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[Transcribed by John Van Voorhis]

CHRIST
A
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Onely Gain:
OR,
The Excellency and desirableness
of the Knowledge
of Jesus Christ,
above all other things
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Made out in several Sermons preached
in *St. Clement Danes,*
London.

By the late Reverend and Learned Minister
of the Gospel Mr. *Richard Vines.*

LONDON

Printed for *Thomas Johnson* at the Golden-Key
in *St. Pauls* Church-yard. 1660.

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Christian Reader,

Thou art here presented with some posthumous, but choice Sermons of that faithful and learned Preacher (now with God) Mr. *Richard Vines*: In commendation whereof I shall need say no more (since as the tree is known by the fruit, so is the fruit by the tree) but that they are really his, and were preached by him in the strength of his Age, and Parts, and to mee seem to bear a due proportion thereto. Whereunto I may also add, that considering his excellent endowments (both natural and acquired) to have been such, as might sometimes perhaps have prevailed with flesh and blood in a fit of self-admiration to cry out with *St. Paul* -- (*If any man hath whereof to boast, I much more* --) I cannot but think it probable, that these Sermons are the very answer and return of his heart thereupon. His wit, his eloquence, his polite learning, ability in Polemicks, his skill in the Languages, yea and his very knowledge // in the Mysteries of Religion, appearing to him but as loss and dung, in comparison of an inward practical and experimental knowledge of Christ, in his own soul, and the blessed influences of the union and communion of God. This is that hee so much exalts, and directs to the attainment of, in these Sermons; to which end, that they may bee the more effectually instrumental to thee, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Light, give thee plentifully of his Spirit, and so affect thee with what thou shalt here read, that as thou must needs see it bee thy greatest concernment, so thou mayest make it thy chiefest business, and never give rest to thy self; till thou hast gotten an Interest in him, who is faithful, and hath promised, that those who come unto him, hee will in no wise cast off.

Octob. 25. 1660

Thine in the Lord
S. E. //

[INSERT TABLE]

Books lately printed, and sold by Thomas Johnson at the Golden-Key in St. Pauls Church yard.

Mount *Eball* levelled, or Redemption from the Curse, discovering the woful condition of sinners under the curse of the Law: The Grace of Redemption, and the wonderful dispensation of Christs becoming a curse for us; with the excellent benefits, priviledges, and encouragements to duty, which flow from it, by *Elkanah Wales*, Preacher of the Gospel at *Pudsey* in *Yorkshire*.

A Treatise of *Self-denial*, wherein the excellency and necessity of it are discovered, with several Directions for the practice of it, by *Theoph. Polwheile*, Teacher of the Church at *Tiverton* in *Devon*.

The Covenant of Grace opened, and as well the true Heirs to that eternal Inheritance, as the several false pretenders thereunto discovered, by *R. Bidwell* Minister of the Gospel, &c.

PHIL. 3.7, 8, 9, 10.

But what things were gain to me, those I counted losse for Christ, &c.

After the Apostle had in the beginning of the Chapter fortified the Christian *Phlippians*, with a caveat against such as did stand upon, and pretend their Circumcisions, and their Jewish prerogatives in opposition to Christ; after this, he gives a three fold account of himself.

1. He sheweth what account he had of himself, in respect of those priviledges that others did insist upon, and what account he yet might make of them, as well as an any other man: if there were any thing in them of worth to be stood upon; *If any other man thinketh he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more, vers. 4.* and then he giveth a bill of parcells of his circumcision, and stock of *Abraham; Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the Tribe of Benjamin &c.* All these (saith he) they were *gain* to me.

2. He sheweth what account he had of /1/ himself, when Christ was discovered to him, and what he made of them all, in order to his gaining of Christ; *those* (saith he) *I counted losse for Christ, and I do account all things but losse for the Excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord &c.* So he goeth on and maketh an inventory of the Excellency and of the righteousnesse of Christ; his communion with Christ, and his conformity to Christ; he maketh them all but losse and dung in Comparison of Christ.

2. He sheweth what account he had of himself, in respect of perfection, and therein he sheweth he was not in a full stature but in a growing condition, *not as thought I had already attained, (ver. 12) but I follow after, I reach forth to those things that are before, I press toward the mark, &c.*

Now here observe, what difference there is with him, when he was in his natural estate, before Christ was discovered to him and afterward: Before, he magnifieth and valueth his naturall estate, his works and his duties, and for such a value he is proud, he is rich, and very full: but when Christ was discovered to him, the Lord Jesus Christ put out all these night-starrs that shined bright before; he looks upon all these are nothing worth, but as *losse and dung*. And indeed /2/ they proved to be nothing but rotten sticks, leaves, and trash; his gain is turned to losse and dung, and nothing is to this man now, but, O that I may winn Christ, that I may be found in Christ; that I may know Christ, and the power of his Resurrection; yea that I may be but a partaker of his sufferings, anything of Christ goeth down: having before patched a Form of Religion of his own works and duties (like a Baby made up of Shreads, of Satin, and Velvet) without any sense of his imperfection, and without growing, like a picture that is alwayes at one stature, groweth nothing, and is alwayes of one colour. But afterward, when Christ was discovered to him, he presseth towards him, breathes after him; and then he must have whole Christ, not onely his righteousnesse to be found in him; but he must have the power of his Resurrection, and fellowship of his suffering, and conformity to his death; he findeth difficulties in the way to Heaven, if by any meanes I may be saved, *verse 11.* This you shall find to be in a man in his natural estate.

I begin with the first of these Accounts, where you shall find him acting the part indeed of every natural man, and for the explication of these words, *what things were /3/ gain to me*, I will offer four particulars.

1. Those things that he counted gain to him, were such as he could plead for himself in his unregenerate state, before he knew Christ savingly; now they carried no little esteem with him, being in a fair shew, (as he thought) for the salvation of his soul; and being those things that, he conceived, did make him righteous with God; it was no wonder he calleth them *gain*.

2. These gaines they became *losse*, that is, they became damage to him, pernicious impediments and hinderances to his coming to Christ, because they filled him up with an opinion of being well already: all that filleth a man hindreth him in his coming to Christ; so the rich loading of a ship being over-laden becometh losse, because it becometh pernicious to the passengers that are in it.

3. These gaines became losse in his account and reckoning (*these I counted losse*.) It was not unnecessary for *Paul* to put in his Circumcision, and his stock and descent from *Abraham*; his strictnesse might come from a Christian, and stand well: his zeale might burn, if it were but in another Chimney; his Righteousnesse in the law might be currant, if the stamp of Jesus Christ had been on /4/ it. Now (by way of comparison) as the Cypher that hath the place of 100l. in the account, is in it self not worth a farthing: So those things that were in the account & the eye of *Paul*, matter of merit and works, and to have salvation from these; they became utterly overthrown because they were nothing worth, and they were obstructive to him in the way to Christ.

4. This turning of these gaines to losse, it was for Christ; that is, for the gaining of Christ; for Christ denotes the final cause: he did account them losse, not in way of comparison, but in a way of gaining of Christ. Now in order to a man's gaining of Christ, all things whatsoever they be (which *Paul* made reckoning of before his conversion) all must be rejected, and cast away, that when all the figures of the number are reduced to cyphers, a man may be found naked, nothing worth to his coming in to Christ. Every one will give their vote for Christ, 'tis a thing easily said: but when a man cometh to strip himself, to undervalue all his pretended works, to stand without a crutch and without a prop, to be lost that he may be found with Christ; now in order to this, all things must be counted losse. /5/

There are two Propositions from the words, *viz.*

1. The Apostle confesseth before he knew Christ, he had many things to plead and stand upon as Arguments, as he thought, to lay claim to the favour of God.

2. When Christ was discovered to him, his Judgment was change: and all of them were counted losse.

Doct. 1. For the first: The Apostle confesseth that in his unregenerate state, before he knew Christ savingly, he had many things to plead and stand upon as Arguments, why he thought he might lay claim to be a man in favour with God.

So much I take to be meant by the word *gain*; whatsoever maketh an evidence for Heaven, that cometh under the name of *gain*; and it may well be called gain because your hopes, your comforts, your assurance lyeth in that which maketh to you an Evidence for Salvation.

The name of Christ is a common refuge, it is every man's pretence, many that are out of Christ, yet they will plead Christ, as the *Jews* that were the Devils children pleaded *Abraham*, pleaded *Moses*. 'Tis true, you that /6/ are in Christ, may plead Christ, both to God, to your own consciences, to the Law of God; but for a man that is out of Christ to

plead Christ, take heed you are not among those that make such a pleading and a pedigree, as *Paul* did in the text.

For the opening of the point, consider four particulars.

1. It is natural to every man to make fig-leaf covering of his own righteousness to himself, and to have something that his heart looks upon, and sets up, that may intitle him to life, and to a hope of Salvation.

The *Jew* he had a Nation to plead in, and the Pharisee he hath his plea, I am not as this Publican; and the Young Man he comes with a plea, all this have I done; The *Laodicean* he comes with his plea, I am rich I have need of nothing. A cob-web to a spider, a shell to a snail, these are their strong holds: So every man hath his strong hold to fly unto, every poor soul hath something to stand upon, why, they hope to be saved:

Even Ignorance is many a man's plea for salvation, and they think God will save them, because they are ignorant. And the name of Mercy with God, is a strong-hold to many a /7/ wicked man: Nay *Paul* thought he was a blasphemer, a persecutor, and injurious, yet he at the very same time had a strong plea, why he should be saved, *I obtained mercy* (saith he) *because I did it ignorantly*, 1 Tim. 1.13. Observe one thing in him; he was one of the worst men we read of, for his opposition to Christ; yet he was one of the best men, for his righteousness in the Law. 'Tis often seen, those are the worst Gospel men, that in Legal righteousness are the best: Those that have the most arguments are the worst to work upon; and the hardest to make them naked, and to stoop to Jesus Christ: Therefore *Rom.* 9.30. the Gentile cometh in before the *Jew*; and Publicans and Harlots shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven before the righteous Scribes, for they believed *John* when the other would not, *Math.* 21.31. And this *something* (I know not what to call it) is the great obstruction that hindreth men from their coming into Christ.

Whether the bottle be stopp'd with gold or raggs, if you pour it will all run aside: So, to preach Christ to them that think they are in a good estate upon feeble shallow arguments, that have nothing of the Lord Jesus in them; I say, to come to bring Christ to them, /8/ all runneth beside, there is no admittance: Christ will not come in, if the soul be full already.

2. Observe; The confidence, that is built upon these pleadings and arguments is strong and great, and therefore look upon these men that have such a plea, to plead that they may be saved, and they are in a good estate, they are not doubtfull, they are not shaken once in all their lives, not once perplexed in their spirits, their confidence is settled. As 'tis said of the earth 'tis steadfast, and yet is said in the book of *Job*, the earth hangeth upon nothing: so I may say of such men, they think they stand fast, and yet they hang upon nothing, they stand upon the false bottoms of the world.

This is a false Principle that lyeth secretly in your heart, and 'tis as false as if a man should say, that all the fruit in paradise that is good did grow upon the tree of life. If you would lay this principle to heart, it would shake asunder your confidences: and make them fall about your eares: There is no argument of Salvation can be raised from any thing, though it be never so good, but onely that which proveth me to be in Christ: without this, let it be never so good a work or duty, it is but confidence /9/ in the flesh; many moral parts, and many good duties may be in you which will no more prove you to be in Christ, then seeing and hearing will prove there is a Reasonable soul in an Animal.

The 3rd thing to be considered; that men for the present while they are at least under such false pleas they do not see the vanity and the nothingnesse of it. When doth *Paul* come to a discovery of the vanity of his pleas? when he had a great desire of Christ, and began to discover Christ, then he beginneth to find it out: but all the while before, he rested on false pleas, and did not see the vanity of them. Now the reason is *partly* because they are not willing to examine themselves; *partly* because they are not able to discern the vanity of them; for to examine my ground and the bottom whereon I stand, for the salvation of my soul, is as the pulling down of a Sea banck, and let all flow in upon me: I say, better you were all-a-pieces for Christ, then to be whole without him; men are not willing for fear, and so they lie all their dayes upon a false bottom.

Then they are not able to discern it, they count that gain, untill the same light that discovereth Christ to them, discover to them the deceits that they lived in for a time; the /10/ touch-stone that tryeth the Gold, berayeth the Copper, and then the little of Christ in you discovereth the false gains before.

4. I will shew you the Reasons of the point, why men will have some what to look upon as their plea for life and salvation.

1. Such is the flattery of the heart, that it will not be without something to plead, pride is a self-flattering thing, and we are brim full of pride. Every blackamore though he be very black, thinks himself to have a good complexion: no man alive is so great a flatterer of an other man as he is of himself; Therefore the beginning of grace in a man, is, to make him plain dealing with himself. The Apostle after his conversion he befooleth his soul, and bewaileth his blasphemy and his persecuting of the Church of Christ; Before, he was reckoning up of his priviledges, and his own righteousnesse; but now he is turning all gain, to losse and dung for Christ whom he so neglected before.

2. As there is a flattery; so there is a desire to nourish peace and security. A man is as unwilling to have his peace broken, now he will have something to plead to stay his conscience when it biteth. It would be the greatest torment in the world for a man to live under the Word and to /11/ have never a privy-coate upon his back, never a strong hold to fly unto, never an argument to prove he is in a good condition; the word of God would fall upon him, he should never be quiet at home for his conscience, nor at Church for the Minister; and therefore he will not be without his pleas. O, it is a terrible thing to believe there is a hell for sinners, and they have no fence against it; and that there is a heaven, and they have no hopes of it; and to live under a Ministry that poureth wrath upon all those that are out of Christ, and they no proof of being in Christ, and therefore a man provokes his heart to say something: I cannot plead such a change as an other, but I will do good works with him: I make not such a profession, but I thank God I have a good faith: and thus the man makes himself a false Passe that he may not be whipt, or else the word of God would meet with him every where; and under this Passe he goeth securely.

USE 1. Let every man search out his Argument, his plea, his ground of hopes, what it is he builds upon; I exhort you upon your lives, and salvation, search it out. What? a *Paul* go upon a false ground all the while, a false plea to stand upon, before Jesus /12/ Christ was discovered to him? O, tis a miserable thing to trust upon a false plea, your pleas and hopes will melt like the snow before the Sun, then will the foolish Virgins cry, give us of our your oile for all ours is out; a little of Christ then will bear you out, when other pretences, vertues, good parts, good works, and I know not what, will sink and vanish.

USE 2. This sheweth, what it is that maketh the taking of Christ to be so hard a thing unto many, because they have already that which is gain to them; they are full, but it were better they were empty except it were full of Christ: nothing can enter into a full vessel. Convinced sinners are something hard to bring unto Christ, to believe, by reason of discouragement; but the proud and self-righteous are hard to bring in, because of their pride. The least thing in the joynt hindreth the graft from knitting to the stock: They are small things that lie in the joynt between Christ and your souls, and hinder you from closing with Jesus Christ, to cleave to him, to live in him, and to live to him. Truly, that which hindreth you, is oftner your righteousness than your Sins: where there is one soul hined under discouragements, three are an hundred that /13/ are proud of something resting in themselves; therefore the best natural men are the hardest to bring in to Christ, they will not be unbottomed to come to a Gospel-state.

USE 3. I exhort you to look to this, that the sight of sin do not drive you into that which is your pretended gain, false pleas and false arguments, and there lodge you. My meaning is this: it is very frequent and common when a man beginneth to be sensible, and to feel himself to be under wrath, and thinketh he is a lost man; presently he flyeth to that which he accounteth his gain, and licks himself whole by his works and good duties, and the like, and there he rests and lies; he is driven to his own salve, but not driven to Christ: he layeth plasters upon himself thinking to cure himself. That's a true sight of sin, when a man is not driven to his refuge, to his own righteousness, and false arguments, when they do not earth and lodge him in a strong hold; but when his sight of sin drowns all his false refuges, all his hope and confidence, maketh them utterly void, no rest, no breathing for his soul and conscience, untill he comes to Jesus Christ; otherwise if the floud drives you to the tree-toppes, and to the mountaines, and not to the Arke, it will but /14/ drive you where you shall be drowned.

Doct. 2. When Christ was discovered to him, then his Judgment was changed, and he accounteth all of them losse in comparison of Christ; that is for the gaining of Christ.

The scope of the Doctrine is to shew, how a man may be taken off from his own bottom; the way is to beat him into a losse of himself, and of all grounds of self-righteousnesse, which keepeth him up under false evidences of his being in a good condition. The proof of such a man is this, if his estimation and favour of Christ be such as makes Christ to him, the only glory of his soul, the only desire of his heart, and the Excellent pearl that he seeketh after; now he turnes all his former gaines into losse and dung for Christ. This is the true discovery of a Christian, in the alteration of his judgment that he had before of himself and of Christ; he thought self before something, and Christ nothing; now Christ is all, and self nothing. Before, he thought self-righteousnesse the onely way to Heaven, and the preaching of Christ foolishnesse: But now he seeth there is no salvation to be had in any thing, either /15/ in Heaven or Earth, but in him alone. As soon as ever this light of spirituall things comes into a man, the seale of his judgment, and the bias of his heart is turned another way, now he is a new man. It is not possible for a naturall man to see spirituall things with a naturall light, natural light cannot bring him to salvation; therefore he doth but half see, he is bleary-ey'd, he looks but upon the outside of the vessel, and this makes Christ not to be accounted of price with him: but now this spirituall light (which is a beam of the spirit) though it be never so small, yet falling into the heart, it's a changing, a healing, an humbling light: 'Tis a hard thing to make a man that hath been born blind to understand what light is: now as the Sun cannot

be seen by any light but its own, so Christ cannot be seen but by a peculiar light of his own. All who have this light in Christ, have it from Christ himself.

Consider three things.

1. Christ over-answereth all things. The Merchant sold all with joy to buy Christ the Pearl of great price; so Christ is worth all that a man can lose for him. /16/

2. Christ himself answereth to all false gain. Every man (I believe) will say, I will give all for Heaven, all for eternal life, all for salvation; but the Apostle hath a new rule, he saith, *All for Christ*; from whence observe, That the participation of Christ and union with him, is the only way to partake of his blessing; if a man hath not this union, he hath not eternal life remaining in him: This union with Christ himself, doth put a difference between false and true desires; one seeks Christ for salvation, and the other for himself; one seeks the things of Christ, the other Christ himself.

3. That man that will have Christ, must come to a loss of all this gain. This is the true part of humiliation, to lose self, to lie a bleeding under it; all his pride must be taken from him, and all his best duties must be broke in pieces for Christ; take two reasons for it. First, Because there is but one Gospel way, and one door of salvation set open for a sinner, by & through the Lord Jesus only, and that is by this casting away of Self. Secondly, There is but one way into Christ, and that is faith grounded upon the free grace and promise of the Gospel. Now, if there be but one Gospel-way, and one way to come into this Way, then all things that we counted gain before /17/ must needs become loss to us; here must be no setting up of any thing instead of Christ, nor nothing set up with Christ; If there be, Christ will quickly pull it down again.

Use. In one word, you may learn; The property of a man in his conversion is, to lose all for Christ; if he lose all, and it be not for Christ, he had better never lose it at all. And again, Christ is not Gain without change of self, you cannot keep Christ and self too; you must avoid the one if you would fly to the other, you must cast self away & fly to Christ, then you come in the right way. And here you see what must be done for the gaining of the Lord Christ. Here is the Mystery of the Gospel, to lose all to get more. /18/

PHIL. 3.8.

Yea doubtless, and I do count all things but loss.

You have heard what reckoning the Apostle had of his own righteousness in his unregenerate state, and upon the discovery of Christ unto him, he came to a loss of all that which before he counted his gain.

Now in this verse, he goeth on to shew you what account he had still of Christ, and of all things besides Christ, after some strength and experience he had of Christ; yea doubtless, nay more than so, yea and more then that, yea and over and above, I do account them still. They are a rhetorical speech wherein the Apostle riseth higher in his expression with greater overflow of affection, verifying all things besides Christ as loss and dung; he repeats it three times over (a note of affection) I count all things loss, I have suffered the loss, I count them but dung; but then it is for Christ, and that Christ who is my Lord.

Suppose the Apostle had been thus spoken unto; 'Tis true you forsook all your former gains, and you professed all should go for /19/ Christ; your self, your wealth, your zeal, your righteousness in the Law; you valued all as nothing while Christ was new and fresh in your memory, and before you had tasted his yoke and cross; but what say you now *Paul*? now you have been beaten with rods, stoned, shipwrackt, and in all those perils mentioned, *2 Cor.* 11.15. What now *Paul*? are you of the same mind still? Is not your courage cool'd? Nay doubtless (saith *Paul*) I do account still all things, nay verily I did and I do, I am not changed, I do account all things, I reserve not one thing to lie between my heart and Christ; not my good works, not any thing within me, not any thing within me that I value and esteem; my righteousness, my obedience to the Law, my fasting, my scourging, I count them but loss and dung for Christ. Here you see is his resolution, here is his affection streaming over towards Christ; The excellent knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord, that lyeth at one end of the ballance, and all things in the world lie in the other, and that weigheth down them all. Consider, here is a right compounded Christian made up of judgment and affection; here is a Christian that is most empty of all things of the world, and they are loss to him, and this Christian is most full /20/ though he be empty, full of Christ, nothing but Christ Jesus my Lord.

The Text is a pair of Scales and a Touchstone; the weight of things may be known by a pair of Scales, but the worth cannot, that must be known by a Touch-stone; here is both the weight and the worth of Christ, and the Nothing of all besides him. In one end of the Scales are laid all things, as Father, Mother, Lands, Houses, Riches; these a man that is in Christ standeth not upon for his salvation and righteousness with God: But here are such things laid in the ballance as men do plead for their salvation; their righteousness, their state, their spiritual condition, their works, their good duties, & the like; these are laid in the ballance, and they are found loss. In the other end of the Scales there is nothing laid but Christ the knowledg of Christ; and Christ there, is found excellent, and found the gain, and all things before named are found dung.

Now, as that which is leight in it self may be found weight, if it be weigh'd in a false beam; and that which is copper may appear to be gold, if it be try'd by a false stone: so if the judgment of the soul be no rightly principl'd with a spiritual light, those things that are loss and dung in themselves may seem /21/ gain, and Christ that is the only excellent thing may be of no account: Therefore mark the weight, the worth of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is much according to the principle of the heart that holdeth the beam;

When these things came to be weighed by *Paul* that was rightly principled, all things were loss and dung to him, and Christ the only gain.

The words contain in them the value and esteem that is set upon Christ and the knowledge of him, and the under-value that is made of all things; therefore I consider four things.

1. What is laid in the ballance? *all things*.
2. What the weight is found to be; *loss, dung, nothing*.
3. The Scales wherein they are laid; the judgement of a Christian enlightned, I count all things loss, dung and nothihng.
4. Here is the respect wherein they are found so leight; and that is, *For the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, that I may win Christ, and be found in him, &c.*

I shall handle the words of the Text in order as they lie, and first these words come to hand, /22/ yea, and more then that, *yea doubtless and I count all things but loss*, both what I did, and what I do; From these words there will arise 4 points of Doctrine.

Doct. 1. First, The Apostle hath the same esteem and judgment of the excellency of Christ afterward, as he had at his first coming in unto Christ, such an esteem and reckoning he doth not abate, whatsoever he found in the wayes of Christ, in the Cross of Christ; what he found to be loss to him in regard of outward things, he holdeth his reckoning still; *I did, and I do*.

For the handling of this point, let me handle two Questions by way of Objection.

Object. 1. This seems not to be the case of all true Christians, that they have the same account after as at their first coming into Christ: Why? because a man at the first discovery of Christ to his soul, the soul is left in a damned condition, swallowed up with horror, pursued by a thousand terrors. How is the soul ravished with the first sight? and how is he carried (as it were) through fire & water? Now afterward, this same Christian doth not find such longings, such prizings of Christ, such a gale of affection: but is flat, dead, benumbed, to his great grief. /23/

Resp. To this I answer, 'Tis true, that which the Scripture calleth the first love, the love of thy espousals, the kindness of thy youth, [*Jer. 2.2.*] this love is ordinarily the most affectionate love, breaking out into the greatest esteem of affection: And there is some reason for it, the horror of sin being fresh, and the sense of all the sin that hath bin upon me ever since I had a being, maketh Christ sweet; and the new and fresh discovery, of Christ at first, is like the first rising Sun in the morning after a terrible stormy night, which is welcome: so the first day that a man cometh to Land after a shipwrack, he enjoyeth the Land and the house more sweetly then it may be he did all his llife time after; the present sense doth make the deliverance so sweet at that time: so the best gold Ring that was brought to the Prodigal, the best cloathing was not every dayes raiment: so when a man is new crawling out, there is a fresher and a sweeter affection; and to lose this affection afterward, is a great loss to a Christian, it is like the loss of wings to a Bird. But it would be a heaven upon earth if a man alwayes had such an affection, and we must not alwayes be on the Mount to see Christ transfigured with *Peter*; but sometimes see him deny him in the Hall; there must /24/ be a thorn in the flesh as well as a revelation.

There be two things that would keep up your affections to Christ; The

1. Is the sense of daily sins, to have a tender sense of them, that will be like Vinegar to keep a fresh relish of Jesus Christ, to keep a fresh appetite alwayes quick to take Christ.

2. The frequent reviews of your first meeting of Christ, let that remembrance be often; for though it be but a memory, yet it will help thee in the way: though the sowre hearbs & the passeover that was eaten many years before, the memory of it was a help afterwards, yet nothing to the life as the deliverance was at that time; for the sense and feeling of a thing, is more affectionate then the memory.

Well there may be a judicious esteem of Christ alwayes remaining, though there be not a like tenderness and strength of affection. The love of man and wife, it is not alwayes so affectionate as at the first meeting; and so the love of a child to the Father, is as strong, but it is not exprest so tenderly as it is when it is a child.

Object. 2. But this is not the case of every Christian neither, in regard that many that have /25/ had a free and full relish of Jesus Christ; yet afterward have grown proud of duties, and works, and parts, and proud of grace: and this doth abate the sense of Christs excellency; for so much as a man doth grow into self, so much alwayes is abated of the sweetness of Jesus Christ.

Resp. To this I answer: I cannot deny but it is so, and it doth so: when a man is brought off from his own righteousness, and cometh to take Christ with some affection; afterward this man may grow into some swelling, and be proud of his regenerate self; for this worm of spiritual pride breedeth most in the mellowest apples. You shall see the mellowest apple in all the tree is soonest worm-eaten: so those that have the best parts, and most fruitful graces, there groweth a worm in the best of them; and there is many a darkness cometh upon them, they look so much to themselves and so little to Christ, they consider not how they Stand. How do you stand you that are in Christ? It is said *Rom.* 11.18. *Boast not against the branches; but if thou boast, thou bearest not the root but the root thee:* neither do they consider how they stand in a justified condition, what a work it is for the Lord Jesus Christ to keep them righteous & fair with God, after their first justification: /26/ For as it is said of the Preservation of the world and the creatures, that it is a continual Creation: so, this bearing and keeping a Christian alwayes in favour with God notwithstanding all his sin, is a kind of continual justification. Neither do you consider what influence Christ must have into the root or else you cannot live, you cannot bear fruit, you can do nothing. Do but look what effect the stopping of the sap would have to the root, such effect will the cutting off of Christs have in your souls: therefore Christ is not relished nor kept in favour with men, because they know him not, they know not how they stand, nor how they live, they know not how useful Christ is to them, which if they did, they should alwayes have him in more account.

