

# CHAPTER 3

## INTRODUCTION TO COLOSSIANS 3

This chapter contains exhortations to several duties, some more general, which relate to all Christians, and others more particular, which belong to saints in such and such a state of life. The apostle begins with an exhortation to seek things heavenly, and not earthly, and to set the affections on the one, and not on the other: the arguments used to enforce it are taken from the saints being risen with Christ; from Christ being in heaven at the Father's right hand; from their being dead to sin, the law, and the world; from their having life in Christ safe and secure; yea, from Christ being their life, and their appearance with him in glory, (<sup><SICR6></sup>Colossians 3:1-4). And next he proceeds to an exhortation to the mortification of sin, and the deeds of it, which he urges from the wrath of God coming upon men for these things, and from the consideration of their former state and condition, expressed by walking and living in them, (<sup><SICR6></sup>Colossians 3:5-7), and by a metaphor taken from the putting off and on of garments, he exhorts to the putting off of the old man, with his deeds, several of which are mentioned, (<sup><SICR8></sup>Colossians 3:8,9), and to the putting on of the new man, and to the exercise of various graces, as mercy, meekness, forbearance, forgiveness, charity, and peace, (<sup><SICR6></sup>Colossians 3:10-15). And then he proceeds to exhort to such duties as relate to the word and worship of God; as that the word of Christ should have an abiding place in them, and that they should teach and instruct one another by singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, and do all they did in a religious way, in the name of Christ, with thankfulness to God by him, (<sup><SICR6></sup>Colossians 3:16,17). And closes the chapter with the duties of wives to their husbands, and of husbands to their wives, and of children to their parents, and of parents to their children, and of servants to their masters, (<sup><SICR8></sup>Colossians 3:18-25).

**Ver. 1.** *If ye then be risen with Christ*, etc.] The apostle having observed in the former chapter, that the believing Colossians were dead with Christ from the rudiments of the world, were buried with him in baptism, and were risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, argues from hence how much it became them to regard a new and spiritual life, and to

seek after superior and heavenly things, and treat with neglect and contempt carnal and earthly ones. For he does not here call in question their being risen with Christ, but takes it for granted that they were, and makes use of it as an argument for his present purpose. They were risen with Christ as their head, and as members in union with him representatively, when he rose from the dead; and emblematically in their baptism, when having gone down into the water, and being baptized, they emerged from it; and spiritually in conversion, when they were raised from a death of sin, to a life of grace, by Christ, as the resurrection and the life, the efficient cause of it, and in virtue of his resurrection from the dead: wherefore being thus raised again in every sense, it highly became them to

*seek those things which are above*; the better and heavenly country, the continuing city, which is above the heavens, whose builder and maker is God; Christ, who is in heaven, and salvation alone by him without the works of the law; all spiritual blessings, such as pardon, peace, righteousness, life, and glory, which are in heavenly places in him; doctrines and ordinances, which come from heaven, and are the means of supporting a spiritual and heavenly life; especially that bread of life which came down from heaven, and gives life unto the world, and of which if a man eats, he shall never die, but live for ever; and particularly glory, honour, immortality, and eternal life, the crown of righteousness laid up above, the kingdom of God, and the righteousness of it; which are to be sought for in the first place with all affection, earnest desire, care, and diligence, not by or for works of righteousness, but in Christ, and as the gifts of God's grace through him.

*Where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God*: which contains other reasons and arguments to engage believers to look upwards, and seek after heavenly things; that as Christ, when he died and rose again from the dead, did not stay long on earth, nor minded the things of the world, but ascended up to heaven, where he now is, and will remain until his second coming; so they, being dead and risen with him, should, in their thoughts, desires, and affections, in the exercise of the graces of faith, hope, and love, ascend heavenwards, like pillars of smoke perfumed with frankincense; and the more should their hearts be where he is, and intent on things above there, from the consideration of that great honour and dignity in which he is. He is “on the right hand of God”; in human nature, an honour which none of the angels were ever admitted to: here he “sitteth”, as having done the work of redemption, and entered into his rest,

beholding the travail of his soul with satisfaction, though he continues to be an advocate, and to make intercession for his people; which is another reason enforcing this exhortation.

