "Lord, remember me." There the Philippian jailer was first taught to tremble and cry, "What must I do to be saved?" And there, not to multiply instances, though a host of witnesses might be found amongst "the pricked in heart" on the day of Pentecost—there Saul of Tarsus, at Damascus' gate, first felt the keen lessons of that Instructress of whom he says, even when a servant of Christ and an ambassador of the gospel, as if still under her tuition, "Necessity is laid upon me." (1 Cor. 9:16.) But when we thus speak of Necessity, and ascribe to her a share in the tuition of the saints of God, are we to be understood literally, or figuratively? Figuratively certainly. There is no such real, actual, living being as Necessity. Like her twin sister Adversity, whom she so closely in form and feature resembles, she is but an abstract idea, a conception of the mind, seeking to realise more clearly, and embody more fully and distinctly that sense of urgent need which is as much a reality in spiritual feeling as an object visible to the bodily eye is of natural sight. But when thus stripped of its figurative dress, and reduced to its native condition, as an inward feeling, can we attribute to it even then any power of instruction? No: not of itself. Look at the case naturally. Necessity has been called the mother of invention; but she has not always been fruitful, or if so, has not always succeeded in rearing her children. Many have perished of hunger, to whom necessity ministered no food; many have died of thirst; to whom she brought no water. Shall we say more, and add that many have died impenitent, who both saw and felt the necessity of repentance; many have perished in unbelief, who were convinced of the need of faith?* Necessity then will do little of itself. It is an excellent—an indispensable preparation for spiritual blessings, but cannot give them; fits the heart for mercy, but cannot bestow it; is the mother of thousands of desires, but cannot feed her own children.

But what bearing have these thoughts upon Necessity on our present subject? This—that a felt necessity of the teaching and testimony of the blessed Spirit lies at the root of all our prayers and supplications for his gracious operations upon our heart, and of all our Meditations upon his Person and work, that they may be fruitful in instruction and comfort to both writer and reader. Unless the spiritual appetite be sharpened by necessity, how little relish is there for the provisions which are laid up in Zion; how little real delight in the word of truth; how little prayer and supplication for the work and witness of the blessed Spirit, as a felt, enjoyed reality. But as a sense of deep and urgent need falls upon the heart, and the Spirit of grace and supplication is given, what an ardent longing breaks forth to experience and enjoy his gracious communications of light, life, liberty, and love. What a sense of darkness—darkness that may be felt, midnight, Egyptian darkness broods like a dense, impenetrable cloud over the soul, when he does not shine upon the word, or upon the Person and work of Jesus. But with this sense of darkness, what a cry for light! "Light, Lord; light, Lord; O break into my soul with a beam of friendly light. O for a word to come with a divine power to my heart." Is not this cry for light, life, and power learned in the school of Necessity? And is it not the blessed Spirit himself, who discovers to our hearts their darkness and death, and makes us see, feel, and know it? for only "in God's light do we see light," and "whatsoever doth make manifest is light."

*** Is not Francis Spira an awful instance of this? and do not ministers continually, when visiting the sick and dying, find many who are convinced, but not converted, sensible of their need of repentance and faith, but freely owning that they can neither feel grief for sin, nor faith in the Son of God?**

In our last chapter, we attempted to bring forward some scripture proofs of the Deity of the blessed Spirit. But this doctrine, like every other sacred truth, can only be really believed as experimentally realised. When then the child of God, as quickened into spiritual life, puts up a whole host of prayers and supplications, bringing up to the front a very army of fervent desires, as if he would take the kingdom of heaven by violence, has he not so many witnesses in his bosom of the Deity of the blessed Spirit? for it is by his divine energy that he is thus enabled to plead with the Majesty of heaven. And so when the same gracious and holy Spirit, as the promised Comforter, brings nigh the word of truth, reveals Jesus, or applies a promise warm to the heart, the child of grace has in his own breast the surest, sweetest evidence that none other but, none less than Deity could thus appear for him to the very joy of his soul. Bearing then in mind this experience of the saints as their internal evidence of

the truths which we are seeking to establish from the word of God, we now proceed with our Meditations on the Person and work of God the Holy Ghost.

Among the scriptural proofs of the Deity of the Holy Spirit which we brought forward in our last paper was this, that *names* are given to him in the word which express or imply that he is God. Amongst them we showed, from a comparison of Scriptures, that he bears the name of "*Jehovah*." Pursuing the same line of proof, we shall now show that he is also called "*Lord*," which we know is the peculiar name of God. Thus we read in a promise made to Israel upon whose heart the veil still is, "Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away." (2 Cor. 3:16.) Now this "Lord" to whom Israel shall one day turn is "the LORD God," according to his own words: "Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your heart and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil." (Joel 2:12, 13.) But the Apostle assures us that "the Lord" to whom Israel shall thus turn is the Holy Spirit; for he adds, "Now the Lord is that (or the*) Spirit." And what Spirit? "The Spirit of the Lord," or as it is rendered in the margin, 2 Cor. 4:18, "the Lord the Spirit." Is not this a plain proof that "the Spirit of the Lord," or "the Lord the Spirit," is Lord and God?

* It is "the Spirit" in the original.

He is called "*the Lord*" also in that remarkable passage where the Three Persons of the blessed Trinity are all named: "And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and into the patient waiting for Christ." (2 Thess. 3:5.) Is it not the peculiar work and office of the blessed Spirit to guide the children of God into all truth, according to the Lord's own testimony: "Howbeit, when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth?" (John 16:13.) When, therefore, the Apostle prays that "the Lord would direct their hearts into the love of God," how plainly he calls the blessed Spirit "Lord;" and if "Lord," then he is God.

We also find the blessed Spirit similarly spoken of both as "*Lord*" and "*God*" in that passage where the Apostle opens the subject of spiritual gifts: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are differences of administrations, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God which worketh all in all." (1 Cor. 12:4, 5, 6.) He there shows that there are diversities of gifts, differences of administrations, and diversities of operations, but that the Giver and Author of them is the same

Spirit, the same Lord, and the same God. How plainly does he then call the Spirit "Lord" and "God." Indeed, the whole chapter is one continued testimony to the Deity of the Blessed Spirit. Examine and consider the following testimonies: "But all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will." (1 Cor. 12:11.) How sovereign will and work are here ascribed to the Spirit. "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." Here the spiritual union of the members of Christ's body is attributed to the Spirit. Now, consider the following testimonies: "But now hath *God* set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him;" (1 Cor. 12:18;) "*God* hath tempered the body together;" *God* hath set some in the Church." (1 Cor. 12:24, 28.) How clear is the conclusion that the Spirit is God, as thus expressly called such.

Consider these things, dear readers; examine them in the light of God's testimony; seek to enter into their sweetness and blessedness. If the Lord the Spirit be but pleased to shine upon his own word and his own work, you will find that a contemplation of his Deity, and sweet meditation on him as a Person in the Godhead, will much draw up your hearts towards him as a most benign and gracious Teacher and holy Comforter, and will put an edge upon your prayers and supplications to be more abundantly baptized with his sweet influences and sacred operations.

3. But we pass on to another branch of scriptural proof of the Deity of the blessed Spirit. This is drawn from the *works* ascribed to him in the Scriptures of truth. These are such as none but God can perform. Thus, as a divine Agent,* he was present *in the first creation*; as we read: "And the Spirit of God moved, (or fluttered like a bird over her young,**) upon the face of the waters," as if vivifying the cold, dead mass, and impregnating it with life and power to bring forth at God's command. Thus in the old creation he was present as a Person in the Godhead, imparting life and movement to dead, motionless chaos.

* Persons have very ignorantly objected to the term "Agent" as applied to the blessed Spirit, as if it implied inferiority. The word "Agent" means one who acts—not an Irish agent in a subordinate capacity.

** It is the same word as is rendered "fluttereth," (Deut. 22:11,) the idea being of a bird brooding over her young with a warm, fond, tremulous motion, and thus fostering them with the warmth of her bosom.

In the *creation of man* he too had a share, for God said, "Let *us* make man in *our* image, after *our* likeness;" (Gen. 1:26;) in which "us" and "our" is wrapped up the sublime mystery of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, Trinity in Unity, all engaged in the creation of our first parents. Nay, Elihu ascribes his own creation to his Almighty power: "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty hath given me life." (Job 33:4.) And so speaks the Psalmist of that re-creation when the Lord takes away the breath of his creatures, and they return to their dust: "Thou sendest forth thy Spirit, they are created, and thou renewest the face of the earth." (Psa. 104:30.)

***To raise from the dead* the sleeping dust of the saints must be the sole work of God; for who but he, who is Almighty in power, can re-animate the cold clay in that resurrection morn, when "the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout and with the trump of God," and "shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body?" (1 Thess. 4:16; Phil. 3:21.) And yet this act of omnipotence is ascribed to the Spirit: "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." (Rom. 8:11.) In the resurrection, therefore, of Jesus from the dead, the Holy Ghost had an important share, for our gracious Lord is declared to have been "put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit," (1 Pet. 3:18,)—the same blessed Spirit who will quicken (or make alive) at the resurrection the dead who have fallen asleep in Jesus. As in the vision seen by the prophet in the open valley, so will he, as a quickening Spirit, breathe upon the dead and dry bones of the sleeping saints, and the entombed millions will arise and stand upon their feet, an exceeding great army. (Ezek. 37:10.)* Of this a pledge was given at the resurrection of Jesus; for as at his baptism, as before pointed out, so at his resurrection, the Three Persons of the Blessed Trinity were all present and all engaged. The Father, as again and again declared, raised him from the dead; (Acts 2:32; 4:10; 10:40; 13:30;) the Son raised up himself by his own power: "Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up;" (John 2:19;) "I lay my life down that I might take it again;" (John 10:17;) and, as we have just shown, the Holy Ghost quickened his dead body when he was "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead." (Rom. 1:4.)**

*** We wish it to be clearly understood that we do not mean this as an interpretation, but merely a figurative application of Ezekiel's vision.**

Nor is the *quicken*ing of a soul dead in sins less an act of divine, creative power than the creation of man or the raising of him from the dead. But this we know, from the testimony of the word of truth, is the special work of the blessed Spirit. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth" was our Lord's own testimony. (John 6:63.) He, therefore, assures us that "except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God;" and that "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John 3:5, 6.) All must admit that nothing short of a divine power can quicken the soul dead in trespasses and sins; for it is "God," and God only, "who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were." (Rom. 4:17.) Thus every one made alive unto God by regenerating grace carries in his own breast a witness of the Deity of the Holy Ghost, for he has felt his quickening power, and is therefore fully satisfied that he must be "God who raiseth the dead," whether out of the dust of death in the grave, or out of the charnel-house of sin. This power to raise the dead was Paul's only trust when he was "pressed out of measure, above strength, insomuch that he despaired even of life," and to him was the sure pledge not only of deliverance from so great a present death, but from all future "deaths oft." (2 Cor. 1:8-10; 11:23.)

And as the blessed Spirit first quickened the soul into life, so he also from time to time *revives* his gracious work; nor is this less the effect of a divine power than the first begetting unto eternal life; for as no man can quicken, so "none can keep alive his own soul." (Psa. 22:29.) When the Psalmist cried out, as expressing the longing desire of the Church: "Wilt thou not revive us again, that thy people may rejoice in thee?" (Psa. 85:6;) did it not imply that none but God could revive his own work? as the prophet prayed: "O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid. O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy." (Hab. 3:2.) Under his gracious renewings David could say, "Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me," as feeling a confidence that the Lord would perfect that which concerned him, and never forsake the work of his own hands. (Psa. 138:7, 8.) "He restoreth my soul;" (Psa. 23:3;) "I shall be anointed with fresh oil;" (Psa. 92:10) "O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit; so wilt thou recover me, and make me to live;" (Isa. 38:16;) "They that dwell under his shadow shall return; they shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine." (Hos. 14:7.) Such and similar expressions of living experience bear testimony to the Spirit's renewings and revivings, for as he grants life and favour in the first communications of his grace, so his after visitations preserve the spirit. (Job 10:12.) Thus every revival of our faith, hope, and love, every renewing in the spirit of our mind,

whereby we put off the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness; every fresh going out of prayer, supplication, or affection after the Lord; and every visitation of his presence and of his power, are so many clear testimonies that God the Holy Ghost is fulfilling the promise: "In that day sing ye unto her, A vineyard of red wine. I the Lord do keep it; I will water it every moment; lest any hurt it, I will keep it night and day." (Isa. 27:2, 3.)

As the *Teacher*, too, of the family of God, the work of the Holy Ghost is divine, and therefore divine must be the Workman. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord," is one of the firm promises of the New Covenant; and to this the Lord himself bore witness when he said, "It is written in the prophets, They shall be all taught of God." (John 6:45.) But the same gracious Lord declared to his disciples that "the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father would send in his name, should teach them all things," and that "when he, the Spirit of truth, should come, he would guide them into all truth." (John 14:26; 16:13.) Now unless the Holy Spirit be God, where is the promise, "They shall be all taught of God?"

But the blessed Spirit is said also "to *search* all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Cor. 2:10.) But this clearly needs an Omniscient eye, for what other can read, so to speak, the very heart of God to its profoundest depths? The Apostle therefore adds, "For what man knoweth the things of a man save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no one* but the Spirit of God." (1 Cor. 2:11.) The angels which excel in power surround the throne, and are sent forth "as ministering spirits to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation;" (Heb. 1:14;) but what angelic being or bright and burning seraph, can "search the deep things of God?" When "the book written within and without," sealed with seven seals, was held in the right hand of him that sat on the throne, a strong angel proclaimed with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the book, and to loose the seals thereof?" But "no one in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon," until the Lamb came and took the book out of the hand of him that sat on the throne. (Rev. 5:1-3, 6, 7.) If, then, no created being could read the book, how can any read the very heart of God but He who has in himself all the perfections of Deity?

* So it should have been translated, as the word "man" is not in the original. The same remark applies to John 10:28, 29, and Rev. 5:3.

"Ye are the temple," says the Apostle, "of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them." (2 Cor. 6:16.) But he also says, "What! Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" (1 Cor. 6:19.) If, then, the body of the saint be "the temple of the Holy Ghost" and "the temple of the living God," how clear, how certain the conclusion that the Holy Ghost is the living God.

When *Ananias* sold a possession and kept back part of the price, that he might have a character for liberality and self-denial and yet make a provision for the flesh, Peter said to him, "Ananias, why hath Satan filled thine heart to *lie to the Holy Ghost?*" "Thou hast not lied unto men, but *unto God.*" How plain, then, how clear the conclusion that the Holy Ghost is God, since to lie unto him is to lie unto God!