Reasons. I come to the Reasons of the Point; why the Apostle, why any other Christian hath still the same account and judgment of Jesus Christ as he had at first; take these two.

1. There is reason why he should say, *I did and I do;* because he findeth Christ to be like a springing Well, alwayes sending forth to him, yet alwayes full, and feeding him with new dainties that do not dry up. If a man grow upon his own works, and his own /27/ righteousness, be it what it will be, alas when he cometh to look upon them, he is presently a ground and at bottom, and in a drought, and in a time of temptation, and anguish of conscience; All your own worth is like a standing Pool dry, and hath no water

to refresh your thirsty souls. If a man can but get a bucket of faith to draw water from Christ, there is enough to supply all his wants, all his capacities, in him there is the hundred fold Father, the hundred fold Mother. They that travel the farthest into Christ they find most. They that cast the net short of Christ, they never discover the hundredth part of the wealth, and riches, and peace, that is to be found in Christ; you shall find a righteousness in him, to make up all your losses; you shall find a strength and a life from him and in him to supply your souls; so that if a man had but faith, he might carve out of Christ all the honours, all the friends, all fathers and mothers like to that which he loseth, though not in substance.

2. *Reason.* He that is truly pitched upon Christ at the first, will be of the same mind, and the same judgment alwayes; for, sincerity is the mother of constancy, they are constant that are sincere. Now the true pitching upon /28/ Christ is this, when a man can strip himself, and leave himself naked without crutches and all things whatsoever; when a man can abstract and sever Christ from all profit or credit, and seek Christ himself; now when such a naked man stript of himself cometh to take such a naked Christ, he will be alwayes of the same mind. But he that cannot strip himself thus naked, he will not be of the same judgment; he is like a man that loveth the comfort of his friend, but doth not love his friend. Certainly, he that hangeth on Christ may be divided, may be taken off; but they that are flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, though they are pierced as his flesh was, yet they are not broken.

Now, as a graft, if it should be set in the clay that is about the stock, it will never grow, the clay will wash off, but the graft will die, because it is not set in the stock it self where it should grow: So when a man cometh to professe Christ, to take Christ for something that is about him, he will fade and wither; but if there be a tast of Christ himself, then there's continuance; then *I count all things loss for Christ.* /29/

Use 1. Here you see the property of a true convert of Jesus Christ, he is the same in his judgement towards Christ at all times: good reason there was, why *Peter* and the other Disciples would not go from Christ, because (say they) *thou hast the words of eternal life.*

2. Let us examine our selves by this character, whether we be Disciples or no? Are you of the same mind and judgment still? yea as full a judgment and a reckoning of Christ as ever? Have you as high a price of Christ as ever you had? A little valuing of Christ is a better sign of your good estate then your parts, and works, and duties; therefore when you come to take a measure of your selves go this way to work, What value is Christ in you and with you? What a thirsting is there after him? I confess there may be changes in a Christian, there may be darkness and infirmities, and you may think him worse then ever he was; I but if there remain in you this tast of Christ, this longing after him, let that be the character, that there is something in you, somewhat that may give you comfort. *Paul* had his corruptions that he fighteth against, [*Rom. 7.*] yet he still professeth that Christ as all in all; yea doubtless *I count all things loss.* /30/

Doct. 2. They that do truly and sincerely seek to get Christ, they must not keep any one thing in the world that shall lie nearer their hearts then Christ. All things must be removed; *I count all things loss*, saith the Apostle; and Christ saith, *he that hateth not all cannot be my Disciple.*

Would you not think it a strange speech, if a woman should say, I love my husband better then all men in the world but one man? The reservation of one marreth

all; and to say Christ is nearer my heart then any thing in the world but one? Now this one, marreth all in the marriage union between the Soul and Christ; the reason is, because such a thing though it be but one, it hindereth union and maketh you rotten. The least chip that falleth between the graft and the joynt, maketh the graft dye. If a man came to take possession of a house, if there be but one in a house, it is not possession, every one must be turned out: so when the Lord Jesus Christ cometh to take possession of our hearts, if there be but a reserve of one lust left within you, let it be what it will, it breaketh the union. How can you believe that have one lust remaining in you? Whatsoever it be that taketh place of Christ in your hearts, it will draw you after /31/ it, and your heart will run in full stream to that. The souls must not leave a hoof behind it, not a lust to dally with, not the least bit of mine own righteousness that must lie between Christ and my own heart, nor any thing in this world, but the soul must be empty of all. Faith is a hard work in it self, 'tis a self-outing as well as a Christ-receiving work; stripping self as well as putting on Christ. When a man comes to cast out all, something will be stepping behind the door, something will say, May not I be reserved? may not I keep behind? By this tryal, try your faith and your love. Suppose a man could have love and self, if he have temporal degrees of love to Christ and eternal degrees to himself, that man hath no degrees at all to Christ; that which over-toppeth, that carrieth away the love. When a lust lyeth in a mans heart that sucketh the sap, that starveth your graces; now here is your tryal, How is your love to Jesus Christ? How much more is it to Christ then above self, and above all other things? A man is worth no more then he hath then, when his debts are paid: So that is a faith which is above it self; so much he is in Christ, and so much he hath of Christ.

Doct. 3. They that truly have Christ, or that /32/ are in a way of having him savingly, do come to this reckoning of all things whatsoever that they are but cast away and loss for Christ.

This is an excellent character of truth, and an excellent means of growth, to have such an esteem and reckoning of Christ, to set such a price upon him as the Apostle doth here, and to be able to bid so much for him as to count all things loss to gain Christ. Our Saviour in his preaching gave the rule, *Luke 14.33. Whosoever he be that cometh to me and forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my Disciple;* Now here is the example to that rule, *I count all things but loss.*

I look upon the Apostle speaking these words as a man already in Christ, and yet he speaks as a man seeking Christ, travelling further into the knowledge of Christ, that *I may win Christ, that I may gain Christ.*

Take 4 things for the opening the Point.

1. 'Tis in the account of a Christian that all things are lost. Our Saviour useth two words; *to hate, to part with, or forsake:* I count them loss. *Hating* is the undervaluing in the esteem and affection; *forsaking* may denote actual leaving all things for Christ, when a man is called to cast them over-board; but in the mean time there must be a counting of them loss, or a hating. /33/ It is your heart that makes the price of things, and they are such as you esteem them to be: they may be lost in a mans account though he have them still; though he have his Houses, or Lands, or Father, or Mother, in possession yet in account they must be lost: For, as a man or woman by marriage is said to forsake Father and Mother, though they may live still in the house with them: but what is it said they should forsake them? because there is a nearer relation comes into place between the

man and the wife, which setteth all former relations into a second place, and removeth them into a farther distance, and therefore they are said to forsake Father and Mother: So there is in this point a loss of all things in esteem and account, yea and a forsaking, when the heart is drawn into such a relation to Christ Jesus, into such a marriage with Christ, as crying down the pride & value of all those other things, which before did take up your confidences, or your affections. A man that hath great store of moral vertues and good parts before his faith in Christ, when he is in Christ he hath them still, he hath the same mettle, though now they bear another superscription: But now they are in his account but loss which before was his gain; yea (before he knew Christ) his Christ. /34/

This loss, this reckoning of all things under Christ nothing in order to the gaining of him, is that which is most to the being of a Disciple; and this being but loss in account, is that which maketh the real forsaking of them to be more easie a great deal when it cometh to it; for when a man is called to forsake those things which were loss before, it is but the taking off of a loose garment which before was unbutton'd. This is not by any change (it may be) of the things he had before, but of his heart, the change is wrought in him not in them; as a child that hath some toy to play with all, you cannot buy those trifles out of his hand with any gold, but when the child groweth to discretion it layeth them aside of its own accord; now he layeth them aside, not because the things are changed, but the child: and so there is wrought such a change of the heart, and judgment, and esteem, when a man cometh to have Christ, the things are the same still, but they are of no price as they were before. Now the working of the soul to this is partly the sweetness, and partly the necessity of Christ. The sweetness of Christ which doth contain all the worth of those things that were lost, as the creature in the field did contain all that the Marchant sold for to buy that /35/ field. And partly the necessity of Christ, when a man seeth he is a lost man if he have not Christ, when a man seeth he is undone without Christ, when a man can desire to be undone for Christ; no man can be undone for him until he see himself undone without him, then the necessity will make an undervaluing. That's the first Point, That it is in the account of a Christian that all things are lost.

2. This loss which the Christian cometh unto, is not only of his self-righteousness, or that which he could plead for heaven, but of all things. Mark, there is a rise in the Apostle's words: whatsoever *things were gain to me*: that is, what I could plead as I thought to be evidences for heaven, that *I counted loss for Christ*; then cometh the rise, *yea doubtless, I do account*. Other things there are wch are of great account with you, the things of this life, Father, Mother, Land, Houses, these I say are pleaded by no man to give any title of salvation as the other are, which are moral vertues and good works: Now mark, he cometh to a loss of his own righteousness, which before he trusted in; Why? because it is not consisting with the righteousness of God, and because it is inconsistent to Gospel-righteousness. And therefore he cometh to a loss of all /36/ other things that are dear and precious, because they are all impediments to him in the following of Christ: for what is the reason that our Saviour calleth to denying, forsaking? but because they may prove snares, and do withdraw from the way of Christ, and from our adherence to Christ; all that maketh against the taking up his cross, and walking in his wayes; all these are to be counted loss.

Now here is a notable character of sincerity, that is, when the Christian is not only come to the loss of those things that may hinder his receiving Christ unto salvation; but when he is come to the loss of all those things that may hinder his walking with Jesus

Christ. For as we say, he that desires grace it self, as it is a meer bridg to salvation, or as it is a meer sign to a man that he is in a saving state, he hath not such a desire as he that desireth grace for serviceableness, not only to receive some benefit from him, but to do him some service: So is it in this case, he that can account such things loss as may hinder his salvation, he hath not so clear a sign, as he that can come to a loss of all honours, riches, preferments, or the like that may hinder his service to walk with Christ. /37/

As by way of comparison, a man may lay out all he hath for ease of the pain of the Stone, or fear of his life, that would not lay out a penny for his Master's work: so in this case a man may lose all, that he may get grace to ease him, and to be a sign that he shall be saved; but in respect of the service of Christ, as it may hinder him in the way of serving him, he will not lay out a farthing; therefore the Apostle saith, I did not only account those loss that were gain to me, but all things that might hinder me from knowing the power of Christs resurrection, all things that might hinder me from the fellowship of his sufferings, and all things that might hinder me from being made conformable to his death. Here's the sincerity of *Paul* when he can come to this account; all things loss in order to service, to conformity, to his sufferings, and to his death.

3. *Observe*, He that is come to the loss of self-righteousness, or of that which was a gain which he could plead for heaven, he will the sooner rise to the loss of all things else for Christ: and this I take up thus; *Those things that were gain to me, I counted loss for Christ*, there is this gain; and then he repeateth it over again, *yea doubtless, all things loss*. If a man can cast his rich loading overboard and his /38/ wares, he will not stick to cast the ballasts when the self-love of a man is once come to be broken, that which was his bottom for the salvation of his soul, his own righteousness; If you find that those many things that before you put confidence in for the salvation of your souls, if you find your former pride, work, duties, to be worth nothings; if you find that self-righteousness is removed out of the way, and that you are come to nothing in your selves so that you may come to Jesus Christ; all other things will be brought to nothing, and will go out of the same door that your self-righteousness came in; this is a comfortable sign beforehand.

4. This coming to a loss of all things is a way towards the gaining of Christ. I speak to you that would know the way to get Christ, this is it, all things loss for the gaining of Christ. Here is a self-emptying and a self-outing work, that conduceth more to the getting of Christ then any work in the world. There is a breaking in pieces, a stripping of people naked, a becoming nothing, here is the right way to get Christ, so that if you ask What shall I do to get Christ? I will tell you what is to be done, To be undone, is, that which is to be done, in order to gain Christ. How contrarily do men usually go to work to get /39/ Christ, when they go to build up a righteousness, or to make a way of works, and their own resolves? whereas humiliation, self-denyal, self-breaking is the way. He that layeth a foundation, needeth not build a Scaffold, he digs downward, the foundation is laid upon no part of the building; so he that would lay Christ the ground-work of all his hope and comfort, he need not build a Scaffold of his own works, and his own righteousness; but on the contrary pull all down, come to a loss of all that, and lay Christ upon nothing of his own; if he do, he cannot get Christ.

How foolish are men and blind in this Gospel-way? they grope false, they set a ladder to get up to Heaven, when they should be emptying themselves. The more you are emptying your selves, and throwing out your own righteousness, the more capacity you

are in to receive Christ. And therefore, as you would count that man a mad-man that when the ship is ready to founder will be taking in more weight, whereas the way to keep her is to cast that out that is within: so certainly we work against our selves when we trust to works, when we take in that which should rather be cast out and removed for Christ. This is that hard work that will try you and break /40/ you in pieces. 'Tis the hardest work that is, to strip a man and break him to pieces, and make him naked, and bring him to nothing; and yet you see it is the proper way if you would have Christ; come to this reckoning that you are lost for Christ.

Reasons. I come to the Reasons of the Point, Why he that taketh Christ must come to a losse of all things that he may gain Christ. The

1. Is in regard of the union and closure with Christ, which every one must have, that will be saved by him; now it can never be close like that of husband and wife, root and branch, head and member, if any thing lie between him, if there be any thing of your selves or your own: Alas, Christ is not to be brought to some outward room by an outward profession, nor you must not be tyed to Christ, as a graft is tyed to the stock; but there must be a closure.

2. In regard of the righteousness of Christ whereby we must be justified, that will never mix with yours in the matter of your justification; and therefore in the Scripture, Law and works, both of them are still opposed to Christ and faith; and Law, work, and Christ are never to be compounded. /41/

3. In respect of the command and government of Christ, which can never take full place in any man that maketh a reservation of any one thing, any one lust that he holdeth or keepeth from Christ, the command of Christ can never take hold; For, put the case you have but one thing that you cannot part with, that you have in esteem in the way of Christ: you should come to a denial of your selves, but that man that is gone a great way, yet if he have a reservation, then like a horse that cometh to tread with his lame foot, halteth, and there he falls: many will go on fair, till they come to some dear lust that they cannot part with: But those that are most full of self-denial have the most comfort, and the sweetest peace, and the greatest light shining into their souls.

Use 1. You see here what the price of Christ is, you see what you must give for him if you will win him; all things loss. And yet these things are not properly a price as if Christ could be bought with the loss of these, for that is a Popish piece of merit; but the selling of all, and buying the treasure is nothing, but the making of a way to Christ by the removal of all these things, the receiving of him and making room for him. Every purchaser must be of this mind to part with /42/ all: for certainly this is not a singular and a peculiar example in the Apostle *Paul*; but it is the character of every Merchant that goeth to the Kingdom of Heaven, that goeth to buy Christ; nay, (saith the Text) He went away with joy, and sold all that he had, and bought it.

2. If all things must come to loss, see what a clear command Christ will have over all his; He will have nothing remaining with them in price, that shall give check to his command, or his cross, or his yoak; all commanding lusts must be gone: If Father and Mother must be forsaken, much more lusts which men love much more: they must come to loss for Christ, that they may give no checks to the commands of Christ.

Again, all self-righteousness must come to a loss: no men have been greater strangers to Jesus Christ, then those that have come with; *All this have I done.*

3. Are all things counted loss? Doth not this then expunge thousands of pretenders to Christ, that make themselves to be in Christ, and yet alas, are not come to the counting and reckoning of any thing loss for him? you think you do count all things loss, why? because you are of that judgment, and you can say so: no, 'tis a greater matter; for you look /43/ one way while you should look another way.

Doct. 4. There's another Doctrine, and it riseth from the present reckoning that the Apostle had of all things after that he was in the state of grace; and the point is this, *That gracious Duties and Performances of a man in the state of grace, are to be disclaimed in the matter of his justification, or his righteousness with God.*

Let them have their due value: They are fruits of the Spirit, they are pleasing and acceptable unto God, they are signs of a saving state and condition, they are the way to the Kingdom of Heaven; but in the matter of your standing right with God (which we call the matter of your justification) they are but Cyphers, they are nothing. Ther's nothing cometh in account with God for righteousness but Jesus Christ; no act of Gods Spirit in you, no sanctifying grace, no holy duty, they must not be set in Christs chair, because it is his Prerogative to be the Lord our righteousness: Therefore, the Apostle saith, *Rom. 5.18, 19. by the righteousness of Christ the free gift came upon all men unto justification /44/ of life: so by the obedience of Christ many were made righteous;* that is unto their justification before God: therefore your obedience is not to be mingled with his sacrificed blood for the making of you righteous, or the keeping of you so standing right, for all your duties are nothing; and therefore 'tis said, *Rom. 4.5. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness;* signifying thus much, that *Abraham* himself (who is the person meant in the text) in the point of justification before God, is to be looked upon as a man ungodly, that is, as a not-worker: for a not worker and ungodly man, is put for one; let his works be never so great proceeding from faith, yet God looketh upon him as an ungodly man, as a man contributing nothing to his own righteousness.

Use. 1. The Papists will not hear this Doctrine; for though with much ado they will quit their good works, that are done in an un regenerate state without and before faith; yet those works of a regenerate person that are besprinkled with the blood of Christ, they will have them come in for their justification: for thus they say, Christ merits for us, that we may merit for our selves; that Christ is /45/ a Saviour by making us our own Saviours; Christ is a justifier, yet making us justifie our selves; he giveth us the money, we lay it down, what is this? It is to keep up works and good duties (say they) which otherwise would fall to the ground: whereas the true spring, and the true whet-stone of obedience to God is faith, and love, and thankfulness upon the apprehension of the pardon of your sins: Let a man have Christ made his righteousness; and let him be ungodly if he can, *The love of Christ constraineth us* (saith the Apostle) They that put least to works are the greatest in Christs eye: Jesus Christ is more able to draw the strength of a Christian out into obedience and suffering, then self-love, and the Spirit breathes with a stronger gale upon an humble man then a proud and meritorious. And therefore I conclude, As it is absurd for any man to say, The first *Adam* put the forbidden fruit into our hands and we die; that is true, we fell in him, but he did not put the fruit into our hands; but in his eating & sinning we dy: so, it is absurd to say, that Christ put a righteousness in us that we may merit heaven into our hands; We are righteous in his obedience, not ours.

Use 2. Are all gracious duties and performances /46/

of a man in a state of grace to be disclaimed? then what a mighty excitement is this point to humility and self-nothingness? and tends exceedingly to the setting of Jesus Christ up in his own chair, and his own throne; your works and duties God reserveth for himself. As the life of a branch does not lie in the fruit that it bears, but in the union that it hath with the root and the sap: so the righteousness of an *Abraham*, a regenerate person, is not in his works, but in his faith and union with Christ. O let this keep up Christ in your heart, for pride of duties, and pride of grace, doth too often lay the Lord Jesus low in the apprehension of your hearts; We should come out of our gracious self, as well as our natural self. The living branches live derivingly from the root and dependingly; it beareth them and feedeth them though they be living branches: so though you be living Christians, yet you are borne up by Christ, fed by Christ. Alas we are poor, and proud creatures; the best of us all are proud of our righteousness with God, because we stand too much upon our works, and have not a naked faith in Christ alone to stand by, to hang by, *1 Joh. 5.6.* This is he that came by water and blood; not by water onely but by water and blood; the water /47/ cleanseth you, but there must be blood also to acquit you. And as we are proud of duties, so we are proud of grace that doth those duties, because we do not look to the root that feedeth us. The Apostle *Paul* in *1 Cor. 15.10.* saith, *I have laboured more then they all*, presently he recalleth himself, *yet not I, but the grace of God which was in me:* He doth not say, my habitual grace, but grace with me, supplying strengthening grace, I did move, but that grace was out of my self, he could go out of his gracious self: In *1 Cor. 3.24.* it is said, *ye are Christs, and Christ is Gods:* Why doth he not say, ye are God's, for he speaks to Saints? No, for though they be God's, yet Christ must come between them and God /48/

PHIL. 3.8.

For the Excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.

These words do shew you the Wherefore he did account all things but losse; it was for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord. He parted with all things (like a wise man) upon a valuable consideration; he was not like to repent his losses.

For the meaning of these words: It is not a meer comparing Christ and all other things together, so as onely to pass a judgment upon them, (for every one will say, Christ is worth all) but it is the making of a choice, a purchase, and for the gaining of Jesus Christ, he counteth all things losse; In a way of chusing and coming to Jesus Christ, he must make away all other things: As a man cannot buy except he first sell, so the Apostle telleth all here, that he might get the knowledge of Jesus Christ, which otherwise could not be had. /49/

I shall raise three points of Doctrine from these words,

1. The Apostle counteth all things losse, for the *knowledge* of Jesus Christ.
2. The knowledge of Jesus Christ, is an *Excellent* knowledge.
3. 'Tis an excellent knowledge, for a man to know Jesus Christ to be *his* Lord: for *Tolle meum, Tolle Deum*; If he be not my Lord, it is to little purpose.

Doct. 1. *He counteth all losse for the knowledge of Jesus Christ.*

There is in the nature of man, an insatiable thirst for knowledge; it was knowledge with which the Serpent baited his hook at first, when he took our Parents. There hath been in all ages men that do mightily search for knowledge, and there have been many discoveries made of natural knowledge: Now if we had all without Christ, all would not be worth anything, touching eternall life. There is but one knowledge, and that is here called the knowledge of Jesus Christ.

For the opening of which point, consider, a man may know many things about and concerning Christ, and yet not have the knowledge of Christ Jesus. The knowledge of Christ Jesus can never be in a man, untill /50/ there be an understanding in him; therefore 'tis said, 1 *John* 5.20. he hath given us an understanding that we might know him; that is, Jesus Christ, It follows, *and we are in him*, that is, in Jesus Christ. The knowledge of Christ in this place is not so much opposed to ignorance as unacquaintance; to be acquainted with Jesus Christ, to come into a fellowship and communion with him: As you know there's a knowledge of a man by face, by hear-say and feature, and so one stranger knoweth another; Christ is but a stranger to such as know him so. Then there is acquaintance by relation; so one friend knoweth another, and so he knoweth Christ. This is the Excellent knowledge of Christ Jesus, or the excellency of the acquaintance of Christ Jesus my Lord.

Now that I might give you the full meaning of it, consider, it can never be meant of a speculative notion; but we must seek for such a knowledge that cannot be had without the losse of all things: now knowledge in Scripture-phrase, denotes more then meer notion, therefore 'tis said, *Esa.* 53.11. by hiw knowledge shall my righteous servant justifie many, for he shall bear their iniquities. 1 *Joh.* 2.4. He that saith I know him, and keepeth not his commandements, is a liar, and the /51/ truth is not in him; there it denotes an obediencial knowledge, whosoever sinneth hath not seen him neither known

him; there it denotes a cleansing knowledge, *John* 17.3. This is life eternal to know thee the onely true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent; here it denotes altogether faith, love, obedience, *Heb.* 8.11. *All shall know me from the greatest to the least*; here is a special relation, a covenant-knowledge.

Now the question may be, Why it is called Knowledge? The knowledge of Christ, why should it be put for all saving grace? The reason is this: All the saving work of God upon the soul of man is increased by it; and knowledge of Gods teaching which mouldeth the heart, teacheth the heart, the will, and the affections of man, *Joh.* 6.45. they shall be all taught of God, and every man that hath learned of the Father commeth to me; every one commeth in, not one tarrieth out. So, to live in sin, is called the not knowing of God; now because 'tis founded in such a teaching, therefore 'tis called knowledge.

Reasons. To give you the reasons of the point.

1. It is the onely thing that bringeth a man into acquaintance with God; By nature /52/ we are lost men, strangers, forreigners, apostates, and enemies to God, and there must be some bridge laid to bring us over the water from one shore to another; this is the bridge, here is founded all acquaintance: it is Christ the second *Adam* that bringeth you into favour with God, as the first *Adam* thrust you out of his favour, and there's no door to enter in again, but by the second *Adam*.

2. This knowledge of Christ is valuable; because all the promises, pardon, righteousnesse, peace, salvation, are all made to the knowledge of Jesus Christ: to your own works nothing, to your own righteousnesse nothing, but all to the knowing of Christ: when you know Christ, you have God for your Father, the Spirit for your Comforter, Heaven your inheritance, peace of conscience; all is made to the knowledge of Jesus Christ: out of him there's no Creature can be saved, out of the knowledge of Jesus Christ there's no man living scapes, and he that hath it liveth: no man but miserable without him, no man miserable in him; that's the key, the bridge, the door of all.

Now for the second thing, Why all things must be lost for this knowledge? So far as a man /53/ is full of the world, so far he is empty of Jesus Christ: Christ cannot take place to raige, to command, while there's any Fort of the heart commanded and maintained against him; he that keepeth a master-lust or a master-love, keepeth out Christ. If a woman be married, though she be married but to one, she is out of capacity to marry another husband; so, if a man be married to any thing in the world, he is out of a capacity of the Lord Jesus Christ, untill the divorce be made; for one Christ cannot go in as a conquerour, while there lyeth any thing within to keep him out: He that hath no fellow in reconciling you to God, he will have no fellow in ruling you: and therefore all must be left and lost, if you intend to come to him.

USE 1. Must all things be lost for the knowledge of Jesus Christ? Then learn a point of wisdom, and a point of godlinesse to account all losse for the knowledge of Christ; that is, for the having of him, or the enjoying of him, or the keeping of him. There is a saving by losing, and a losing by saving; *he that loseth his life* (saith our Saviour) *shall save it, and he that would save his life, shall loose it, Math.* 10.39. And therefore, though you know not the worth of /54/ Christ, you are not able to make a price of him, you are afraid you shall out-bid him; now did the Apostle bid too much for him, and out-bid Christ? We are sorry chapmen, we know not the price of Jesus Christ, listen to a better chapman that knoweth the worth of him: I count all things but losse (saith the Apostle) for Jesus Christ my Lord; thus far he went, Go ye and do likewise, there's

wisdom in it, and Gospel-godlinesse in it; your own righteousnesse, your vertues and duties they are not the Gospel-way: now if you be for Gospel-godlinesse all must go for Christ, to lay him in your heart, and to be full of him.

2. Let it exhort you to this losing, to this reckoning, as undone Creatures from all props and hopes; you know how soon you may come to the triall-losse of all things. If we have Christ, all will be well: you shall never know how full Christ is of Fathers, Mothers, Children, Wives, Husbands, &c. untill they be all gone: He is rich when you are poor, he will bestow comfort and peace, when he knoweth you stand in need of them, he keepeth his Cordialls for sick fits. The Lord Christ will appear the sweetest and the fullest to you when all is gone: therefore, I say, come to this losse; hang /55/ loose to the things here, that when you come to a reall forsaking of them, it will be more easy.