**Ver. 2.** *Set your affections on things above*, etc.] For unless the affections are set on them, they will never be sought after in a proper manner. The word signifies to mind them, and think on them, to favour and approve of them, to be affectionately desirous of them, and concerned for them; for where the treasure is, the heart should be; and as the saints' best things are above, their minds and affections should be there likewise; their contemplation should be on those things, and their conversation should be in heaven; nor should they regard anything but what is there, or comes from thence, for they belong not to this world, but to another and better country: their citizenship is in heaven, and there, in a short time, they must have their everlasting residence; and therefore should seek after, and highly prize and value heavenly things, and set their affections on them, and

*not on things on the earth*; not mind earth and earthly things, temporal enjoyments, riches, and honours; and though food and raiment, and the necessaries of life, are to be sought after, and cared and provided for, yet not with anxiety and perplexity of mind, in an over thoughtful and distressing manner; nor should the heart be set on those outward things, or happiness placed in the possession of them. Moreover, worldly lusts, the members which are on the earth, earthly pleasures that are sinful, may be here meant. Worldly lusts are to be denied, the deeds of the body are to be mortified, carnal desires are not to be gratified and indulged, provision is not to be made for the flesh, to fulfil its lusts; and particularly the vain philosophy of Jews and Gentiles, the traditions of the elders, the ceremonies of the law, which lay in earthly things, in worldly observances, the difference of meats and drinks, keeping of days, months, and years, new moons, feasts, and sabbath days; the rudiments of the world, the commandments and doctrines which were of the earth, and lay in not touching, tasting, and handling certain things that are on earth, and which perish with the using, as opposed to the doctrines of the Gospel, and ordinances of Christ, which are from above, and come from heaven, and have a spiritual and heavenly use: and which is the sense chiefly intended, though it is best to understand the words in their largest compass.

**Ver. 3.** *For ye are dead*, etc.] Not in a natural or corporeal sense, for they were living in the world; nor in a moral sense, for though they had been

dead in sins, they were quickened by the grace of God; nor in a legal sense, for all their trespasses were forgiven them; (see <sup>SK13</sup>Colossians 2:13,20); but they were dead to the law, moral, ceremonial, and judicial, by the body of Christ; and to sin, as to its damning power, through his bearing it in his own body on the tree; and to the world by his cross: and therefore as dead men have nothing to do with the world, and the things of it, so believers being dead with Christ, should have no regard to the rudiments of the world, the ceremonies of the law, and the ordinances of men; to worldly lusts, and to the things that are in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; but should be dead as to their desires after, affections for, and subjection to these things:

*and your life is hid with Christ in God*; which is another reason why they should not mind things on earth, but things in heaven. The saint's "life" is either spiritual, and is a life of grace from Christ, a life of faith on him, and a life of communion with him, and may be distinguished into a life of sanctification, both internal and external, and into a life of justification; or eternal, which is a life free from all the sorrows of this, both outward and inward; a life of perfection and pleasure, of vision and enjoyment of God and Christ, and of fellowship with Father, Son, and Spirit, angels and saints, and which will never end. This is "theirs", what they have a right unto, and shall everlastingly enjoy: it is not only promised to them, and prepared and laid up for them, but it is given unto them in Christ; and who has made way for their full possession of it, into which he himself will put them, having power, as Mediator, so to do; and even now they have it, the beginning, pledge, and earnest of it. This is said to be "hid", which denotes the secrecy of it, and is true both of spiritual and eternal life. The spiritual life of the saints is hid from the men of the world, who are alienated from the life of God, are ignorant of the Lord of life, and know nothing of the spirit of life; they are strangers to the nature of this life, and to the food on which believers live, the hidden manna; and to the doctrines of the Gospel, by which they are nourished, these are hid to them that are lost; and to all the joys and pleasures of it: and this is sometimes hid from the saints themselves, when temptations are violent, corruptions prevail, grace is low, and seems to be gone, and God hides his face. Eternal life is also an hidden one from natural men; the things that are eternal, are things unseen by the carnal eye, and not to be conceived of by a carnal heart; and can only be beheld, and that in a very glimmering and imperfect manner, by an eye of faith, which is the evidence of things not seen, the clearest one saints have