***The sin against the Holy Ghost* is, we, know from the Lord's own testimony, the great transgression, the unpardonable sin; and thousands of God's dear family have been sorely tried lest they should have been guilty of it. But, without entering into the nature, the subjects, or the consequences of this unpardonable sin, as foreign to our present intention, let us look at it merely as a proof of the Deity of the blessed Spirit. If the Spirit be not a divine Person in the Godhead, but a mere virtue, or a breath, or an emanation, or a title, why should the sin against him be so exceedingly great as to be absolutely unpardonable? Sins against the Justice, the Mercy, the Longsuffering, the Goodness of God, are not unpardonable; why, then, if the Holy Spirit be but a covenant title, or a peculiar relationship, or an operation, or an influence, or an attribute of God—why, we ask, should the sin against him be without forgiveness? Besides which, when we speak of sinning against the goodness, longsuffering, &c., of God, we speak but figuratively; for, in strict language, these sins are not so much against the attributes of God as against God himself, who is all good, longsuffering, &c. To sin, therefore, against the Holy Ghost must be to sin against God, for there is no sin but what is against God. Why, then, should the sin against the Holy Ghost be so deeply resented, so inflexibly punished, and should bring down such certain and awful ruin upon the head of the transgressors, unless he be verily and truly God, possessing, as such, every glory and perfection of the Godhead?**

Again, still pursuing the same line of argument, we read that "*all Scripture is given by inspiration of God.*" (2 Tim. 3:16.) Now, who inspired the Scriptures, or rather, the men of God, both under the Old and New Testaments, who

wrote them? Was it not the Holy Ghost? Hear Paul's testimony, as an inspired Apostle, whose blessed epistles we hold in our hands and the power and sweetness of which we have so often felt in our hearts: "Now we have received not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given us of God; which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual."* (1 Cor. 2:12, 13.) And what is Peter's testimony? "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you, searching what, or what manner of time the *Spirit of Christ* which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." (1 Pet. 1:10, 11.) And again: "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the Scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as *they were moved by the Holy Ghost*." (2 Pet. 1:20, 21.) Similar was the testimony of the sweet psalmist of Israel: "*The Spirit of the Lord* spake by me, and his word was in my tongue." (2 Sam. 23:2.) Agreeing with this was the witness also of Stephen before the council: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always *resist the Holy Ghost*? As your fathers did, so do ye. Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? And they have slain them who showed before of the coming of that Just One, of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers." (Acts 7:51, 52.) But how did they and their fathers resist the Holy Ghost, except by resisting his testimonies, as speaking in the prophets whom they persecuted? How plain the conclusion, then, that the Holy Ghost inspired those Scriptures, which are expressly declared to have been given by inspiration of God. Is not this a conclusive proof that the Holy Ghost is God?

* The last clause might be translated, "composing spiritual things for spiritual men." That this is the meaning of the passage, or at least that it may be rendered so, seems plain to us from the context; "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." Here the Apostle contrasts the spiritual man of whom he had just spoken with the natural man. "We" he says, "compare or write spiritual things for spiritual men;" and why? Because they only can receive them. We do not write spiritual things for natural men, for they cannot receive them, as being the things of the Spirit of God. But he that is spiritual judgeth (or discerneth, margin) all things, and therefore for him and him alone do we write. If our readers will look at the drift and bearing of the whole chapter, (1 Cor. 2) we cannot but think they will see it harmonize with our interpretation.

Thus we see how, as in a magnifying glass, the scattered rays of divine truth converge into one focus, and all meet in one point—the Deity of the blessed Spirit. It is, then, with this as with every other foundation truth, that it does not rest on one or more isolated passages, but bursts more and more upon our view as we examine, compare, and meditate upon the word of God's grace. The truths of the gospel, though to an enlightened eye they shine as with a ray of light all through the word, yet are they, for the most part, laid up as in veins. "Surely there is a vein for the silver, and a place for the gold, where they fine it." "As for the earth, out of it cometh bread, and under it is turned up as it were fire. The stones of it are the place of sapphires, and it hath dust of gold." (Job 28:5, 6.) But where is "the place of sapphires?" and where his "dust of gold?" "In the path which no fowl," no unclean professor, "knoweth, and which the vulture's eye," keen though it be after this world's carrion, "hath not seen." (Job 28:7.) But to a spiritual mind sweet and soul-rewarding is the task—if task it can be called—of searching the word as for hid treasure. No sweeter, no better employment can engage heart and hands than, in the spirit of prayer and meditation, of separation from the world, of holy fear, of a desire to know the will of God and do it, of humility, simplicity, and godly sincerity, to seek to enter into those heavenly mysteries which are stored up in the Scriptures; and this, not to furnish the head with notions, but to feed the soul with the bread of life. Truth, received in the love and power of it, informs and establishes the judgment, softens and melts the heart, warms and draws upward the affections, makes and keeps the conscience alive and tender, is the food of faith, the strength of hope, and the mainspring of love. To know the truth is to be "a disciple indeed," and to be made blessedly free—free from error, and the vile heresies which everywhere abound; free from presumption and self-righteousness; free from the curse and bondage of the law and the condemnation of a guilty conscience; free from a slavish fear of the opinion of men and the contempt and scorn of the world and worldly professors; free from following a multitude to do evil; free from companionship with those who have a name to live but are dead. But free to love the Lord and his dear people; free to speak well of his name; free to glorify him with our body and soul, which are his; free to a throne of grace and to a blood-besprinkled mercy-seat; free to every good word and work; free to "whatsoever things are good, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report." (Phil. 4:8.)

The Deity of the blessed Spirit is one of those foundation truths which are thus

to be received in love and power. It is no dry doctrine when made manifest to the heart, but full of heavenly comfort and rich with that holy savour and divine unction which make the truth of God so precious to every believing soul.

III.

In our last Paper on the Person, work, and covenant offices of the blessed Spirit, we brought to a close our scriptural proofs of his eternal and essential Deity. We shall now, therefore, endeavour, with God's help and blessing, to unfold a point very closely and intimately connected with his essential Deity, viz., his divine *Personality*; in other words, we shall attempt to show from the word of truth that he who in Scripture bears the sacred name of the Holy Ghost is not a breath, or an emanation, or a quality, or an energy, an operation, or an influence of God, from time to time put forth by him, but a distinct *Person* in the Triune Jehovah.

But as on these important points clearness of thought and of expression is eminently desirable, for often, like the mob at Ephesus, "some cry one thing and some another, till the whole assembly" of writers and readers "is confused, and the most part know not wherefore they come together," (Acts 19:32,) let us, at the very commencement of our argument, first explain and define what we understand by a *Person*, and show how such a one differs from a breath, a power, or an influence. Nor let any one think that this doctrine of the distinct Personality of the Holy Ghost is a mere strife of words, an unimportant matter, or an unprofitable discussion, which we may take or leave, believe or deny, without any injury to our faith or hope. On the contrary, let this be firmly impressed on your mind, that if you deny or disbelieve the Personality of the blessed Spirit, you deny and disbelieve with it the grand foundation truth of the Trinity; and "if the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" You may talk of your deep and long experience,* or of your consistent practice; but "doth a fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter?" (James 3:11.) If your doctrine be unsound, your experience must be a delusion, and your practice an imposition. Ye, then, who desire to be right and fear to be wrong, who prize the truth of God more than thousands of gold and silver, "make straight paths for your feet," and look and see whether you have been taught of God that precious doctrine of a Triune Jehovah, and have a personal knowledge and experience in your own soul of each of the Three Persons in the Godhead.

"Look," we repeat it, "to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward." (2 John 8.)

* There is a sect, if we may so call it, of Socinian Baptists in some of the eastern counties, who will talk glibly and seemingly well of their experience, of convictions of sin, and of mercy received; but if you touch them upon the Deity and eternal Sonship of Christ, or the Deity and Personality of the Holy Ghost, they will hiss like vipers. It is these to whom we allude, as speaking of their experience.

But as we write more to establish truth than to refute error, though we cannot well do the one without at the same time doing the other; and as many true believers in the Trinity may not have considered the strong grounds on which their faith rests, or may even have confused ideas on these high and heavenly doctrines, we shall endeavour, as clearly as we can, to unfold the testimony of God on this point for their instruction and edification.

By a *Person*, then, as a term applicable to the blessed Spirit, we understand a living, intelligent Agent, one who has a distinct spiritual subsistence, and is possessed of a will and power of his own, which he exerts and manifests so as to show that he has a real, substantial existence. Now compare with this living, breathing, intelligent, active Person an influence proceeding from God, and observe how widely they differ. You, I, we all are persons, and as such we exert a certain influence upon our families, our dependents, our friends. A minister, for instance, exerts an influence upon his Church and congregation. His words, or actions, or spirit issuing from him carry with them a certain power, and are impregnated with a peculiar influence. But this is not the *man*. His person and his influence are as distinct as the sun and the warmth of the sun, or as the moon and the light of the moon. Now see the craft of those subtle heretics who deny the Personality of the Holy Ghost, and resolve all that is said of the Spirit in Scripture into an influence exerted by God, as the sun exerts an influence upon vegetation by his light and heat, or into an act of power, as when a magistrate exerts his legal authority. It may seem, at first sight, a matter of no great importance, or a mere subtle distinction of learned divines, or a theological quibble, or that it all comes to the same thing in the end. But penetrate through these crafty devices, and then you will see how the denial of the Personality of the blessed Spirit is a deadly poison, an error of the first magnitude,* for *it strikes at once a Person out of the Trinity*; and what is this but to nullify and destroy the doctrine of the Trinity altogether? Men of God, in both ancient and modern times, knew well the sacred blessedness of

truth and the damnable nature of error; and this deep conviction led them to fence off the one from the other by using expressions such as the Trinity, Personality, &c., which, if not precisely Scripture words, are so far scriptural language that they clearly and definitely express Scripture truth.

* The late Mr. Gadsby would never allow any man to stand in his pulpit who objected to the expression, "God the Holy Ghost;" for there were at one time in the North Calvinistic Baptist ministers, and some, we believe who had been in connection with him, who would not use the words. Mr. Gadsby was perfectly right; and in this, as in all other points, manifested his hatred of error, and his faithfulness and decision for the truth.

But to bring this point to a simple and easily intelligible test, and to help you to distinguish between a person and a thing, take a quality, so to speak, or what is more commonly called an attribute of God, as his holiness, or his justice, or his mercy, or his love. These attributes of Jehovah have no personal subsistence distinct from himself, though sometimes, speaking figuratively, we assign to them personal acts. Thus when we say that "Justice draws its awful sword;" or, "Mercy smiles;" or, "Grace superabounds;" or, "Love draws," we do not mean that these attributes of God are so many distinct Persons in the Godhead, though the strong language of metaphor and figure invests them with a kind of temporary personality. But as we easily distinguish between the kindness of a person and the person himself who is kind, so we can similarly distinguish between the kindness of God and the Person of God himself. Thus when we speak of the *Personality* of the Holy Ghost, we mean that he is not a certain power or influence, virtue, energy, or operation which God puts forth, as when in the first creation he created all things by the word of his mouth, or as he now manifests his sensible presence to the soul; but that the Holy Ghost is as much a distinct Person in the Godhead as the Father and the Son, and as such possesses all the peculiar attributes of Deity. Has the Father power? Yes; for "power belongeth unto God." (Psa. 62:11.) So has the blessed Spirit, for "Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee." (Luke 4:14.) Has the Father love? Yes; for "God is love." "God so loved the world," &c. So has the Spirit. "Now I beseech you for the love of the Spirit." (Rom. 15:30.) Does the Father give commands? Yes; for "this commandment have we from him, that he who loveth God love his brother also." (1 John 4:21.) So does the Spirit; for the Spirit bade Peter go with the servants of Cornelius, nothing doubting. (Acts 11:12.) But we are rather anticipating a line of proof, which we shall presently have occasion more fully to dwell upon. We have, therefore, merely adduced these two or three instances to explain, more clearly and fully what is

intended by the expression the *Personality* of the Holy Ghost, and to show the distinction between a person and a quality, power, or influence.

We shall now, therefore, proceed to show from the firm word of truth that the blessed Spirit is truly and really a divine and distinct Person in the eternal, self-existent Godhead.

I. Our first class of proofs, for they may be conveniently arranged under two leading heads, shall be taken from those passages in which *the Holy Spirit is spoken of in conjunction with the Father and the Son*; and as these are by general admission Persons—the Person of the Father being spoken of Heb. 1:3, and the Person of Christ,* 2 Cor. 2:10—the Holy Ghost is a Person also. The first proof shall be taken from the words which our blessed Lord spake to his disciples when he said to them: "Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." Let us examine these solemn words of our blessed Lord with a view to the Personality of the blessed Spirit as distinctly expressed in them. Baptism, all admit, is the outward sign of admission into the visible Church of Christ, an ordinance of the Lord's own institution. In its administration, the believer is baptized "in the name," that is the authority,** of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Now does not this formula of baptism express, 1. A plurality of Persons? The Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost are each distinctly named; and 2. Unity of Essence? for it is not in the names, but "in the name" of the Three Persons, clearly implying that the Persons are Three, but the name, the nature, the essence, the being, the authority but One. But to establish this point as bearing upon the distinct Personality of the Spirit more clearly, try and substitute a quality, a breath, an influence, a virtue of God for the word "Holy Ghost." Such plain, simple tests are often more convincing, at least to some minds, than direct positive arguments. "Baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of love." How flat, how uncouth, confused! How unworthy of the divine majesty of the blessed Lord who spake the words! "In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the divine breath." Still the same flat, uncouth, confused mixture, so that the veriest babe in grace could tell it was not such heavenly language as ever fell from him into whose lips grace was poured. It is hardly worth while to pursue the argument by making another trial of "energy," "power," "authority," or "influence." The result would be still the same, that all such terms at once betray themselves by their own nakedness and nothingness, as unfit to stand side by side with the name of the Father and of the Son. But now view the truth in its own pure and heavenly light, and read the words in the brightness

of their own grace and glory. Read them as a believer in the blessed Trinity. Then how clear to faith is it that "the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost" declares that these are three distinct co-equal, co-eternal Persons in one undivided Essence.

* The expression "in the *face* of Jesus Christ," (2 Cor. 4:6,) might be rendered "in the person of Jesus Christ;" it being precisely the same word as that translated person, 2 Cor. 2:10.

** The word "name" in the Scripture, as applied to God, signifies all that God has revealed of himself, whereby he can be known, believed in, worshipped, feared, and loved by the children of men. See, for the proof of this, Exod. 33:19; 34:5, 6. The name of God, therefore, includes and signifies all those glorious perfections of Deity which he has revealed of himself in the word of his grace.

2. But now under the same class of proof—the name of the Holy Ghost in the same connection with the Father and the Son; look at another text of holy writ, in which the Personality of the Holy Ghost is most clearly seen. It is that well-known benediction which so often and so fitly closes the service of God in the sanctuary: "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." (2 Cor. 13:14.) See how the Three Persons of the sacred Trinity are here invocated and called upon to bestow each his distinct blessing. "The love"—the eternal love of God the Father; "the grace," in all its richness and fulness, of God the Son; and the sweet, sacred fellowship and "communion" of God the Holy Ghost—will the believing soul part with either the Person of each divine Giver or the gift of each divine Person? Are not Giver and gift, Person and work of all Three alike inseparable? We might, if it were worth while, try the same experiment with this text as with the one before quoted, Matt. 28:19. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion"—of what? Of an influence, a quality, a virtue, a power, an emanation? What do they all mean? What fellowship is there in a breath, or a quality, or an influence? There can be communion only with a Person. Can a virtue, or a breath, or an influence converse with me, talk with me, commune with me, or I with it? Who ever expected a breath to speak, or conversed with it as a man converseth with a friend? A poet might so speak in figurative language, or a lover may sigh his woeful complaints to the rocks, or tell his mournful tale to the purling stream, into which he drops his hot tears; but the blessing prayed for was not the longings of poet or lover, but the solid, solemn, holy aspiration of a man of God, who knew for himself what the sacred fellowship of God the Holy Ghost,

as a divine Person, communicated to his soul.

**"Thy sweet communion charms the soul,
And gives true peace and joy,
Which Satan's power cannot control,
Nor all his wiles destroy."**

This sweet communion never charmed the soul of those vile heretics who deny his Deity and Personality. Such sips and tastes of heavenly bliss are the sole portion of the living, believing, loving family of God.

3. Another testimony under the same class of Scripture proof to the Personality of the Holy Ghost may be drawn from his appearance at the baptism of our blessed Lord "in a bodily shape:" "And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased." (Luke 3:22.) Here again, as we have pointed out in a preceding paper, the Three Persons of the blessed Trinity were all present. The Father spoke with an audible voice from heaven, the Son was in the water, and the Holy Ghost descended "in a bodily shape like a dove" upon him. Now it does not matter to the argument whether the Holy Ghost assumed the outward form of a dove, which seems the better meaning, or descended with the rapid motion of a dove. The point and force of the proof lie in the words, "in a bodily shape," and that his visible appearance was simultaneous, that is, occurred at the same moment with, that of the Father and the Son. "A bodily shape" presumes a personal subsistence. A quality, or an energy, or an influence, can have no bodily shape; but when the Holy Ghost would reveal in a sensible, visible manner his personal subsistence as a divine Person in the Trinity, he descended in a bodily form.