3. Doth he account all things losse? then consider, you that have not this mind, this sense, this palate, to know him powerfully, and savingly, and experimentally; pull down your profit and your credit, least Christ should pull down all that you have; you are afraid because of his yoke, because of his crosse: How many thousands are there that think Christ worthy the avoiding & the losing, because he is attended with the yoke, and attended with holinesse? He that is afraid of Christ will give nothing for him; a sure signe of a rotten heart that loveth Christ for honour and the like: you see *Paul* he did not bid all for something of Christ, that he might pick and chuse, and leave and take, but all things losse for the whole Christ. But what if the yoke and crosse hang to it? ye all things losse for the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; all goeth to the bargain without exception. He doth not say, I will give all for pardon of sin, and for heaven; no, but that I may know Jesus Christ, that I may know good and evil in respect of crosses and losses, the reproach of Christ I esteem greater riches then the treasures of *Egypt*. /56/

4. It is the knowledge of Christ Jesus that is at this price with the Apostle, and at this high rate; it is the soul-saving fundamental knowledge, the having of Christ for his righteousnesse, for his head, and for his root: all shall go for this knowledge; but not for some wanton opinion or wild conceit; while we are star-gazing we fall into pits and quagmires: This wilderness of fancy, of opinion, breedeth our fatal divisions.

Doct. 2. *The Knowledge of Jesus Christ is an Excellent knowledge.*

It was that eclipsed all things into losse, into dung. Now let me compare the knowledge of Christ with other things, for thereby the excellency will appear: and the comparison will be threefold.

1. We will compare Knowing Jesus Christ with the things of this life, which are of greatest esteem.

2. With other pretended wayes of glorifying God, and getting life Eternal.

3. With other knowledge which a man may attain unto, and abound in; and /57/ this knowledge of Christ will be found the most Excellent.

First: The knowledge of Jesus Christ is excellent above the having, above the holding, of all things in this world. I think the Apostle doth comprehend these, when he saith, All things are losse, all riches, honors, peace, all these in all fulnesse, yea in the whole world; to know Christ Jesus so as to have him, and be in him, is the most excellent thing. So that if the Devil should bait his hook for us, as he did for our Saviour, *all these will I give you*; yet God saying I will give you Christ to know Christ that would be the greatest gift, farr exceeding the other: The knowledge of a poor persecuted, crucified Christ is more excellent then all the fat of the Earth. But now though Christ be the richest

commodity that is to be found, to a Merchant that seeketh goodly pearls, that hath the eye of a Merchant; yet the Lord Jesus is of no more tast, no more value to a carnal hearr, than gold is to a child that trifle it away for shells and baubles: untill Christ be made wisdom to a man, he is of no worth and value: therefore in 1 *Cor. 1.30.* /58/ it is first said, that Jesus Christ is made unto us *Wisdom*, he beginneth there; and then it followeth by a copulation of all Christ together; and *Righteousnesse*, and *Sanctification*, and *Redemption*: They are all coupled together, that is, when a man hath so much knowledge of Christ, so much wisdom to set a price of him to have him at any rate.

Now how shall I convince you of this point, that the knowledge of Christ is excellent? Consider these four particulars.

1. God accounteth that he hath given you more then if had made you masters of all that glory. Our Saviour did not thank his Father for the wisdom he gave to the wise, but that he had revealed these things (that is himself) to babes, *Mat. 11.5.* and those babes had more given to them (when Christ was given to them) then all the wise, prudent, rich, and honourable.

Do you think Jesus Christ would put you to it, to lay down Father, Mother, Land, Houses, Friends, nay, all for him if he did not reckon himself worth them all a hundred fold? This is that great gift whereby God carryeth on the Election of his /59/ people, those that under the speciall, the first love of God, the love of benevolence, by given them a saving knowlege of Jesus Christ, for the bringing them unto that whereby he hath assigned them; he doth it not by heaping worldly things, but by the knowledge of Jesus Christ: now that which is the very main thing which our God carryeth on, it must needs be the excellent thing.

2. Consider, the knowledge of Jesus Christ, in respect to that which is a man's chiefest good and happinesse, and you shall see it is the excellent, things above all things in the world; for I hold this to be a sure rule, The chiefest good is the measure by which all other things are to be measured by, and those are alwayes the most excellent which lye the nearest and are the most conducing to our happinesse. The chiefest good in man is in his union with God, and his standing right with God. Now the getting of Christ you will find is more unto your union with God, and enjoyment of Heaven, then all the things of this world: This knowledge of Christ Jesus is either our happinesse, or the next ingredient to it; and therefore you shall find in Scripture, that those graces that /60/ put a man into a capacity of receiving Christ, that do argue the Lord Jesus to be mine, they are called blessed; *Blessed are ye poor, blessed are ye that hunger, blessed are ye that weep*, *Luk. 6.20.* *But we be to you that are rich for ye shall hunger, and we be to you that laugh for ye shall weep;* declaring that such things that make way for Christ Jesus, a poor and mournful spirit those have more blessednesse in them, they lye so near to that wherein true blessednesse consisteth: Riches may seem better then Poverty, fulnesse may seem better then emptiness, yet Blessednesse is not set to them, *James 1.9.* *Let the brother of low degree rejoyce in that he is exalted; of a low degree*, that is, of a low estate,, of a low condition; let him *rejoyce* that he is made an heir of God: But when it follows, *but the rich in that he is made low*, the meaning is, if he be made low for Christ, for the Gospel, let him glory in it, *because that as the flower of the grasse, he shall passe away*, that is, his outward glory will melt and will come to losse and nothing. Let him rejoyce that he is made low for Christ, his losse is made his glory: let him that glorieth, glory in him that is above riches, above might, above wisdom, /61/

3. This is confirmed to you by the sense of all true believers, that the knowledge of Jesus Christ is the most excellent thing in the world. *Paul* in the text counting all but *loss & dung* to gain Christ, is the evidence of a great witness. If you have the knowledge of Christ, that will sweeten all, there's nothing in the world favoureth like Christ to the soul: He is compared to all the spirituall sense of a believer: There's nothing to be seen like his light, there's nothing to be felt like his flesh, nothing heard like his teaching, there's nothing tasted like his goodness; nothing to be smelt like his spices and ointment; Therefore *Paul* when he stood before King *Agrippa*, when they came down with great pomp, the Apostle made no bones of it, *Acts 26.29. I would to God, not onely thou, but all that hear me were altogether such as I am, except these bonds: He would speak it though he were a King:* he did except his bonds, for in point of manners he would not wish *Agrippa* in chains; yet he did not fear to value the knowledge of Christ above all.

4. The conscience and convictions of them that have had the least account of the knowledge of Jesus Christ, will attest unto this, /62/ that the knowledge of him is the excellent thing. Let a wicked man be full of honours, riches, everything; yet his self-love will make him cry out. O, that I had Christ! Honour, wealth, and pleasure is a burden to him; and that which before he counted foolish, and never did look after, he can see to be the greatest wisdom, and pursueth it very close.

Secondly, I might compare the knowledge of Christ, with other pretended meanes of glorifying God, or other wayes which men take to get Eternall life.

There be divers wayes men take to seek happinesse: something they have they account their gain, some argument for life to shew as a ground why they should be saved. Now all other gaines, meanes, works, duties, whatsoever men may use, pretending to seek a happinesse, let us compare the knowledge of Christ to them; take it in four particulars.

1. Believing in Christ, is that, which glorifieth God above all other wayes or pretended works of men whatsoever. Men do not consider this, that faith in Christ doth most glorifie God: you think believing in Christ is a thing very conducing to your salvation; but I would have you consider /63/ it as that which most of all doth glorifie God: Faith doth *God* the greatest credit especially when 'tis carried through discouragement, darknesse, clouds, and desertions, and when men will follow Christ, as fast when he calleth them dogs, and when men by faith can lay Christ in the ballance against the Law, and the number of their sins, and take Gods word that he will give Christ to them, and trust upon him; this bringeth glory to God, when a poor soul calleth his soul upon the offer and truth of God holding forth Jesus Christ, when it seales unto God that he is true: you cannot do God a greater credit, then to trust in him.

2. Consider, the glory of God is fully laid open in the Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore the knowledge of Christ must needs be Excellent. The Heavens (saith the *Psalmist*) declare the glory of God, but not comparably to the Gospel: Here is the free grace of God seen, never more free then in a Redeemer: Here is the wisdom of God seen, never more wise then in giving Jesus Christ, to be an *Adam* unto men, a rising *Adam* for men to rise, as there was a /64/ falling *Adam* for men to fall: Here is the justice of God seen, never more livelily set forth then in pardoning sin; he did justify the ungodly: Here is the truth of God seen, never more true then in offering the Lord Jesus Christ, according

to his promise, to the lost sinner: And here is the power of God seen, never more powerful then in the pulling men out of sin, lust, and ignorance, and out of themselves.

Here's all the glory of God in a harmony, in a full shew, in Jesus Christ. In *2 Cor.* 3.10. it is called the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, and *2 Cor.* 4.6. speaking of the Gospel, or of Christ in the Gospel, he calleth it the glory of the Lord.

3. All the promises of God are entailed upon the knowing of Jesus Christ: this is onely your Title for Heaven, you need prove nothing else to your souls, but that you know Christ, and that you have faith in Christ; for that link draweth all the rest with it, namely, righteousness, justification, adoption, life eternall; prove the knowledge of Christ and they all follow, because they are all annexed /65/ on Jesus Christ; if you know Christ there is Yea and Amen in him; therefore this must needs be an excellent knowledge, upon which and onely which are entailed all the promises, of this life and the life to come.

4. Of all other, this is the most excellent way because it taketh a man off of himself; it raiseth a man by losing him; because it exalteth a man by humbling of him. This is the way of God in saving of a sinner, he will take him off of his own bottom.

Thirdly, Let me compare the knowledge of Christ with other knowledge, which a man may attain unto, and it will appear to be the most excellent knowledge above all other. To say this by roat that it is so, is nothing; but to say this tastingly and experimentally as the Apostle doth, it is peculiar to them that have it; for they have it, can only say it. In Scripture-Language to know Christ, is to have Christ, to have him and know him are in a saving sense both one; that we may know him that is true, and that we may be in him that is true, *1 Joh.* 5.20.

There is a speculative knowledge, which is a meer empty notion, an empty knowing, /66/ an empty nothing; so much acquaintance as a man hath with Christ, to much in Scripture he is said to know him and no more. He that knoweth the nature of Gold he is not rich, but he that hath it, so 'tis here; not he that can discourse of Christ, but he that hath Christ; he is the man that knoweth him indeed. There's nothing to a rationally man more sweet, more desireable then knowledge; but see how the Apostle undervalueth all worldly knowledge, *1 Cor.* 1.20. Where is the wise, or the scribe, or the disputer of the world? hath not God made all this wisdom foolishnesse? Indeed we preach Christ crucified, the foolishnesse of the Gospel (which is the preaching of the word) that is, the wisdom of God; but the wisdom of man is as foolishnesse.

Now that I might set out the excellency of the knowledge of Christ, consider five particulars.

1. Consider this knowledge, by the excellency of the Object of it *Jesus Christ*. Now of Christ 'tis said, In him are hid, all the treasure of wisdom and knowledge: *Col.* 3.2. There's no such object of knowledge as Christ, for him God hath set forth all his glory, and therefore tis said, All /67/ the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in him, and those treasures of wisdom are called the unsearchable treasures of Christ, *Eph.* 3.8. and of those things it is said the Angels desire to look into, *1 Pet.* 1.12. Where the Apostle alludeth to the Cherubims that were over the Mercy-seat, of which the text telleth you, they did look downward to the mercy-seat, which was the sight of Christ.

2. All other knowledge is ordinarily spun out of a natural light, yea the Scripture and much of the truth of Christ himself is discerned literally by a naturall light, the light of reason, and the light of judgment, that is in all by nature. When the Gospel is preached to you, you may understand much by a natural light: But this saving knowledge of

Christ, that is, by a light which is spirituall, cannot be made out by that light; you have not this knowledge as you know other things. Therefore the Apostle prayes for the *Ephesians*, that God would give to them the spirit of wisdom and revelation: *Eph.* 1.17. This is a light shined-in by the same God that commandeth light out of darknesse at the first, as it /68/ is in *2 Cor.* 4.6. All natural wisdom is but darknesse like that which was upon the *Chaos* at the Creation, untill God commanded a light to shine out of this darknesse, which is that light whereby you only come to the knowledge of God, in the face of Jesus Christ: There can be no knowledge from the wisest and learnedest, no saving knowledge of Christ by a natural light, Christ is hidden to such men untill there be a new day-break of spiritual illumination which doth enter into the mind of man. But this is such a knowledge of Christ, that every one that knoweth him with this light, is in him; Every man that hath learned of the Father, (saith Christ, *John* 6.45.) cometh to me; not one excepted upon the coming in of this light; whereby there is made a saving knowledge of Christ; there is an exceeding powerful conviction goeth along with it, whereby their thoughts are captivated; there is a sweet savour or odour of Christ, that relisheth and taketh the heart at that time with sweet delight and Complacence; and it is hard to say whether the soul be drawn to Christ by power or sweetnesse; power, that doth /69/ drive it, and sweetnesse that doth draw it. There is a mighty power that draweth the heart unto faith in Jesus Christ; hence 'tis they are so excellently coupled by the Apostle, in *1 Cor.* 1.14. *To them which are called*, saith he, *Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God;* for in your calling when Christ appeareth to you, he appeareth as the Wisdom of God, and he is felt as the Power of God.

3. The knowledge of Christ is excellent, because it bringeth a man into acquaintance, and favour, and fellowship, and fruition with God; it is the key that letteth a man into these. All other knowledge whatsoever, as it findeth a man a stranger to God, when it first cometh in, so it leaveth a man to be a stranger still, he hath nothing of God in him: but this knowledge of Jesus Christ taketh away that distance, because it taketh away the guilt of your sins; this is an uniting knowledge by the faith of Jesus Christ, *Math.* 11.27. There 'tis said, *No man knoweth the Son but the Father, neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him;* There's not a man in the world knows the Father but Christ, and by knowing Christ you come to know God. /70/ To this purpose, *Joh.* 3.13. *No man hath ascended into Heaven;* that is, no man hath the knowledge of God, but he that came down from Heaven, from the bosom of God to bring and reveal it unto men: Christ is that golden key that openeth God to men, and bringeth sinful, fearful, guilty souls into favour and fellowship with God. *Joh.* 14.8. *Philip* there saith unto Christ, Lord, *shew us the Father, and it sufficeth us:* Our Saviour answered him, Have I been with you so long, and know you not me, *Philip?* He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; he that knoweth me and is acquainted with me, is acquainted with God.

What poor advancement to the knowledge of God is gotten by *Philosophy*, and the knowledge of the Creature? Do we not see that many times the greatest Scholars are the greatest Atheists, and the greatest strangers unto God and the deepest Ignorants unto God; but when a man commeth to know Christ, then commeth all his comfort and sweetnesse.

4. The knowledge of Jesus Christ, it changeth every man that hath it, and maketh him to become another man, *Col.* 3.10. *The new man is renewed in knowledge after* /71/

the Image of him that created him. And 2 Cor. 3.18. *We with open face beholding as in a glasse the glory of the Lord are changed into the same image from glory to glory:* Now the Legal glory that was in the face of *Moses*, but the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. The will of man, the affections of man are changed by the knowledge of Jesus Christ. The very least beam of this knowledge, if it fall within any man, it changeth the whole man, and maketh him new throughout. There is a knowledge that will make a grosse sinner to become more fair and moral, this is but a moral alteration, not a new creation: but when the saving knowledge of Christ is wrought; of an unclean person, a man is become clean, of a moral man a Gospel-man; so that if there be no change, we may argue there's no knowledge of Christ; the argument will hold from no change, no knowlege of Christ, 1 John 3.6. *Whosoever sinneth* (saith the Apostle) *hath neither seen him, nor known him.* In the time of the Law there was a way of making an unclean person clean; but there was no way of making an unclean Creature to become clean which was unclean by kind: But now in the Gospel, there is this way of making the unclean /72/ creature clean, that is unclean by kind, by birth, by life, to be clean by the knowledge of the Lord Jesus; and the reason is this, It is impossible to know Christ savingly, and not to be in him: for union with Christ is not a union of love onely, by love and affection to him, as two friends may be said to be one; but this union is by communion of the same spiritual nature, and dwelling in the same spirit; that's a union a man hath by Christ, which how it can be without a real change, is not a thing that can be understood.

5. The Properties of this knowledge will shew you the excellency of it; take these five.

1. This knowledge of Christ, it is an humble knowledge. There is a knowledge (saith the Apostle) that swelleth and puffeth up: truly, that is the danger of knowledge; there's nothing maketh a man more proud then knowledge: But now, of all kind of knowledge, the knowledge of Jesus Christ is the most humble. There is a breaking humblenessee, and self-outing humblenesse; The breaking humblenesse is the humiliation under the weight of sin, and thus it may be broken by the terror of the law; But then there is a self-outing /73/ humblenesse, that is, when a man is cast out of his self-righteousness, and spiritual pride is removed out of the soul, and it maketh a man nothing worth in his esteem; now this is wrought by the knowledge of Jesus Christ, it killeth self which nothing else in the world will kill: Self will live though a man hath never so much knowledge; now Christ is the only killing of Self.

2. Property, 'tis an obediencial, a practical knowledge, 1 John 2.5. *Hereby we know him, if we keep his Commandements:* Faith in the promises looketh to the commandement; and that faith, deriving grace from Christ by the promises, issueth out that grace again, in the service of God according to the Commandement. If there be a Well of water in a man, there must be a springing up (saith our Saviour) unto everlasting life; This knowledge of Jesus Christ is the most easie thing to constrain obedience to God.

3. It is a satisfying knowledge. There's no satisfaction in all other knowledge; the appetite of man cannot be full, the capacity of the heart cannot be filled, the eye is not satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing; but he that drinketh of this water /74/ (saith our Saviour) is no more a thirst; there is enough in Jesus Christ.

Now it is satisfying, upon a twofold account; First, because it cleareth the conscience by purifying and by pacifying it; purifying it, from being unclean; pacifying it, from being a troubled conscience: other knowledge may please the fancy, but this dispelleth the horrors of the soul, the feares, the agonies, and the wounds of conscience. Secondly, It is satisfying, because it is certain: There's nothing more certain then the knowing of the Lord Jesus Christ: and the reason is, because the Spirit of God cometh with a Seal, and maketh this knowledge sure. Read the Scripture and you will find that the seal of the Spirit is proper and peculiar to the knowledge of Jesus Christ. I do not say, that every Christian alwayes hath this seal set to the knowledge of Christ; but I say that it belongs to this knowledge, and to no other thing: faith in Jesus Christ may sometimes go without Evidence, (that I grant sometimes) for the clearest Sun may be darkned sometimes by Eclipses.

The fourth property of this knowledge, It will hold a man's head above water, (for it is accompanied with outward crosses.) /75/ Though a man should know the nature of all Creatures, of Heaven and Earth, and be as wise as *Solomon*, it would not hold his head above water; but this keepeth you from sinking. As it is said, *Psal. 46. When the mountains were shaken, there is a river that runneth by, that shall make glad the City of Jerusalem:* This knowledge is like a well that runneth under ground, that filleth the Cistern with water in secret.

5. This knowledge of Jesus Christ is an excellent knowledge, because it filleth with all the fulnesse of God; whatsoever God is full of, that he conveyeth to you by the knowledge of Jesus Christ, *2 Pet. 1.3.* there it is said, *He hath given unto us all things that pertaine to life and godlinesse.* How? though the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and vertue, such influence of strength and comfort cometh into a man at a dead lift, such variety of knowledge in Jesus Christ: and the like of this cannot be said of any other knowledge whatsoever; therefore 'tis, above all other, the most excellent.

USE 1. Is the knowledge of Christ such an excellent knowledge? This is the key of Heaven, the key of Salvation, the key that openeth God to you, all his fulnesse, /76/ all his treasure is in Jesus Christ? Then let us not run out to curiosities, and speculative questions, that do not belong to the free-hold of life and salvation. A man may find Scripture-truths, and yet be never the nearer to Heaven by them. How many Trees might *Adam* have eaten of in paradice yet there was but one Tree of Life in Paradise, though the fruit of every one was good: So, every truth of Scripture is a pearle, yet there is but one tree of life in all the Scripture, and that is the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Many are not capable of much other knowledge that is counted excellent; but of this knowledge of Christ Jesus, Who is not capable? the poor, the silly soul, may be capable of it, when the wise and prudent, the learned and the knowing are not; nay it is hid from them, and given to babes. A wooden candlestick will hold a candle as well as a silver one: so the poor soul that is ignorant of other things, is as capable of this knowledge as any; and the more poor, especially in spirit, the more capable he is.

2. Examine whether you have this excellent knowledge, Examine it by the properties I laid down. It is not the knowledge that is literal that is the excellent /77/ thing, nay as it is said in *Jer. 2.8. they that handle the law (saith God) know me not;* so I say, they that handle the Gospel may not know Christ, though they may preach Gospel truths. A man may be very Learned, and yet not know Jesus Christ: but doth this knowledge of him warm and work as farr as it shineth, though it be but a little way? then

'tis a right and comfortable knowledge: A spark in the heart is worth a whole torch in the brain, if it work as farr as it shineth. The knowledge of Christ feedeth all grace, strengtheneth all grace, bringeth all comfort, so full of sweetnesse, so full of excellency; the least beam of it in your souls, will be worthy all the world unto you. Examine it, be sure you find the difference between it and the form of knowledge: if it doth not renew and change you, it is not a right knowledg, if you have nothing but this form of knowledge, it is but like the picture of the Sun-that hangeth for a sign; you call it a Sun, but it hath nothing of the Sun-light; the Sun influence; so you may call this a knowledge of Christ, but there is nothing of the light and influence, as there will be when you come indeed to the true light. /78/

3. This teacheth you all to drown all other losses in Jesus Christ and count them nothing worth. *Paul* doth not bewaile for the losse of his former gain, he was not troubled; because he found the excellent thing: Christ to have, and Christ to hold; is that which will make you all gainers, though your estates and lives go to the purchase of it.

Doct. 3. *'Tis an Excellent knowledge for a man to know Christ Jesus to be his Lord.*

I draw it from these words of *Paul*, *Jesus Christ my Lord*. *Jesus* is a name of fulnesse and sufficiency for the Salvation of a sinner; *my Lord* added thereunto, is the appropriation of that fulnesse, and that sufficiency to ones self; and this appropriation (Christ Jesus my Lord) is the ground of all the hope and all the comfort which a poor sinner doth expect or look for in this world or in the world to come.

I have formerly handled the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus: but all that excellency described in Christ, is but like the view of a rich country to a man that hath not a foot of Land in it, he seeth it and commendeth it, but is never the richer for /79/ it: Therefore I come to the propriety that a Christian hath in Christ, whereby Christ is his own, according as 'tis said, 1 John 5.12. *He that hath the Son hath life, and he that hath not the Son, hath not life.* A Surveyor taketh a measure of the ground, and knoweth the dimensions of it to a foot; but the owner knoweth it as his own possession, and the fruit of it is his: so there be many that have the notion of Christ, and of the worth and excellency of Christ, and by that knowledge he surveyeth, he knows the truth and properties of Christ better then many an owner: but they that have Christ, and can truly call him *my Lord*, they are the only happy men on earth; and their knowledge of him is most excellent.

Let me premise a word or two.

1. There is some difference between a Christians propriety in Christ and his assurance; for to have Christ and to know we have him are 2 distinct things, distinct gifts, 2 John 5.11. these things have I written (saith the Apostle) *to you that believe that you might know*, &c. The only point I have to speak to, is not so much of assurance, but the propriety of a man's having Christ. /80/

2. Consider, this propriety of having Christ is most needful to be treated of, because many, nay thousands think to be saved by a Christ, that is without them though they have not Christ formed in them; 'tis a dream but yet it is the conceit of thousands; It is as if a sick man should think to be healed and cured by an herb as it grows in the garden, though it be not applyed to him.

The point of propriety to have Christ, that's the great point out of these words, *My Lord*; For the opening of which I will propound only three particulars.

1. Whatsoever Christ hath in himself, yet he is nothing to you without propriety in him, that is, except you have him; and the reason is, because Benefit follows after propriety, and upon it: for we used to say communion followeth union, there's no benefit except there be first a propriety, and the benefit flowes into, and upon the man that hath propriety in him; *Of him*, (saith the Apostle) 1 Cor. 1.30. *are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us Wisdom, and Righteousnesse and Sanctification, and Redemption; of him* first, and then he is made so and so. /81/

Observe, all the comparisons of union between Christ and his people; as the head to the members: the root to the branches; the husband to the wife; the foundation to the building; and you will find the communion and benefit of Christ Jesus must needs follow upon the having of himself: what benefit can there be to member if it hath not union with the head? what benefit can there be to a branch, if it be not joyned to the root? and what benefit can a woman have of a man, if she be not married to him? and what benefit will it be for a building, if there be no foundation for it to stand upon? As the fullest fountaine giveth nothing to the Cistern, if there be not a pipe of conveyance made, in which the water may run: So, what Christ may be for fullnesse of sufficiency, yet there's nothing for you, except there be a having of him, a union with him.

2. There is no man hath Christ as he is Jesus a Saviour, that hath not him as he is Lord; for all Christ must go together, *Christ Jesus my Lord*.

Men in their imaginations and desires, do partially divide Christ; they divide his merit from his spirit; they divide the blood /82/ from the water; they divide his Priesthood from his Empire: as if they would or could have Christ in one respect, and reject him in the other; they cry *Hosanna* in the highest, and then they say again we, Will not have this man to reign over us. There can be no such division made, such a faith (if it made be called a faith at all) is rotten and unsavory; either you must have all Christ or none; therefore when our Saviour had promised Rest to them that *were weary, and heavy laden*, *Math.* 11.28. yet he called them to a yoke: Rest in Christ, and the yoke of Christ must go together. 'Tis in vain to think of detaing *Israel* in *Egypt*, when they are to go out: *Israel* must not strike the blood upon the door-posts to escape the destroying Angel, and stay in *Egypt* still: but as they struck the blood upon the door-posts, so they must go out of *Egypt* in haste into the wilderness: they must follow the conduct of God in all things.

3. A Christian valueth the having of Christ Jesus his Lord above all things, to be lost for him, he layeth Christ in the scales against all; and there be two Reasons for it. First, If it be eternal life and /83/ salvation that a man seeks, the having of Christ is the only ladder to heaven, the foot of this ladder standeth in the Gospel, Christ is the great link of the chain that draweth all the rest; the making Christ sure, maketh Heaven sure; so righteousness with God, and favour with God, are all sure, because they all depend upon Christ Jesus. If a man would prove to his own conscience that he should be saved and justified, prove but one thing, that proveth all; prove the having of Christ, that proveth all the rest.