in this life; for eternal glory and happiness is in part hid from the saints themselves; they see it but through a glass darkly; nor does it appear to themselves, as yet, what that felicity is in its fulness and perfection they shall enjoy. Moreover, this phrase is expressive of the safety, as well as of the value and preciousness of this life, things of worth being hid for security. It is hid, and it is hid “with Christ”; spiritual life is with him, as the head, root, and fountain of it, and so is safe, and can never be lost; because he the head lives, the members shall live also; and as long as it is in him, as the fountain, the streams and supplies of it shall not be wanting to his people; nor can the communication between him and them be ever cut off: eternal life is deposited in his hands by the Father; it is bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord God, and is in him for ever safe: nay, it is not only with Christ, where it is secure enough, but it is with Christ “in God”; Christ is in God, the Father is in the Son, and the Son is in the Father; they are one in nature, and so in power and glory; and this union between them, which is natural and perfect, is the foundation of the security both of the persons, and of the life, spiritual and eternal, of God's elect; (see ~~Exod~~ John 10:28-30). Moreover, this life itself is in God. Not only our natural life is in him; we live and move, and have our being in him; but our spiritual and eternal life: he is the spring of it; it arises originally from him; it was purposed in him; it was promised by him; the scheme of it, or what is called the fellowship of the mystery, was hid in him; it was given by him; he is the fountain of it, and that itself; and therefore the saints can never perish, nor need they fear any enemy.

**Ver. 4.** *When Christ, who is our life, shall appear,* etc.] The Vulgate Latin version, and some copies, read, “your life”. Christ is the author of spiritual life, the fountain from whence it springs, the object on which the saints live, yea, their very life itself; it is not so much they that live, as Christ that lives in them: and he is their eternal life; it is in him, and given forth by him; to know him now is the beginning of it; and its perfection hereafter will lie in the vision of him, communion with him, and conformity to him. The Jews have a saying<sup>f48</sup>,

“that lives depend upon the son of Jesse;”

all sorts of life, natural, spiritual, and eternal. At present, Christ, the life of his people, is, as it were, hid; when he had done the work he came into this world about, and which he was manifest in the flesh, he departed out of it, ascended up into heaven, and went to his God and Father, where he is, and

will be retained, until the time of the restitution of all things; and though he appears in the presence of God, and on the behalf of his redeemed ones, yet he is now out of sight, and not to be seen with their bodily eyes; but, ere long, he will be revealed from heaven, and come in the clouds of it, and be seen by all, to the terror and confusion of some, and to the joy and salvation of others; when his appearance will be exceeding glorious, not only in his glorified body, or exalted human nature, and as the Judge of the whole earth, clothed with majesty, authority, and power, but as the Son of God, God equal with the Father, in all the perfections and glory of deity, which will be manifest and apparent to everyone:

*then shall ye also appear with him in glory:* the dead bodies of the saints will then be raised and united to their souls, which he will bring with him, when he appears; and living saints shall be changed, and be caught up together with the raised ones, into the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air; and so they all shall be with him together, wherever he is, whether in the air, or on earth, or in heaven, and while he is in either; and shall be for ever with him, enjoy communion with him, be made like unto him, and behold his glory: yea, they shall “appear in glory” too; with a glory on their bodies, which will be raised in glory like unto the glorious body of Christ; and on their souls, being in perfect holiness, having on the wedding garment, or robe of Christ's righteousness, being clothed upon with their house from heaven, and appearing in the shining robes of immortality, incorruption, and glory; having the glory of God upon them in soul and body, and such a glory revealed in them, as the sufferings of this present life, and all the enjoyments of it, are not to be compared with. All which furnish out strong arguments and reasons, enforcing the above exhortations to seek for, and set the affections on things in heaven, and not on earth.