4. Another testimony of a similar character may be drawn from the celebrated passage of the three heavenly Witnesses: "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one." (1 John 5:7.) How plainly and clearly is the Holy Ghost there joined with the Father and the Word, (or Son,) and how positive the declaration that these three are one—Three in a distinction of Persons, One in Unity of Essence!

II. But we pass on to another class of proofs of the Personality of the Holy Ghost. *Actions are ascribed to him which none but a person, and He a divine*

Person, *can perform.*

1. Thus he is said "to *search* all things, yea, the deep things of God;" "to *know*" the things of God; and "to *teach*" them in words not of human wisdom but of his own special inditing. (1 Cor. 2:10-13.) Are not all these *personal* actions? How can a quality, or a virtue, or an influence, except figuratively, and the Apostle is not speaking here in figures, know, search, or teach? If you came from a foreign country and told me that there was a dignified and exalted Personage there who searched, knew, and taught the inhabitants of that land all that was good for them to know, should I think you meant that there was a certain influence in that climate, or a peculiar virtue in the sun or air which knew, searched, and taught all things? Should you not deceive me by ascribing to a breath, or a passing influence, such actions as a person only can perform? So we may argue if all that the Holy Ghost is declared to do be not personal actions, but merely figurative expressions of a certain power which God puts forth, would not the Scriptures awfully deceive us, and could we credit their testimony on any other point?

2. But the fullest and most blessed testimony of these personal actions of the Holy Ghost is contained in the words of our Lord to his sorrowing disciples where he promised to send them "another Comforter." Now nothing can be more clear than that when the blessed Lord was with his disciples he was a *personal* Comforter. It was himself—"Behold it is I," who was ever with them. It was not, as now, his spiritual, but his actual bodily presence, which was their joy and strength. If, then, the promised Comforter were not a Person, and a divine Person, but a mere breath, an influence, or a quality, how could he be to them what Jesus had so long been? The Lord did not say to them, "I will send you comfort;" no; but "a Comforter;" another Comforter, who shall be to you all and more than all I have been to you. But observe also the *personal* actions which the gracious Lord said this Comforter should perform. He was "to *abide* with them for ever." (John 14:16.) Now an influence has no abiding, still less for ever. When not put forth, it ceases to be. He was also "to *dwell* with them." This is a personal act. I dwell in my house, but an influence does not dwell. It is like the wind that passeth away, and the place thereof knoweth it no more. When the blessed Lord said, in the same heavenly discourse: "Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words; and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him," (John 14:23,) are not the Father and the Son, who come and make their abode in the believer's heart, Persons? By parity of reasoning, then the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, when he is said to dwell in

believers, must be a divine Person also. He is also said "to teach and bring all things to remembrance" whatever Jesus said unto his disciples. Are not these personal actions? Does not the Lord expressly say "He"* not "it," "shall teach you all things?" We all know how peculiar, how authoritative, how distinct a living teacher is from any book. How wisely he can discriminate cases, fathom the extent of our ignorance, adapt his lessons to our capacity, chide us when we are sluggish or stupid, encourage us when we are diligent and attentive, blend tenderness with authority, and mingle affection with rebuke. But could an *influence* do all this? Where is the teacher's influence when he himself is not present? Let every large school testify. Where, too, the all-seeing eye; where the kindly hand; where the tender forbearance; where the peculiar adaptation to the thousands of wayward pupils could there be in a breath, or a passing power, compared with what the Holy Ghost, as a divine and distinct Person in the Godhead, personally exerts, as he looks down in all his infinite wisdom, and all the depths of his boundless pity and love, upon his dear pupils—the family of God?

3. He is said also "to *testify*," or bear witness. (John 15:26; Rom. 8:16; 1 John 5:6.) Is not this, too, a *personal* act? According to the Levitical law, personal testimony was needed. "At the mouth of two witnesses, or three witnesses, shall he that is worthy of death be put to death; but at the mouth of one witness shall he not be put to death." (Deut. 17:6.) What we call circumstantial evidence, as blood upon a man's clothes, or the property of the murdered person found upon him, was not admissible. The testimony only of personal, living witnesses was admissible under the Hebrew law. Thus our Lord could not be legally condemned by the Jewish Sanhedrim until the two false witnesses came to testify what they had personally and individually heard him say. Bearing, then, this in mind, see what a proof it is of the *Personality* of the blessed Spirit, that he bears witness. And observe also how, according to the Lord's words, he testifies or bears witness of him: "He shall take of mine, and shall show it unto you." (John 16:15.) Is not *taking* a personal action? It is as if the blessed Spirit had hands. You could not say of a quality, an operation, or an influence, that it takes of a thing.

* The "He" is very strongly expressed in the original; He, "that very person."

4. To *speak* also is a personal action. "He shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak." (John 16:13.) It is true that in figurative language, "the heavens" are said to "declare the glory of God," and that "there is no speech nor language where their voice is not heard." (Psa.

19:1) 3.) But this we know is figurative language; and so when the prophet says that "at the end the vision shall speak," (Hab. 2:3,) we clearly understand that it is a figure or metaphor. But our gracious Lord was not speaking figuratively to his disciples, but describing and declaring, in the plainest, simplest language, the work of the promised Comforter. It is hard to judge for others, but to us it seems that no simple-hearted, believing child of God can rise from the solemn perusal of these three chapters of John's Gospel (14, 15, 16) without the deepest persuasion that the Holy Ghost, the promised Comforter, is a divine Person in the Godhead.

5. To *seal* is another personal act. An influence cannot seal. You may be sealed by the blessed Spirit, and feel his sweet influences, as he seals the love of God on your heart; but it is *He* who seals. Of our blessed Lord we read: "Him hath God the Father sealed." (John 6:27.) This was the personal act of God the Father. So believers are sealed by the Holy Ghost: "In whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with (or by, as it might be rendered) that Holy Spirit of promise." (Eph. 1:13.) "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." (Eph. 4:30.) When I sign and seal any legal document, as a deed or a power of attorney, is it not my *personal act*? The very words I use are a proof: "I deliver this as my act and deed." My personal act gives it all its validity. Another must not seal for me any more than he may sign for me. I must do it myself. So when the blessed, Spirit seals the love of God on the heart, it is a *personal act*, and from this personal act is derived both all its validity and all its blessedness.

6. To *intercede* for another is also a *personal act*. We see this especially in our glorious Intercessor within the veil. The personal intercession of Jesus is the most blessed feature of his presence in the courts of bliss. Now the blessed Spirit is declared to intercede for us: "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." (Rom. 8:26.) To help our infirmities is a personal act. View the thousands of poor, needy, tried, tempted saints, all full of infirmities, and see by the eye of faith that tender, holy, Almighty Intercessor helping the infirmities, however varied, of each and all. Must he not be a divine Person, ever present, who can thus help the several infirmities of thousands, and that from age to age? And O, his unparalleled condescension, himself to intercede for them with those unutterable groanings in which they vent the desires of their troubled hearts! and that he should thus "make intercession for them according to the will of God!" It is by this inward witness, these personal

teachings and divine operations of the blessed Spirit upon their hearts that the saints of God know for themselves his Deity and his Personality. Thus whatever infidels may deny, or heretics dispute, the child of God carries in his own bosom the precious testimony of the truth of God. He knows that he has not followed cunningly devised fables in believing, worshipping, adoring, and loving God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, Three distinct Persons in One glorious, undivided Essence.

Our space, not our subject, nor our heart or hand, is exhausted on this glorious subject. We shall, therefore, with God's help and blessing, resume it in our next paper.

IV.

In our last paper we attempted to unfold, from the word of God, the glorious truth of the *Personality* of the Holy Ghost, and intimated, at the conclusion of that paper, our hope and intention to pursue the same subject in a subsequent Article. This promise we shall now, therefore, with God's help and blessing, attempt to redeem.

Ever since we have been led into the truth as it is in Jesus, and more especially since we have been called to speak and write somewhat largely in his blessed name, we have seen and felt the necessity of three things to make us able ministers of the New Testament. 1. A spiritual understanding of the things of the Spirit of God; (1 Cor, 2:10-16; Eph. 1:17, 18;) 2. A gracious experience of their power; (1 Cor. 2:4, 5; 4:20;) 3. A door of utterance to open our mouths boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel. (Col. 4:3; Eph. 6:19.) Without divine teaching and the wisdom which cometh from above, no man can clearly "show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth;" (2 Tim. 2:15;) nor can he "take forth the precious from the vile," and so be as God's mouth. (Jer. 15:19.) But in no instance and for no work is this spiritual knowledge, this gracious experience, and this heavenly gift of utterance more needed than when the servants of God have to handle and unfold such deep and mysterious truths as the blessed Trinity, the Sonship of Christ, the Person and work of the Holy Ghost,—subjects so important, and yet so profound, that one wrong word or one confused expression may open a door for error, wound or perplex the children of God, strengthen the hands of the enemies of truth, and lay a train for the temptations of Satan. We need, therefore, the prayers of the

children of God before whom our papers on these deep and mysterious subjects come, that we may be led into all truth, and kept from all error, and be specially favoured with that "anointing which teacheth of all things, and is truth, and is no lie." (1 John 2:27.) Thus to be blessed and favoured has been and is our earnest desire; and not only so, but in laying what we hope the Lord has taught us of his precious truth before the Church of God, we have sought, with the Preacher, "to find out acceptable words, that what is written might be upright, even words of truth." (Eccles. 12:10.) And as many are watching for our halting, who would gladly seize upon some expression from our pen to make us an offender for a word, we have endeavoured at the same time to use "sound speech that cannot be condemned, that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil to say of us." (Titus 2:8.) However, then, we may have failed, our aim and study have been, on the one hand, to write acceptably to the saints of God, and on the other, to leave no room for any, whether friend or foe, to take any just exception to our language, either on the ground of obscurity of thought or error of expression.*

* Exception, we understand, has been taken to our using the word "Agent" in reference to the Holy Ghost, as if the expression necessarily implied subordination or inferiority. We expressly guarded against any such ungrounded exception by explaining, in a note, p. 358, the meaning of the word "Agent" as "one who acts." We repeat it, therefore, again, that the word "Agent" literally and truly means "one who acts," and therefore necessarily implies a *person*, for a *thing* cannot act. It is a slight variation of the participle of the Latin word "*ago*," "I act;" "*agens*," "acting;" like our "do," "doing;" "I do," or "I am doing;" "I act," or "I am acting." "Why do you act so?" "Why are you acting so?" Where is the difference? If there be any, it requires a microscope to find it out. Even the word agent, as applied to an Irish agent, has the meaning of acting, and personal acting too. He is the man who acts. It is not his writs, nor his levies, nor his law papers, nor his leases and contracts which act. *He* acts, and is therefore an agent. His noble employer does not act. He lives probably at Paris, or in London, and knows nothing of his Irish estates, except to get all the rent he can from them. His agent does the work, and it is because he so acts that he is called an agent. That he acts for a landlord, a superior in rank, and therefore occupies a subordinate position, is a mere accidental circumstance, and has nothing whatever to do with the true and real meaning of the word. Let us have, then, no more of this cavilling about the word "Agent." An Agent is a person, not a breath or an emanation; and in the case of the Holy Spirit a divine Person in the Trinity, and therefore co-equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Son, for in Godhead there can

be neither superiority nor inferiority, supremacy or subordination.

We intimated in our last paper that we had not exhausted our scriptural arguments in proof of the *Personality* of the Holy Ghost. And amongst other convincing scriptural testimonies to prove that the blessed Spirit is not an emanation, a breath, an influence, or an operation, but a divine *Person* in the Godhead, we adduced a variety of *personal* actions, such as sealing, witnessing, &c., which none but a Person, a real living Person, could perform.

7. Under this class, then, of proof we may range another scriptural testimony—that he can be *grieved*. "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption." (Eph. 4:30.) Can we grieve a breath, an influence, an emanation? Have these passing things a heart to grieve? An unkind husband grieves a loving wife; an undutiful son grieves a fond parent; an untoward member of a church grieves a faithful pastor. In these too frequent cases, it is not the love that is grieved, but the loving person by whom the affection is so deeply felt, and out of whose heart the wounded love so tenderly flows. So when we are bidden not to grieve the Holy Spirit, it is He as a Person in the Godhead whom we are not to grieve. There is no personal feeling, no tender heart, no holy jealousy, no bowels of compassion in a breath, an influence, a passing operation. We might as well say that we grieve the air when we shut it out of our houses, or grieve the rain when we keep it from falling on our bodies, or grieve the fire when we leave its warmth, as that we grieve the Spirit by neglecting his admonitions, if he be only a fleeting breath, a descending influence, or a warm emanation. But when we view him as a distinct *Person* in the Godhead, and possessing in himself as such, independent of all covenant relationships, all the goodness, all the love, all the mercy, pity, and compassion of God, this act of faith upon him as a divine Person gives us a special feeling towards him which we could not have to a breath or an emanation, and makes us fear to grieve him. The love of a fond wife is dear to an affectionate husband. But the love is not the wife; and to grieve the love is a distinct thing from grieving the loving woman. The *woman* feels. *She* is "grieved in spirit;" (Isa. 54:6;) but her love cannot feel as distinct from herself. If "a wife of youth" and "forsaken," (Isa. 54:6,) according to the Lord's own figure, it is *she*, the feeling, living, loving woman who is grieved. Her tears, her sighs, her midnight weeping, her noontday sobbing, are but marks and signs of her inward. grief. The whole woman feels, and feels as a woman. Now apply this argument to grieving the Spirit, and see how it bears on his divine Personality. To grieve him is to grieve a *Person*, not an influence, or an operation, or some emanation from God.

But, perhaps, if you are a cavalier, you will say, Can God be grieved. How carnal is your figure about a woman being grieved by an unkind or unfaithful husband, as if God could feel grief, as you represent this mourning wife to feel! Would not grief imply some imperfection in the Almighty, and represent him as subject to feelings and passions just as we are?" As to our figure, let it be only what we intend—a figure. We certainly do not mean to convey by it that the blessed Spirit is grieved just as a poor, sinful, mortal woman is grieved. But as the Scripture bids us not to grieve the Holy Spirit, we believe from God's own unerring word, that he can be grieved. We cannot explain how. All we contend for is that he can be grieved, and that this feeling ascribed to him proves that he is a Person, not a thing—not an influence, or an emanation. But if you ask the question, as if the very inquiry implied the negative, "Can God grieve?" we reply, "Can God *love*?" This none can deny, with the Bible open on the table, But is not love a feeling? Can God be *angry*? Yes, for he is "angry with the wicked every day;" (Psa. 7:11;) and the Church says, "Though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me." (Isa. 12:1.) And thou, O cavalier, who art barking at God's truth, and denying that he can be grieved because Deity, thou sayest, cannot feel, mayst one day find, to thy eternal dismay, that the feeling, or passion, if thou likest so to call it, of anger against his rebellious foes, as well as of grief towards his disobedient children, may dwell in the bosom of God. And can he not be "*jealous*," for is he not "a jealous God?" (Exod. 20:5;) and if a jealous God, does not the feeling of jealousy dwell in his bosom? In the same way, then, and judging from the light of the same testimony, the Holy Spirit, as God, can be grieved. We cannot, indeed, explain how these feelings of love, anger, jealousy, grief, &c., exist in the bosom of God, or how fully to reconcile them with his immutability. But this God of feelings is the God of the Bible; not a god of the ancient Epicureans or Stoics, (Acts 17:18,) above, and therefore without all feeling; nor a Hindoo deity, some Indra or Seeva sitting impassive on Mount Meru's snowy height.* The God of the Bible loves and hates; (Mal. 1:2, 3; Rom. 9:13;) pities and repents; (Psa. 102:13; Exod. 32:14; 1 Sam. 15:11;) is jealous and revengeth; (Nahum 1:2;) is grieved and provoked; (Psa. 78:40;) is turned to be his people's enemy, and fights against them; and yet in all their affliction he is afflicted. (Isa. 63:9, 10.) This is Bible language; and therefore "sound speech that cannot be condemned;" yes, sound divinity, gracious theology; for in so speaking, we speak "as the oracles of God," and "in doctrine show uncorruptness." (Titus 3:7, 8; 1 Pet. 4:11.) But if we reject the testimony which God has thus given of himself as possessing certain feelings, either because we cannot comprehend so deep a

mystery or cannot reconcile it with our preconceived notions that such, as we think, human feelings must necessarily clash with the perfection and immutability of the divine nature, what must be the certain result? To set up a God of our own conception or imagination, modeled and framed according to a scheme of our own mind, as distinct from the God of the Bible. But you will perhaps still urge, "Do not the feelings which you ascribe to God of repenting, being grieved, &c., lower our ideas of his infinite perfection? Do they not represent him as a mutable, changeable being?" "Which *you* ascribe," do you say. *We* do not ascribe; it is the Bible which describes. We follow the Bible, and use Bible words. It is not our ascription, but the Bible's description. Doth this offend you? But, perhaps, you are muddling your mind by confounding the pure feelings of the infinitely holy God with the impure feelings of poor, fallen man. Separate all idea of infirmity from God's love, pity, grief, &c., and you will see how you have, unconsciously perhaps, been mingling natural conceptions with spiritual apprehensions.