As by way of Comparison; A woman that would go to prove her dowry, she hath no deeds to shew of those Lands that are hers, but she proveth the man to be her husband, and then all the rest cometh to her: so 'tis here, How shall I prove that I shall be saved? here is the way, Have you propriety in Christ? Is Christ yours? if he be, he draws all the rest. A second Reason, because Jesus Christ himself to a Christian is worth all he looseth for him, or all he layeth out for him. A man at his first startling by the law, when he

cometh first to the veiwing of his sins and damnable condition, such a man seeketh heaven and eternal life; /84/

but, after the man hath gotten the sense, and the sight, and the tast of Christ himself, then he beginneth to love and prize Christ as much as Heaven; and it is never right with a man, till the relish of Jesus Christ himself do so take with a man, that he can count himself well enough though he lose all for him; then the yোক, and the cross, and the way of Christ is sweet, and all because Christ is sweet to him: Christ sweetneth Heaven itself.

Use: Shall be to move you to secure your propriety in Christ Jesus. Every man can pretend & say that he hath him, as *Balaam* saith *my God*, when he went about to earn the wages of unrighteousnesse; but the thing it self is worth all the world, All the labour and travell of a Christian is about this short word, *my Lord*.

Now to get Christ, to come into a propriety, take these 5 Reasons or motives to stir you up.

1. You ought to be quickned up to this, because the heart of every man sticketh most at the Lordship, the Empire, and the Government of Jesus Christ. Self-love naturally may eagerly desire a Christ, but self-love alwayes seeketh Christ with division; his salvation from his sanctification; his blood /85/ from his Scepter. The property of self-love is partial, dividing Christ from himself, the heart of man envying his Lordship and his Dominion. If a sick man could be healed by licking the sugar off from the Pill, how easie and how pleasant would it be for him? and if you could be saved by apprehending of Christ's goodness, it is an easie thing to believe, and very pleasant; but when you come to the bitter thing, then you hang back from his Law, and his way, and if need be his cross: never think our Lord Jesus will be an under tenant to his own purchase; he hath purchased you to be his, and do you think he will be your under-tenant.

2. Reason why you ought to be stirred up, because of the self-credulity and flattery of all our hearts; they will be very stiff to lay strong claims upon low grounds. I wonder who it is that doth not run away with this that Christ is his Lord? can you beat him off of this? It is hard thing to wring a false claim out of a dead, carnal, self-credulous heart; their confidences for Heaven are so strong: There's no better way to proceed with such souls than to kill them first, that so they may be saved; and to break them in pieces that they may be /86/ set in joynt. O that we could un-Christ these men! How many are there that build upon their faith that they believe in Christ? but when that faith is examined, it is nothing but an assent to the Word, not a faith of closure; they were never troubled about their Title, therefore their Title is good: 'Tis a dangerous argument, it argueth him rather stark dead then alive: They love Christ, and they think highly of him, and therefore they have him; that is an argument of what he did for them, he shed his blood, but they never found yet what Christ hath done in them; Now the tryal of propriety is, that which Christ hath done in you, not that which he hath done for you.

3. There is nothing that conscience awakened especially in affliction or temptation, that it doth more question then matter of propriety, when conscience is awakened within them, then it is Christ my Lord.

There's not one of a thousand that falleth into temptation and darkness of spirit, but this is the thorn that sticketh in their sides, but is Christ my Lord? He was not more credulous before then distrustful now: Hath he desires after Christ? he imputeth /87/ it to self-love, to his own ends: Hath he corruptions in him? still he doth not distinguish between molesting sins, and reigning sins; between the tyranny of sin, and the reign of

sin, the kingdom of sin which is the dominion over him: certainly he that hath great thirstings after, and high prizings of Christ, he hath a propriety in him, though not a sight of him: There is a faith that is called a motion, a struggling to the rock; that is, a coming to Christ, as well as a faith resting and settling upon him: If a man hath a motion after Christ 'tis saith, if a man seek grace and not merely ease, and if he seek the Lord-ship, and not only the Saviour-ship, there is something for him to hold by, there is a bargain made between him and Christ; the contract is made, though the indentures be not sealed.

4. The necessity of having Christ, should excite you to try your propriety. 'Tis evident, all that is saving depends on your propriety. It is that that bringeth you in to Christ; until this be, Christ is but a Christ without you, and you will never be able to prove your propriety, and so say, *my Lord*.

5. Nothing is more comfortable then when /88/ a man can say *Jesus Christ my Lord*. As a woman that is married, casteth all upon her husband: so you may cast all upon Christ. Jesus Christ my Lord answereth all objections. Here is the wisdom of a Christian to walk with God, that he may alwayes be able to secure his propriety in Christ. Every Apple upon the branch proveth, that every branch hath union with the sap. There are many great parts and gifts of the mind, and many great moral works that will not prove this propriety in Christ. Again, there be any corruptions and infirmities in a Christian, and many sins that do not disprove this propriety: the comliness of a wooden leg will not prove that it is a member with the bodyt; neither doth the lameness of a leg prove that it is not a member. Well then, that which proveth this propriety must be something of Christ in you, that's a sure rule: the least bud upon the branch proveth the union with the stock, so the least thing of Christ proveth you have Christ; if you can prove a communication of a new heart and a new spirit, you may prove your propriety in him; certainly there may be Christ forming, though there be not Christ in fulness of stature; whether Christ /89/ be in you in a conception or in a grown state still you have Christ. Christians do often wrong themselves, ay, & they wrong Jesus Christ, and the Spirit of God by casting out many signs of life, because they have not in themselves signes of strength and signs of growth. If there be not ripe fruit upon a bough, will you cut it off from the tree? then you must cut off all young boughs; but you must say, Is there sap in the branch? if there be, that proveth union: Is there anything of Christ, there's all the question? Have you so much in you as to relish Christ himself? for all the grace that cometh from Christ, reflects and carrieth the heart back again to breathe after him, to come unto him, to love him, to serve him, to undertake his service: Have you so much as to relish Christ himself? I say not, to relish Christ as a bridg to Heaven, because he would carry me to Heaven, and get over hell by him, but Christ himself in the heart. Again, doth your souls long after him without a partial dividing of him, desiring a whole Christ? Certainly, this is a sign that something of Christ is in you, that you relish whole Christ, so as to love, so as to seek, so as never to be contented without him. /90/

PHIL. 3.8.

For whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung that I may gain Christ.

This is the second half of the text, and it is an affectionate tautologie, or a repetition of the same thing; for what he said in the former part, he saith it here again, such is his affection to Jesus Christ, that he is not satisfied of the valuation of him; *All things for Christ*, saith he, and therefore he doth repeat it again, *for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, &c.* So much esteem he hath of Christ, so much he undervalueth all things whatsoever in order to his gaining, and having, and holding of Christ Jesus: He doth express the disposition of true faith, to lose all things for him; So by this you may take a measure of your selves.

Now there are in this part of the Text four Points, I shall handle them in order.

/91/

1. He professeth he had *lost all things for Christ*.
2. Here's the reckoning that he made of these *all things*; it was *but as dung*.
3. If you ask, whom he lost all those things for? it was *for Christ*.
4. Christ is the gain that answereth the loss of *all things*.

Doct. 1. For the first of these: *Paul* professeth, *that he had lost all things for Christ*. Observe him, mark his speech, Doth he speak it whimperingly, bemoaningly, as a man casteth his treasure overboard, with a willing-unwilling mind? Doth he speak of his losses as if he repented of them? No: The Marchant that findeth this treasure goeth away with joy (saith our Saviour) & sold all that he had & bought it, *Mat.* 13.44. The Apostle expresseth more content of his losses then sorrow; *I have suffered the loss of all things, and count them but dung that I may win Christ*. The young man in the Gospel, he went away from Christ in his own self-righteousness, *all this have I done*; but the Apostle cometh to Christ in the loss of his self-righteousness; What a change doth the discoveries and the tast of Jesus Christ make? /92/

For the opening of this Point, consider these 4 particulars.

1. The extent of that loss: *all things*.
2. The Reasons of this loss of all; *for Christ*.
3. A loss of all *suffered*.
4. A present *loss of all things for Christ*.

First, Here is the extent of that loss; *all things*. True affection to Jesus Christ, is without reservation or exception of any thing that may hinder the receiving of him, or your walking with him. Now this may be reduced to three ranks: All predominant lusts, all self-righteousness, and all support and contentment of this life, wealth, credit, &c. For even lawful things are to become loss, if they take away the heart from Jesus Christ; or take the wall of Christ in your affection, esteem, or confidence.

1. All predominant lusts; there must be a loss of them in order to a sanctifying Christ.
3. All self-righteousness, or any thing that hath an opinion above Christ, there must be a loss of them in order to a justifying Christ; none are greater strangers to Jesus Christ than they that come with, *All this have I done*. /93/

3. All outward things there must be a loss of them in order to a glorifying Christ: As for fathers and mothers (as our Saviour saith) he that hateth not all these, is not worthy of me, neither can he be my disciple. The Lord Christ engageth his people to be the greatest losers; his Doctrine on earth was losing, forsaking, hating; a strange doctrine!

If you should ask me, Which is the hardest thing for a man to suffer the loss of? I answer in the general, It is hard to be made a loser of any thing to which the heart is united, be it never so base a lust. But for known sins that look a man in the face, the Law of God will help to fire a man out of those sins. And for outward things as fathers, mothers, credit, land, though in point of nature all be very hard to give a divorce to them, yet that is not the hardest; but that is the hardest thing, to wring out of a mans hand that which he flyeth to in the point in the safety of his soul: or which he flyeth to in the point of saving of his life; now that is a mans own righteousness, it is his gain. When a deluge comes, a man will climb to that he thinks will save him: so when you have but convinced a man, and digged him out of /94/ the borrough of his own righteousness, bring him to a loss of that and all will follow. O this something of self, upon which bottom you stand for the safety of your souls, or for life eternal; this must be lost that you may come to Jesus Christ.

Secondly, The reason of this loss of all, It is for *Christ*: This sweetneth all losses: It's an easie thing to bbear those losses that are sweetned with Christ. *For thy sake* (saith the Psalmist) *we are killed all the day long.* *Psa. 44.22.* Christ must be found before this loss will be a joy. There are two Reasons why all these must be lost for Christ.

1. Because otherwise a man can never come to a true closure with Jesus Christ. The least thing that lyeth in the joynt or the stock, killeth the stock: so if any thing interpose between your closing with Christ, it destroys the union. A man may entertain Christ in an outward room by acknowledging his name; so if you observe any lust, you do but entertain him in an outward room; but if Christ lay next your heart, you would remove all things unto a distance.

2. As he cannot close, so he cannot walk /95/ with Christ in the service of him, nor in the enjoyment of him, but he will halt, and he cannot persevere; this befalleth all men that come not to the losse of all things.

Thirdly, Here is a loss of all *suffered, I have suffered the loss of all*; upon which I have these two enquiries.

1. Was this true? Had the Apostle suffered the losse of all things? He had not, he had not lost his life for Christ.

I answer, you must understand the phrase, he had suffered the loss of all things as *Abraham* had offered up his son. *Paul* had given them their dismissal, he had parted with them. I may let the things stand still in my house, but yet they are sold, none of mine. When a woman is married, she is said to forsake father and mother (as the Scripture commandeth) this married woman Now may forsake father and mother, and yet live in the same house still with them; they are forsaken because there is an other relation: so *Paul* had suffered the loss of all things, because he had taken Christ into his heart, and Christ had taken place, and made them worth nothing. For the real loss of things I may compare them to a delivery rather than /96/ to a sale; so a man hath lost all things when the contract is made with Jesus Christ; but the delivery may not be at that time, nay it may never be.

2. Upon this point, I enquire, was it not forsook by violence? Was it not a violent loss? because he saith, *I have suffered the loss.*

To which I answer, The word is passive in form, but active in sense; it was his esteem and judgment, by which he lost them, he was active in the loss, he made no more reckoning of them, then a sold thing.

Now, the heart is willing to nothing more then to the losing of all for Christ; when a man seeth the necessity of having Christ, that loosneth the heart, that draweth the heart, that makes it easy. Is it not an easy thing to part with dung, when the soul cometh to see the necessity of Christ, and casteth the sweetness of Christ?

Fourthly, Here is a present *loss of all things for Christ:* and here likewise I have two enquiries.

1. Why doth not the Apostle speak of doing, but *suffering the loss of all?* Why doth he not say, what I have done that I may win Christ? /97/

Answ. Christ is not gotten by doing moral works, or moral duties; but the preparatives are self-emptying things; when God bringeth any man to Jesus Christ he must be empty, he must be cast out of himself. All that we have to do, or all that is to be done, is, but to make room for Jesus Christ, and that is by being made losers for him, and that is by being brought unto a sensible loss of your selves, and your own righteousness, and all that looketh fair to the eye, for Jesus Christ.

2. Question is, Whether the Apostle doth profess his losses by way of merit? or how doth the losing of all things tend to the gaining of Christ?

Answ. How can the Apostle value his love by way of merit that calleth it dung? It is meant onely, as removing impediments that might hinder Jesus Christ, his closure with him, his enjoyment of Christ, his walking with Christ.

Now the word *buy* in Scripture, as *buy* of me wine, or his buying of Christ, it is nothing, but the removing of such impediments that might hinder my receipt of Christ: There is no receiving of Christ by a way of merit but by the way of self-emptying: There are those corrival lusts, those proud /98/ righteousnesses that oppose and stand against him, they must be cast out: that is all the buying that I know, and your selling is losing all for Christ.

This is the question of many, What shall I do that I may win Christ? that I may get Christ? What should you do? 'Tis not to go and set up some moral duties and works that are pleasant in your own eyes: no, that's not your way; but pull down your pride, break the heart, strip your selves and become naked, become lost and utterly undone; this the way to win Christ.

If one would have the Sun to shine into a room, what should he do? should he paint the room? that would be never the near; but let him open the windows, or break the wall then it will shine: so, if you would have Christ come into your souls, to dwell in you, you will go paint the room, you will say you will mend your lives, and do such a duty and such a work, this will not do it; there must be a heart-breaking, a heart-searching, a heart-emptying.

Use 1. Survey your rotten hearts: Are there not thousands that dare not come to a resolution to Christ for fear of being /99/ engaged, for the loss of all, that dare not be in the threshold or out: Absolutely renounce Christ they will not; absolutely engage for Christ, and stick to him they dare not. Certainly, they that fear holiness are a miserable people, and yet of this sort are many. How many are there that stand in and half out?

they dare not be Atheists for fear of the lash of conscience; and Christians they dare not be, for fear of self-denial, and losing, and forsaking all. I would you were cold or hot, I would you were something, I would you were nothing that you might be something; not to be like *Ananias* and *Saphyra* that can part with half; nor with *Agrippa* that could be almost a Christian; but rather as the Apostle *Paul* that could part with all for Christ: Here's the Character of a sound Christian.

Use 2. For reproof of such whose resolutions towards Christ may be strong, but forced like fire out of a flint, and like a ship-man in a storm, none more fuller of vows and promises: so are you, when you are under pangs of consciences, or in sickness, lying upon your death-beds, then, as if you could run through fire and water, do any thing, suffer any thing for ease: But /100/ these slavish resolutions never hold long. There are a sort of men that are slaves to their own lusts, and at the same time slaves to their own consciences, they cannot but sin and they dare not sin, a miserable thralldom, because there wanteth love of Christ to set their heart at liberty. 'Tis a miserable thralldom when a man cannot but itch after such and such a lust, and yet he dareth not for fear of the lash of conscience, he is sensible of the pang of conscience that is coming to him like the pang of a woman in child-bed. They have a sense of sin, and they desire a Saviour, and that desire maketh them leave sin and to have a hatred against it, so that they want knowledge of Jesus Christ. Now when men seek ease rather than grace, there can never be truth in the mans hear: though the thing he seeks may be spiritual, but he hath no desire of grace as it is grace; he had rather have his conscience pacified, then pacified with Jesus Christ.

Use 3. The sheweth the rottenness of such whole resolutions are limited with a salve to some one thing, one lust, one love that must be reserved. You had as good bid nothing for Jesus Christ, if there be a heart to reserve any one sin or lust. Christ will /101/ not be brought into any mans soult to be an inmate with Self, with lust; he did not dye to bring you out of half your sins. It is base for any mans heart to say, Lord, I would take thee for a husband, only, I beseech thee, let me love one thing besides thy self; I would be married to thee, only, I would have one lover more besides thee; Is not this base? It argueth a rotten heart.

Use 4. Let me divide the Point: Consider what it will cost a man to close with Christ and follow him; and whether Christ be worth this loss of all things; and whether there be a strength in you to lose and count all things loss for Christ.

1. Consider what it will cost a man to close with Christ and follow him; *all*. This short word *all* is a long price to give, the Marchant sold all to buy the field. One man hath more to lose really then another. *Moses* had much to lose, the fisher-men they had not so much to lose; yet (saith the text) *they forsook their nets*, they could say, We forsook all. Truly, men will bid very fair for Christ, they will lay aside some old cast lust that they do no much care for; they may venter the loss of some friend, or offices, or preferment for the /102/ Gospels sake: A man may lose many things, and yet be as full of self as ever before; This self is the *all* the Apostle speaks of, therefore where self lives Christ is as far from that heart, as ever: therefore it is said, *let him deny himself*. Wher Christ getteth between the heart and self, and lyeth there, then he hath his due place. A man may keep father, mother, friends, land, and yet lose more for Christ than he that parteth with all; he may deny himself in having of them, and another may seek himself in parting with them; all is as self cometh down, and all is as Christ taketh place, whether you are called to part with or to keep them, here is the sum of all, The denying of self.

2. Consider, whether Christ be worth the loss of all things that is presupposed: certainly he is worth the Marchants *all*, and the loss of *all*, otherwise the Apostle could not have professed, he had suffered the loss of all things for him.

Nothing can debase and count all things to be dung, but the excellency of the knowledg of Christ Jesus: nothing can Eclipse & put out the Stars, or the Moon, but the Sun: so earthly things may take off the beauty of Christ, yea, take off your heart /103/ from Christ, but Christ putteth down all their worth, and turneth all to the dunghil, and eclipseth all with his beauty and excellency. Christ is no such chapman to ask more then he is worth, he asketh all, because he is worth all. No man giveth a Pearl to a Swine. He was a Merchant that brought this Pearl, the eye of a Merchant, which eye if you had so to discern and value the Lord Jesus Christ, and the excellency of him above all things, then he will be chosen; But if the loss be terrible and fearful to you, it is because you want the eye of him that went away with joy, whereby he understood the value of this great treasure he found.

3. Consider, whether there be a strength in you that was in this Apostle towards Christ Jesus; all things lost for him. It is a point of strength to be able to lose, and to cast over-board those nearest relations and dearest things that you might enjoy Christ in his righteousness, in his life, in his government, that you may have him, that you may enjoy him. It is easy to carry a lamp of profession, and to have a form of religion and formality; this /104/ may stand long enough as a bull-rush standeth in a stream: how? by compliance and bending; and turning which way the wind carryeth it; if it should refuse the wind, down it would come presently. While the fair weather lasted, the house that was built upon the sand stood as well as the other that was built upon the rock, both stood until the storm came. Now to carry the profession of Jesus Christ through storms that cannot be without strength. There must be a special ability in any man that will do any thing for God. 'Tis the easiest thing in the world to face God in a duty, and yet at the same time for the heart to wheele back again to it self. No arrow shot by natural strength can ever do any thing for God. All the natural men in the world cannot perform any act of grace to love God for God, to love Christ for Christ, to do an act simply for God, but when you come to hate nearest relations, outward professions, life it self for Christ, to follow him with his yoke upon your necks, and to do all this for Christ him self, and to suffer all things for Christ; this requireth a special strength. The strength of your faith lies in self-denyall; /105/

it will carry you through all firearms to lay out enough for him, for self-ends will suck any man, so will self-resolutions, upon a man own strength though it be never so strong, thought it be in as high terms as *Peter's* was, Though I should dye, I would not forsake my Master, yet notwithstanding it will leave a man in the hall of the High-Priest. A man cannot go with the Armour of *Saul* against *Goliaht*, I cannot carry it, saith *David*. Now, it self were but taken off, if it did but hang loose to you in your account it would be no pain to leave them, it is no pain for a mans cloath to be taken off when it is unbuttoned.

Now suffer me to move you to seek the conquest of your selves, of that which we call self, self-righteousness, self-end, self-ascribing, self-loving; This self in man, is that which the Gospel must pulldown, and which Christ must take the place of in the heart of every man, that's the thing Christ must beat down and remove, that he may rule and reign.

Now I shall exhort you to it, by reasons drawn from the mischief self doth, and by the good you shall get by the mortification of it. /106/

First, From the mischief self doth toyou in 5 particulars.

1. It corrupts all your parts, all your vertues, though they be never so eminent in their kind, it self be stamped upon them, that I seek my self by them, God is excluded out of them.

2. This self is that which weakeneth all your abilities, it maketh you fall when you might stand & maketh you yield when you might withstand.. *The youth shall faint, and the young men shall fall*, (saith the Prophet, meaning, self-sufficiency) *but they trust upon God, that shall mount up with wings like Eagles*.

3. 'Tis the loss of all your duties, the utter loss of your profession, the loss of your prayers, the loss of all. *Israel is an empty vine* (saith God) *she bringeth forth fruit to her self. Hos. 10.1*. If you pray and do good duties for your selves, it is but the loss of them.

4. It is the discomfeiture of all your comforts, if you have any inward springings of joy in your heart, truly they can be but false fires.

5. This self maketh you uneven in all your wayes. *Jehu* was carried meerly by a principle of self, and had his own ends: /107/ as the biass is set so you run and so you stand.

Secondly, See the good that you should get by bringing in this earthly member self, which is the soul of the body of sin.

1. The abatin of self in the root, that one degree would work a world of good in the whole man. If you make the spring to fall a foot, the stream would fall a yard: a little of self pulled down there would be great alteration, it pulleth down your pride, and cleareth you from hypocrisie and your own ends.

2. God will not be such a stranger to you, if you can but come to this denial of your self for Christ. When God hath something in you, then he will do much for you. Christ gave the odd talent to him that had most, and the reason is given, *Matt. 25.28. to him that hath it shall be given;* that is, to him that usefully hath and tradeth for God with his heart, and all his soul, trading for God withal his parts and graces.

3. You shall have the purest joys and comforts, every duty that you do shall carry a seal in his hand to seal you to be Gods, by every duty you shall clear your title in God and clear your state when God is above /108/ self. The devil may interpose to the corrupting of those comforts, but God is above the devil; and hence it is, that your comfort runneth clear, God is his own rewarder.

4. By this abatement of your self, you shall have a sure mark of the truth of your love. So much as a man's love to Christ riseth above self: so much love in account a man hath to Christ; and truly there is not one jot of the love of God in any man until it be risen at least one degree above self, and therefore he did not say amiss, and that in measuring the degrees of his faith said, he would not so much look to the degrees of perswasion, but how much conquest over carnal reasons, fears, and lusts; so 'tis in measuring what love of God you have, it is not looking to the height of love and affection; but look how much degrees you are above this self, if God hath one grain over-weight in your heart above self, then there is something of God: and hence you may draw the mark of a true love to God by that which it over-draws self-love in you, so much that it overtoppeth you, and no more. /109/

Use 5. It was suffered for Christ: Here is the sweet and comfort of all losses that are lost for Christ, and for his sake. When *David* was mocked for playing the fool (as his wife called it) this was that that did comfort him, *it was before thee*. And when the

Apostle spake of being killed all the day long, that word for *thy sake* is that that sweetens all: So when *Paul* suffered the loss of all things, it was for *Christ*, and there lyeth the comfort of it. They denyal of your selves, the loss of father, mother, friends, so far as you can title them *for Christ*, so much it sweetneth the comfort of all these losses.

Use 6. For whom I have suffered the loss: This sheweth the true temper of a believer, that he is able to make up all losses in Christ himself, all losses in one Christ. Christ is indeed all things. All the comfort and happinesses that can be found scattered in parcels and retails, all this is to be found in Christ Jesus; poverty in Christ, wealth in Christ, sickness, health, liberty: We feel no want of the Moon, and the Stars when we have the Sun with us: so when Christ is ours we are Christ's, and all of Christ is ours also. It is a rare thing when we can supply our wants /110/ of temporal things, by spiritual in Christ Jesus; when a man can be willing, as by bill of exchange to suffer all losses, so that he may be paid in other mony: now faith can make him my countrey-house, make him my land, and liberty, and preferment, and All. Saith our Saviour, *He that forsaketh all, and loseth all for me, shall receive an hundred-fold*, What should this hundred-fold be paid in? Certainly by way of exchange in Christ; all the things the world can yield, if you forsake them, you shall be found in Christ, and you shall find in Christ an hundred fold.

Use 7. For whom? for Christ: Then consider how contrary a spirit those men have (for it is spoken by way of conviction to such as make their own markets of Jesus Christ) that come under his name, and under the name of his Gospel, and the truth of Christ, but they seek their own ends; a vile prostitution of Jesus Christ to the lusts of men, to serve our own credit, our own glory and profit, yea, and our purses too, upon the name of profession and religion; I say these are plain Turks, though they hang our English colours; vile and base spirits, that will use Christ to serve their own ends: Is this to suffer loss and /111/ to say Jesus Christ the nearest the heart? Is this to account all things but dung for Christ? No surely, this is an accounting of Christ himself to be but dung for them. Many will pretend and cry up the name of Christ but that is not the right way, if you will have him you must suffer all things, the Apostle will empty himself of *all*, so must we. The Gospel is the self-destroying doctrine, the Gospel will try whether there be room made for self, or for God; if there be no room made for Christ you cannot have him. /112/

PHIL. 3.8.

And count them but dung that I may gain Christ.

The second Doctrine ariseth from these words, *I count them but dung.*

The Apostle by this word expresseth the utmost contempt and undervaluing of all things besides Christ; as if he should have said, I count them all worth just nothing, *that I may win Christ.* The Doctrine is this,

Doct. 2. That a true knowledge, taste, and desire of Jesus Christ, they make a man count all things as dung for him, and in respect of him.

A knowledge discerning, and a taste relishing the excellencies of Jesus Christ, a desire pursuing after the gaining of Christ. What he counted gain before, he counted loss now. All pretenders for wealth, for honour, for pleasure, for strength, beauty, learning, wisdom, moral vertues, whatsoever to a mans wisdom, or to a mans lust might seem desirable, cometh here with the /113/ Apostle under the most contemptible name of *dung*, and doth cast a greater contempt then *Solomon's Vanity* and vexation of spirit. Here you may see the character of a Christian in the spirit of *Paul*, both in respect of the tast of Christ, and the desires after Christ; the tast of Christ is such, that the sweetness and the excellency (as one called it) marreth his mouth to all the sweet-meats of the world, he maketh them all to be no other but dung; his desires to Christ and after Christ is such, that in the pursuit of them he casteth them all off as vile trash, unprofitable burthens, stinking and unsavoury things.

Now if this be the character of a Christian indeed, thus to relish and favour Christ Jesus, and thus to esteem and reckon all other things that bear a very great shew to a carnal eye; then how justly may we all complain, that among Christians 'tis not so easily a thing to find a Christian; when the name of Christ is not that that beareth sway, but his name is made a stirrop unto mens desires, a covert for our lusts and prophaness. /114/

If you do but consider the lives of men, and wayes, and ends, it would appear that Christ is the dung, and not all other things for him, and other things the gain.