**Ver. 5.** *Mortify therefore your members,* etc.] Not your bodies, as the Ethiopic version reads, nor the members of the natural body, but of the body of sin, indwelling sin; which as a body consists of various members, which are parts of it, rise out of it, and are used by it, as the members are by the body; and intend the sins of the flesh, or sinful actions, which are generally performed by the members of the natural body, in which the law of sin is, and by which it operates; so that the mortification the saints are here exhorted to, in consideration of having a spiritual life in them, and a hope of eternal life in Christ, from whence the apostle argues, is not a mortification or destruction of the body of sin itself, or of the being and principle of it in the soul, where it is, and lives, and dwells, and will as long

as the saints are in this tabernacle, but of the deeds of the body, or of sinful actions, as to the life and conversation; and signifies a denial of them, an abstinence from them, and a non-performance of them; (see Gill on “<sup><BR><BR></sup>Romans 8:13”). These members, or deeds of the body, or acts of sin, are called “your”: for as the old man is ours, the vitiosity of nature is what we bring into the world with us, and is rooted and incorporated into us; so the actions that flow from it, and are done by it, are not to be ascribed to God, nor even to Satan, but they are our own actions, and which are performed by the members of our mortal body, or by the faculties of our souls: and are,

*which are on earth*: or earthly; are concerned about earthly things, the things of the world, worldly lusts and pleasures, which rise out of earthly mindedness, and incline unto it, and are only what are done here on earth, and will have no place in heaven. The particulars of which follow:

*fornication*; the sin of uncleanness committed by single persons, or out of the state of marriage, and which the Gentiles did not account sinful: hence so much notice is taken of it, with a censure, and so often, by the apostle, in almost all his epistles, and dehorted from, as a sin against the body, as what disqualified for church communion, and was not to be named among the saints, who should be dead to that, and that to them, as to the commission of it.

*Uncleanness*; of every sort, all other impure actions, as adultery, incest, sodomy, and every other unnatural lust; all which should be abstained from, and never committed by those who profess to be alive unto God.

*Inordinate affection*; which may intend the passions, or first motions of sin, stirred up by the law, and which work in, and operate by the members of the body, and bring forth fruit unto death, and therefore to be opposed by such as have a life in Christ; and also those vile affections, which some in a judicial way are given up unto, and prevail with those who are effeminate, and abusers of themselves with mankind, and which are to be abhorred and denied by all who are heirs of the grace of life, and expectants of an heavenly one.

*Evil concupiscence*; so called to distinguish it from that natural concupiscence, or desire after things lawful and necessary, and which is implanted in nature by God himself; and from that spiritual concupiscence or desire after spiritual things, and that lusting against the flesh and carnal

things, which is formed in the heart of a regenerate man by the Spirit of God. It is the same with [rh rxy, “the evil imagination”, or corruption of nature so much spoken of by the Jews. This here is what is forbidden by that law, “thou shalt not covet”, (<sup><02017></sup>Exodus 20:17); and includes every fleshly lust and inordinate desire, or every desire after that which is not lawful, or does not belong to a man; as what is another's property, his wife, or goods, or anything that is his; and so very naturally follows,

*covetousness*; an immoderate love of money, the root of all evil, an insatiable desire of having more, and of having more than a man's own; and is enlarged as hell, and as death is not satisfied, but still craves more, without making any good use of what is possessed:

*which is idolatry*. The covetous man, and the idolater, worship the same for matter and substance, even gold and silver; the covetous man lays up his money, makes no use of it, as if it was something sacred; he looks at it, and adores it, and puts his trust and confidence in it, and his heart is so much set upon it, that he neglects the worship of the true God; and indeed no man can serve God and mammon. Some think, that by this *πλεονεξία* rendered “covetousness”, is meant, that greedy desire after the commission of all uncleanness, and impure actions, which were perpetrated by the followers of Simon Magus in their religious assemblies, and under the notion of worship, and as acceptable to God, and therefore called idolatry; and which ought not to be once named, much less practised, among the living members of Christ. Moreover, such filthy actions were performed by the Gentiles in the worship of their deities.