*Mount Meru is an icy mountain top in the Himalayan range, whence the Ganges springs, and in the Hindoo mythology, the paradise of their gods. The Ganges, according to the poetic Hindoo mythology, sprang from the sweat that started from Seeva's forehead, when the goddess Parvati put her hand on his eyes on the top of Mount Meru:

"A moment and the dread eclipse was ended;
But, at the thought of nature thus suspended,
The sweat on Seeva's forehead stood,
The Ganges thence upon the world descended,
The holy river, the redeeming flood.
None hath seen its secret fountain;
But on the top of Meru mountain,
Which rises o'er the hills of earth,
In light and clouds it hath its mortal birth."—*Southey*

But to pursue the subject for a moment further. What sort of God would that be who felt neither love nor mercy; was never pleased, and never vexed; whom nothing could provoke to anger, not even the most daring blasphemies; and nothing move to pity, not even the most dreadful sufferings or the deepest afflictions of his own children? Such a God as this might be a stone god or a wooden god; but be he who or what he might, he would not be the God of the Bible, the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ; for a God without feeling would be a God without love; and this most certainly would not be the God

who "so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." (John 3:16.) This is, indeed, rather a digression from our subject; but it may help, with God's blessing, to relieve the mind of some who have puzzled themselves over the problem, how the Holy Spirit can be grieved or vexed.

8. But the Holy Ghost is said in Scripture to be *resisted*; and this implies also that he is a *Person*, and not a mere *influence*. Let us endeavour to open this point a little more fully. The martyr Stephen charged this sin of resisting the Holy Ghost upon the members of the Jewish council: "Ye stiff-necked, and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye." (Acts 7:51.) This then is our argument, that if they and their fathers resisted the Holy Ghost, they must have resisted him as a Person in the Godhead, and not as an influence. Let us work this question out. If we say then that the Holy Spirit is but an influence which God puts forth, and is not an actual living Person, what must be the necessary consequence, if he can be effectually resisted? for the council most certainly effectually resisted him when they gnashed upon Stephen with their teeth, and cast him out of the city, and stoned him. That divine influences may be effectually resisted. But what is this necessary conclusion? Arminianism to the very height! for it would prove that spiritual influences can be effectually resisted,* which is thorough Arminian doctrine. But now view the Holy Ghost as a Person, and then you will see in a moment that men may and do resist a Person, who could not resist an influence. A figure perhaps may make this point somewhat clearer. A mob collects together for some political object. The people become excited by some mob orator, and matters wear an aspect threatening to the public peace. The magistrate appears and begs the people to disperse. They resist. But what do they resist? The magistrate or his influence? The magistrate surely—the *person* of the magistrate, not his *influence* over their minds; for if his influence prevailed over their minds, they would obey him and disperse. We do not say that, in natural things, an influence may not be effectually resisted, as in the figure there may be an effectual resistance in the minds of the people to the natural influence of the magistrate; but not so in divine. But now suppose the mob become riotous, and blood is shed; and suppose that the rioters are afterwards tried in a court of justice for not immediately dispersing after the Riot Act was read. *Why* are they punished, if found guilty? For resisting the *influence* of the magistrate, or for resisting the *person* of the magistrate? The law knows nothing of the magistrate's influence, but a great deal of the magistrate's person. The magistrate might not appear on the scene at all, and yet, from the general weight of his character, might exert an influence at a

distance, or from being thought to be near at hand. But the law knows nothing of such an unseen influence. It looks to the *person* of the magistrate, and to the authority which lie, as a state person, exerts and administers. Now apply this figure to resisting the Holy Ghost, and see how he is resisted as a Person, and not as an influence. How did the Jewish council resist the Holy Ghost? In a similar way as that whereby a riotous mob resists a magistrate. They resisted his Person. But how could they resist his Person? They did not see him as a Person; they did not know him as a Person. No; but they resisted him in his word, his testimony, his authority. But how could they do that? By disbelieving, disobeying, spurning his authority, and opposing his testimony; especially as speaking first in the prophets, and then in the words and miracles of the blessed Lord, whom they had just crucified. "Which of the prophets have not your fathers persecuted? and they have slain them which showed before of the coming of the Just One; of whom ye have been now the betrayers and murderers." (Acts 7:52.) It was not then the secret and sacred influence of the blessed Spirit upon their hearts which they resisted, for that neither did he put forth, nor did they feel, but it was his Person and authority as testifying to the Son of God by the prophets, and by the miracles, death, and resurrection of our blessed Lord. (Acts 5:30-32; Rom. 1:4.) Thus to resist, and that effectually, the Holy Ghost in his Person and his testimony, was their sin, their condemnation, and their ruin.

* The carnal mind, as being enmity against God, always resists the Spirit; and therefore in that sense he may be resisted in his influences; but as He always overcomes this resistance in God's people by giving them a new heart and a new spirit, he is never, in the case of a child of God, effectually resisted. Toplady, therefore, if we mistake not, and other good men as well as sound divines have objected to the use of the expression "irresistible" influences of the blessed Spirit, and have preferred the term "invincible," on this simple ground, that his influences may be resisted, though not effectually; and are therefore rather "invincible" than "irresistible."

9. But as a further argument under the same class of proof—*personal* actions, the Holy Ghost is said also to *have a temple in which he dwells*. "What! Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" (1 Cor. 6:19.) Now compare with this passage another testimony of the blessed Spirit: "And what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people." (2 Cor. 6:16.) In one testimony, the body of the

believer is called "the temple of the Holy Ghost;" in the other, the believer is said to be "the temple of the living God." But it may be said that this may only mean an influence of God, called the Holy Ghost. We have nothing to do with what a text *may* mean; what we have to do with is what a text *does* mean, and *must* mean. Does not a temple imply a habitation of and for God? There may be an influence, and a divine influence too, felt in a temple, as David saw and felt the power and glory of God in the sanctuary. But the temple was not built for the *influence* to inhabit, but for the *Person* of him from whom the influence comes. What saw Isaiah in the temple? The LORD, or his influence? "In the year that King Uzziah died I saw also the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple." (Isa. 6:1.) It was the Lord whom he saw, and the influence that he felt. "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips; for mine eyes have soon the King, the LORD of hosts." (Isa. 6:5.) And how prayed Solomon at the dedication of the temple? "But will God in very deed dwell with men on the earth? Behold, heaven and the heaven of heavens cannot contain thee; how much less this house which I have built!" "Now therefore arise, O LORD God, into thy resting-place, thou, and the ark of thy strength; let thy priests, O LORD God, be clothed with salvation, and let thy saints rejoice in goodness." (2 Chron. 6:18, 41.) A temple, all must admit, is the house of God. "But Solomon built him a house." (Acts 7:47.) But who ever built a house for an influence, or a breath, a virtue, an emanation, or an operation? A house is built for a person or persons to inhabit. So a temple presumes the habitation of God, and of God there in Person. God is worshipped in his temple only as dwelling there. "The Lord is in his holy temple." (Psa. 11:4; Hab. 2:20.) This made Moses say, "He is my God, and I will prepare him a habitation." (Exod. 15:2.) And David, "I will worship toward thy holy temple." (Psa. 138:2.) "Worship God," said the angel to John. (Rev. 19:10.) But you cannot and must not worship an influence. You may and should worship the Holy Ghost as a Person in the Godhead; but if he were only an influence, such worship would be idolatry. In fact, the root of idolatry was the worship of God's perfections and attributes, under outward and visible representations, instead of worshipping God himself, "in spirit and in truth." Take away, then, the Person of the Holy Ghost, and reduce his divine Personality to an influence, or an emanation from God and nothing more, and he has neither temple nor worship, cannot be served without disobedience, or adored without idolatry.

10. One argument more under nearly the same class of proof will bring to a conclusion this part of our subject. The *sin against the Holy Ghost* is the

clearest possible testimony that he is a divine Person. As all language is necessarily imperfect, and often assumes the character of metaphor and figure, we speak sometimes figuratively of sinning against conviction, or of sinning against light and love, &c. It might, therefore, be argued from such and similar expressions, that the sin against the Holy Ghost does not necessarily imply that he is a Person, as we may sin against an influence, as well as against a Person. But if we once begin to press figurative expressions into our service to overthrow by them grand scriptural truths; we may soon make the whole Bible a figure, and push the God of the Bible out of his own book, as those have done who explain the creation and fall of man, as revealed in the book of Genesis, to be a figurative representation, and that the whole is—a myth. Casting aside, then, the figurative meaning of sinning against a thing, and taking the expression in the full strength of its real signification, sin to be sin must be committed against a Person, and that Person, God. If there were no God, there could be no sin; and if that God had not spoken to the sons of men, and given a law from his own mouth, there could have been no sin; for sin is the transgression of the law,* (1 John 3:4,) whether of the law of Moses, or the law of Christ. All will admit that sin is against God, and against God as a Person: "Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight." (Psa. 51:4.) When, then, we speak of sinning against light or love, we do not mean that we sin against light that is able to punish, or against love that is able to destroy; but against him who is both light and love. Look into your own conscience when guilt lies hard and heavy upon it, and you will both see and feel that *this* is the load, *this* the pang, that you have sinned *against God*—not against an *influence*, but against the very *Person* of the Almighty. The sin, then, against the Holy Ghost must be against the Person of the Holy Ghost. But assume for a moment that the blessed Spirit is not a Person in the Godhead, but a transient influence put forth by God, then which must be the greater sin,—to sin against God's influence, or to sin against God himself? You must allow that God is greater than his influence; as the Son of God was certainly greater than the virtue which went out of him and healed the diseased woman. But why should the sin against the Holy Ghost be greater than the sin against God, if the Holy Ghost be only an influence or an emanation from God? And we know that it is greater, nay, the greatest of all sins and absolutely unpardonable; for the Lord himself declares: "Wherefore I say unto you, All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men." According to the Lord's own testimony, then, "All *manner* of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men;" and, therefore, blasphemy against God; but to blasphemate the Person of God must be a greater sin than to

blaspheme the influence of God, if the Holy Spirit be only an influence from God. The very greatness of the sin, therefore, establishes the greatness as well as proves the reality of his Person.

* It should have been rendered "transgression of law," not "*the* law," or rather "iniquity," for there is no mention of, or allusion to, the law of Moses in the original. The whole verse might be, and indeed should have been rendered thus: "Every one who committeth sin committeth also iniquity; for sin is iniquity," or lawlessness—a breach of law. The same word occurs, 1 Cor. 9:21, and is thus rendered in our admirable translation: "To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law." But here again, our translators have rather missed the Apostle's meaning by using the words, "but under the law to Christ." It should be "under law" (or "in law," without the article) "to Christ;" that is, though to them that are without law (*i.e.* the Gentiles) I became as without law, still I was not a lawless one—an iniquitous wretch who throws all law aside. No; I was under law (or "in law;" in the very heart and arms of law,) "the law of liberty" and love, "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," "to Christ," as living under the constraining influence of his love. Thus, this passage, (1 Cor. 9:21,) which has been so often brought forward to prove that believers are *under* the law as a rule proves the exact contrary, and establishes that though they are not under *the* law, they are not without law—the perfect law of liberty and love. John's testimony which we have already quoted (1 John 3:4) is exactly to the same purport.

Such are a few of the scriptural arguments whereby we establish the heavenly doctrine of the Deity and Personality of the Holy Ghost. But however strong these arguments are, we may observe that the weight of their testimony is due not only to their quality, but to their quantity. There is in them what is sometimes called "cumulative evidence;" that is, they form collectively a mass of evidence heaped together, and all bearing on one point. It is not, therefore, upon one or two isolated texts, (though one "Thus saith the Lord," would be sufficient,) that we rest our faith in the Deity and Personality of the blessed Spirit, but on a vast number and variety of testimonies from different quarters, all converging to one point. This is the special privilege, and this the distinguishing beauty and glory of truth that, as in a good cause in a court of law every successive witness confirms the testimony of the preceding, so the more that the evidence for the grand distinguishing doctrines of revelation is examined, the closer the inquiry, the more searching the interrogatory, the more clearly it shines, and the more strongly and firmly it is established. So it

is with the Deity and Sonship of our blessed Lord; so it is with the Deity and Personality of the Holy Ghost. Witnesses without number lift up their voice in the fullest unison, and the sweetest harmony, and their united anthem is, "Glory to thee, O God the Father; glory to thee, O God the Son; and glory to thee, O God the Holy Ghost."

11. But to the believing child of God, who has felt any measure of the light, life, and power of the blessed Spirit in his heart, there is a proof more convincing and more confirming than even these solid Scripture testimonies, with all the weight of their united cumulative evidence,—*the Communion* which he has felt with the Holy Ghost, the Comforter; for as "grace" is the especial gift of the Lord Jesus Christ, and "love" the especial gift of God, so "communion" is the especial gift of the Holy Ghost. We need not quote our proof. The well-known text, 2 Cor. 13:14, will recur immediately to the mind. But "communion," or "fellowship," for the meaning of the two words is just the same, as the expression in the original is identical, must be with a Person. We cannot commune with an influence, a breath, or an emanation. David, indeed, says "Commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still;" (Psa. 4:4;) but this is only because he figuratively personifies the heart, that is; represents and treats it as a person, who can speak and be spoken unto, as in the words: "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said unto thee, Thy face, Lord, will I seek." But laying aside all mere figurative language, communion, real communion, can only be with a Person, for it necessarily implies two parties, one who speaks and another who answers. Surely, when the Apostle says, "And truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ," (1 John 1:3,) it must be admitted that the Father and the Son are Persons, not names or influences, and that this fellowship implies mutual converse. If, then, there be fellowship with the Father as a Person, and fellowship with his Son Jesus Christ as a Person, there will be fellowship with the Holy Ghost as a Person. But communion or fellowship implies, as we have already shown, mutual intercourse, converse, delight.

"With him sweet converse I maintain;
Great as he is, I dare be free.
I tell him all my grief and pain,
And he reveals his heart to me."