I would not have you measure your Religion by your shops, but by your warehouses; not by what you hang out, or hang forth in esteem and resolution, but esteem is to be measured by your self-deniall; let not your esteem of Christ be measured by the good words you give him, but by your accounting all things but losse for him.

For the opening of the point, Consider,

First, what are those things that are accounted dung for him? when he saith *all*, we must referr them to two heads, First, what he might plead and put confidence in for the Salvation of his soul; and those are receited in the 5th and 6th verses going before. Secondly, what might call out his affection, they come under the general word, *yea and all things* verse 8. It is hard to call the heart of man from his confidence and his affection. There's no man in the world that hath any sense of salvation, but he hath somewhat wherein /115/ he putteth confidence, and counteth his gain, else he could never be quiet and at ease, nor sleep and rest secure upon imaginary dreames, reasonings of mind, very husks, poor things, but yet they are such things that stay men from God. And so for the Affections of a man, 'tis as easie pulling and rearing them from him, as 'tis pitch from a mans hand: Alas, we are Ignorant of Christ, we are proud, and look for a Christ in our selves, some duties, some works, and some good deeds.

Secondly, How are these to be accounted dung?

1. All things without Christ are no better then dung. If you were able to name as much as the *Jew*, and as *Paul*, your moral natural goodnesse whatsoever without Jesus Christ, they are all dung, they will be worth no more to you, when you come to the shore of another world. Alas, all these vertues, good parts, they are but starrs, within the night may shine, but when the day cometh the sun putteth them out, they are dung without Christ, for they give no life. Many are adorned with sweet flowers, sweet dispositions, which to nature appeares to be vertues, if they are /116/ without Christ Jesus, they are but like flowers strew'd upon a dead Corps a stinking carkasse, though they may sweeten it, yet they give no life at all.

2. They are dung, as they are impediments to Christ, to your closure with him; as they take any part from him, from his Government; you love your wealth and your friends, and therefore you cannot hold Christ. Again, they are impediments to your walking with him, you cannot walk with that resolution and confidence, and boldnesse, these things hinder you. And they are impediments to your enjoyment of him; the sweetnesse of the comforts of Christ and his spirit, they are not so sweet as they should be; because they tampered so much with these carnal joyes; 'tis worthy that these men should be turned into the kinnel when they take the wall of Christ.

3. They are dung, as they are set up towards the having of him. The Apostle doth not set them up, but looseth them, and taketh them down, and maketh dung of them, they are not to be set up towards the having of Christ Jesus, for the way of Christ into the soul is not made by such things as these. The law it self is a preparative /117/ work to your better knowing and relishing and receiving of the Lord Jesus Christ: But how is it preparative? not by your doing the duty of it, but by the sentence of it, unhorsing the pride of man, and bringing it to lye under the sentence of the Law.

4. What is it that maketh them dung? I answer, the esteem; the alteration is wrought in you, not in the thing; Fathers and Mothers are so still, yet (saith the Apostle) these are in the number, I count them all dung, the judgment is changed, the pallat and tast of the soul is changed: The eye that is blood-shot maketh the object to alter; so 'tis here, that which turneth them all to dung, is the esteem of Christ Jesus, the change lyeth in you, because you have an other eye. That which is meat to a dog is but dung & trash to a sheep, because it hath another nature, another appetite: that which is sweet and precious to your hearts when you are one of Christ, is esteemed vile to an other man that hath an other principle, another tast and sense, for all the spiritual senses of the soul are changed and altered.

USE 1. Here learn from this example, to see your own righteousnesse, accomplishments, /118/ parts, works, while you are out of Christ Jesus, to see them and own them as dung: The God of Heaven disclaimeth them, and the Gospel of Jesus Christ cashiereth them; and you must come to this tast to suffer the losse of them; and the losse of these is easily suffered when the account is changed: It is an easie thing to loose and forsake dung, all the hardnesse is to bring the heart to this judgment, to this esteem, to this tast, to this affection. Were a mans hand full of gold, he must let it all fall if he will take hold of a bough to save him: so if you will take hold of the Lord Jesus Christ and win him, though your hands were full of gold, it must be losse and dung for Christ. How do many men that are puffed up with a self-something, look down upon Death and Hell, from the battlement of their self-flattering and their pride? they think they are out of the

Gun-shot of Hell and Death, untill there comes some storm and breaks their maine-mast. When storms of conscience arise, then they will see (though they had a good shew for naturall parts, and moral righteousnesse) they would not passe any account with God; you deceive your selves, for it is a Gospel way /119/ that you must be saved by, 'tis Christ alone; it must come to this, that all be dung for Christ.

USE 2. Let this Exhort you, thus to value all things in order, and in reference to Christ, to look whether this esteem of dung be in you, otherwise 'tis not a right esteem.

The old Philosophers and Heathens, there were strange speeches of contempt given by them to the glory of the world; And the *Papists* will go bare-foot, and cast all over-board that they might be poor men, and many upon their death-beds, when they are stung in conscience, they will count them dung, so in affliction a man may see the vanity of the Creature because he can find no ease by them: But the right way of accounting them losse, and a Christian way, is, when Christ is sweet to his heart, when the sweetness of Christ worketh the heart off, then it is right. Christ must needs be very glorious in the eye of *Paul*, that could turn all those excellencies which before he took into a great admiration and pronounce them no better then dung; Christ must needs be glorious to the poor soul that cometh to this esteem of all things for Christ. Therefore let me speak /120/ to men of parts, and gifts, and morall vertues, to you that have the things of this world, that you may value him, that the tast of Christ may make you undervalue all things, and the spirituall and Evangelicall graces that flow from Jesus Christ may flow to your souls: your abilities they may be useful to others, yet they are unsaving untill Christ be formed in you, and the spirit that cometh from Christ bring you into union with him, and you be filled in some measure, with the fullnesse of Christ Jesus.

USE 3. Out of this Expression of the Apostle, we might make a Character or a description of a heart, really and truly addicted to Jesus Christ.

1. Observe, in what soyl saving-faith in Jesus Christ is to be found, what manner of soil it groweth in; in a man that is cast out of himself, out of his false hopes, blind security, &c.

A believer is a poor guilty sinner, one that hath his mouth stopt, an out-cast, he seeketh about to find some foot-hold that he may rest his weary soul. He compares himself with other men, and findeth more good works in him, then is in thousands; and upon this pillow he would fain lye /121/ himself down to sleep. *Well! he cannot*, for God will bring him to the losse of it. He casteth about again and tryeth an other way, and that is mirth and good company to drive away his Melancholly, but it will not do, for when God resolves to bring a man to Jesus Christ, he shall not finde a husk to feed upon; for if he could, he would (with the Prodigal) never come to his Father. God will take away all; no reasons, no shifts, no conceited righteousnesse, no ship-man's vowes shall do any thing, no sick-man's promise, shall serve your turn; every high thought that lifteth up against Jesus Christ, shall be laid flat. Now when the soul is ship-wrackt and cast, then faith casts it's eye upon Gods free mercy and grace, and if it perish at all, it will perish at the very prospect of grace and key of mercy; this is to bring a man to be lost, where he cannot be lost. If a man be a banckrupt, cast out of all his own righteousnesse and conceit, if he hang upon Gods free grace, meerly because of his grace, this self-outing Faith brings the greatest honour to Gopd: But for a proud man it is the hardest thing to leave self; he cannot do it, he will not do it. /122/

2. Character, is prizing of Christ, raising him up in a high degree of esteem, for faith looketh upon Christ with an eye of necessity, now things are set to sale; and life, friends, liberty, land, houses, and all are trash and rotten vanities. Mark the stepps that are in the Merchants purchase; saith the text he findeth a pearl, (that is Christ revealed in the Gospel) then he layeth it near his heart, then he goeth away with joy, and this maketh him sell all that he had to buy it. Labour to make your faith appear, by your high prizing of Jesus Christ. I confesse any man in the verdict of his judgment, will confesse Christ is best; but let the choice of your heart verifie your judgment, else your judging of Christ to be the best is but a complement. Take Christ as he is in himself, and you will say he is the best pennyworth that a man can buy; yea but take him comparatively against the bag of gold, against poor paltry pleasures, against any poor lust; then what is the price of Christ Jesus? what place and power hath Christ in you then? I fear Christ is but gazed upon, or at best but cheapned by many. The good Merchant and the young man in the Gospel differed very much; the one /123/ fold all, and the other fold nothing; the one had Christ, the other went without him.

3. Character is, the tast of Christ upon the soul: now the Lord Jesus is relished, he hath such a favour as he never had before; where there's a high price, and relishing palate, it's an excellent sign there's a good faith. How many honey-combs will such a man find in the word of God, and the Doctrine of the Gospel, which before was but like the white of an egg? One of the first things that the Spirit of God worketh in the new Creature is the sense of tasting; the desires after more and more, is enlarged; now what sweetnesse is there in your palat? what Spiritual sense of tasting have you found in Jesus Christ?

The Apostle was a man out of all, and Christ was raised to a high price with him; he had a new tast, a new sense, a new judgment of Christ.

Do but consider and imagine what affection to Jesus Christ there was in him, and what disdain and contempt to the things of this world, when he uttered these words, *And I count them but dung that I may win Christ.* /124/

I come to the motive, or reason, or end which the Apostle had in his eye, and in his heart, when he suffered the losse of all, and it was this, *that I might gain Christ.*

Our Saviour maketh a supposition, and it is no more then of a man's gaining the whole world, which if he do with the losse of his soul (saith he) it will not quitt charges, it will not pay him for his losses: But here now is the losse of the whole world for the gain of Christ, and the purchase is great. A Christian, trading for Jesus Christ, is the very scorn and the wonder of the world, Every man will wonder at him that loseth all things, untill they have an eye to the value of the price; the end and the gain that he hath gotten, will make this loser a wise man.

The Point of Doctrine is this,

Doct. 3. *'Tis for the gaining of Christ that a Christian counteth all things in the world as dung, and suffereth the losse of all things.* /125/

It is a strange thing that a man must lose to gain; He must be a beggar and a bankrupt that he may be rich; he must be nothing that he may have Christ. A Christian is the greatest self-looser, and the greatest self-seeker; the greatest self-looser, I have lost (saith the Apostle) all, and I count them but dung; and greatest self-seeker (in a good and spiritual sense) for he seeks and findeth all things in Christ; yea himself could not be found in himself, that I may win Christ, and that I may be found in him; so that in all

loosing there is a seeking, he loseth himself in himself, that he may be found in Jesus Christ. This is the property and signe of a true Christian, to make up his righteousnesse, his friends, his credit, his life, his all in Jesus Christ; as *Paul* did, he took up *Abraham*, and his righteousnesse in the law, and his Circumcision, and all things that were gain to him, he was able to take up all in one Christ; yea, his works after grace received, all that I did know, and all that I do know still, I do count them but as dung that I may win Christ.

Quest. Here may a Question arise, why, the Apostle in this *verse*, and in the /126/ following *verses* speaks in such a style as this, that I may win Christ, that I may be found in him, that I may know him; as if so be the Apostle had not Christ already; like one that was a seeking, that had him not in possession.

Answ. To this I answer: much matter may be pickt out of this, that an Apostle a holy man being in Christ, is yet in pursuit of Christ: four things I gather out of it.

1. That a Christian that hath any thing of Christ, he would have all Christ; he that hath some drops and some tast, he would have full drops of Christ Jesus; he that hath him for a Priest, or for a Sacrifice, would have him also for a King; he that hath Christ coming by blood, would have him also coming by water; he that hath any part of Christ Jesus he can reject no part, his comfort, his righteousnesse, his graces, his yoke, nay (if you will) his crosse too, for the Apostle would take Christ and all that belongeth to him.

2. It sheweth that it is a comfortable condition for the soul to be pursuit of Christ; not onely to be in possession, (all grant that) but to be laying out affections, and stretching out the desires of the souls, /127/ this is a comfortable condition to be laying out for him, though you be not in full possession, nay though you be not in a quiet possession. What do you think of the seeking Merchant? happily the Merchant hath not his assurance made that the pearls are his, but the Kingdome of Heaven is like a Merchant seeking goodly pearls. 'Tis good to be in a seeking position thus valluing, thus esteeming, thus pursuing, for if you seek you shall find.

3. It sheweth that they that seek Christ have Christ. If these longings be in your hearts, they shew you have him. The Apostle thus seeking hath Christ. A woman hath other signes of being with childe before quickning, so those longings are signs that you are conceived with him. Christ must needs be formed in such a heart that longeth after him. There are some desires of grace that cannot come but from grace it self, and what are those? but a high esteem of Christ himself, making all but dung besides himself, when the desires come to such an esteem, these desires do not come from grace. He that would love doth love, or else he could not desire, for dead men have no desires. Surely there are /128/ some beginnings of Christ in this Apostle, and that maketh him so earnest after him, and if he had dyed at this time when he cryed, O! that I might know him, he had certainly been found in him.

4. This phrase of speech, *All things losse*, and all but dung, mine own righteousnesse both before yea and after grace, I count all to be but dung that I may win Christ; this sheweth you what the faith of adventure is. Consider, there is a faith of assurance, and that faith is after possession, there must be possession before there can be assurance; now the faith of adventure it is the lowest degree of saving faith, it is when a man seeing Jesus Christ held forth in the promises to an undone sinneer, a lost man, it will strip himself, and cast off all his confidencies, reasonings and opinions of his own righteousnesse that makes him proud; and upon the free grace and promise of God will adventure himself upon Christ Jesus, as a man lost and stript of all succour, like a man

that will quit the ship that he may swim to the rock; when a man ventureth so upon the sufficiency of Christ, and upon the truth and goodnesse of God in his word, /129/ that he cometh to act his faith being in a lost condition, and having no hopes and being cast out of all other proppes. But now our hearts are false, when they come to this that would first have assurance. For so it is in earthly possessions. We must not do as they do, when a man buyeth a house or land he hath an assurance made before he take possession of the house: so men would have it here, they dare not venture on Christ, untill they have first an assurance, and then they dare take possession of him. This is but unbelief, we will not quit our own foot-hold, our own righteousnesse to make an adventure, like men that have nothing in the world to underpropp them; we have not that faith that will throw our selves in the armes of Jesus Christ, but are afraid we have fallen in the pit. We would have the boat held fast to the shore that while we stepp with one foot, the other may stand fast in the boat, we would bring our own righteousnesse to Christ that while we step into him, we may stand fast with one foot upon our selves, while with the other foot we take hold of Christ Jesus; but that can never be, there is no adventuring there; we must lose all (saith the Apostle) /130/ and by faith, we must make this adventure upon the grace and truth of God. This is an excellent piece of faith, when a man knowing that God is true, and good, and therefore cashiereth all to make an adventure on Jesus Christ. He that biddeth you come to him upon the water, be sure he will keep you from sinking, though you should feel your selves sink as *Peter* did; therefore take hold of Christ without any thing of your own; he that putteth you up to this adventure, he will hold you up, and keep you from perishing: though you may feel your selve to sink in the mid-way with temptation.

For the further opening of the point, there are three things I shall speak of.

1. Consider, It was Christ himself, whom the Apostle aimeth to gain. He cometh afterwards with particulars, to distribute and parcell Christ (as I may so say) that I may have his righteousnesse, that I may know him, the power of his Resurrection, and be made conformable to his death; but first he pitcheth upon Christ himself, that I may win Christ. There is a great deal of matter in this, a great deal of /131/ triall of mens hearts. Marriage is of two persons, and the lands are in right of marriage, but the marriage is not to an estate: so the union with Christ is with very Christ himself; and all the spirituall blessings of Christ: his righteousnesse, his spirit, his kingdom, they come to you in your right of having Christ, the shortest and surest way to have it, is, to make him yours.

Alas, every man's eye is upon the benefit, they will have his kingdome, but not Christ himself, and to be in him; If you could have his kingdom, his peace, and pardon of sin, and not Christ himself, it would not be faith but self love. If ever you will pitch your faith a right, set it upon Christ himselfe.

There are many poor souls lie weltring in tears and temptations a great while; partly because they will not take Christ himself, but onely aim at the ease, the quiet of their consciences, and some particular benefit by him; And partly because they will not give their whole selves to him, they willkeep somewhat back of themselves from Christ, and they will have but a part of Christ; they will not submit their wisdom to his teaching, as he is /132/ a Prophet, nor their righteousnesse to his merit as he is a Priest, nor their hearts to his government as he is a King; for this they lie weltring under temptations, because they will be dividing Christ; something they would have of Christ, but to give an resigne up all they have, they will not; there they stick, and there's their error. The

Scripture speakes of such a phrase, of coming into Christ himself, to close with him by faith. If there would not a dividing of Christ, there would come a great deal of comfort to your souls, but you must be dividing, and there lieth your misery.

2. Whereas the Apostle saith (*that I might gain Christ*) I note this, that which the Apostle aimeth at, is, the making of Christ his own, by some propriety and possession.

There is a general acknowledgement of Christ Jesus, to be excellent, to be above all things as he lyeth in the word, this is but the valuing of the treasure as it is in the field; but there must be a buying of it. This point should drive you out of a Dogmatical faith, of a general believing Christ as he is in the word, which is a deceiving faith, making you think you are believers, /133/ when you are not; It should drive you to a receiving, *For he that hath the son, hath life, and he that hath not the son, hath not life*, 1John 5.12. Can it possibly be that the branch should live by the sap of that tree, in which it is not planted? so, do you think to be saved by Christ out of Christ? It can never be. *Of him are you in Christ Jesus, who of God is made so and so*, 1 Cor. 1.30. The benefits follow, having of Christ himself.

3. That I may win Christ; This sheweth the opposition that is betwixt the esteem of these things, and the having of Christ; and this conduceth to the gaining of Christ.

First, There is an opposition between the prizing of your own righteousnesse, and the gaining of Christ Jesus; if they could stand together, the Apostle needs not cast one of them away. Why doth he say I have suffered the losse of one, I count one but dung that I may win the other? If a man hath any righteousnesse, that he setteth up himself, that man can never have Christ till that thing be cast down and removed which he set up. That which the vessel is full of must be emptied out, before any thing else can come in the /134/ room of it: so there must be a divorce made between the heart and every former husband, before it can be married to Jesus Christ. Two husbands for Love, and two Masters for one obedience that cannot be, these things will not stand; to the having of Christ, they must be made dung, otherwise Jesus Christ will not be gained.

Secondly, This phrase sheweth you, that the loss of all things, and to count them but dung, conduceth to the gaining of Christ. How doth this self-outing make towards the gaining of Christ? It is not to be understood of merit, for 'tis merit that keepeth Christ out of doors; but there must be this losing, this self-outing, as laying the heart open to receive and entertain Christ. A vessel that is full, is as good as shut up is to the receiving of more; so, so much as the heart of man is full, so much it is shut up against the Lord Jesus Christ; therefore the bringing of all your loves, and lusts, and pride, and confidences to nothing in order to your receiving of Christ, doth no otherwise than as the emptying of a vessel of that which it is full of, conduceth to the receiving or putting any other liquor or stuff into it. Every man in the world hath a self-fulness in himself; they /135/ are full of hopes full of their own peace, full of their own self-reasons, full of friends, full of the world, full of pride, full of lusts; a man is brim-full of these; now he must be emptied out, and brought to poverty and nothing that Christ may be laid in; for how can Christ be thy righteousnesse, if thou hast another righteousnesse? and how can Christ be thy master, when thou hast another master? and how can Christ govern thee, if thou art governed by another? there must be accounting of them all dung for Christ.

Use 1. Learn that self-nothingness is the most proper qualification, to the gaining and bringing in Jesus Christ to you, *all things loss and dung that I may win Christ*. Gospel salvation is such that requireth a man to be made nothing in himself, it *casteth*

down every high imagination (saith the Apostle 2 Cor. 10.5.) and every high thing that exalted it self against the knowledge of God; and bringeth into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. Christ cannot come with power while there is any thing that giveth him a check in the way. A Christian that would have more of Christ let him labour to make more room for Christ. Every man hath a bottom of his own, /136/ they could not live at peace and security, if they had not some borrough to earth themselves in. What's the reason that those men that are out of Christ are quiet? nothing but this, they have something that they have not made loss, some pride, some lust; and out of all question, there is nothing that keepeth out Jesus Christ but a fullness within; If you were but empty surely you might be full: What can the Sea it self do to a bottle that is full? What can the fullness of Jesus Christ do to a man that is full already? They that are at ease and have a bottom to stand upon, can never gain Jesus Christ, they are not in the Apostle's way nor capacity; Christ doth come into an empty heart as the Sun comes into an open window.

Any raggs, or a little dirt taken out of the streets will stop a bottle: The poorest trash and reasonings, which are in mens minds will serve to stop Christ Jesus out of their hearts. Let it be your care to be nothing, and fear not, you shall have enough; be poor, and hungry, and empty, and fear not filling. A full hand is as uncapable to receive any thing as a dead hand: the heart that's dead, and the full heart are all one. There can never be any /137/ thing of Christ Jesus in that man that is filled with something of himself. Hence, it is self-righteousness and good deeds, keep Christ out of your heart as well as grosse sins; pride filleth, and fullness keepeth out Christ.

Use 2. This reproveth such Christians that instead of trading for Christ with the loss of other things, they trade for other things with the loss of Christ Jesus: they should undervalue all for Christ, undervalue Jesus Christ for other things. How easy do men lose him to gain a profit, a pleasure? Your gold is but the Apostle's dung.

Doct. 4. *Christ is the gain that answereth the loss of all things.*

The Point ariseth from those words, *that I might gain Christ.* As many answereth all things, so Christ is the gain that answereth all things; *the loss of Circumcision &c.* But *that I might gain Christ I counted all loss.* The Marchants word that trades and traffiques for the things of this life, his word is, that of *James*, chap. 4.13. *I will buy and sell and get gain:* yea, the Apostle goeth so far, that he doth observe /138/ some *that think gain is godliness*, 1 Tim. 5.6. 'Tis true, here is a gain that is godliness indeed, the merchandise of Christ is better than gold, and the gain of Christ is better than fine gold. Christ is the gain not only in life but death. There is no shell in Christ, but (as it were) all kernel, all of him is gain; he is the gain that answereth the loss of all things, or that can be lost for him.

I might prove this two wayes; by the fulness that is in Christ himself for the use, necessity, comfort and chiefest good of a poor sinner; and by the consequent that follows upon, and is annexed unto, the having of Christ.

1. It doth appear that Christ is the gain that answereth the loss of all things; such is the fullness of Christ, for in hin dwelleth all the fulness of the God-head bodily; and in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge: There is a righteousness in Christ to justifie the guilty sinner; a spirit in Christ to sanctifie the foulest sinner; comfort and peace in Christ to pacifie the conscience of every sinner. There are unsearchable

riches in Jesus Christ, He is the treasure that is said to be hid in the field of the Gospel; He is /139/ the only pearl of great price; He is the hundred fold father, and mother, and land, and houses, (which is spoken of in the Gospel) for those that lost all for him; He is the All in All: There is in Jesus Christ all things, all the comforts of the things of this world: If you are married to Christ, you are married to the greatest Heir that ever was, because of the fulness that is in him, and those treasures, where it appeareth that Christ is the gain.

2. It might be shewed you by the consequents that go along with the having of Christ; the pardon of all your sins every one of them; you shall have favour with God as children have with their Father, you shall claim an interest and title, yea, and assurance unto heaven and eternal life; every thing that conduceth to your chiefest happiness, or your greatest good, followeth upon your having of Christ; Christ is that center wherein all good meeteth; the readiest way to take hold of all, is to take hold of him; there you have pardon of sin, and there you have righteousness with God, there you have an interest and title to the heavenly inheritance; all these follow upon your having of Christ. /140/

Use 1. Doth the Apostle forsake all that he might gain Christ? Observe then, the Apostle doth but change his gain by coming into Jesus Christ, he is not a loser, had had a gain before, and he shall have a gain by having of Christ. So I say, a Christian doth but change his comforts when he cometh to Christ: as that Merchant that sold all that he had, he had all that he sold all for, in that Pearl of great price: so you that sell all you have, your own righteousness, you gain Christ in that that you sell; thus a Christian doth but change his gain.

Use 2. Observe, There is in Jesus Christ enough to make every man a saver, yea, to make ev'ry man a gainer whatsoever your losses be, therefore to be sure you will never repent your bargain, nor sorrow for your choice,, if you have suffered the loss & shipwreck of all things that you might gain Christ. O that we were but convinced of this! for till a man have a Merchants eye, he will never give a Merchants price to buy it; and until men have this judgment of Christ Jesus, that he is worth all, all that they can give or lay out, they will never sell all things for him; *he went away with /141/ joy* (saith the text) O there was a good bargain.

Use 3. This point calleth upon you to drive this trade of the gaining of Christ; The Apostle maketh it a way of Trade. Now, let me give you some inforcements to stir you up to this trade of the gaining of Christ. Look upon the great Marchant,'tis below him to be a petty-chapman. Let me speak to you that are Christians, that have given up yourselves to Jesus Christ, that are so great Marchant-adventurers,'tis too low for you to trade for the low treasures of the world with such a love as you do; here is the trade that will make you rich; here is the gain that is to be sought for. Take these three enforcements that you may drive this trade.

1. This is the standing measure to discern whether you be under wrath or no, this gaining or not gaining, the having or not having of Christ Jesus. How should a man know whether his way be blessedness or cursedness? There be some certain rules of God's making; *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life*; he hath it already in the just claim and title, in the first-fruits of it; *and he that believeth not, shall not /142/ not see life, but the wrath of God abideth on him*, Joh. 3. last, and *he that believeth not, is condemned already*. Joh. 3.18. How already? as a prisoner that is cast by the verdict and cannot read his book, there he is as it were condemned already: so when a man is cast by

the Law of God, (as every man is) he hath Jesus Christ offered him in the Gospel; If he doth not gain him, if he doth not believe on him, if he cometh not unto him, this man is already condemned, by the very Gospel; What a further remedy can there be propounded to him? This seems to me to be the very sum of the Gospel by that Commission that Christ gave to his Disciples; *Go preach the Gospel to all Nations*, and what is that? *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life*. I would have you know, it is the Gospel that every unbeliever that doth not believe shall be damned by, 'tis Gods standard delivered by Jesus Christ to all to measure your estates by, whether you have Christ or no. This is able to shake in pieces all the fine dresses of Nature, all the curious frames of moral vertures, the excellency of gifts: He that is not planted into Christ by a self-denying sanctifying faith, is damned already. /143/

Now, consider, It is neither very easie to believe in Christ, no nor very easie to discern, whether thou dost believe even happily when thou dost believe. Many an humble soul lyeth tossed upon the billows with fear, and doubts, and perplexities a long time (at least in itw own thoughts) hanging between hope and fear, before it can claim to the promises so as to say feelingly, *I believe*; nay, when it is able to say, *I believe*, it is fain to add, *Lord help my unbelief* to it. True faith doth most commonly feel unbelief in the seeds of it. Many do passe for believers in Christ upon this reason, because they do not contradict the doctrine of Jesus Christ, so their faith is a dogmatical faith: 'Tis an easy matter to believe the Doctrine and the Truth of the Gospel, to believe that Christ dyed and rose again and conquered death: 'tis as easie to believeth this, as to believe that *Julius Casar* and *William* the Conquerour were Masters of this Island; Who contradicted this? But now to choose Jesus as our Lord and Saviour, with rejection of all sinful lusts, that's much; to cleave to him with the loss of all friends, liberty, estate, that's more; to deny our selves, our very graces, this is most of all: Do you believe thus? /144/ If you do, I dare say you are drawn to it with no lesser hand then Gods. The faith of doctrine that lies aloft in the cock-loft of a cold brain, that is an easy thing; but the faith of the heart, casting away all his Idols and his gain upon Christ, that's a hard work. If it be easy for to deny a mans self, to bring all your by-ends, your wisdom, your glory, your very graces; to take up a daiuly cross, & despite all the shame, to sell all you have for this Pearl, to love Christ more than all other worldly things to be in him, to know him, to suffer any thing for him; yea to love him, to love him alone; if this be easy, then 'tis easy to believe. Do all men thus believe? besides Jews and Infidels, are there not Christians that believe not? Nay, are there not thousands of believers that believe not in Christ Jesus? and therefore consider it, because the standing measure is the having, or the not having of Jesus Christ.