**Ver. 6.** *For which things' sake*, etc.] Those sins above mentioned, (<sup><5185></sup>Colossians 3:5):

*the wrath of God*; the effects of it in temporal judgments, and eternal ruin and destruction, the wrath to come, which all are deserving of, and there is only deliverance from by Christ:

*cometh upon the children of disobedience*: who are disobedient both to the law of God, and Gospel of Christ: who are unbelievers in him, are rebellious and gainsaying, reject his calls, the persuasions of his ministers, set at nought his counsel, and will have none of his reproof. There have been already instances of God's displeasure at sin, his indignation against it, and his judgments on account of it: his wrath is revealed from heaven, and it will come down from thence on disobedient and rebellious sinners, and



that suddenly, and with great power, like a mighty torrent, that there will be no standing before it. This is a reason why such who have life in Christ should mortify, repress, and abstain from the above sins; for though this regards sinners, and ungodly persons, yet the effects of God's wrath on such show how much such sins are displeasing to him, and detested by him, and therefore to be avoided by the saints.

**Ver. 7.** *In the which ye also walked some time*, etc.] Either in or among the children of disobedience, (<sup>5108B</sup>Colossians 3:6), or rather in the aforementioned sins, (<sup>5108B</sup>Colossians 3:5). Sin is a road or path, in which sinners walk a way of their own, or of their own choosing and approving, though a dark and crooked one, and which leads to destruction: walking herein denotes a continued series of sinning, a persisting in it, a progress therein, a proceeding from evil to evil, taking pleasure, and going on securely in it; and which is the case and state of God's elect before conversion, which is a turning of them from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God, and out of the ways of sin, into the paths of righteousness, when the course of their walk, of their lives and conversations, is altered; and which is suggested here, and made use of as another reason for the mortification of the deeds of the body of sin, taken from their former state, and their deliverance out of it; and therefore the time past of their lives, when they walked in these things, should suffice, and they should now cease from sin, from a series and course of sinning:

*when ye lived in them*; in sins, and were dead in them; for to be dead in sin, and to live in sin, is the same thing; living in sin is the death of sin. To live in sin is to live after the flesh, after the dictates of corrupt nature, to live a sinful course of life; it is for a man to give up himself to sin, be wholly bent upon it, take delight in it, and make it his work and business. This had been the case of these believers, but now they were dead to sin, and it became them to live no longer therein, but to mortify it by denying it, and abstaining from it, and living soberly, righteously, and godly.

**Ver. 8.** *But now you also put off all these*, etc.] Intimating, that now since they were converted and delivered out of the former state in which they were once, and professed not to walk and live in sin, it became them to separate, remove, and put at a distance from them all sins, and every vice, to lay them aside as dead weights upon them, and put them off as filthy garments; for such sins are never to be put on, and cleaved to again as formerly; and that not only those, the above mentioned, fornication,

uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, but the following also,

*anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy*, or “evil speaking”; what vices are here intended, (see Gill on “<sup><4081></sup>Ephesians 4:31”); to which is added,

*filthy communication*, which comes

*out of the mouth*: and is to be removed and put out of it, or abstained from; and which is to be understood also of blasphemy, or evil speaking of one another, whereby the credit and reputation of each other may be hurt.

“Filthy communication” is the same with that which is said to be corrupt, (<sup><4049></sup>Ephesians 4:29); and which, though it is applicable to all speech that is unsavoury, unedifying, idle, and useless, and may be properly enough said of flattery, lying, cursing, and swearing; yet chiefly regards obscene language, unchaste words, and filthy talking, which tend to encourage and cherish the sin of uncleanness in any of its branches, flattery, lying, cursing, and swearing; yet chiefly regards obscene language, unchaste words, and filthy talking, which tend to encourage and cherish the sin of uncleanness in any of its branches.