As, then, the blessed Spirit, as a divine Person in the Godhead, bends down, so to speak, over the soul to teach, to comfort, to soften, to sanctify it, and the soul looks up to him with adoring reverence, living faith, and tender love,

receiving what he communicates, believing what he reveals, and feeling what he inspires, *there* there is the fullest evidence which can be afforded in this time-state of his Deity and distinct Personality. Can we have faith but in a Person? We may believe an influence, but we cannot believe *in* an influence. The two things are quite distinct. We may believe the wind, that is, believe there is such a thing as wind, for we feel it blow on our faces; but we do not believe *in* the wind, as if it were a Person who sent itself, and, so to speak, blew itself. So we believe the influence of the blessed Spirit from feeling it; but we do not believe *in* the influence, as if it were a Person, and possessed a personal existence. But we do believe *in* the Holy Ghost, for faith confides in him as a Person in the Godhead; and by this faith only have we any communion with him. An influence is felt and gone; but a person abides and remains. So it is with *hope*. You cannot hope in an influence, though you can hope in him who sends and gives the influence. Do we hope in the rain, or in him who sends the rain? If we hoped in the rain, the hope would fail when the rain failed—the very time when the hope was most wanted. But if we hope in him who sends the rain, the hope will abide, whether the rain fall or fail. So with *love*. We cannot love an influence, though we may love to feel the influence. But we love the Person of the Holy Ghost, who communicates the influence. That there is "the love of the Spirit," the Scripture plainly declares: "I beseech you, for the love of the Spirit." (Rom. 15:30.) Now, whether we understand by the "love of the Spirit" his love to us, or our love to him, either interpretation will prove his Personality. If the Spirit love us, he must love us as a Person, for an influence or an emanation cannot love; and if we love him, we must love him as a Person, not as an influence. Do we not love God as a Person, and love his dear Son as a Person? Then must we not love the blessed Spirit as a Person? A spiritual influence is a blessed thing, and though not precisely a scriptural word, it has a scriptural meaning; for the word "influence" properly means "an inflowing;" and thus corresponds to the expression "shed abroad," (Rom. 5:5,) and "poured out." (Isa. 44:3.) But we cannot worship an influence as we worship God; and therefore those who deny the Personality of the Holy Ghost cannot and do not pray to him, and censure those who do. Such can never say or sing the sweet words:

"Blest Spirit of truth, eternal God," &c.

But this the believer can do with all his heart, and with the full testimony of an approving conscience. He can and does adore the Spirit, worship the Spirit, pray to the Spirit; and as he feels his sacred operations and heavenly influences descending on his breast, he can and does have communion with

the Spirit as a divine and distinct Person in the ever-blessed Trinity.

O, ye erroneous men, who deny this grand and glorious truth of the Deity and Personality of the blessed Spirit, how ye sin against God! how ye sin against your own souls! What will ye do in the day of visitation, and in the desolation which shall come from afar? Who will teach you, who will comfort you, who will support you on the bed of death? Not the influence when you deny the Person of him who sends the influence. But the believer has both—both the Person and the influence; the Holy Ghost and his operations; the blessed Spirit and his communications; the Comforter and his consolations; the Teacher and his instructions; the Testifier and his testimonies; the Interceder and his intercessions; the Advocate and his pleadings; the Spirit of truth and his leadings; the divine Sealer and his heavenly sealings. By his gifts he knows the Giver; by his graces he loves their Author; and by his fellowship he has union and communion with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, three distinct Persons in One glorious undivided Godhead.

V.

Thus far have we endeavoured, with the Lord's help and blessing, to open from the word of God the glorious, the sublime mystery of the Deity and Personality of the Holy Ghost; and we trust that our readers have felt with us that it is "a doctrine according to godliness;" for we cannot but here express our firm conviction that the more these heavenly truths are examined by the light of the divine testimony, the more brightly do they shine, and the more that they are seen and felt to harmonise with the experience of the saints of God, the more powerfully are they commended to their conscience and the more warmly embraced by their affections. This, indeed, is the peculiar character and blessedness of divine truth, that it will bear the strictest examination. It is not like error which shrinks from the light of day—slinking off, like the owl or the bat, out of the bright rays of the sun into some dark hole, where it "may make its nest, and lay, and hatch, and gather under its shadow." Truth, on the contrary, courts inquiry; and, like the eagle, can look on the sun with unshrinking, unblenched eye. But that Truth might thus shine forth before the eyes of his people in all its heavenly lustre, it has pleased the God of all grace to store it up in his holy word; for heavenly mysteries do not, for the most part, lie on the surface of the Scripture, but rather, like the gold and silver to which they are often compared, are laid up deep in its bosom. Such was Job's testimony: "Surely there is a vein for the silver, and a place

for gold where they fine it. As for the earth, out of it cometh bread; and under it is turned up as it were fire. The stones of it are the place of sapphires; and it hath dust of gold." (Job 28:1, 5, 6.) The Holy Ghost, therefore, by the pen of Solomon, gives this counsel to all who would desire to be made wise unto salvation: "My son, if thou wilt receive my words, and hide my commandments with thee; so that thou incline thine ear unto wisdom, and apply thine heart to understanding; yea, if thou criest after knowledge, and liftest up thy voice for understanding; if thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. For the Lord giveth wisdom; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." (Prov. 2:1-6.) As, then, pursuing such wise counsel, we are enabled to search the Scriptures with a reverent mind and a prayerful spirit, and as the precious truths stored up in them are from time to time revealed to our spiritual understanding and embraced by our believing heart, light, life, and power attend the testimony, and these heavenly mysteries become the food of the soul. The Trinity, the glorious Person and finished work of the Son of God, the Deity and Personality of the Holy Ghost, and similar divine truths which are the very foundation of our most holy faith, are not then barren speculations or dry doctrines, articles of a creed, or furniture of a well-stocked brain, all of which they may be and indeed often are in the hands of graceless professors; but are vital realities, animating as with heavenly life every member of the new man, strengthening faith, confirming hope, reviving love, renewing patience, drawing out prayer, and feeding the secret springs of humility, brokenness, and contrition. As a proof of the truth of this assertion, take away out of the word and out of the heart the love of God the Father, the Person and work of God the Son, and the teaching and testimony of God the Holy Ghost, and what or where is all our religion, what or where all our experience? A nightmare dream, a mere confused mass of tumultuous feelings or wild and vague thoughts, tossing themselves here and there without end or object, guide or guard, but of no more real worth or value as regards salvation than the restless heavings of the Atlantic ocean. Truth, divine truth, the truth as it is in Jesus, is the food of the soul. But take this truth away, and not only has our soul no food, but our faith no foundation or object, our hope no anchor or anchorage, and our love no source in present grace or consummation in future glory. Christians, therefore, and especially Christian ministers, cannot be too jealous over God's truth, or too determined enemies to all error; nor can they be too earnest to experience its power in their heart, to proclaim its blessedness with their lips, and manifest its effects in their life.

But we now approach a part of our subject in which we need special wisdom,

that we may speak according to the oracles of God and in harmony with the work and witness of the blessed Spirit in the heart. We mean the "Covenant Offices" of the Holy Ghost, which, according to the title of our present Meditations, we propose now to consider.

These Covenant Offices are intimately connected with, and indeed flow from his Deity and Personality; for if he had not been a Divine Person in the Godhead, he would not and indeed could not have taken a part in the Covenant of Grace. We have used the expression "Covenant Offices." It may be as well, then, before we proceed any further, to define the meaning which we attach to the term.

In all our attempts to set forth truth, clearness of thought and of statement has been with us a leading object, for we know well that if our own mind be confused, we shall but confuse the minds of others, and if when we bring the sheep to the drinking place, we muddy the waters with our feet, we shall but spoil the sweetness of their draught. (Ezek. 34:19.) Let us endeavour, then, not only to make straight paths for our own feet, but so to cast up the King's highway that we may take up every stumbling-block out of the way of God's people. (Heb. 12:13; Isa. 57:14.) By the "Covenant," then, we mean that solemn compact which was entered into between Father, Son, and Holy Ghost on behalf of the elect; and by the word "Offices" we understand the whole of that part of this sacred compact which the Holy Ghost undertook to perform. There is nothing in the word itself, as some have imagined, to imply subordination or inferiority. It signifies literally a particular charge, trust, duty, or employment conferred for some public or beneficial end, as "the Priest's office;" (Exod. 28:1; 31:10; Luke 1:8;) the office of an Apostle; (Rom. 11:13;) of a Bishop or Overseer; (1 Tim. 3:1;) of a Deacon; (1 Tim. 3:10;) of a Treasurer. (Neh. 13:13.) There is then no impropriety in using the word to express the several parts which the Son and the blessed Spirit undertook in the covenant of grace. As Persons in the Trinity they were equal; as covenanting Parties they were equal; and if in infinite condescension they undertook to communicate unutterable favours and blessings to the Church, do these kind offices, so freely, so graciously and voluntarily undertaken, destroy or diminish that original equality in which they from all eternity subsisted in the perfections and glory of the Divine Essence? No more than Christ's office as a servant diminished or destroyed his equality as a Son: "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of Hosts." (Zech. 13:7.) "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not

robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." (Phil. 2:5, 6, 7.) The word "Office," then, as applied to the covenant work of the Spirit, is simply expressive of what he undertook to perform by way of stipulated engagement, and sets forth, under one comprehensive term, the whole of his gracious pledgings and performances on behalf of the election of grace.

But let us for a few moments direct our thoughts to the Covenant of grace itself, as a clearer light may be cast thereby on the offices connected with that covenant. To an enlightened understanding and a believing heart, there is in the covenant itself—in the fact of it and in the provisions of it, something singularly beautiful and blessed. That there should have been a covenant at all; that the three Persons in the sacred Godhead should have condescended to enter into a solemn compact on behalf of fallen, ruined, guilty man, may well fill our minds with holy wonder and admiration. That thoughts of peace, that movements of love, that purposes of grace should occupy the mind and have a seat in the bosom of the Three-One God to any part of the human race, and that these counsels of peace should not only engage the thoughts, but be unalterably fixed and as if determinately embodied in a solemn compact uttered by word and confirmed by oath; before a mystery so deep and yet so high we pause as in the contemplation of an ocean of wisdom, grace, mercy, and love, as profound as Deity and as boundless as eternity. But how firm a foundation was thus laid for the salvation of the Church. No room was allowed for contingencies; no place left for accidents or uncertainties; but the whole of her being and well-being was at once and for ever secured by solid compact and fixed by absolute decree.

In this "everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure," (2 Sam. 23:5,) the Holy Ghost, as a divine Person in the Godhead, undertook to sanctify the objects of the Father's eternal choice and of the Son's redeeming blood. And let us not forget that to sanctify was as needful, as indispensable for the Church's salvation as to redeem. For O! how low was she foreseen as sunk in the Adam fall! The image of God, in which she was created, how defaced and as if blotted out! Death spreading itself with fatal effect over her every mental and bodily faculty; sin, like a hideous leprosy, infecting her to the very heart's core; a thousand base lusts plunging her deeper and deeper into a sea of guilt and crime; enmity against God boiling up in waves of ceaseless rebellion; Satan tyrannising over her with cruel sway, sometimes drawing and sometimes driving, but by one or the other dragging her without hope or help

towards the brink of the bottomless pit. Hear that bold blasphemer; see that drunken, raving prostitute; look at that murderer with his blood-red hand stealing off from his mangled victim; or, if you shrink from such sounds and such sights, picture to your imagination the vilest wretch, man or woman, that ever disgraced human nature, and you see in that portrait the features of the Church as implicated in the Adam fall, and sunk into original and actual transgression. What a work, then, was undertaken by that most gracious and condescending Spirit, who solemnly pledged himself, in the eternal covenant, to sanctify such wretches, and to fit and frame them to be partakers of holiness, and live for ever in God's spotless presence. And yet without this sanctification where were redemption? That removed only a part of the fall. By it sin was put away, a full and complete atonement made, a glorious righteousness brought in, and the persons of the elect reconciled to God. But God in his Trinity of Persons and Unity of Essence is essentially holy: "Ye shall be holy; for I, the Lord your God, am holy." (Lev. 19:2.) Heaven is not only a high, but a holy place. (Isa. 57:15.) Holy are its employments, holy its enjoyments. Holy angels there minister, whose unceasing cry is, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts." (Isa. 6:3.) How then can unholy sinners, even though redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, enter into that holy place into which" there shall in no wise enter anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie?" Rev. 21:27.) It were easier for the wolf to dwell with the lamb and the leopard to lie down with the kid than for ungodly sinners, unwashed, unregenerated, unsanctified, to dwell for ever before the throne of God and of the Lamb. But O, the wonders of covenant wisdom, covenant grace, and covenant love! Sinners, the vilest sinners, the worst of wretches, the basest of mortals, can and will enter through the gates into the holy city; for, having enumerated some of the vilest crimes which stain human nature and sink it below the beasts that perish, the Apostle adds, "And such were (not "are") some of you." But, though ye were all this, what are ye now? "But ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. 6:11.) Then to be sanctified is as needful, as indispensable as to be justified.

We are thus brought to look a little more closely into that work of the Spirit upon the heart of the people of God which is expressed by the term sanctification.

But it may help our Meditations on this important point and cast a clearer light on our present subject, if we define and explain the meaning of the term, and more especially the Scriptural use of it, before we advance further into

the Spirit's work.

To sanctify means primarily to separate or set apart for holy uses; thus dedicating and consecrating them to the special service of God. Thus Aaron and his sons were sanctified, or set apart, in a solemn manner for the service of the tabernacle; (Lev. 8:30;) and so was the tabernacle, and the altar, and all the vessels of the sanctuary. (Exod. 30:26-36.) In a similar way the Church was sanctified or set apart in Christ, when she was chosen in him, that she might be holy and without blame before God. (Eph. 1:3, 4.) This is the radical source of all her holiness, as the Apostle argues: "If the root be holy, so are the branches." (Rom. 11:16.) The elect are therefore said to be "sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Jesus Christ, and called;" (Jude 1;) that is, sanctified or set apart by the Father in eternity, preserved in Jesus Christ amidst the ruins of the fall and during their state of unregeneracy, and at the appointed season called. Being thus chosen and set apart in Christ before the foundation of the world, the Adam fall, though being in his loins, they fell in and with him, did not destroy their eternal union with the Lord Jesus Christ, nor sever them as unclean from being still members of his mystical body; for though the Church fell in Adam as her federal head in time, she did not fall out of Christ, her Covenant Head in eternity, nor out of the arms or heart of a Triune God. (Deut. 33:27; Jer. 29:11.) The will of God, which had determined her salvation, and the original decree, which had sanctified and set her apart to be the bride of Jesus, still remained in all their full force and unbroken integrity, and secured her safety amidst all the floods of sin which broke in upon her through the fall, by giving her an indissoluble union with the glorious Person of the Son of God.

It is rather a digression from the point immediately in hand, but as we wish to put the "Covenant Offices" of the blessed Spirit on a sure and scriptural foundation, and as the subject is even by some good men not clearly understood, or at least not always clearly stated, we shall endeavour to trace out from the word of truth the sanctification of the Church, both in its cause and effect, in its source and in its streams.

Sanctification is often, then, confined by ministers and writers to the work of the blessed Spirit upon the soul, whereby he internally sanctifies the people of God, and makes them meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. This is certainly one scriptural meaning of the term "sanctification;" but this limitation of the signification of the expression is not in strict accordance with the word of God. It has there a much wider range and a much, more extensive

bearing, as we shall now hope to show.

Sanctification, then, as a scriptural term, refers to each Person of the Godhead; for as each Person in the Trinity has a part in the Church's salvation, so each Person has a part also in the Church's sanctification. Let us never forget that, as in the blessed Trinity there is a Unity of Essence, though a distinctness of Person, so in all their works, whether of creation or grace, there is a oneness of purpose and of operation whereby that Unity is ever manifested. We cannot wonder, therefore, that in the sanctification of the Church each Person of the sacred Trinity is engaged in this fruit of eternal wisdom, boundless grace, and infinite love.