2. Enforcement. Though other sins bring you under wrath and into the state of condemnation; yet, it is only your not believing in Christ Jesus that continueth you under that estate. Every sin against God casteth a man to wrath, but every sin doth /145/ not really cast a man *under* wrath: Why? because there is a coming in. Every sin bindeth a man, but faith in Christ breaks and looseth those bonds. It is this unbelief that keepeth you bound and under the chain: Guilt cannot be severed from sin, yet it may be severed from the sinner, and that is by his imbracing of Jesus Christ: The guilt of sin cleaveth fast to a sinner, if he believe not; every transgression casteth you even under wrath, and to believe in Christ is that that taketh it off. Unbelief is the only sin that damneth, not but that the sins against the Law, damn men in regard of desert, but the sins against the Law

do not really do it; but now not believing in Jesus Christ doth really condemn. Hence that Question, *Am I under wrath?* must be answered thus; yea, I am under wrath, for I have sinned, all must say, yea, to this: Then this question is put forth, *Am I still under wrath?* Now that may be answered, either by Yea, or No; Yea, I am still under wrath, for I believe not in Jesus Christ: or No, I am not still under wrath, for I am a believer, I have gained the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord. Therefore it is said, *If you believe not, the wrath of God abideth /146/ on you.* How terrible is the face of unbelief? How deadly are the looks of it? compared to the red-cross that you set up on your doors, marking a house out that's visited: This is the sin of sins which men do not see and feel in their own selves; that that bindeth all the rest of your sins upon you, is your not believing in Christ Jesus.

3. There is nothing can be done in a man, that proveth him to be out of wrath, any further than it proveth him to be in Christ. In this argument, lies all the strength, That Christ is yours, and that you are Christs; what other argument otherwise you have, that will not prove this point; they are but fallacies, and your hopes are but ropes of sand. Dress up your selves in the best attire you have, let nature be drest in the best dressing; vertue, civility, learning excellent parts: let them paint over the rotten face of corrupt nature never so curiously, will all these prove that he shall be saved? He that is thus indued and beautified, though he be thus qualified, yet he is under the curse, for still there is one thing he wanted, and that is, to believe in Christ Jesus. The Apostle counteth all this stuff but lumber and /147/ trash, losse and dung for Christ. Can you climb heaven by any ladder of natures erecting? What ladder reacheth up to heaven but only *Jacob's* ladder, which was a Type of Christ.

Let us come to the graces of God's Spirit: they prove that you are out of the state of wrath, that you shall be saved; but how do they prove it? not as the causes thereof: Doth your grace that is in you satisfie the justice of God, and redeem you from the curse, and pay down your ransome? Is it your title for salvation? Do you pretend to have him upon the worth of your graces? like man that's questioned about his Land, should prove the worth of the Land in the wax with which it is sealed. A Seal is more worth then the wax, Why? because it signifieth the truth, the possession; so the signifying or the evidencing force that is in you, is a thousand fold more comfortable than the merit or the worth of your graces. It remains then, that grace in your heart proves both that you are out of wrath, and that you shall be saved, as a sign or both; therefore the Apostle doth not say only, *we are translated from death to life*, but *hereby we know we are translated*, 1 *Joh.* 3.14. Now how doth grace signifie /148/ unto you, that you are out of wrath? as it evidences you to be in Christ, and so the sign bringeth you to the cause, wherefore you are out of it, and that is Christ, it bringeth you to the fountain, and that is the Lord Jesus Christ. Here's the comfort of your graces, not that they are the causes, nor the fundamental titles to heaven; but that they evidence that you are in Christ. If they prove but unto you the work of grace in your heart, and that you are in Christ, you need ask them no more, they have done enough, they have settled you upon a sure ground.

Now it may be some will say, Will God give heaen to such weak and poor duties that I do? The truth is, God doth not give heaven at such rates: but work the wax a little further; Heaven is Christ's, and Christ is mine, & and therefore heaven is mine, & Christ is mine; & Christ is mine, because I have this work of grace which cometh from the root.

Here you see, a spark, a very dram of grace, which proveth you to be in Christ, is worth a world of parts and moral righteousnesses: the least dram of grace is worth a thousand tun of such kind of stuff, all /149/ these things may be in you, and yet never prove you to be in Christ. A little Seal is worth a cart load of wax, because it sealeth more to me than the wax is worth: so the least dram of grace wrought in a man that is in Jesus Christ, is worth a world of moral vertues and duties by man out of Christ. Why? because it sealeth and evidenceth pardon of sin, favour with God. Therefore examine your selves, that you may not take a humane faith for a saving faith; for such a faith as only believeth the truth of the word, will evidence you to be no more in Christ, than sense that is in a brute-beast, will prove him to be a man.

PHIL. 3.9.

And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the Law, but the righteousness of God, which is by the faith of Jesus Christ.

The continuation of the ninth and tenth verses with the fore-going, seems to be this: The Apostle having set up as the end of all his losses, and as the center of all his desires, that gaining of Christ, *that I may gain Christ*, the last word of the former verse; doth further explain what he meaneth by the gaining of Christ; and the sum lies in two expressions, *that I may be found in him*, verse 9, *that I may know him*, verse 10.

In these two expressions briefly is compriz'd that which he calleth the gaining of Christ, or the winning of Christ: To be found in Christ, that he referreth to justification, or the making of a sinner righteous with God; therefore he saith, *not having mine own righteousness, but the righteousness of God which is by the faith of Christ*; To know /151/ Christ referreth to sanctification as it is expressed in three things; *the power of his resurrection, the fellowship of his sufferings, conformity to his death*. Now, the result will be this: They that desire to gain Christ, must give up themselves to the righteousness of God, by the faith of him, and to the power of his resurrection, and fellowship of his suffering, and conformity to his death: They that desire to gain him in this way, they must come to this, that so they may be truly said to be found in him, and to know him; to know him by acquaintance and by experience; now unto this manner of knowing Christ the Apostle coupleth eternal life.

Quest. But some might ask, Why the Apostle reciting the particulars of Christ who is his new gain, as before he did recite the particulars of his old gain; Why he makes no mention of the joy, comfort, and happiness that he should find in Christ, that he had rather be in the fellowship of his suffering, and nothing mentioned concerning the fellowship of his joy? Now a man that sold all, lost all, counted Christ his gain, he should have made some mention of those joys, and comforts which he thus found in Christ. /152/

Sol. To this I shall give you this resolution: There are none of the particulars which the Apostle aimeth at, but favoureth of a crucified Christ; his righteousness, his resurrection, his suffering, his death; you must gain a crucified Christ, then a glorified; the effect of his cross in you must go before the fruits of his crown; If you have the fundamental benefits, of Christ, justification and sanctification, then you have a title to joy whether you have the sense of it or no. God payeth some of his people well before hand, and some receive not their penny untill the evening; if he hath given you a quickning and a mortifying Christ trust him for joy.

Use The use shall be to explain a double self-flattery that is in men, there be two sorts that flatter themselves.

1. Such as think they have gained him. A man easily flattereth himself into thoughts of having gained Christ, and that because they have moral vertues and religious duties. Truly the poorest men many times have the richest treasure; those that have Christ are many times doubtful souls; and they that have him not are commonly most confident, /153/ Consider, there is a fruit of the Merit of Christ's death & resurrection, & that fruit is called redemption & justification; there is also a fruit of the power of Christ's

death and resurrection, and that is called, likeness and conformity, *Rom. 6.5.* We must be planted into the likeness of him: Now mark, never one of these did go without the other: the fruit of the merit of his death, never went without the fruit of the power of his death, which is likeness and conformity, the heart being moulded, dying to sin, and rising again to newness of life. Now ordinarily you shall find a two-fold struggling in you against both these; there is a struggling against the righteousness of Christ, and that is by self-righteousness, which strives for place and for room still, and would not be shut out of doors; and a struggling of lusts and corruption against the power of Christ's death; corruption would not lose its dominion, but reign.

2. Here is another flattery of Self that is in men, and that is of those that flatter themselves, and think they do desire to gain Christ. You shall easier convince a man that he hath not Christ, then to convince him that he doth not desire to have /154/ him. Now to know whether your desires be good, will you be measured by the Apostles desire to gain Christ? Was not his desires to gain both? to be found in him, to be justified, and to know him too in the conforming power, and vertue both of his death and resurrection? Mark your desires that you pretend to have, if they be only a putting in for a parcel and not for a whole purchase; some benefit of Christ you may desire with exception of some other. But, were the Apostles desires measured in your bushel? Certainly no, he made no reservation of any thing from Christ, *all things loss*, he made no exception of any part of Christ, not so much as his sufferings and crosse. That which is done for God is equally done not in regard of the Act, for there may be a failing: but the intention, the aim, the desire, there is not exception of one commandement more than another: As there is an universal obedience, so there is also an universal faith, and that is of receiving whole Christ without exception either of his cross, or his yoke, or his way, or his Spirit.

Now I come to the full particular /155/ appertaining to this gaining of Christ; *that I may be found in him, &c.*

In this verse you have two great things expressed: *Union with Christ, that I may be found in him, righteousness with God, having the righteousness of God.* There is a distribution of righteousness into two sorts, *Legal, Evangelical:* These two sorts are

1. Described what they are; *Legal, mine own righteousness, which is of the Law; Evangelical, the righteousness of God, which is by the faith of Christ.* Being described,

2. The are opposed the one to the other. First, The one is of the Law, the other is the righteousness of God, Secondly, the one is by the Law, the other is by the faith of Christ; they are set contrary because they cannot be had together.

3. There is a disclaim of the one; *not havine mine own righteousness which is of the Law;* and an adherence to the other; *but the righteousness of God by the faith of Christ.*

The Point of Doctrine I shall gather from the first words is this, /156/
Doct. *In the gaining or having of Christ the first thing is Union.*

This word *in Christ* notes Union, as *2 Pet. 3.14. be diligent that you may be found in him;* 'tis as if he should have said, There will come a time that God will weigh every man's ballance to try what state he is in, and there will come a time that God will pass a judgement upon every man what state he is in, then to be found in Christ is the best thing in the world; the first and the great thing to be found in Christ, answereth the loss of all things. Can a woman claim any thing in a man to whom she is not married? Can a

branch receive any thing from the root that it is not knit to? or can a member receive an act of life from that head with which it hath no union? Nothing of Christ that is saving, shall every be found in them that are not found in him, because the being in him, must be the ground of righteousness coming to them, and of grace and spiritual sap derived to them.

Use 1. Being found in him & then righteousness; Learn, after closure with Christ and union, then all Christ followeth by /157/ consequence, his righteousness to justify, and his Spirit to sanctify; if you be in him then you partake of fellowship with him: Union must be before communion.

Whatsoever is in the death, resurrection, and sufferings of Christ, either temporall or spiritual, all comes after union with himself.

Christ is a great mystery: Christ and his people are like one great Tree, he is the stock and the root, and they are the twigs planted in that great stock, and they two live like one great body, as the head and the members; and they are like man and wife: as it is said, *man and wife are one flesh*, so 'tis said of Christ and his people, they are one spirit; as man and wife are one person in the Law, so are Christ and all that are in him, they cannot be cast into hell, because the sentence must light upon Christ, before it falleth upon them.

Use 2. Is to shew you, that those that be saved by Christ must be found in Christ, for if you be out of him, and he out of you, there can be no salvation. The cloths you wear are warm by the heat of the body, but yet they are no part of the members: /158/ so many that are out of Christ they may have parts and gifts; but if they are not in Christ, they cannot have salvation by him. The Scripture speaks very much of our being in him, and of his being in us, for we receive from him, and he deriveth unto us; we are in Christ by union, he is in us by possession and government. There must be a Christ in you, and a you in Christ, before you can receive any benefit from Christ; therefore the Apostle came to this, that all should go that he might be found in Christ; he knew it were nothing, if he were out of Christ.

Use 3. Is is the Apostles desire to *be found in Christ*? Let it be your desire and aim; you may be found in the Church, found at the Table, found doing miracles and professing in Christ's name, and yet not be found in Christ. If there were a general flood over all the world, where then would you be found? not on the top of a mountain and tree of your own righteousness, for that would fail you, the sentence of the Law would overflow you, though you were the most righteous men in the world. /159/

Again, if the avenger of blood should come, where would you be found? not in gardens, but only in the City of refuge. Again, if the destroying Angel should come, where would you be found? in the streets? No, only in the house where the posts were stricken with the blood, for there the Angel cometh not. When the Law condemneth, and the mouth of hell is open against every man for sin, where you be found, if not in Christ? think of no shelter if you be not found in him. But now *to them that are in him, he is wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption*: 1 Cor. 1.30. This is the great security and peace of a believer in Christ, no man can express his comfort. When *Sinai* shall be so terrible that it shall even make a *Moses* to cry, I exceedingly quake; when this thundering Law shall come to be heard in your ears, it will be but like hail-stones, upon the tiles of a house which makes a noise, but your heads will be safe when you are in him; then the promises shall come to be fulfilled and the blessing to be pronounced, if

you be found in him which is the Center in which all the promises do meet. As it was said to *Pharaoh, Every beast and man shall dye with /160/ hail that shall be found in the field, therefore gather them in;* so I may say here, All that are out of Christ Jesus when this hail shall come, shall dye, every mothers child, therefore get into Christ. What's the knowledge of a man worth that is not in him? What's his profession? What are all his duties worth, if he be out of Christ?

I come to the second thing in the words (which, *righteousness with God*) and there in the first place, you find a distribution of righteousness into two sorts; *mine own which is of the Law; the righteousness of God which is by the Faith of Christ;* from whence I take up this point of Doctrine.

Doct. There are two sorts of righteousness; Legal, and Evangelical; the one of the Law, the other of the Gospel, for that which we call righteousness with God, is the same which we call Gospel- or Evangelical righteousness, which is plain, *Rom. 1.17. /161/*

Now do not stumble at this, do not think I mean there are two sorts of righteousnesses, which a sinner may be justified by, *for by one righteousness we are justified with God,* *Rom. 5.18.* But, when I say there are two sorts, it is to be understood thus; There are but two sorts of righteousnesses, by which life at any time hath ever been attained; there never was a third righteousness, whereby a man should be righteous with God, ever propounded either to man standing or man fallen; there are, there have been, there can be no more; the one is his own, the other is that which is called the righteousness of God.

Now to give you a description of these two sorts of righteousnesses; the one of them is called Legal or the righteousness of the Law, because it is described and proclaimed in the Law. Moses *describeth the righteousness which is of the Law,* *Rom. 10.5.* and what is that description? The man that doth these things shall live in them.

The other sort of righteousness which we call Evangelical, or of the Gospel, *because it is revealed in the Gospel,* *Rom. 1.17.* And what is that? how do you describe that? *The just by faith shall live;* or, *The /162/ just shall live by faith;* or, if you will, *Rom. 10.10, 11.* the righteousness which is of faith, faith thus, that whosoever confesseth with his mouth the Lord Jesus, shall be saved; for the Scripture saith whosoever believeth in Christ shall not be condemned.

These two *doing* and *believing* are the two Characteristical words, that describe these two sorts of righteousnesses of the Law, and of the Gospel. The righteousness of the Law is onely for the perfect man that never sinned, because it must be doing; the righteousness of the Gospel is for a sinner, a sinner over-whelmed overspread with sins. The righteousness of the Law is an exact compliance with the law of God in every tittle; the righteousness of the Gospel, is the righteousness of Another, the righteousness of God in him; of an other, in an other, *2 Cor. 5. last. It is a righteousness imputed without works, to a sinner believing in Christ Jesus;* this is Gospel-Righteousnesse.

Now take this for a rule. What righteousness soever it be, that justifieth a man with God it must be perfect, whether it be a righteousness of the Law or the Gospel: Again, it must be his *own*, now that it is /163/ own, is not meant as if the Gospel-righteous was not ours; though it be not our own originally, yet it must be ours derivatively from Christ; 'tis not our own, being in us, but it is ours by imputation, imputed or accounted to us; 'tis not our own that is by works, but it is ours by faith; it is not our own in our selves, but it is ours of God. So that you see, the righteousness you

stand upon must be perfect, and it must be yours. Legal righteousness is perfect, If a man fall into one sin whether in not doing, or mis-doing, the Ladder is broken, the righteousness or justification of the Law is broken by that one sin for ever, & man can no more climb to life and salvation by that ladder, then a sinner can satisfy the Law's curse, once fallen into that curse: On the other side the righteousness of Christ it is perfect, if it be not perfect it cannot be righteousness, 'tis made a sinners by imputation through faith in Christ.

Now I come to the Demonstration, that there are but two sorts. By this point I must needs drive every man up into a corner, for a man must be brought to a choice of one of them, & if he standeth upon one of them which is of the Law he falleth; the point will drive you to a necessity of a Christ /164/ and faith. Now that there are but two, will appear thus; the righteousness of the Law, and the righteousness of God are described, named, and distinguished in *Rom. 10. ver. 6, 7, 8, 9.* Again, your own righteousness, and the righteousness of God are named and distinguished, *Rom. 11.3.* Now mark in Scripture you shall find these phrases and expressions; grace, free grace, Christ or the Redemption of Christ; the Promise or the Gospel, faith, the righteousness of God; you may find all these upon one file ranked together: on the other side you shall find, the law, works, our own righteousness, debt, our wages by debt, boasting and glorying; these make another file, they hang upon a file all together; there's no 3d, all must come under one of these two files; if it be one, 'tis the righteousness of God by the faith of Christ; if it be the other, 'tis the righteousness of the Law by our own works; by this 'tis plaine that there are but two sorts of righteousness. And consider, the two *Adams* were certainly but two common roots, and the foundation of two covenants, the covenant of works, and the covenant of grace; now the *Adams* being two, consequently the covenants /165/ are two, and consequently the righteousnesses are of two sorts and no more.

Quest. Now the Question might be, Why the Apostle here and in other places doth keep up such a distinction of a righteousness into two sorts, seeing it is confessed one of these is out of date, never any obtained salvation by it? the bond-woman of the Law did never bring forth a free-borne Son to God; never a man was born heir of life.

Answ. To this I Answer, that the Distinction of this righteousness into two sorts (which the Apostle doth so go upon) 'tis necessary to be known; for though not one man in the world can be saved by the righteousness of the Law, yet thousands perish by it; because many (yea you and I) being ignorant of the righteousness of God, and not knowing the Gospel-righteousness, which we must stand int, if ever we stand before God, we are groping after the old door, our own righteousness and our own works, which hath been shut up every since we entred into the world, and never opened since to give entrance to any sinner; and yet we will be climbing by the broken pieces of that /166/ Ladder which is too short ever to come to Heaven by; yet we will be setting the broken pieces together, our own works, our own righteousness, our own goodnesse, our own vertues; and though the Gospel overthrow our righteousness, yet we will establish it; and though it be impossible to us, yet we are not outed of it, we do not disclaim it; the Apostle himself stood upon it, untill he found out Christ Jesus; our natural pride and principles do carry us still to our own righteousness. Now that we may avoid it, and that we may not ship-wrack our selves upon this rock, which is the righteousness of the Law, therefore 'tis most necessary that this distinction should be made and holden up.

USE 1. Learn the difference between the Law and the Gospel, (It is of the most greatest consequence, and useful to the conscience of a man, to the settlement of his estate of the life and salvation of his soul) the difference between the Law the covenant of works, and the Gospel of grace to bring you to the righteousness of God: The Law promiseth justification to the doer upon condition of perfect obedience; there are the two things /167/ requisite, it must be perfect and perpetual; the Gospel freely promiseth justification to every man that believeth in Christ Jesus, though his obedience be not perfect, and though it be not perpetual: and this Gospel-righteousness excluded works as any cause in the world, by which you should be justified with God, and without these requisites of obedience perfect & perpetual, the Gospel freely justifieth a sinner by the faith of Christ. Many will be looking for good tydings from the Law, which is only brought to you as the Olive-leave in the mouth of the Gospel.

USE 2. Are there two sorts? This teacheth you that a man is under the Law untill he be in Christ; untill a man be in Christ, all the righteousness that he can be under or be in, is his own. This is a terrible thing. What a shield of paper is this for a man to hold against the thudder-bolt of Gods Law, Gods fiery Law? mine own righteousness, no better a shield then that? do you think to look God in the face with that? or to look the condemning Law in the face? and yet till you be found in Christ, you have no other, for there are but two sorts; the righteousness of God, that followeth upon your being found in /168/ him: and your own righteousness is that which remains untill you be found in him; and therefore learn and make hast to get into Christ till you be under the righteousness of the Gospel, you are but under paper walls which is your own righteousness; Every arrow that the Law of God shooteth against a sinner, will shoot you through and through, it will no more feed and loath you then a dream, and yet you have no other untill you be in Christ, and then mine own goeth off. And consider it, the righteousness of Christ, is of no larger compass then union with Christ. Do you think to be justified by the righteousness of God, & not in union with Christ Jesus? I tell you, righteousness extends actually and effectually to no more then those that be in him, and be found in him.

USE 3. Seeing there are but two sorts of righteousnesses; then bring your selves unto this distinction. Let every say, which of these two do I rest in? which have I? all men come unto two ranks. A man may be famous in temperance, Justice, Charity, and other vertues belonging to his Sect, Condition, or Place; and all these several sorts if they were all put together into one nose-gay they make but your own righteousness; and so they make nothing but that /169/ which through your pride, ignorance, and confidence may damn you. Again, a most prodigious sinner that hath a thousand fold more sins upon him, may have a better righteousness to appear before God in, then the most vertuous man or woman in the world; why? because this poor sinner is brought out of himself to Christ Jesus; and the other hath no righteousness but his own.

Here is the sad delusion and mistake of many a poor soul, when they are convinced of sin and of their undone estate, and beaten out of the field, and all your reasonings are outed by the convictions of the Gospel, and there are but two turns, two ways; either to your own righteousness which is the righteousness of the Law, to go to doing; or the righteousness of *God* by the faith, or the coming into Jesus Christ; how here's your misery, many take the wrong turn, and fall to better obedience; they fall upon these as the things that should settle them in the state of their souls: so instead of looking

to the Serpent upon the pole, he flyeth to make his own salves and to apply his own plaisters; but the right turn is first to close with Jesus Christ by faith, to be ingrafted into him, and to see the necessity of a Gospel-righteousness, /170/ wherein you must stand before *God*, if ever you be saved; and then for resolution and duties of obedience to walk with *God*; that belongeth to sanctification or holiness of life: and so much for the distinction of righteousness into two sorts.

Now the second Point is this,

Doct. These two sorts of righteousnesses are inconsistent, & opposite the one to the other, (not having mine own, but having the righteousness of *God*.) These two will not stand together, in making a man righteous with *God*. Oh! that we could bring you off from your own bottom to the Gospel. You may think, because they be two sorts they may be compounded; no, they are inconsistent: Gospel-righteousness a man hath not, untill he be in Christ; Legall righteousness of his own he hath not, when he is in Christ; they never stand together. The Scripture is full of the oppositions, the contrariety of these two righteousnesses: for if you mark it 'tis said to be the obedience of one by which we are made righteous, not the obedience of two, that is, mine own and Christ's together; but one directly, *Rom. 3.21. the righteousnesse of God without the Law, Rom. 4.6. God imputeth righteousnesse without /171/ works,* (without them.) And every where do you not find a plain opposition between faith and works, the law and faith, works and grace? are they not discriminated one from the other? doth there not come a *But*? *Rom. 10.5. the righteousnesse of the law is this,* (then there comes in a *but*) but the man that doth these things shall live in them, *Gal. 3.12. the law is not of faith; but the man that doth them shall live in them. Gal. 2.16. Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, Gal. 5.4. Christ is become of none effect unto you, whosoever is justified by the law is fallen from grace. And, Rom. 9.31, 3-. But Israel which followed after the law of righteousnesse, hath not attained to the law of righteousnesse. Wherefore? because they sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law.*

Now that they are not only distinguished, but opposed, I will shew you how these two are inconsistent in three things.

1. 'Tis excluded as the matter of your righteousnesse with *God*, for that which is the matter of my righteousnesse with *God*, is the obedience of Christ; now to bring your /172/ own righteousnesse into this place to be the matter of your righteousness with *God*, is, to mingle your obedience with Christ's; so 'tis not the obedience of one but the obedience of two.

2. 'Tis excluded as the Motive to move *God*: If you bring your own righteousness into this place, you mingle it with free grace, *Rom. 3.24.* If you make it any motive you must bring it into the place of Jesus Christ.

3. It is excluded as the Instrument which should receive the righteousnesse of *God*, if you bring it into this place, then you bring it into the place of faith, for faith is the only hand that taketh hold of the Gospel-righteousness, therefore he saith, the righteousnesse of *God* which is by the faith of Jesus Christ: now if there be no room for these three; not as the matter, then you joyn it to Christ; not as the motive, then you joyn it to free grace; not as the instrument, then you joyn it to faith; therefore it followeth, 'tis thrust out of door.

USE. Let this point call you all off, from setting up of your own righteousness which can never be done: such as your righteousness is, such will your peace of /173/ conscience be: give me such a righteousness that in my extremities, afflictions and temptations I may glory in against all the world, as the Apostle doth, Who shall lay any thing to the charge of *Gods* Elect? many of you complain of much unsetlednesse and much trembling: you do not discern from whence this palsy ariseth, the causes of it, I will tell you the root of the disease; you have (at the least) a corner of your eye, something in your selves, or would have, to buy the free mercy of *God*, or else you dare not come. Oh! this something of your selves, is the thing that breeds that shaking and distempers upon you; you have one foot upon the firme land, and the other upon the tottering boate; if you could be rid of self and works for free grace, you would be rid of many tremblings: As the Gospel is the mother of all setled peace, so it is the nurse of all your sincere obedience to *God*.

Now I come to the Description of both these righteousnesses, which the Apostle had divided into two sorts:

We shall begin with the description of that righteousness, which being in Christ we have (being found in him) the righteousness which is by the faith of Christ; out of /174/ which Description we shall take up four points.

1. They that are in Christ have righteousness; *having righteousness*.
2. That righteousness is the righteousness of *God*; *having the righteousness of God*.
3. That righteousness of *God* they have by faith; *the righteousness of God by faith*.
4. That faith whereby they have the righteousness of *God*, is the faith of Christ.

For the first of these: They that are in Christ, have righteousness with *God*. There's an *Emphasis* in the words, they that are in Christ have the righteousness, the only excellent righteousness, the righteousness which is so called, that righteousness, being made righteous with *God* himself.

The *Papists* say, we have righteousness by works: we say they have it by imputation, yet they that have this righteousness by imputation, have it truly, and they are made righteous by it. As a man that hath a hundred pound given him by Will, hath it as truly to all intents and purposes, as he that earneth a hundred pound with /175/ his hand labour, though they do not come by it the same way, yet both have it, the one hath it by gift or legacy, the other as wages: so, those that believe in Christ have righteousness, and are truly made righteous, as well as accounted so; only here is the difference, they have it by way of free grace and imputation; but not by works. There are two words for the explaining and clearing of this point.

1. They that are in Christ have a righteousness with *God*; mark, they have that which setteth them right with *God*, into a state of favour and acceptance: they have that that discharged all guilt and condemnation: they have that which freeth them from every charge, every inditement, every sentence of the Law of *God*: they have that which setteth them into friendship and peace with *God*: that which intitleth them to eternal life and heaven: they have that which though it doth not take away the being of sin, yet it setteth them as free from Hell, as *Adam* in innocency, and setteth them into a sure Center: that faith wherein we stand, out-speaks *Adam*, even *Adam* in his first integrity. /176/

2. They that are out of Christ have it not. They may have moral righteousness, they may that which is called the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, which is indeed call righteousness; but this Evangelical righteousness, which is called righteousness with *God*, they that are not found in Christ have not; and the reason is this; union with Christ, and righteousness with God, they are things that are of equall extent.

USE 1. If they that are in Christ have righteousness; Then this may be (as it were) an Engine to draw men into Christ, that so they come into that admirable state or relation of standing right with God, which is the greatest happiness of a sinner: for that is the door to enter into righteousness, and being entered in, they may lie down in peace, for this righteousness is the only Mother of peace; there is no peace with God, but it must flow from that righteousness whereby you are righteous with God. This is a truth in divinity never to be denied, that God saves only righteous persons, (*whom he justifieth, them he glorifieth,*) now righteous you can never be, except you be found in him alone. All that are in him are /177/ righteous with God, though they have be never so ungodly; and all that are out of him, are not righteous with God, though they have been never so vertuous; though they be never so full. Which way can you creep out? If you pretend to heaven without a righteousness; if you pretend to a mercy that shall save you without a righteousness, whereby you should be made righteous with God, you are lost for ever; and if you pretend a righteousness with Christ, and not be found in Christ, you are lost for ever too. Without a righteousness to pretend to heaven cannot be; and for a man out of Christ that is not in him to pretend to a righteousness by him can never be; (that I may be found in him, having the righteousness of God.) Oh! the sad and lost condition of men that stand upon a righteousness out of Christ; or else that pretend a righteousness in Christ, and themselves out of that Christ! Whether you stand upon the one or the other, you stand upon a bridge that will break and fail you.

USE 2. If they that are in Christ have righteousness with God: Then here see the privilege and comfort of them that are found in Christ, they have that /178/ righteousness which is good, pleading against all the shot and fire of mount *Sinai*, where the terrible law was given; you have that righteousness, through which the Law of *God* cannot shoot an arrow, nor the sharpest edge and point of the law cannot hurt you.

When the Apostle speaks of his inward corruptions, then he cries, O wretched man! but when he looks upon high righteousness with *God*, upon that righteousness whereon he standeth, then he is alost, who shall lay any thing to the charge of *Gods* Elect? and there is no condemnation to them that are in Christ. There is one thing wherein the militant soul may be triumphant; wherein the soul that warrs with grief, and groanes against inward corruptions, and labours under imperfect grace; there is one thing that it may triumph in, that it is righteous with *God*, It makes a man that groans under this body of death, to break out into and shut up all with glory, as the Apostle did, I thank *God* through Jesus Christ.

Secondly, This righteousness which they have in Christ, is the righteousness of *God*, This is a phrase frequent with the Apostle *Paul*, and is almost peculiar to him. /179/ Now mark, that righteousness by which a poor sinner is made righteous with *God*, that is the righteousness of *God*; the righteousness of *God* what is it? 'tis the righteousness of a person who is *God*, the Lord our righteousness, *Jer.* 33.16. Do not imagine that it is called the righteousness of *God*, as if it was the Essential righteousness whereby *God* himself is righteous, we cannot be made the righteousness of *God* in that sense? we are

justified by it but not deified; 'tis only that righteousness which is from *God*, and that is the righteousness by which *God* makes us righteous, that which *God* imputeth to us; that which he hath provided, appointed, and approved to be a satisfaction to his justice; that's the righteousness of *God*, which *God* hath made to be so to us, and that is Christ, 1 *Cor.* 1.30. *that which makes us righteous, what is that? but the obedience of Christ, for by his obedience many shall be made righteous, Rom. 5.19.*

USE 1. If they that are in Christ have the righteousness of *God*; Then let it call in your thoughts, from all false righteousnesses and imaginary confidences and ways of being righteous with *God*. If /180/ your Heart be up at any time to look for righteousness, let not any vertues or works of your own deceive you, pitch your selves here. It must be the righteousness of *God* that you must have, and therefore were you cloathed with the good parts that any man in the world had, and lived the fairest life that any nature in the world did, you should say of your selves, for all this you are but dead men: As a dead man wrapped in a white sheet, spread over with flowers and spices; a sweet savour, but it giveth no life to a man that is dead: no more do all those excellencies of perfection, vertues and works, while a man is out of Christ, they cast a good savour, but they neither give life nor righteousness to your souls, for all is but a dunghill. You look upon much your selves as good, you think it is good, but let it be as good as it will, let it be better then it is, that is not the question whether such a thing you have done be good, but whether it be the righteousness of *God*? Is it Gospel-righteousness? are you in a Gospel-state? Grant that I am never so good, if it be not the righteousness of *God*, it is nothing in this Court. /181/

USE 2. If it be the righteousness of *God*, which they that are in Christ have; The Learn here with what security may the soul rest upon, and be encouraged to come in unto this righteousness which is called the righteousness of *God*, owned of *God*, accepted with *God*, yea which is found out by *God*. Let all trembling and sinful fear be scattered by this consideration, that the righteousness you have with *God*, is the most strong foundation that ever was laid to give comfort, and security, and encouragement to a sinner. What ever thy sins be (I speak it to a man in Christ) this righteousness of *God* you may plead even at the barr of justice, at the barr of the Law. I confess a man doth not get this righteousness from the hands of *Gods* justice properly; but he may plead it before and unto the very justice of *God*, you have an advocate that will plead this for you, because you have the righteousness of *God*. Come into this Gospel life, lay the stresse and weight of your souls upon this righteousness, though you have infinite sins, as heavy as mountaines, yet this will bear you up, and bear you out for ever. /182/

Quest. But now some will say, I am full of shievering and trembling that I cannot firmly rest but with much tottering this way and that way, I am in doubt of having this righteousness of *God*, whether I have it.

Answ. To this I answer, Have you the witness of water? have you the witness of the spirit that may attest and give in evidence unto this point? Gospel-righteousnesse goeth not out of the compasse of the Gospel to seek for witnesses; the spirit of Adoption to call *God* Father, the witness of water to sanctifie you.

A man that's troubled for debt, we do not wonder to see him carry a little piece of paper to the barr; it is not to pay the debt, but to prove payment that there is a man's hand to it: So here, when you question this point, Have I the righteousness of *God* or no? am I found in Christ? have I any thing of Christ in me? If a man have the spirit of the Lord

Jesus Christ, the water of Christ that purgeth and cleanseth his heart, this will prove the whole righteousness of *God*; you do not bring these to pay your debt, but here is appearance, here is testimony. The smallest buds upon the graft, will shew and prove that it is /183/ united unto the stock; so the smallest things of Gospel-grace, if it be but the witness of water, will attest and witness to you the whole righteousness, for it goeth not by parts, but together; the whole righteousness of God.

Thirdly, This righteousness of God is by faith. God hath appointed this humble grace of faith to be the hand of the receiver, which taketh hold of this righteousness of God. But now you must consider this faith, not as a quality, or habit; but consider it in the office it hath, as it is an Instrument taking hold of Jesus Christ: not, I say, as a habit, for the worthiness of faith it self, for thought it be said *by* faith, yet it is never said *for* faith; *by* it as an Instrument of God, for hereby you come to the promises and to Christ, closing with Christ by faith, you are made the righteousness of God in him. It is a self-denying faith, that casteth out pride, and self, and works; and cometh naked, and poor to the rich promises of Christ, and there hangeth, taketh hold, and claspeth fast.

Fourthly, This faith by which you have the righteousness of God, is the faith of Christ, or (which is all one) the /184/ Promises hold forth Christ, they are the Object of this faith, by which you have the righteousness of God. 'Tis true, the Object of faith is the whole word of God, and that doth justifie because it works faith: The eye seeth other things besides the brazen Serpent, but as it healeth, it looketh to the brazen Serpent onely, so here, faith the object of it is the whole word of God; but as it justifieth and maketh you partakers of the righteousness of God, it looketh to the Gospel, the promises of Christ. Therefore in all Ordinances, let Christ be the thing you look at, Christ to pitch and fasten upon for ever. Thus you see how this chain of points is linked together: They that are in Christ have the righteousness of God; that righteousness of God comes by faith; that faith hath for it's Object Jesus Christ; this the Gospel reveales unto us, the Sacrament seales unto us. This righteousness is the kernell, this is the thing you can never have untill you come to Christ Jesus. In this righteousness live, in this righteousness dye, in this righteousness be happy for ever. /185/

Now I come to the description of that other sort of righteousness, which being found in Christ we have not; not having mine own righteousness which is of the law: Out of the words I shall take up these two points of Doctrine.

1. There is a righteousness called our own, which is of the law, *mine own which is of the law*.

2. Our own righteousness which is of the law, is to be utterly disclaimed; *not having mine own*.

Doct. 1. For the first of these: There is a righteousness called our own which is of the Law. Our own in opposition to the righteousness of God, which is by faith in Christ: As the righteousness of God is the very same, with that which is by the faith of Christ, for they are all one; so our own righteousness is all one with that which is of the law. Now that there is a righteousness, which is called our own, is evident, Rom. 10.3. *their own (proper) righteousness, they thought to establish. Moses* describeth the righteousness of the law thus, The man that doth them shall live in them. /186/

I shall open the point in two things.

1. Shew what the righteousness of the Law is.
2. What is meant by our own righteousness.

For the first: The righteousness of the law is nothing else but a conformity to the law of God, and that conformity is either external or internal; conformity of the person, or conformity of the actions. This conformity to the law is called the righteousness of the law, now this righteousness of the law consists either in negatives or positives; abstaining sins, and doing duties, If a man be just and do that which is right and lawfull, *Ezek.* 18.5. The righteousness of the law is exprest in doing, *The man that doth them shall live in them*, *Gal.* 3.12. and the doing of the law, *Rom.* 2.17.

Now to make this righteousness full, the obedience must run through every part; the matter of the Law, that is, the duties, the manner of performance, with love, faith, sincerity; the measure and degree, with all the mind, with all the soul, with all the strength; one deformity discovers the righteousness of the law, /187/ that it can never justify any one; *God* hath made every iota or tittle of the law more firme then Heaven and Earth, so that this righteousness of the law abateth not a tittle. Consider the righteousness of the law, so as to justify a man, it never was Extan: since the fall of man, it never was in any but in the two *Adam's* in the fulness and perfection of it.

The *Jewes* sought righteousness by the works of the Law, therefore they did not obtain it, because they went to a wrong door, *Rom.* 4.32.

Its a natural error to us all to stand knocking for entrance to life and heaven, at the same door: for every man hath somewhat to plead for himself, some parcells, either abstaining from some sins, or doing some duties or good works, which are both of them parts of the righteousness of the law.

You do not understand the rectitude of the Law; In it self as it is a rule of righteousness so the law is holy, and just, and good; the law lost nothing of its rectitude, for the impossibility of the law, the weakness of it is through the flesh, *Rom.* 8.3. But you must understand by the righteousness of the law your conformity /188/ to it. Now this conformity to the law is in men and women more or lesse, (compare the young man that came to Christ, with all this have I done from my youth, to *Paul* before his conversion, and with many thousands) in some more free from grosser sins: but, be this conformity to the law more or lesse, be it what it can be in you, yet this righteousness of conformity to the law, justifieth no man till it come to such a pitch and fulnesse as hath no defect or spot; till it come to such exactnesse, it doth not justify. And here is a notable difference between the righteousness of the Law, and the righteousness of the Gospel; that which the law requireth of us for righteousness, must be perfect in kind and measure, or else there's not justification followeth it; but that which the Gospel requireth of you, being only faith in Christ, if it be true for the kind of it, that is a going forth of the soul to Christ with self deniall, though it be a weak faith, yet that faith brings perfect righteousness; like a dim-sighted-eye in the wilderness, though it could not see so well as another, yet he could look up towards the Serpent, and with his dim eye bring as perfect a cure of the string as a stronger /189/ could; so there is not in a weak faith that exactnesse of walking, that obedience to *God* in the strength of it, as in a stronger; but in the point of justification and bringing a righteousness; if it go forth to Jesus Christ, touching his garment with trembling, it brings a righteousness.

Secondly, what is meant by our own righteousness? It is that whereby we walk in some conformity to the law of *God*. If by our own righteousness you will have works done out of a natural principle, or out of a naturall power, by the strength of moral vertues, by men out of Christ, this is indeed without our selves, and this is our own

righteousnesse, like that which the Apostle calleth his gain, before he knew Christ; thus by our own righteousnesse is meant all the works which a man can do out of Christ; but then for holy duties or works that are performed, which flow from a principle of renewing grace, this (say the Papists) is not our own righteousnesse.

But now for the clearing of this point, how farr our own righteousnesse doth extend, let this be the principle we hold to; /190/ That, whereby we walk in conformity to the Law of God, is called our own righteousnesse: All your works that come from naturall principles of conscience in your unregenerate state, before you knew Christ, these are all your own; and all your works that flow from sanctifying graces in conformity to the Law of God, all these come under the name of your own righteousnesse. Christ speaking of this, calls it, your righteousnesse, *Mat. 5.20. Except your righteousnesse exceed, &c.* Now do you stick at this, that sanctifying Grace should be called our own righteousnesse? I shall cleer it to you: 'Tis not of our selves efficiently, but it is ours subjectively inherent in us, as heat in the Water is not of the Water. Now if you consider sanctifying grace and holy duties, & compare them with justifying righteousnesse, so this sanctifying grace, and all the duties that come from it, or in obedience to it, is called your own, because they are inherent in you. Was not *Adam's* righteousnesse his own, though it came from an inward holinesse and righteousnesse given him by God? was not the righteousnesse of the Jews & Pharisees their own? yea certainly. Are not the fruits of the Spirit, /191/ as love, joy, temperance, are they not our own? they are our own or Gods; if our own, then I have the point you contend for; if the righteousnesse of God, then you are justified by the fruits of the Spirit, and not by the righteousnesse of Christ imputed, which is the greatest Error in all Divinity. If the Apostle in this Text had said not mine own righteousnesse, but the righteousnesse of God, which is by repentance, and love, and hope, and the fear of God, and holy duties, then Apostle had carried it cleer against us, but he brings nothing that we have into joynt concurrence to the righteousnesse of God and Christ but onely faith; Therefore the Apostle leaves all our inherent grace and the works that issues from them, in this Text, to come under the name of our own righteousnesse: As the sin of the first *Adam*, that was personally in guilt, was likewise ours; so the righteousnesse of God is, subjectively in Christ, and by imputation, ours. Consider then all those works that proceed from sanctifying grace in you in order to conformity to the Law of God, they may all come under this name and notion, *my own righteousnesse.* /192/

Doct. 2. The second point is this, our own righteousnesse is utterly to be exclaimes that we may be justified by the righteousnesse of God. Mark the Scripture, it is said, the righteousnesse of God without the Law, *Rom. 3.21.* Again, the righteousnesse of God without Works, *Rom. 4.6.* Christ pulleth down the righteousnesse of your selves which had the chair before; the Servant must not sit in the King's chair; so grace, though it be that whereby you may walk serviceable to God, yet you must not sit in the chair of Jesus Christ: our best works must not hold the place of Christ's righteousnesse, and let the Water that Christ comes by, take place of the Blood, for he cometh by Water and Blood; both have their distinct place.

Then you will say again, Would not the Apostle have holinesse and obedience at all, because he saith, *not having my own righteousnesse?* could he have a righteousnesse without sanctification? No, the Apostle would not be without holiness, and sanctification, nor obedience: A Christian, one that is in Christ, hath vertue, and hath

holinesse, and hath obedience; but how? as serviceable graces to walk with God, /193/ not as his righteousness with God. When the Sun shineth, the Moon is put out: how put out? not out of her Orb, not her course, but (as I may say) from her rule: so the righteousness of God, when you come to be justified by Faith, doth not abolish holinesse and sanctification (for they are and must be there together) but the setting of obedience to the place of righteousness. As a cypher is pulled down from the place of pounds to farthings, it is the same metall still but it doth not go for the same value; so 'tis in this case, when your own righteousness is abolished as not having that place in you but is pulled down in a lower place, it is the same, yet in another Court and in another office, and wherein you may walk with God: so is all the righteousness of man to be eclipsed with the righteousness of God.

How then doth the Apostle say, *not having mine own righteousness?* I answer, not having it as my righteousness with *God*; then I should put my own in the place of Christ. Not having it, as concurrent with Christ, that can never be; for that would make my righteousness copartner with Christ: Not having it as a Motive to move /194/ him; then I should put my righteousness in the place of free grace. Not having it as the Instrument whereby I take Christ; no, for then I should put other graces in place of faith.

Well then, in a word; having holiness or righteousness as a stock to trade with, in the way of service with *God*; not having it as a means to buy my soul out of Hell: So you see the difference, that still wee have it, and yet we have it not:

But why is our own righteousness that is inherent in us to be thus disclaimed?

1. Because it is a way impossible for a sinner ever to go to heaven or to be righteous by; that ladder is too short, though it seems long enough to you that have some fragments of the Law.

2. Not having it, why? because there is another righteousness (and not this) which is called the righteousness of *God*: There is another *Adam*, and that *Adam* hath another righteousness for all to believe in him, a gospel-righteousness which is not of the Law; There is another Covenant *God* hath appointed whereby a sinner shall be just: Now because there is another, not this. /195/

3. Because one of these voides the other; if I have the righteousness of God, then my own is void; if my own, then the righteousness of God is void: As the Apostle saith of grace; if works, not grace, and if grace, not works.

Use 1. Here you see what it is men and women insist upon, and stick to, as their gain, untill they find Christ; their own righteousness. The best naturall men in the world are here ensnar'd in standing upon the bottome of their own righteousness; the Gospel state in which men are translated in, they know it not. Nay the most wicked man alive, till he come to be anatomized by conviction, hath some cover or other, and is sewing Fig-leaves together; he is not so bad as others, or else he hath done some works; this you trust to and hide your selves in; you lay your own Salves to the Serpent's sting, which they might not do; if they did, they dyed for it; no, it must be the Serpent on the pole. But this is the way you go till God melt your waxen wings, and then you come down and are miserable: here you stick till the Lord bring you into a gospel-condition. /196/

USE 2. Here you see what they stick upon, when they are called to Jesus Christ; It may be, you see sin in your selves, here is the thing that holdeth you fast, you hold to your own righteousness, you ssey, this is good that I have done; I but it is of the Law, and if it be of the Law it will never justifie you.

Men will be groping still after this door that hath been shut up against them, ever since the fall of man; and no greater opposition then this maketh against you, for if a fulness be in you, it keepeth out Jesus Christ, for Christ entereth upon an empty person, he cometh to a man that hath no righteousness to pleade, no [??]ing to hang by.

USE 3. If this must not be had; Then here is encouragement to the undone sinner, to come unto Jesus Christ without righteousness. To go to a Market you go with money, but to go to a free dole, you need no money: so if you go to trade in a way of works to come unto a righteousness of God, then you should labour to be righteous, to do this and that, yet that is not the way; but when you come to /197/ free grace and the promises, you need not seek for money; I am not the further off, I may be the nearer, by not having these. You are like a man when he was stung, he would first seek a salve, then he would come and look up to the brazen Serpent; in the mean time he would be dead: No, immediately to the Serpent, or never. If thy soul be indeed stung to the death, say not, I will do thus and thus first, and then believe; but your must come first to Jesus Christ, that is, set up in the promises to a lost sinner.

USE 4. Exhortation to all that you would labour to be nothing, that there may be an emptying of all that which is of the law, and then the Lord Jesus will come in sweetly, for the not-having one one conduceth to the having the other; you must lose it, or it will lose you. Do not think to take a tree when *Noah's* flood comes, the flood will overflow all. There must be a denying of a man's gracious self; Do not think to come to Jesus Christ, with a righteousness for a righteousness. Jesus Christ is to take off the load from men's shoulders; If you be empty, you shall be full. /198/

PHIL. 3.10

That I may know him, and the power of his Resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffering, and be made conformable to his death.

I shall consider these words three ways.

1. In Coherence which they hold with the former Antecedent.
2. In the parts particularly contain'd in them.
3. In the Connexion of those parts together; That I may know him, *and* the power of his Resurrection, *and* the fellowship of his suffering, *and* be made conformable unto his death.

I begin first with the Coherence of this *verse* with the foregoing; you may conceive it thus: The Apostle having named the gaining of Christ, as the utmost end of his losse of all things, and in his counting all /199/ but dung, *verse* 8, and all was for this end that I may gain Christ; he doth more expressly declare what it is to gain Christ, or wherein the gaining of Christ consists, and that he expresseth in these two words, to be found in him *verse* 9th, and to know him *verse* the 10th: for in these two heads is contained the gaining of Christ, which he maketh to be the up-shot of all his longings and thirstings; and that gaining consists in being found in him, and in knowing of him. To be found in him denotes union, justifying righteousness with God, this we have handled. Now this knowing denotes not a new sense, or a knowledge of the person, or History, or Offices of Christ; but here 'tis meant a saving knowledge of Christ, and to know him here is to have a real sense and experience of vertue and vitall grace, derived into the soul from Christ; 'tis as if he had said, that I may know Christ in me, a reall sense and experience of Christ dwelling in me.

I shall not yet come to the particulars of the Text, but give you a generall purport of the words, as they are in coherence with the former *verses*; so then the generall point is this. /200/

Doct. Whosoever hath gained Christ, hath Christ in him, he knoweth him by this vertue, and power working him to a conformity and likeness to himself.

A goodly heart loves Christ, and priseth Christ, not onely as Christ is my righteousness with God; but as Christ is a Christ that hath vertue and power and in my soul, to bring me into a conformity to himself. He counteth all things losse to gain him: not onely to gain him as a surety as paying my debts, but as a root feeding me with sap of spirituall life, as a root feedeth the branches. 'Tis a signe of a rotten heart, to relish Christ onely as one that opposeth Gods wrath, and not as one that purifieth the soul. See, *Exod.* 24.7. *The blood of the Covenant, part of it was sprinkled upon the Altar, and the other part upon the People;* the blood was divided as it were two wayes; signifying that Christ his satisfaction worketh upwards to pacifie his wrath, and satisfie his justice, to pay the ransome and price of your lost souls; and the other part worketh downward, upon you, sanctifying and sprinkling you that you may be clean. /201/

As this point relates to union with Christ; so it sheweth, that, union with Christ brings forth communion and conformity; communion in the righteousness of Christ *verse* 9th, conformity to the likeness of Christ *ver.* 10th. See 1 *Cor.* 1.30. *You are in Christ Jesus* (there's your union) *who is made unto you Wisdome, Righteousnesse,*

Sanctification, and Redemption, (there's your communion.) The vertue of that redounds to you, you have a partnership and a share with Jesus Christ in his Resurrection, Ascension, Intercession; in his Righteousness, in his Conquests, in his Son-ship, in his Glory, when you have Conformity. There be many words expounded together in the new Testament; to dye with him, to be buried with him, to rise with him, to sit together in heavenly places with him, to suffer with him, to raaign with him, and co-heirs with him, all these shew the community and conformity; and both; you shall never have with Christ as his fellows, if you be not like him as his brethren.

Again, if you relate the Coherence of this point, to the last words of the former text, (the righteousness of God by faith) and /202/ make the Copulation so as to know him, if you relate it to the same faith, the faith of Christ, it will shew you this; That faith that taketh hold of Christ for righteousnesse with God, that faith is accompanied with the vertue of Jesus Christ upon the soul of a believer. There's no such thing as that a man can be saved, by a solitary faith or dead believing, but a justifying faith that brings you into a conformity to Christ: For as the soul in the body of a man, if it should onely give you an eye to see, and no life in no other parts, it would be a strange thing; so, do you imagine that there can be such a faith, as shall onely give you an eye to see Christ, and all the other parts dead in trespasses and sins, and hath no power of the resurrection of Christ? There cannot be such a faith.

Now observe, what the point is, Whosoever hath Christ, besides righteousness in Christ, by faith, he hath in him a reall sense of Christ; that is, some vertue and power working a man to a conformity and likenesse to himself.

To open this point a little, it will be of use to dispel the fancy that raignes in the /203/ mindes of men that think they may be co-heirs with Christ; and yet have no conformity to him; that think they may live with him, that do not live to him: they that have him have a reall sense in their own souls. Now touching this conformity, I shall open it in four particulars.

1. This conformity to Christ, God hath predestined all his Elect in a special manner unto, to make them like Jesus Christ, Rom. 8.29. *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, to be conformed to the Image of his Son;* that is, to the likeness of Christ: in likeness in what? in holinesse, in righteousnesse, in the crosse, in affliction. God in his first purpose he had this in his eye, to bring you into a conformity to his Son; do not think there is a predestination to glory, without being like to Christ; his image you must bear: no comfortable use can be made of Election, and predestination untill you find this conformity to Christ Jesus: God did not ordain all wishers of heaven to heaven, but all that are brought into a likenesse and conformity to Jesus Christ. /204/

2. This conformity to Christ, is not wrought without power, that shall transforme you out of nature, and out of your selves into this likenesse of Christ Jesus; you must be cast into another mould, before you can come to this; for we are changed (saith the text) into this image; and into this image we shall never come without we are changed. Look then for a new change, and transforming of the new man, renewing and changing the Spirit, the minde, and heart, taking another form, and being cast into a new mould; the best nature will not answer it, there must be a reall change.