1. The moving cause of the sanctification of the Church is *the Will* of the Father, which determined both the *end* and the *means*; the *end* being the salvation of the Church and her perfect conformity to the glorified humanity of Jesus, and the *means* being Redemption by the Son and sanctification by the Holy Ghost: "By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (Heb. 10:10.) And again: "This is the will of God, even your sanctification." (1 Thess. 4:3.) This will of God is *sovereign*, (Dan. 4:35; Eph. 1:11,) *free*, (Isa. 40:13, 14,) *immutable*, (1 Sam. 15:29; James 1:17,) *irresistible*, (Rom. 9:19,) and *effectual*. (Isa. 43:13, 46:10.) In pursuance, therefore, of this sovereign will, God the Father sanctified or set apart the Church, chose her in Christ, blessed her with all spiritual blessings in him, and made her accepted in the Beloved. (Eph. 1:3-6; Jude 1.)

2. But the Son of God, his own co-equal and coeternal Son, has also a share, and a most important and blessed share in the sanctification of the Church. The will of the Father, we have just pointed out, determined both the end and the means. The end was the perfect sanctification and eternal glorification of the Church; the means was twofold, corresponding to the Person and work of the Son, and the Person and work of the Holy Ghost, and called for by her pressing and most miserable exigencies. The Son was to redeem her by his blood-shedding and sacrifice, and the Spirit to sanctify her by his grace.

As involved in the Adam fall, the persons of the elect were defiled by sin; their nature also became polluted; and as born into the world they make themselves vile and abominable by actual transgression. They need, therefore, to be washed from their sins, that this defilement of their persons, of their nature, and of their works may be removed out of the sight of God. This mighty, this efficacious work none but the Son of God could do. And that he might do it,

and by doing it finish the work which the Father gave him to do, he took the body which God had prepared for him: "Wherefore when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me; in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo, I come, (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God." (Heb. 10:5, 6, 7.) This will of God was, as we have seen, the sanctification of the Church. To do this will the Lord Jesus offered as a sacrifice for sin the prepared body, (that is; his human nature, including body and soul,) and thus sanctified the Church by his one offering: "Then said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all." (Heb. 10:9, 10.) Thus the sanctification of the Church was accomplished and effected by the offering of the body of Christ once for all. In his priestly office, therefore, and by the sacrifice which he offered when he offered up himself, the Lord Jesus was the sanctifier of his people, (Heb. 2:11,) and was "of God made sanctification to them." (1 Cor. 1:30.)

By this sanctification of the elect through the one offering of Christ several things were effected, of the deepest importance to their present and eternal interest. 1. All their sins were expiated and atoned for, and thus cancelled, blotted out, and forgiven: "Unto him that loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood;" (Rev. 1:5;) "In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins." (Col. 1:14.) 2. Their persons were reconciled and brought near unto God: "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight." (Col. 1:21, 22.) 3. They were consecrated and dedicated to God by virtue of his one offering, so that the Church, like Israel of old, became "holiness unto the Lord." (Jer. 2:3.) 4. They were redeemed from the curse of the law, which being removed, a way was made for every spiritual blessing: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree; that the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." (Gal. 3:13, 14.) 5. By his resurrection from the dead and his entering into heaven, to be there the great High Priest over the house of God, he became a head of influence to his people, and thus communicates to them of his own holiness. As a brief summary of the sanctification of the Church by the Son of God, we may lay it down from the word of God that he took part of

the flesh of the children; (Heb. 2:14;) bare their sins in his own body on the tree; (1 Peter 2:24;) made atonement for their transgressions, and expiated all their crimes by being made the propitiation for their sins; (1 John 2:2; Rom. 3:25;) shed his precious blood and laid down his life on their behalf; (John 10:15; 1 Peter 1:19;) reconciled their persons when they were enemies and aliens unto his heavenly Father; (Rom. 5:9; Col. 1:21;) offered himself a sacrifice for their offences; (Hob. 9:14, 26-28;) and washed away all their iniquities in the fountain opened in one day for all sin and uncleanness. (Zech. 13:1.) Thus "by one offering he perfected for ever them that are sanctified;" (Heb. 10:14;) and by virtue of that one offering they are "complete in him," without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; holy in his holiness, comely in his comeliness, and perfect in his perfections. (Song 4:7; Ezek. 16:14; Eph. 5:27; Col. 2:10; Jude. 24; Rev. 14:5.)

We have rather wandered from our subject, and now it is too late to return to it in our present Article; but we hope, with the Lord's help and blessing, to resume it in our next paper.

VI.

In our last paper we attempted to define, and explain from the word of truth the gospel mystery of sanctification, and to show that so rich and heavenly a blessing is not limited to the work of the Holy Ghost on the hearts of the people of God, but that it includes and embraces their sanctification before time by the original and eternal Will of God the Father, and their sanctification in time by the Offering of the body of Jesus Christ, his dear Son, once for all. And we may here remark that there is a peculiar blessedness in this view of the sanctification of the Church of Christ by the Will of the Father, and by the Work of the Son, that not only does it lay a firm and broad foundation for her sanctification by the Spirit, but that this branch of her sanctification is thus already in itself completely and absolutely perfect. Nor indeed, as being an accomplished work of God, can it be otherwise, for He is the rock; his "work is perfect." (Deut. 32:4.) This sanctification, therefore, of the people of God, as distinct from the work of the Holy Ghost upon their heart, is already in itself fully and entirely complete; for the Will of the Father is absolute, and the Work of the Son is a finished work. In this sense, then, the Church of Christ is now and for ever perfectly holy, for she is "complete in Christ," (Col. 2:10,) "accepted in the Beloved," (Eph. 1:6,) and stands before God all fair and without spot. (Song 4:7.) We well know, indeed, how bitterly

and angrily this view of sanctification has ever been opposed by legalists, and all those children of the bondwoman who hate that glorious comeliness which the Lord has put upon his bride; (Ezek. 16:14;) nor are we unaware of the reproaches which "the ignorance of foolish men," (1 Peter 2:15,) has cast both upon the doctrine itself, and upon those who hold and teach it, as if it were fraught with the most dangerous consequences, and were the very high road to licentiousness. They have argued against it, as if we intended thereby to supersede sanctification by the Spirit, and to employ it as a kind of substitute for that individual and personal holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord; and which they insinuate that we hate and shun as laying a restraint on our lusts. But this is one of those stumbling-blocks, over which blind and obstinate men stumble to their own perdition; for so far from this sanctification of the Church by the Father and the Son superseding sanctification by the Spirit, it lays, on the contrary, the only firm and solid foundation for it, for it ensures the spiritual and personal sanctification of every member of the mystical body of Christ, as they are successively brought into a time state, by unalterably securing their interest in the covenant work and offices of the Holy Ghost, and in those gracious operations whereby he makes them meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. It also casts a glorious light upon the economy* of grace; that is, the order of the divine procedure in the dispensation of grace to his Church; for "God is not the author of confusion," (1 Cor. 14:33,) but as in nature, so in grace, of the most perfect order in all his arrangements. In the economy of grace, then, the same divine order rules and reigns as in the personal subsistence of the Three Persons in the Godhead. The order of that subsistence is Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. In the everlasting Covenant, in all its provisions and all its blessings, the same order prevails; and therefore rules and reigns in the great Covenant blessing, Sanctification. The blessing is an orderly blessing, and, as such, in all its steps moves onward according to the order of the Persons in the Godhead. The Father is first; therefore the sanctification of the Church by his eternal Will is first. The Son is second, therefore her sanctification by his one Offering is second. The Holy Ghost is third; therefore the sanctification of the Church by his efficacious grace is third. And yet, though the Persons of the Trinity are distinct, their eternal Essence is but One; so in this work of sanctification a glorious Unity of will and work pervades the whole. As, too, the Persons, though distinct, are equal, and the order of their subsistence does not affect the equality of their eternal Being, so the work of sanctification, as participated in by Father, Son, and Holy Ghost is equal, and if equal, equally complete. This is already true, as we have shown, as regards the work of the Father, and of the Son, and will be equally true as regards the work of the

Holy Ghost, for his sanctifying work on the souls and bodies of the saints will, in the resurrection morn, be as perfect as the absolute Will of the Father, and the finished Work of the Son.

*** The word "economy" means literally, "the management of a house, or household, " and as the Church is the house of God, (Heb. 3:6,) the term is applied to the order of God's dealings with the Church.**

This glorious mystery of the sanctification of the Church, though written as with a ray of light in the word of truth, has been so obscured by the advocates of a legal and fleshly holiness, that we have felt desirous to lay before our spiritual readers what has been opened to our mind on this subject as a part of the divine counsel. These points of heavenly truth, we admit, are deep, and may, therefore, be considered by some of our readers mysterious and obscure, and by others neither instructive nor edifying; but we believe, on the contrary, that it will ever be found that deep truths, like deep rivers, are full of fruitfulness in proportion to their depth. How deep the mystery of the Trinity! But in its very depth lies its blessedness. How deep the mystery of the eternal Sonship of our Lord! But in its depths what treasures of ineffable glory are laid up! How deep the mystery of the incarnation! But what streams of superabounding grace are ever springing and rising out of its bosom, swelling in an ample and healing tide over all the aboundings of sin. Marvel not, then, that deep is the mystery of sanctification; for it will be found, if we are favoured with a spiritual apprehension of it, that in its very depth lies much of its blessedness.

Having, then, laid this firm foundation for the sanctification of the Church by the blessed Spirit, we are now brought back to our original subject, the covenant offices of the Holy Ghost; for as it is his special office to sanctify, by his divine operations, the people of the Father's choice and of the Son's redeeming blood, the term will include the greater part of his efficacious work upon the soul. But to arrange our Meditations on this subject with some measure of that clearness which is so desirable on points of such deep importance, we will consider,

i. The *necessity*;

ii. The *nature* of this sanctification by his effectual grace.

i. Its necessity lies, 1. in the essential holiness of God, 2. In the fallen state of man.

1. God is essentially holy; so much so, that holiness is his very nature, the very perfection and glory of his Being. He, therefore, swears by his holiness as if it were himself, for "because he could swear by no greater he sware by himself." (Heb. 6:13.) "Once have I sworn by my holiness that I will not lie unto David." (Psa. 89:35.) So essentially is he holy, and so bright a lustre does it reflect on all his other infinite perfections, that he is said to be "glorious in holiness;" (Exod. 15:11;) and as possessing it eternally in himself, and so the fountain of it to angels and men, "there is none holy as the Lord," (1 Sam. 2:2,) and "he only is holy;" (Rev. 15:4;) for in him only is it underived, all communicated holiness from him as a Supreme Fountain being but the shadow of what in him is a self-existent substance.

Because God is thus essentially holy, he requires that his people should be holy too. (Lev. 20:26.) And what he requires he makes: "I am the Lord which sanctify you." (Lev. 20:8.) Indeed, there is not a single attribute or perfection of the Lord God of Israel so continually brought forth, or so urgently insisted on in the word of truth as his holiness. We need scarcely prove this; but let the following testimonies suffice in addition to those already adduced: "But thou art holy, O thou that inhabitest the praises of Israel;" "Exalt ye the Lord our God, and worship at his footstool; for he is holy. (Psa. 99:5.) And again: "Thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy." (Isa. 57:15.) So in that touching prayer of our gracious Lord: "Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me." (John 17:11.)

We do not wish to make minute distinctions, or may fail in clearly communicating our own thoughts, but we seem to see a difference between the purity of God, the righteousness of God, and the holiness of God; and as this distinction has a bearing on our subject, we shall drop a few words upon it. God is pure, eternally and infinitely pure, "for he is of purer eyes than to behold evil;" (Hab. 1:13;) so pure that the stars, so bright and glorious in our eyes, "are not pure in his sight;" (Job 25:5;) and his very "angels he chargeth with folly." (Job 4:18.) John, therefore, says: "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure." (1 John 3:2, 3.) But this his eternal and essential purity consists rather in the infinite perfection and spotlessness of his nature than in the spirituality of his being. But the holiness of God is intimately connected with his being a Spirit, for

"God is a Spirit." (John 4:24.) When, then, we approach the Majesty of heaven, and seek to realise, with solemn awe and trembling reverence, his glorious perfections, a view of his holiness is ever intimately connected with a believing persuasion that he is a Spirit, and, as such, requires spiritual worship. In a similar way, his righteousness may be mentally distinguished from both his purity and his holiness as having peculiar respect to his justice, the integrity and righteousness of all his ways, words, and works, and that "the Judge of all the earth will do right." (Gen. 18:25.) Our Lord, therefore, addressed him "O righteous Father," (John 17:25,) as well as "holy Father,"—righteous in the uprightness of his character, holy in the spirituality of his Being. Thus, as infinitely pure, he is perfectly spotless; as infinitely righteous, he is perfectly just; as infinitely holy, he is the very Spirit of holiness.

But to show that those are not mere barren speculations, or unfounded distinctions, let us now see the peculiar bearing which this view of the holiness of God has on our subject, the sanctification of the Spirit, and trace out how and why, in the economy of grace, this sanctification so peculiarly belongs to the Holy Ghost as his covenant office. We have just shown that the holiness of God is intimately connected with his eternal, underived existence as a Spirit. How appropriate, then, to the Holy Spirit, as a Person in the Godhead, is that Covenant Office that he should communicate of his holiness to the people of God; for holiness being in itself essentially a spiritual thing, it may be communicated by his divine operations and spiritual influences. We are, therefore, said to be made "partakers of the divine nature;" (2 Pet. 1:4;) that is, of that part of the divine nature which is communicable; for omniscience, omnipresence, omnipotence, &c., are not communicable to a finite creature such as man. But holiness, as a part of the divine nature, is communicable; and thus, when the Holy Spirit breathes, infuses, and communicates spiritual life to the soul, in that life imparted is the very holiness of God. We read accordingly: "But he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness." (Heb. 12:10.) In being made partakers, therefore, of the divine nature, we are made partakers of the holiness of that nature, and this is nothing less than "his holiness," the very holiness of God. In regeneration we are born of the Spirit, (John 3:5,) and as "that which is born of the Spirit is spirit," there is a communication of the spirit by the Spirit. We may illustrate this by the case of Elijah and Elisha. Before Elijah was taken up to heaven by a whirlwind, "he said unto Elisha, What shall I do for thee before I be taken away from thee? And Elisha said, Let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me." This request was granted, and so visibly that when the sons of the

prophets saw him they said, "The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha." (2 Kings 2:9, 15.) Here there was a communication by the Holy Ghost of the spirit of Elijah to Elisha. We wish it to be observed that we use this merely as an illustration; but in a similar way there is a communication of the holiness of God to the soul by the Holy Ghost when he communicates to it divine life. The new man of grace, therefore, is said to be "created after God; "that is, after the image of God, "in righteousness and true holiness,"—true holiness, as distinct from all legal or fleshly holiness. (Eph. 4:24.) It is "a new creation," (2 Cor. 5:17,) as the word may be literally rendered, and not an alteration or amelioration of the old man. By the communication, therefore, of this new spirit, we are made spiritual men as distinct from all natural men; (1 Cor. 2:14, 15;) and as there is but "one body and one Spirit," (Eph. 4:4,) and "by this one Spirit we are all baptized into one body," (1 Cor. 12:13,) there is a blessed oneness of spirit among the family of God; and what is more blessed still, by the gift and communication of this spirit we enjoy union and communion with the Lord himself; for "he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." (1 Cor. 6:17.)

2. From these considerations we may now, perhaps, more clearly see how the doctrine which we are thus seeking to establish distinguishes the work of regeneration and sanctification from all the works of the creature, and all the vain attempts of man to furbish up nature and pass it off for grace. Our Lord, indeed, at once and for ever, decided the whole matter in those pointed and pregnant words: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit;" (John 3:6;) for by that decisive declaration he set apart the flesh and the spirit as wide asunder as he will one day separate the sheep from the goats, and declared them by his authoritative voice to be radically and essentially distinct. All, then, that is born of the flesh, be it what it may, however educated, polished, refined; however drawn out, made up, or twisted into shape; however adorned within, decorated without, improved by adventitious circumstances, or disguised by ornamental additions, is, and ever will remain flesh still. It is like everything else which earth produces. No manipulation of art can change the original nature of the raw material. It is still wool, or flax, or cotton, and no process of manufacture, no hackling, or drawing, or twisting, or spinning, or weaving, or bleaching, or surfacing can turn cotton into flax, or wool into silk. So let men-made preachers and the whole assembled corps of creature religionists do what they may, and toil night and day to transmute flesh into spirit, let them work at it from the cradle to the grave to fit it for heaven, after all their labours to wash the Ethiopian white and rub the spots out of the leopard, nature will and ever

must be nature still, and flesh flesh still, and cannot, therefore, by any possibility, enter the kingdom of God.