3. The spirit of union with Christ, is the Worker of this conformity of this image of Christ in you, as, 2 Cor. 3.18. *We are changed into the same image, as by the Spirit of the Lord;* the image of Christ in your own souls, hath Christ by the spirit of union for the

worker of it: be himself is the sampler of the work, therefore you cannot draw a line of this image; you may say, Lord, I may hear, and I may learn long enough, before I can mould my heart into this conformity; my heart is hard, and I have no tool that will beat so hard an adamant as my heart is, I cannot melt my self. /205/

4. This conformity is not in full pitch, but in degrees, untill we come to attain the Resurrection of the dead. What is the growth of a Christian? but the more full conformity to Jesus Christ, his head and root that giveth him sap; the full proportion of life which is remaining in another world, Christ will bring thee to that.

The Apostle hath this phrase, in 1 *Joh.* 3.2. *Though now we be the Sons of God,* (meaning thus much, there is some likenesse in every Son of God, bearing some likenesse to God his Father) yet when Christ shall appear, we shall appear, for we shall see him as he is; perfect knowledge will bring perfect likenesse; faith beginneth this likenesse, but sight perfecteth it; faith maketh the first conformity, to be able to be like Christ on on earth in holinesse, and suffering, and bearing the Crosse; and full-sight shall make the other proportion as he is. *When he shall change these vile bodies, that they may be fashioned like his glorious body;* Phil. 3.11. *and as we have born the image of the Earthly, so we must also bear the image of the Heavenly,* 1 Cor. 15.49. Few men love to be like Christ on Earth, and then how shall they look /206/ to be like Christ in Heaven? many can digest conformity to Christ in happiness when they dye, but can't digest conformity to him in holinesse while they live.

Use. 1. This is a necessary point for triall and proof, whether you have gained Christ or no. It is necessary to discover and dispell the false claim whereby many thousand pretenders lay claim to Christ that have nothing of Christ in them. It would be a good work of the Word of God to un-Christ such men, to pull them out of themselves. How many take and make the name of Christ their refuge upon their opinion of Christ? as the Jewes were nursed up in *Abraham* and *Moses*, our Saviour went about to wrest these names out of their hands. Truly, while men ly under such a shelter, and make Jesus Christ himself a false refuge and hiding place, flattering themselves with false hopes, and sit down and presume that they are in Christ already; how will they be ever brought to him?

Now let all know by this point that Christ is not come unto you, neither have you ever gained him, untill he hath sanctified you; untill he hath made you new-Creatures to God, he hath not made you /207/ heirs of God; for those very people of whom it is said *there is no condemnation to them being in Christ,* of the same persons 'tis said, *that walk not after the Flesh but after the Spirit;* there's the character and description of them that are in Christ. And the Apostle after he had discovered justification by faith, *Rom.* 5.8, 9. (which are an Epitome of the whole book of the *Romans*) he cometh to tell you, all those that are justified and made righteous with God by Christ, *are planted into the likenesse of his death,* Rom. 9.4. 5. Sin hath in it uncleannesse and guiltinesse; by the one you are made filthy in the eye of God; and by the other you are made guilty of hell fire: now Jesus Christ cometh by water and blood, he cometh to purifie you of your uncleannesse, for the use of God; as well as redeem you unto happinesse, for your own good.

USE 2. How many men (like prisoners) make loud cries, that will cry hard for a Saviour, and pardon of sin: But for Christ, to know him and to be thirsting after more influences of grace, to bring them into conformity, they mind not. The object of a man's desires may be spirituall, but the end carnall: now /208/ spirituall things must not be

measure by their object, but by their end; there may be a carnall desire of spirituall things. There is in Christ Redemption from Hell to Heaven; there's none but would be contented to be Redeemed from Hell to Heaven; but who desires to be redeemed from sin to holinesse? there's the touch-stone, we would be saved, but we would not have that in Christ to serve Gods turn, to make us live the life of God; now will God allow such desires? By way of comparison, A man's soul that is never yet truly hubled for sin, is onely fallen out with sin for punishment sake and hell sake, and not for the filthinesse in it: so a man's desires are not yet true, that onely looks up to Christ as a Saviour meerly to bring him out of Hell, and help him out of the wrath of God, and not for conformity and sanctification. And as it was not enough for the *Egyptians* to strike the door-posts with blood, but they must rise up and be gone, as well as sprinkle the door to save themselves: so you whose desires are that the blood of Christ may be sprinkled for salvation, you must go out of *Egypt*, to stay under your sins and corruptions, it cannot be, these things must go together. /209/

I proceed from the Coherence of the words, which they hold with the formes Antecedent, to the parts particularly contained in them.

And here observe, by what gradation the Apostle moves from point to point. We find the Apostle first spreading his wings, and looking upon the moralities of his unregenerate State, *verse 4th, 5th Born of Abraham, Circumcised the eighth day, &c.* Then as the scales fell from his eyes, see these gaudy feathers, moted off and cast over-board, all that he called his gain for Christ, *verse 7.* Having discovered Christ, see how contemptuously he speaks of all his former worth, he speakes of them that they were but [GREEK] *very trash.* Now see with what savoury relish he speaks of Christ, *for Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.* And because it is not enough to complement in a phrase or style of speaking, and to call the knowledge of Christ excellent, nothing will serve him but a gaining of Christ, and counting of them but dung; then he maketh an Anatomy of the Excellencies of Christ, which he would gain, he would be found in him *verse 9th, having /210/ the righteousness of God by faith;* there is justification. Then he would know him, and the power of his Resurrection, and the fellowship of his suffering, and so be molded and conformed to the likenesse of his death. And in 11th *verse* he concludes, and if by any means I might attain to the Resurrection of the dead: The gaining of Christ in he particulars mentioned are certain premisses of eternall life; there he determineth, concludeth, and resteth.

Will you see the way now to eternall life? well then, suppose a man is at rest in secure confidence, but yet upon rotten grounds, in an unregenerate state, making no question but he is rich enough to make the purchase of eternall life, (ignorance and confidence are seldome seen one from the other; they that lie in blindnesse, and they that are dead are most confident of eternall life.) Now see how this sinner comes to be saved, and herein you will see the way: This confident justitiary lying in security in the first place, he hath Christ discovered to him, in such a convicted light, that he seeth a necessity of him, and an Excellency in him. Then this discovery of Christ unto the soul falleth down /211/ in the judgment and the conscience, and when the conscience is convinced, this conviction worketh Christ into such an esteem with him that all his self righteousness, all former propps, hopes, and confidencies, all things begin to look poor and base. Then this light of conviction falleth lower yet, and beginneth to warm the heart

and affections with savoury tastes and relishes of Christ; and the sweetnesse of the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord, turneth all former and present gaines into vile trash, and all their righteousnesse whatsoever, it presently turneth them into dung. Then followeth a resolution to cast away all, to buy this pearl to gain Christ; I have accounted *yea & I do account all things as dung, that I may gain Christ*. Now mark how the soul surveyeth Christ, and how the heart thus wrought upon pursueth every part, and every parcell of Christ, not onely looking for his righteousnesse that I may be justified with God, but even pursuing the fellowship of his suffering, taking the thorns as well as the rose. Therefore I would be found in him, covered with the righteousnesse of God; found in him, hidden from the eye /212/ of justice, and from the eye of the law, and the justice of the law, under the righteousnesse of God, and this I shall be when I am in him. Then I would know him; know him in the power of his Resurrection, know him in the fellowship of his suffering, and know him being in conformity to him. And when all this is done, that my soul is thus far wrought upon; when it hath this opinion, this judgment, this esteem, this pursuit, this survey; then it is an easie step to eternal life.

Look over the Text once more, and you shall find him have nothing but Christ in his mouth; the faith of Christ, and the knowledge of Christ, that I may gain Christ, that I may be found in Christ, and that I may know Christ; Christ in the power of his Resurrection and Christ in the fellowship of his suffering, and conformable to Christ's death; all Christ; and there is no stepp but hath something of Christ, whereby this *Paul* from a naturall condition came to life eternal.

The Text is a Text divided; or it is a brief sum rendered into its parts, and that is in these two words, that I may *know him*; the parts, in respect of the object *Him*, are three; *Him*, that is, his resurrection, /214/ his suffering, his death, here is nothing of Christ in heaven, but of Christ as he was upon earth, a suffering Christ, a dying Christ, a rising Christ. Why doth the Apostle fasten his desires on Christ as he was upon earth? Because a Christian on earth must take out the copy of Christ as he was on earth, that is, to suffer with him, to dy with him, and to rise with him. The parts in regard of the act, that I may *know him*, are three; know the power, know the fellowship, and be made conformable.

Then mark the fit coupling of each of the three to the other; power of resurrection, fellowship of suffering, conformity to death. Now if you ask me why power should be assign'd to resurrection? The answer is, because resurrection is an act of power; Christ's resurrection is an act of God's power; our resurrection is an act of his power. And why is fellowship assign'd to suffering? not onely because a Christian suffereth like Christ, but because a Christian suffereth for righteousnesse sake, as he did, or in the same cause. Again, why must it be conformity to his death because as the death of Christ was a Martyrdom, and was followed by a glorious /214/ resurrection to dy no more: so is a Christian's death, when it cometh upon him for his conscience sake, he shall dy no more; my suffering is a Martyrdom, and I shall rise out of them as he did.

Doct. Now I come to the first part, *To know him*, this is the point, *That the scope of a Christian's desires, is, that he may know Christ*, his chief pursuit is, that by faith he may know him; the reason, is because he loseth and suffereth the losse of all.

Now, this knowledge of Christ in Scripture is expressed by the knowledge of all the five Senses. 'Tis expres5 by seeing, which is by the Eye, and therefore it is called, in *2 Cor. 4.6. the light of the knowledge of the glory of God*. 'Tis exprest by hearing, and therefore it is said, *John 10. 4. His sheep know his Voice*, that is a knowledge by hearing.

'Tis exprest by tasting, and therefore it is said, 1 *Pet.* 2.3. *if so be that you have tasted that the Lord is gracious.* 'Tis exprest by smelling, and therefore it is called 2 *Cor.* 2.14. *the sweet perfume of his knowledge, and the sweet savour.* And 'tis exprest by feelings, and therefore it is said; *Eph.* 1.18. *the Eye of your understanding being enlightned that you may know /215/ what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the Saints.* He knowes not Christ whose faith doth not exercise (as it were) the act of all the Senses; to hear him, to see him, to tast him, to feel him, to savour and to relish him.

For the opening of the point, consider the Act, the Object, the Reason of the desire.

First for the Act; and there are three things in the Act.

1. What manner of knowing this is?
2. What are the properties?
3. Why it is called knowing?

1. What manner of knowing it is? take it in these three particulars.

1. Consider there is a Knowledge which is a not-knowing of Christ. As God is said to know that which indeed he is somewhere said not to know: There is a knowledge of God whereby he simply understands and knoweth all things; but then there is a knowledge of complacency whereby God is pleased with, and so to know as he loveth. Now though God knoweth all things by the act of the understanding; yet (saith he) Go, I know you not; /216/ therefore thereis a peculiar manner of knowing, whereby God knoweth those that are his, 2 *Tim.* 2.19. So is it here, there is a knowledge of Christ in us which is a not-knowing, there is a speculative and a dogmaticall knowledge, that is no knowledge; but then there is a peculiar knowing, whereby a Christian knoweth God.

2. Since it is not a generall, what is the speciall knowing? 'Tis such as is between Covenanters and Confederates, *Heb.* 8.11. *they shall know me from the least to the greatest,* and I will make a new covenant, I will put my Law in their minds, and then they shall all know me, *omnes, et soli,* all, and they alone.

3. This covenant-knowledge 'tis not a Notion or a knowing of truths, as they may be delivered in a proposition; but this phrase of knowing God and Christ is nothing else, but such a knowledge as carrieth with it the sense of that relation which God and his Children have one to another: This knowing of Christ is the exercise of all those graces which the relation that a man hath to Christ doth bespeak and require; to affect, to adore, to obey /217/ him; a man is so to know Christ as to adore him, to love him, to obey him, to perform the duty of a Child.

2. The Properties of this knowledge, and they are two.

1. It is begotten by such a light and by such a discovery of Jesus Christ unto the soul, which is onely of the Spirit of God to them that are in covenant; or are to be his. Knowledge of Christ can never be in any animall light which is a light of reason; but mark, *He hath given us an understanding to know him,* *Joh.* 5.20. And *Every man that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh to me,* *Joh.* 6.45. *Every man that hath been taught to know God, by this teaching light and discovery of the Spirit, cometh to me.* So *Heb.* 8.16. *I will write my law in their minds and they all know me:* When the Eye of a man is enlightned with this light, then Christ hath an other manner of shew and appearance to his soul then ever he had before: this maketh him beautifull, excellent, and admirable. A rich commodity loseth its beauty by a candle; so, when Christ is known

only by the common inquiry of Reason and Understanding, /218/ there is not that beauty in Christ, as when he appeareth in his own light, in this illumination of the Spirit of God, the least beam of it maketh Christ appear more glorious, and maketh him more sweet and more relishing to you, then he can appear to the meer learning of the learnedest men in the world.

2. Property is taken from the act of it, it is a knowledge that doth assimilate and liken the man into the resemblance of that Christ, he knoweth; it doth copy out Jesus Christ into the heart, and into the soul of that man that knoweth him, by this light bringing the image whih it seeth, *2 Cor. 3.18. we behold him with open face;* (that is, in the Gospel, which faces unvail'd) we are changed (and the reason of that similitude is taken from sight) into the same image. And, *1 Joh. 3.1.* the Apostle speaking of the Children of God in heaven, saith, *we shall be like him;* why? for we shall see him; the ground of likeness is taken from the seeing. Now hath your common learned knowledge this effect? doth it draw out the copy (as it were) of things it seeth? many rest in common knowledge that will never beget life, /219/ it will never assimilate and bring the heart and change it to a likeness; but the knowledge which is wrought by the spirit, it doth beget and transforme the heart, if it hath but the least beam of it.

3. Question: Why should this be called knowing? for many are abused by this word, since it taketh in more then meer notion, and doth comprehend all kind of Covenant-obligation whatsoever between the soul and God. The Reason why in the Scripture it is phras'd by knowing, is this; because all the saving work of God, upon the soul of any man is founded and increased, by a certain peculiar light, or teaching, or knowing of God: They shall be all taught of God, Every man that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh to me: all the work of grace is founded in this manner of knowing, and discerning the Lord Jesus Christ, this is the mother and nurse of all your graces; no faith, not love of God, no communion can be had without this knowing of Christ. /220/

I come to next words, *and the power of his Resurrection*, and I shall handle them as they stand in connexion with the other part of the text, *that I may know him:* And there are four things for the opening of the point.

1. That I may know him; first *Him*; and then *His*; first himself; then *His*, and then it followeth power of his Resurrection, and communion of his suffering, whether it be in order of your justification or your sanctification; first Christ, and then the things of Christ; union first, and then communion next.

There is an order of having, and an order of proving; the order of having righteousness, life, heaven, is to close with Christ himself: as in marriage, first to have the person, then the estate next, for the honour annexed to the person followeth thereupon; so the order of having is first to have Christ, then all the righteousness, the knowledge which is annexed to the having of Christ: But now the order of proving, if one would prove to himself that he is in Christ, that is otherwise; for here you may begin at the latter, to prove the former, /221/ as you may begin at Calling to prove your Election, therefore 'tis said, Make your calling and Election sure; but in order of proving, begin at the new-Creature, to prove that you are in Christ; because the text saith, If any be in Christ he is a new-Creature; so in order of proving that you know Christ; begin at the latter end, the power of his Resurrection, to prove you know him; a justifying righteousness, whereby you shall stand right with God, by a sanctifying spirit, whereby you shall walk with God.

Now I do inculcate this notion for two Reasons.

First, Because men do not rightly understand, how the benefits and graces of Christ are conveyed; for many think that the benefits of Christ come by way of truck, as one commodity for another; a righteousness for our righteousness, a Kingdome for our works; now this is merit, that's not the way of conveyance: else, there are many think that we receive them by gift, as a benefactor from the hands of God and Christ; without any other relation: no, but the way of receiving /222/ is as a member receives from the head, and as a branch receives sap from the root, and as a woman receives an estate from the husband: How is that? not meerly as a man receives a gift from another who is without him; but by way of union, by way of in-being in him; otherwise the member is nothing to the head, the branch nothing to the root, the woman receives no dowry or estate from the man.

Secondly, Another reason why I inculcate this, is, because in this point is found the distinction of the love of God, into the love of complacency and friendship, whose Object is the person. That we call the love of the wife, not onely his honour, or his estate, but his person; otherwise 'tis concupiscence, and lust, or mercenary love to the benefit and reward, if it be not to the person: There must be first a having Christ, Christ the object of our faith, Christ to be married, and to be in union with him.

2d. Thing for the opening of the point in generall is this; The saving knowledge of Christ is a sense, a feeling, an experience /223/ of him in his vertue upon the soul. This is the knowledge of a Christian as a Christian, the simple ignorant man or woman in this manner of knowing, may know more of Christ then the greatest *Rabbies* by all their Philosophicall speculative knowledge, *John* 6.44. Mark! The drawing of a man to Christ, and Gods teaching of him are both one; so far as a man is taught, so far he is drawn; so much as you know of Christ; so much feeling and sense of his power and vertue there is in you; therefore the Apostle explaining what it is to learn Christ, saith, You have not so learned him: how doth he expresse himself? he doth it not by notion, whereby you can talk and know Christ; but thus he doth it, *by putting off the old man which is corrupt, and being renewed in the Spirit of your minds, which is created after God in the Image of him*, *Eph.* 4.20, 21. *If you have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus*; this is the right knowing. A man may know Christ as a Surveyour knoweth another man's Land, he knoweth the number of Acres, it may be, better then the owner; but he hath /224/ no benefit arising out of it, as the owner hath: so, many a man knoweth Christ, the knowledge of Christ, and the things of the Gospel; better then many an owner; but yet he hath no livelihood out of Christ, no possession, no sense of the feeling of Christ in his own soul.

3. It is by the Apostle divided into sense of his power, communion, fellowship, and conformity; here is the knowledge of Christ thus divided, all of them practicall things; he would have a quickning life from Christ, and he would lay out that in wayes of communion with him, and in fellowship and conformity to him. You now see the compasse of the knowledge of Christ, and it holdeth forth an excellent levell or an aime for a Christian, that he may live in Christ and Christ in him. Ask your selves this Question in every point of knowledge, What power hath this knowing upon me? and what fellowship with Christ do I get by it? and what conformity to Christ is conveyed in me?

4. The first thing the Apostle pitcheth his desires upon, is the sense and feeling of Christ's /225/ Resurrection. Now there is reason why this should be first; a dead man must rise before he can walk; there must be a life to quicken, before there can be a walking in fellowship or in conformity to Christ: that's the first experience that a Christian hath of Christ, which looseth the darkness and the bonds and fetters of spirituall death, under which all the powers and faculties of the whole man did before lye buried; your know Resurrection is of the whole: the recovery of a dead eye if it were possible, and the recovery of the Leg, is not a Resurrection, because 'tis but a part; such is the Resurrection of a Christian, there cometh a life to him, to the whole man, the mind, the heart, the will, the affections; and by this life of Christ you rise to live, and you rise to dye; to dye to sin, to live to God: our Resurrection is a continuall rising, a rising by degrees. Thus much for the generall.

Now for the point distinctly and apart of it self, there are three things to be opened in the point. That the Resurrection of Christ hath place in the Sanctification of a man. And there is a power of Christ's /226/ Resurrection which taketh place in a sinner that is sanctified and regenerated. And the Resurrection of Christ, and the power of Christ's Resurrection, both of them are exemplified and copied out in every Christian that knoweth Christ.

1. The Resurrection of Christ hath a place in the spirituall quickning or the raising up a sinner from spirituall death. First, It hath a place in justification, for the text saith, *He was raised for our justification*, Rom. 4. last. Now what place hath it in the justification of a sinner? Thus, as it is an assurance of the Atonement made by his death; for Christ did rise (as it were) out of thy sins and my sins; he rose out of the guilt and condemnation of them, and we must rise out of the power and dominion of them. Christ's rising sheweth that sin is abolished, the attonement made: had he not risen, our faith had been in vain, saith the Apostle, 1 *Cor.* 15.37. Now there is no condemnation: why? Mark the Apostle, *Christ dyed, yea rather he is risen again*, Rom. 8.34. why *rather*? because there is a full assurance that all is paid, the debtor seeth his Surety out of prison, that lay in prison for him. Secondly, /227/ It hath a place also in the quickning of a sinner from the dominion and the death of sin: What place hath it? see Rom. 6.5. *We shall be planted in the likeness of his death*, Rom. 6.10. *So shall you live from the death of sin, to the life of God*, why? because you shall be cast into the mould of Jesus Christ; the Resurrection of Christ is not onely an Article of your Creed, but it is a mould into which every believer in Christ must be cast.

2. There is a power in Christ's Resurrection, which also belongeth to this spirituall Resurrection of a sinner to the life of God: nay 'tis called the working of God's mighty power *which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead*, Eph. 1.20. You will say, It is a mighty power to raise a dead man; but, What power was it to raise a dead Christ, that lay (as it were) under all the sin of all the believers in the world? nothing could hinder that quickning power; no weight of sin, no sealing the stone; the Earth shall quake, and Christ shall rise: the Apostle prayeth that Christians might know what was the exceeding greatnesse of his power, working their souls to the rising of Christ. /228/

3. This Resurrection of Christ, and the power of it, they are copied out in a Christian, rising from spirituall death; God, doth (as it were) act over the power that he shewed in Christ's Resurrection, he acts it over in the spiritual Resurrection of every believer, that is turned from sin to God. Consider for thy comfort, That very power that

raised Jesus Christ from the imputed sins under which he did lye, shall raise thy soul from that inherent sin and dominion of it, under which thou lye, if thou be in him; and if you know him he will carry you through the power, the power of impediments whatsoever you meet with.

Now I come to open the last two words; *Fellowship of his suffering* and *Conformity to his death*.

First, for the *fellowship of his suffering*. It is not meant a share and a part in the [Merit] of his suffering; but 'tis nothing else, but that I may know to suffer with him, to bear his cross, to indure his shame, to undergo, yea, to take up the crosse, or any suffering, in the cause, and for the sake, of Christ: So the phrase is taken, *2 Cor. 1.7.* /229/ as you are partakers of his suffering, so shall you be also of the consolation; that is, as you suffer with him, so shall you also raaign with him. And the Apostle *Peter* speaking of the fiery triall, and reproach for the name of Christ which falleth upon believers, *1 Pet. 4. 13.* he saith, *Rejoyce, for as much as you are partakers of Christ's sufferings;* you suffer with him, you suffer for him, you indure the Crosse, and shame and pain in the cause, and for the sake of Christ.

For the second phrase, conformity to his death; It may be meant mortification of sin, dying unto or the killing of sin. But I rather understand that which the Apostle speaks of, *Rom. 8. 19. Conformed to the Image of his Son;* confirmed in suffering, dying, glorifying. In one word, it is to dye daily. The life of a Christian is alwayes a dying life in regard of suffering, temptation, persecution: *2 Cor. 4.11.* is a clear explication of that which is here meant; we which live are alwayes delivered unto death for Jesus Christ sake. Take notice what an excellent spirit there is in a Christian towards Christ, that can value and set a price upon his sufferings and upon /230/ his dying, because of some conformity and fellowship that he hath in them with Jesus Christ. So I shall handle these two branches or points together, and consider these five particulars, and so conclude.

1. Observe, that, Communion with Christ, and Conformity, they go together. 'Tis the end of Gods effectual calling: *you were called unto the fellowship of his Son, 1 Cor. 1.9.* and conformity to Jesus Christ, 'tis the very end of your predestination, *Rom. 8.29.* These two do immediatly flow from union; communion, and conformity; you cannot be in Christ but you must have Communion with Christ, Conformity to him. Now you that pretend to Christ, look out for that communion and for that conformity: the communion is large; in his spirit, in his righteousness, in his life, in conquests over death and Hell, in his victory, in his glory; now if you look to have communion, shew you conformity to him; what part can you have in Christ, that are in no part like Christ? To have communion and no conformity to him, that cannot be. /231/

2. Consider, the saving knowledge of Christ, and the power of the Resurrection of Christ carrieth a man to this communion, then to this conformity to Christ Jesus. There can be no communion between a man dead in sin and a Christ that lives; but when he is raised up, there may be both. The whole fury of the world and devil commeth upon you, when you are raised, yet this power of the Resurrection of Christ will bear you up in all sufferings; in the fellowship, whatsoever the suffering be; and in the conformity, whatsoever the death be. As the root of the tree conveyeth the sap into the branch by conveyances invisible, and operations that are secret, no outward thing can hinder: And as the life runneth from the head to the feet, by secret conveyances that are with in; so when the power of the Lord Jesus Christ hath raised you up to have communion and

conformity to Christ, though it be in suffering and dying, yet the secret conveyance that maintains this communion, that cannot be hindred; it will follow the power of his Resurrection. /232/

3. Mark what that faith is, which the Apostle here desires to have. He describeth that faith by the knowledge of Jesus Christ which is proper to a saving faith. There is in faith an inward and a sensible feeling of Christ's efficacy and power. There is in faith a formative vertue that formes the soul into conformity and into wayes of fellowship and communion with Christ Jesus. Leight and swimming notions of knowledge, these are not Faith. At what price can your faith take Christ? for there is a great deal of low-price faith, a world of it that raigneth and aboundeth; my meaning is, that can believe, and give a generall assent of Christ, speak good words, and have good thoughts, and, it may be, will do some good works, and they will hear the word, and, it may be, will pray; but they cannot take Christ at any price, they cannot set all going for Christ.

4. The most bitter things of Christ, are those wherein the Apostle desires communion and conformity: 'Tis not in his Kingdome, nor in his happinesse, nor in his glory: but in his suffering death, which is a hard point to those feather-bed Christians that lye soft, that think /233/ Religion and Christ to consist in some few notions and easie practices; ay but (saith our Saviour) Can you drink of the cup that I shall drink of? can you be made pertaker of his sufferings? and be made conformable to his death? Truly to a Christian that walketh inwardly, communion and conformity with Jesus Christ, is the sweet of the sweetest flowers, the sweetest benefit that can be enjoyed; That communion and conformity is the sweet of Heaven it self, *to be dissolved, and to be with Christ*, much more doth this make sweet the bitterest things. There is in the sufferings for Christ much, that may qualifie all their bitterness: How often are you put in mind of it, if you suffer with him, you shall raign with him? there is life Eternall; and there is a present rejoycing, unspeakable, that attendeth this kind of suffering, there's honey found in the belly of this Lion; they bring most commonly their Cordialls with them.

Fiftly and lastly: The knowledge of Christ will bring him to suffering, and bring him to a daily dying: and one would think you should traine up your faith to live in foul-weather, for 'tis no going out to /234/ Sea in such a ship, that a man knoweth will hold no longer then it is fair weather: when the Gospel came to be preached by the Lord Jesus and his Apostles, you hear of the Crosse and persecutions, hating and forsaking all, Fathers, Mothers, and the like: Thus it shewes you the nature of Gospel-godlinesse.

FINIS

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