We see, therefore, how deeply the necessity of sanctification by the work of the Holy Ghost is laid in the state of man through the fall; that not only his nature is defiled and polluted to the very core by sin original and actual, but that there is in him an absolute incapability to understand, embrace, or enjoy spiritual things, according to that well-known testimony: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14.) The necessity, then, of regeneration, which is the commencement of sanctification, lies not only in the sinfulness of man, but in the state of spiritual death whereby he is as unable to live, breathe, and act Godward as the corpse in the graveyard is unable to leave the silent tomb and move among the busy haunts of men. But enough has been said of the necessity of sanctification. We can know but little of the word of God and little of our own hearts if we need proof of a fact which meets us at every turn. The vileness of our nature, the utter depravity and thorough deathliness of our carnal heart are so daily and hourly forced upon us, almost whether we will see and feel them or not, that they are as much a matter of our spiritual sense and apprehension as we should see the blood and garbage of a slaughter-house, or smell the death taint of a corpse in the coffin. Suppose a man is born without eyes, or like the man in the Gospel of John, (9:1,) is born blind. He has a natural incapacity of sight. No arguments, no biddings, entreaties, threats, warnings, promises, can make him see. But let a miracle be wrought; let the Lord touch the eyes with his divine hand; he sees at once. A new capacity is given; and though he cannot explain how or why he sees, he can still say, with the blind man, in face of all objectors and all objections, "One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see." (John 9:25.) And here we may admire for a few moments the grace, the wisdom, and the power of God. How rich his grace to raise up poor, fallen man into the spiritual participation of his own holiness, without which he could not have enjoyed the eternal bliss of his presence! How adorable his wisdom to devise a way whereby, in a manner perfectly consistent with all his glorious perfections, this holiness of his nature could be imparted! How infinite his power to remove every obstruction to the execution of his sovereign will, and of the communication of the divine nature, to fit and qualify a worm of earth to enjoy communion with the God of heaven! And does not our doctrine of sanctification afford the fullest answer to those sons of earth who would fain libel us with the imputation that we reject or despise what they call personal holiness? So far from this being the

case, we assert, on the contrary, that sanctification by the eternal will of the Father and the finished work of the Son, not merely lays the only sure foundation for sanctification by the Spirit, but that our view of this latter branch of sanctification outshines theirs as much as the bright sun the feeblest star. Their sanctification, at the best, is but human nature modified, improved, and ameliorated; but our doctrine declares that the sanctification for which we contend is the very holiness of God himself breathed into the soul, and that the new man of grace is as holy as God is holy, for it is that holy thing, that incorruptible seed which cannot sin, because it is born of God. (1 John 3:9.) Which of these views is the more scriptural, which more full of divine wisdom, power, and grace, which brings more glory to God and blessedness to men, let the spiritual judge. "Try the spirits whether they are of God," and discern, ye Christian men, between the spirit of truth and the spirit of error.

ii. But we now pass on to inquire into the *nature* of the Spirit's sanctification; and here, at the very threshold, we are met by our Lord's own words: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (John 3:8.) The breathing of the Holy Ghost on the soul, whereby he quickens it into spiritual life, is compared by our Lord to the blowing of the wind. In this movement of the wind, as brought forward by our blessed Lord, there is something known, and there is something unknown. Unknown are its origin and end, "whence it cometh and whither it goeth." Known are its present effects: "Thou hearest the sound thereof." Its sound is heard; its force is felt; but all beyond is a mystery. So in the gracious operations of the blessed Spirit in the heart, who can tell, when first brought under his divine power and influence, whence comes his quickening breath, why was he thus divinely wrought upon? or who can see or discover into what an exceeding and eternal weight of glory these beginnings of grace will eventually issue? But the sound is heard, for the word of the living God, whereby he quickens and begets the soul into divine life, sounds an alarm in the inmost depths of conscience, and is heard echoing through every secret chamber of the soul. This is "the voice of the Lord," which is "powerful," yea, that voice which is "full of majesty." This is "the voice of the Lord which shaketh the wilderness;" (Psa. 29:4, 8;) and it cries aloud, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light." (Eph. 5:14.) Thus light and life ever attend the first operations of the blessed Spirit in the heart,—light shining into and illuminating the dark chambers of imagery, and life quickening the soul which before was dead in trespasses and sins. That light attends the operations of the

blessed Spirit on the soul is most manifest both from Scripture and experience: "The entrance of thy words giveth light." (Psa. 119:130.) Paul, therefore, was sent to the Gentiles, to turn them from darkness to light; (Acts 26:18;) and the same Apostle, addressing the Ephesian believers, says, "Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord." (Eph. 5:8.) How else could we see the kingdom of God, which we are said by implication to do, when we are born again? (John 3:3;) or how else could there be any manifestation to our soul of eternal and divine realities, as the Apostle speaks? "But all things that are reprov'd (or "discovered," margin) are made manifest by the light; for whatsoever doth make manifest is light." (Eph. 5:13.) Do we not also read: "For with thee is the fountain of life?" Here is the source of all divine life; but it adds, "In thy light shall we see light." (Psa.36:9.) Thus light and life ever accompany, and, indeed, are the necessary and invariable consequences of regenerating grace in the vessels of mercy. By light we see; by life we feel. The illuminating beams of the Spirit light up God's word, which now becomes "a lamp unto the feet and a light unto the path;" (Psa. 119:105;) and what that light reveals the heart believes, for the power of God, attending the application of the word, raises up faith in the soul to credit God's testimony. As, then, the word is made "life and spirit" to the soul, (John 6:63,) the solemn things which the blessed Spirit by it reveals to faith become firm realities, which seize and take possession of its inmost being. No more now trifling with religion; no more dallying with sin; no more song and jest; no more formality and lip-service; no more making a covenant with death, and being at agreement with hell; no more putting far away the evil day; for the day is now come, that great day, so that none is like unto it, even the time of Jacob's trouble, (Jer. 30:7.) Under, then, this entrance of divine light and life, the hitherto unseen, unfelt being of God is revealed to the soul; (Heb. 11:6;) and now the surroundings of his awful and universal presence with the inmost searchings of his heart-penetrating eye; (Psa. 139:1-3;) his inflexible justice in a fiery law which goes from his right hand to condemn all who are under it; (Deut. 33:2;) his immutability, so that he is in one mind and none can turn him; (Job 23:13;) his dreadful anger against sin and the sinner, which burns to the lowest hell; (Deut. 32:22;) the impossibility of escaping out of his hand; (Psa. 139:7-12; Jer. 23:23, 24;) the utter inability of man to deliver himself from the yoke of his transgressions which are wreathed about his neck, (Lam. 1:14,) or to make satisfaction and atonement for them, (Job 9:30-33; Psa. 49:7-9;)—these and similar exercises and troubles spring up in the heart, and form the subject of continual thought and meditation. This is the work of convincing of sin, as the Lord spake: "And when he is come, he will reprove (margin "convince") the world of sin." (John

16:8.) Thus he wrought on the day of Pentecost, when so many were "pricked" (or rather "pierced") "in their heart," until they cried aloud in their distress, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37.) So smote he the publican in the temple; the woman who was a sinner, and would fain have wept her soul away at Jesus' feet; the thief on the cross; the jailer at Philippi; the incestuous Corinthian; and one no less than that signal vessel of mercy, Saul of Tarsus, thrust he through with his two-edged sword, as he pierced him even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, when in the pride of self-righteousness and the madness of persecution he approached Damascus gate. We by no means wish or even dare to set up a certain standard, or say that all the quickened family of God are equally exercised as we have here described, but we cannot understand how there can be the communications of divine light and life, and nothing seen and felt. How can we flee from the wrath to come if there be no sight or sense of that wrath, or how beg for mercy, if no guilt lie hard and heavy on the conscience?

But we now pass on to another covenant office of the blessed Spirit. The same gracious Teacher communicates to the soul, thus convinced of sin, the spirit of grace and supplications: "Behold he prayeth," was the word of the Lord to Ananias to convince him that this dreaded persecutor had been quickened by the Spirit. And what a mercy it is for the quickened soul that the blessed Spirit thus helps his sinking, trembling spirit, puts life and energy into his cries and sighs, holds him up and keeps him stedfast at the throne, and thus enables him to persevere with his earnest suings for mercy, mingles faith with his petitions, and himself most graciously and kindly intercedes within him and for him with groanings which cannot be uttered. (Rom. 8:26.) This is "praying with the spirit," (1 Cor. 14:15,) and "in the Holy Ghost." (Jude 20.) This is pouring out the heart before God, (Psa. 42:8,) pouring out the soul before the Lord; (1 Sam. 1:15;) and by this free discharge of the contents of an almost bursting heart, sensible relief is given to the burdened spirit. By this special mark, the convictions of a quickened soul are distinguished from the pangs of guilt and remorse which are sometimes aroused in the natural conscience. Cain said, "My punishment is greater than I can bear," but there was neither repentance nor prayer in his heart; "for he went out from the presence of the Lord"—the very presence which the living soul is seeking to reach and be found in, and into which the Spirit brings him. (Eph. 2:18; Gen. 4:13, 16.) Saul was "sore distressed," when God answered him, "neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets," but he goes to the witch of Endor, and in the end falls upon his own sword. (1 Sam. 29:6, 8; 31:4.) Judas

repented himself of his accursed treachery, but went and hanged himself. (Matt. 27:3, 5.) No prayer, no supplication was in either of their hearts. So it is prophesied that men shall gnaw their tongues for pain, and yet shall blaspheme the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and not repent of their deeds. (Rev. 16:10, 11.) But the elect cry day and night unto God; (Luke 18:7;) and their prayers, perfumed with the incense of their all-prevailing Intercessor at the right hand of the Father, enter into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. (Rev. 8:3, 4; Rom. 8:34; James 5:4.)

VII.

The glorious truths connected with the Deity, Personality, and Covenant Offices of the blessed Spirit, which have thus far engaged our thoughts and employed our pen, are in themselves so deep and yet so full, and in their application to the experience of the living family of God so varied and yet so comprehensive, that the nearer we approach the close of our Meditations upon them, the more sensibly do we feel the vastness and difficulty of the subject which we have undertaken to consider, and our own inability to unfold it in any way becoming its divine blessedness. But as we are already in sight of the goal, for with this paper we shall close our present Meditations, we feel that we must not now halt in our course, but, with such ability as the Lord may give, still speed our way onward, sustained by the hope that we are so running, not as uncertainly, but, with his gracious help whom we are seeking to honour, may win the coveted prize—the high privilege of bringing some glory to God and communicating some profit to his people.

But as we approach the terminus of our labours we are pressed also by another consideration—the difficulty of crowding into our remaining narrow compass what still remains before us of the gracious operations of the blessed Spirit upon the hearts of the saints of God.

Some of these we have already considered, and broke off rather abruptly in our last paper, whilst contemplating his divine operation as a *Spirit of grace and supplications*. And O how deeply indebted are we to this most holy and blessed Spirit for this part of his covenant work; for how true are the words of the Apostle, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought." (Rom. 8:26.) How often do we find and feel this to be our case. Darkness covers our mind; ignorance pervades our soul; unbelief vexes our spirit; guilt troubles our conscience; a crowd of evil imaginations, or foolish or worse than foolish wanderings distract our thoughts; Satan hurls in thick and fast his fiery darts;

a dense cloud is spread over the mercy seat; infidelity whispers its vile suggestions, till, amidst all this rabble rout, such confusion and bondage prevail that words seem idle breath, and prayer to the God of heaven but empty mockery. In this scene of confusion and distraction, when all seems going to the wreck, how kind, how gracious is it in the blessed Spirit to come, as it were, to the rescue of the poor bewildered saint, and to teach him how to pray and what to pray for. He is therefore said "to help our infirmities," for these evils of which we have been speaking are not wilful, deliberate sins, but wretched infirmities of the flesh. He helps, then, our infirmities by subduing the power and prevalence of unbelief; by commanding in the mind a solemn calm; by rebuking and chasing away Satan and his fiery darts; by awing the soul with a reverential sense of the power and presence of God; by presenting Jesus before our eyes as the Mediator at the right hand of the Father; by raising up and drawing forth faith upon his Person and work, blood and righteousness; and, above all, by himself interceding for us and in us "with groanings which cannot be uttered." When the soul is favoured thus to pray, its petitions are a spiritual sacrifice, and its cries enter the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth, for "He that searchest the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." (Rom. 8:27; James 5:4; 1 Peter 2:5.)

3. Another covenant office of the blessed Spirit is to work *repentance* in the heart of the child of God. Our blessed Lord, when he ascended up on high, received gifts for men. (Psa.68:18; Eph. 4:8.) Now the main gift which he received was "the promise of the Holy Ghost," (Acts 2:33,) which he sheds abroad in the heart of his people. Being, therefore, "exalted to be a Prince and a Saviour to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins," (Acts 5:31,) by shedding abroad the Spirit he gives repentance, for his gracious operations break, soften, and melt the heart. He thus fulfils the promise: "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh." (Ezek.36:26.) This "new spirit" is a broken spirit, a soft, tender spirit, and is therefore called "a heart of flesh," as opposed "to the heart of stone," the rocky, obdurate, unfeeling, impenitent heart of one dead in sin, or dead in a profession. And how is this soft, penitent heart communicated? "I will put my Spirit within you." (Ezek. 36:27.) The same divine truth is set forth in that gracious promise to which we have already referred: "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the Spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be

in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn." (Zech. 12:10.) But what is the immediate effect of the pouring out of the Spirit of grace and supplications? A looking to him whom they have pierced, a mourning for him as one mourneth for an only son, and a being in bitterness for him as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn. This is evangelical repentance, as distinguished from legal; godly sorrow working repentance to salvation not to be repented of, as distinct from the sorrow of the world which worketh death.

These two kinds of repentance are to be carefully distinguished from each other, though they are often sadly confounded. Cain, Esau, Saul, Ahab, Judas, all repented; but their repentance was the remorse of natural conscience, not the godly sorrow of a broken heart and a contrite spirit. They trembled before God as an angry Judge, were not melted into contrition before him as a forgiving Father. They neither hated their sins nor forsook them, loved holiness nor sought it. Cain went out from the presence of the Lord; Esau plotted Jacob's death; Saul consulted the witch of Endor; Ahab put honest Micaiah into prison; and Judas hanged himself. How different from this forced and false repentance of a reprobate is the repentance of a child of God—that true repentance for sin, that godly sorrow, that holy mourning which flows from the Spirit's gracious operations. This does not spring from a sense of the wrath of God in a broken law, but of his mercy in a blessed gospel; from a view by faith of the sufferings of Christ in the garden and on the cross; from a manifestation of pardoning love; and is always attended with self-loathing and self-abhorrence, with deep and unreserved confession of sin and forsaking it, with most hearty, sincere, and earnest petitions to be kept from all evil, and a holy longing to live to the praise and glory of God.

4. But as the Lord's people are for the most part a poor and afflicted people, and the entrance into the kingdom of heaven is through much tribulation, another covenant office of the blessed Spirit is to *comfort* the family of God. Our gracious Lord, therefore, in that heavenly discourse in which he sought to console his sorrowing disciples on the eve of his own sufferings and death, promised to send them, after his departure, the Spirit of truth as a Comforter: "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him; but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." (John 14:16, 17.) And again: "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me."

(John 15:26.)

As our divine Lord so graciously unfolded to his mourning disciples who this Comforter should be, what he should be to them, and what he would do in and for them, we will devote a few moments' consideration to the words which then fell from his lips, as they have so important a bearing on the point which we are now considering. The very name, then, by which the Lord called him, "the Comforter," shows at once what he is to the Church of God, and that he is sent to comfort afflicted saints. He was to be "*another* Comforter," therefore distinct from, or he could not be another, and yet equal to the Comforter whose bodily presence they were about to lose, or he could not fill his place, or be to the disciples what their Lord and Master had been.* Nor would he ever leave them, or withdraw from them his spiritual, as their Lord was about to withdraw his bodily presence, but would "*abide* with them for ever." Nay, more, he was "to *dwell* with them, and be *in* them." Thus though they would lose the unspeakable happiness of having their dear Lord and Master continually in their midst; though they would no more see his face in the flesh, no longer witness his marvellous works, or hear his gracious words; though they would sustain the seemingly irreparable bereavement of his daily company, of his wise and affectionate counsel, and of his ever-shielding power, without which they would be but as sheep among wolves, yet all would be made up to them by the indwelling presence and unutterable consolations of the promised Comforter. Nor would they even lose the best part of their Master's presence, or even be deprived of their wonted sight of Him whom they loved; for he adds, "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me. Because I live, ye shall live also." (John 14:18, 19.) He himself would come to them; not indeed in his bodily, but in his spiritual presence—in the manifestation of his love, in the personal abode which he would make in their hearts. The world should see him no more. It had seen only his bodily form, and that it hated and despised. No eyes had it to behold his glory as the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth. It only saw the poor, despised Nazarene—the man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, who, in its eyes, had neither form nor comeliness. When, then, he went up on high to sit down at the right hand of the Father, the world saw him no more. Its last look of him was on the cross, when it said by the mouth of its representatives, in mocking scorn: "He saved others; himself he cannot save; if he be the King of Israel, let him come now down from the cross, and we will believe him. He trusted in God; let him deliver him now, if he will have him; for he said, I am the Son of God." (Matt. 27:42, 43.) The next sight the world will have of him will be in judgment, when

thousands and tens of thousands will call on the rocks and mountains to fall upon them and hide them from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb. But he promised that his disciples should see him by his personal manifestations, as from time to time he should reveal himself to their souls.

* How clear and striking a testimony did the Lord thus give to those two points which we have considered in our previous Meditations—the Deity and Personality of the Holy Ghost. To comfort the disciples as Jesus had comforted them, he must be equal to Jesus, or he could not take his place. If the Son, therefore, be God, the Holy Ghost must be God. But he was to be another Comforter, therefore distinct from Jesus; and must comfort them as a Person, for an influence may comfort, but it must be a Person to be a Comforter.

But they and they only? Have *we* no interest in these gracious promises? Is there *now* no Comforter for *us*? Does Jesus never come to us? Do we never see him by the eye of faith and in the light of his own manifestations? Does he not still live? Is he not still "our life?" (Col. 3:4.) Is he not still at the right hand of the Father? And does not the promise still hold good, "Because I live, ye shall live also?" The faith, the hope, and the love which deal with these promises, which are sustained by them and spring out of them, form the very life and power, cream and marrow, unction and savour of all our religion, unless we have a name to live and are dead.

5. Connected, then, with these promises of the Lord on the eve of his sufferings and death, are also other covenant offices of the blessed Spirit. Thus he is to "*glorify*" Jesus, according to the promise: "He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." (John 16:14.) He glorifies Jesus by taking of the things which are his and showing them to the soul; for as everything which belongs to Jesus is unspeakably glorious, whatever he makes known of him shines forth in all the reflection of his glory. Thus he takes of his glory as the eternal and only-begotten Son of God, reveals and manifests it to the soul as the most blessed and essential truth, shines on the various passages of holy writ which speak of it, illuminates the eyes of the understanding to see their meaning, bears them home upon the heart to believe their sure testimony, and seals them on the conscience with an invincible energy to feel their weight and power, so that we cry out in faith, "Thou art the Son of God, thou art the king of Israel." (John 1:49.)

He also takes of his eternal *Deity* as one with the Father and the Holy Ghost in the glorious Trinity, and holding up his divine Person to the eye of faith, bows the soul down with softening, humbling, dissolving power to worship and adore him as verily and truly God over all, blessed for ever.

He takes also of his sacred and *suffering humanity*, reveals it to the soul in all its purity and holiness as the body prepared for him by the Father, and which he assumed into union with his divine Person when, under the sacred overshadowing of the Holy Ghost, he took part of the flesh and blood of the children in the Virgin's womb. He discovers to the believing heart the perfection of that nature; its intimate and indissoluble union with the Person of the Son of God; how in and by it he obeyed the law which we had broken, bare its curse, endured its penalty, and by his sacrifice, blood-shedding, and death reconciled us into God.

He shows also to the eye of faith the glorious Person of Jesus as *Immanuel, God with us*, as the Mediator, the only Mediator between God and men. He anoints the eyes of the understanding to see him equal with the Father in his eternal Deity, and yet allied to man in his sacred humanity, and thus a most suitable and all-sufficient Daysman who can lay his hand upon them both. (Job 9:33.) He shows him to the eye of faith as sitting on his throne of grace as the great High Priest over the house of God, interceding for and sympathising with his dear people, bearing their names deeply cut on his heart and worn on his shoulder, and thus their all-prevailing Advocate with the Father. He thus inspires them with holy boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which he hath consecrated for them through the veil, that is to say, his flesh, melting away and dissolving their guilty doubts and fears by bringing them to the blood of sprinkling, which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. (Heb. 10:19, 20; 12:24.) He thus takes of that precious blood, applies it to and sprinkles it upon the guilty conscience of the approaching worshipper, and thus purges it from guilt, filth, and dead works to serve the living God. (Heb. 9:14.) He shows the trembling child of grace how this great High Priest, having put away sin by the sacrifice of himself, is gone up on high, there to present within the veil the merit of that precious blood which he shed here below for ruined sinners. He thus strengthens and encourages the timid believer to look unto and hang upon this once suffering but now glorified High Priest; and as he trusts in his name and confides in his blood and righteousness, rests on his heavenly grace and cleaves to his risen power, light, life, and feeling, liberty and love descend into his breast as if borne upon the wings of the descending Dove, enabling him to rejoice in hope

of the glory of God.

6. Thus it is also that the blessed Spirit takes of the *dying love* of Jesus, reveals and makes it known to the soul with a divine unction and power, and sheds it abroad in the heart of the saint of God. He thus communicates to him the strongest and noblest of all feelings, the warmest and most enduring of all affections, and the surest and most unailing of all motives, constraining him by the sweetest and most powerful of all constraints to live to his glory, as the Apostle so forcibly urges: "For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again." (2 Cor. 5:14, 15.)

7. He also breathes into the soul at the same time and by the same divine power and influence *love to the brethren*; for when the love of God is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, (Rom. 5:5,) it invariably produces love to God's children, as John, himself so full of this loving spirit, so plainly declares: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him." (1 John 5:1.) Love to the brethren is, indeed, a choice and unailing fruit of the Spirit; (Gal. 5:22;) a proof of divine teaching; (1 Thess. 4:9;) an evidence of the new birth; (1 John 3:14; 4:7;) an abiding in the light; (1 John 2:10;) a fulfilling of the law; (Gal. 5:14; 1 Tim. 1:5;) and a keeping of the new commandment of our most gracious Lord. (John 13:34.) Who, then, but the Holy Ghost can put us into personal possession of a grace like this?

8. He takes also of the *promises of Christ*, for they are "all Yea and Amen in him," (2 Cor. 1:20,) and applies them to the heart of the poor, tried, tempted, exercised family of God, to comfort them in trouble, to support them in the furnace of tribulation, to deliver them out of temptation, to cheer their fainting spirits on the bed of sickness and languishing, and bear them up as on angels' wings in the very prospect of death and eternity.

9. He takes also of the *ordinances of Christ*—Baptism and the Lord's Supper, sets their truth and divine institution before our eyes, opens to us their nature and obligation, their object and intention, shows us the Lord's precept and example in them, and constrains us, not as a matter of hard bondage or legal duty, but by the sweet constraints of heavenly love to follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, in all obedience to his revealed will and word. He thus leads into the ordinances, not forces; (Rom. 8:14;) draws, not drives; (Song

1:4; Jer. 31:3;) enlarges and persuades, not shuts up and drags; (Gen. 9:27, *marg.*;) is a Spirit of liberty, not of bondage (2 Cor. 3:17;) is "a Spirit of wisdom and understanding, a Spirit of counsel and might, a Spirit of knowledge and of the fear of the Lord," to guide, admonish, and instruct the living family of God; for the same Spirit which rested on Jesus without measure rests on his people in measure, dividing to every man severally as he will. (Isa. 11:2; 1 Cor. 12:11.) The ordinances of God's house are thus, by the light of his teaching and the life of his revelation, seen and felt to be not carnal duties, or immaterial observances, obsolete relics of a past dispensation, as some now consider them, mere toys for children but far too low and legal for advanced believers; but, on the contrary, are viewed by the enlightened eye as spiritual institutions, and the obedience rendered to them as serving God in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. (Rom. 7:6.)

10. As connected with this spiritual obedience, the blessed Spirit takes also of the *precepts of the gospel*, shows their beautiful and harmonious connection with the promises, removing from them all trace of legality and hard service; shines upon them with rays and beams of heavenly light; commends them to our conscience as glorifying to God, and the only path of obedience in which we can safely, happily, and holily walk in the Church and in the world, as well as in all the varied relationships of life. He teaches us also the danger of neglecting or slighting the preceptive part of the word of truth; shows us that it is as much a part of inspired Scripture as the doctrinal or experimental portions, and bears the same impress of a divine revelation of the mind and will of God; brings to our mind and memory the many sad slips and falls we have made, and the guilt we have brought on our own consciences from disregarding or breaking the wise and holy precepts of the gospel; discovers the grace which shines through, and the liberty which is to be found in them; (Psa. 119:32, 45;) gives us to see the awfully hardened state of those preachers and professors who despise them, and effectually separates us in heart and spirit from their secret and their assembly. (Gen. 49:6.) He grants us also to see that the same power which enables us to believe enables us to obey; that the misery of disobedience is as great, or greater than the misery of unbelief; and that as there is a divine sweetness in trusting the promise, so there is a divine sweetness in performing the precept.

11. He also *plants* and maintains in living exercise *the fear of God* in the breast; makes and keeps the conscience alive and tender; shows the evil of sin, and gives grace to flee from it; discovers and breaks to pieces the snares of Satan; imparts honesty, uprightness, and godly sincerity; tries the reins and

searches the inmost spirit.

12. He *opens* also *the ear* to receive instruction, and listen to the voice of the heavenly Shepherd; sanctifies the lip, and guides the tongue when to speak and when to keep silence; unlocks the hand to minister to the necessities of the saints; bends the knee in the chamber, in the family, and in the house of prayer; and guides the feet into the ways of truth and peace. Thus, is there a good thought in our heart? the blessed Spirit gives it; a good desire in our soul? He inspires it; a good word in our lips? he dictates it; a good work in our hands? he performs it. We are the clay and he the Potter; and what we are in grace we only are as the work of his hand. (Isa. 64:8.) All our spiritual and experimental knowledge, be it small or great; all our faith, be it weak or strong; all our hope, be it slender or firm; all our love, be it little or much—all, all are his gift and work. In a word, from him is all our fruit found, and in him all our fresh springs are. (Hosea 14:8; Psa. 87:7.) Not that we mean he is all this to us and all this in us to the exclusion of the Father and the Son. On the contrary, it is by his indwelling in us that the Father dwelleth in us: "No man hath seen God at any time. If we love one another, God dwelleth in us, and his love is perfected in us. Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit." (1 John 4:12, 13.) And what is true of the Father is true of the Son, for he also dwelleth in us by the Spirit: "And he that keepeth his commandments dwelleth in him, and he in him. And hereby we know that he abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us." (1 John 3:24.)

13. But there is one peculiar feature of this most holy and blessed Teacher and Comforter which the Lord mentioned to his disciples, that is very noteworthy: "Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will show you things to come." (John 16:13.) "He shall not speak of himself." There is something peculiarly gracious in this feature of the Holy Spirit—that, if we may use the expression, he does not glorify himself by speaking of himself in the same direct, personal manner as the Father and the Son speak of themselves. Thus the Father speaks of himself all through the word; and the Son speaks of himself in scripture after scripture; but the Holy Ghost, though he speaks in the Scripture, for by his divine inspiration the whole was written, yet does not speak of himself in a positive, direct manner, nor call upon us in a clear, personal way to believe in, worship, and adore him. But his office and work are to testify to our conscience and bear witness to our spirit of both the Father and the Son. Thus as a Spirit of adoption he

enables the soul to cry, "Abba, Father," and so testifies of the Father. As a Spirit of revelation he manifests to the soul the glorious Person of Christ, and thus testifies to the Son. But he does not in a personal manner manifest himself, or testify of himself. How, then, do we know him? By his operations, his influences, his teachings, his consolations, his sealings, his softening, meltings, humblings, waterings, enlargings, openings, liberatings, strengthenings, and enablings. The Lord therefore said to his disciples, "But ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." (John 14:17.) Thus we know his indwelling by the light he gives to see our evidences clear and bright; by the life which he diffuses into the soul, to renew and revive our drooping graces; by the submission which he imparts in affliction and tribulation to the sovereign will of God; by the meekness which he bestows under the chastening rod; by the gracious confidence which he will not suffer us to cast away; by the holy boldness which he grants before the enemies of truth; by the zeal which he kindles in the heart for the truth as it is in Jesus, and for the glory of God; by the suitable words which he brings to the mind in defence of the gospel; and by the power which he gives to speak them forth with an authority which silences, if it does not convince the adversary. Thus, though the blessed Spirit does not speak of himself, he makes himself effectually known by his indwelling power and grace. O blessed Teacher, holy Comforter, gracious Intercessor, and heavenly Witness, come and take up thine abode in our heart; there reveal and form Jesus, the hope of glory; there shed abroad the love of God; there bear thy divine testimony to our sonship; there cry, "Abba, Father;" there teach and sanctify and bless, that we and all our readers in whom thou hast wrought thy work of grace may be "filled with all joy and peace in believing, that we may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost." (Rom. 15:13.) And O that he would fill as if with heavenly dew and impregnate with holy unction these Meditations on his Person and Offices, which we have put forth in his blessed name, that they may instruct and edify, strengthen, encourage, and comfort that part of the living family of God into whose hands they may come.

14. Here we would willingly pause, but we feel that we cannot close our Meditations on the Covenant Offices of the blessed Spirit without briefly naming one of great importance to the Church of Christ, and one which at this present day we seem especially to need—his raising up and qualifying, equipping and sending forth living servants of Christ to be pastors after his own heart, to feed the Church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. This is expressly mentioned amongst the gifts which the risen Son of God received and gave to his body, the Church: "And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." (Eph. 4:11, 12.)

When we look around and see how the Lord is taking one and another of his aged servants home, and laying others aside by sickness or infirmity, how suitable the prayer that the Lord of the harvest would raise up labourers and send them into the harvest, for truly the harvest is great and the labourers few. Gloomy indeed is the present prospect, and dark the cloud that seems to be hanging over the churches. Pastors are continually being removed, and no men of sufficient gifts or grace seen raised up to take the charge of the widowed churches, much less to become permanently fixed over new and rising causes. But we cannot enlarge on this subject, though we have had many thoughts upon it, and may some day give them utterance, for our page warns us to come to a close.

Here then, for the present, we conclude our Meditations; and may the blessing of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, Israel's Triune Jehovah, rest upon them, and rest upon us, and upon all who, with us, desire to walk in his fear and live to his glory. Amen.