**Ver. 9.** *Lie not one to another* etc.] Which is another vice of the tongue, and to which mankind are very prone, and ought not to be done to any, and particularly to one another; since the saints are members one of another, and of the same body, which makes the sin the more unnatural; of this vice, (see Gill on “<sup><4025></sup>Ephesians 4:25”), and is another sin that is to be put off, or put away; that is to be abstained from, and not used. The arguments dissuading from this, and the rest, follow,

*seeing that ye have put off the old man, with his deeds.* The Syriac, Arabic, and Ethiopic versions read this as an exhortation, as they do the next verse also. Who is meant by the old man, (see Gill on “<sup><5116></sup>Romans 6:6”), and what by putting him off, (see Gill on “<sup><4022></sup>Ephesians 4:22”), and as for “his deeds”, they are the same with the deceitful lusts there mentioned, and the works of the flesh in (<sup><4159></sup>Galatians 5:19) and with the members of the body of sin in the context, (<sup><5135></sup>Colossians 3:5,8). Some, as Beza, think, that here is an allusion to the rite of baptism in the primitive church; which, as he truly observes, was performed not by aspersion, but immersion; and which required a putting off, and a putting on of clothes, and when the baptized persons professed to renounce the sins of the flesh, and their former conversation, and to live a new life.

**Ver. 10.** *And have put on the new man*, etc.] Concerning which, and the putting it on, (see Gill on “~~400a~~ Ephesians 4:24”),

*which is renewed in knowledge*; this man, or principle of grace in the soul, is a new one, which never was there before; and there is a daily renovation of it in the spirit of the mind, by the Spirit of God; for as the outward man decays, the inward man, which is the same with this new man, is renewed day by day, increases in holiness and righteousness, grows in grace, and particularly in “knowledge”; light and knowledge of a man's self, of his lost state and condition by nature, of his need of Christ, and of his salvation, is what appears at the first formation of this new man; and the daily renovation of him lies in an increase of spiritual, experimental, and saving knowledge of God, and Christ, and divine things; and indeed, until a man becomes a new creature, he neither knows, nor is he capable of knowing, the things of the Spirit of God; so that this new man, or principle of grace, begins with spiritual knowledge, and is formed in order to it, and its increase lies in it:

*after the image of him that created him*; the new man; for this is a creation work, and so not man's, but God's; and is made not after the image of the first man, no not as innocent, and much less as fallen; but after the image of Christ, to which the elect of God are predestinated to be conformed, and which is stamped in regeneration; and more and more appears by every transforming view of Christ, and will be perfected in heaven, when they shall see him as he is, and be perfectly like him, who is not only the pattern, but the Creator of it, even the author and finisher of faith.

**Ver. 11.** *Where there is neither Greek nor Jew*, etc.] That is, either in Christ, after whose image the new man is created; (see ~~400b~~ Galatians 5:6 6:15) or in the new man, and with respect to

regeneration; or in the whole business of salvation: it matters not of what nation a man is; this has no influence on his new birth, either to forward or hinder it; for he is never the more a new creature, a regenerate man, and interested in salvation, because he is a Jew, which he may be outwardly, and not inwardly; and he may be born again, though he is a Greek or Gentile, as the Syriac version reads; for God of his own will, and abundant mercy, and not out of respect to nations and persons, begets souls again to a lively hope of the heavenly inheritance:

*circumcision or uncircumcision*; a man's being circumcised in the flesh signifies nothing; this he may be, and not a new creature; for that is not true circumcision, but that which is of the heart, and in the spirit: and, on the other hand, it is no objection to a man's being born again, that he is uncircumcised in the flesh; this may be his case, and yet may be circumcised with the circumcision made without hands; neither one nor the other is of any account with God, nor makes the man either better or worse.

*Barbarian, Scythian*; all such were Barbarians to the Romans, that did not speak their language; and as were such also to the Greeks, who were not of their nation, and therefore Greeks and Barbarians are opposed to each other, (see <sup>e114</sup>Romans 1:14) and so they are here in the Syriac version, which reads “Greek” and “Barbarian”. The Arabic version, instead of “Barbarian”, reads “Persian”, because it may be, a Persian is so accounted by the Arabians; and because the Scythians were, of all people, the most barbarous and unpolished <sup>f49</sup>, and were had in great disdain by others, therefore the apostle mentions them, as being within the reach of the powerful and efficacious grace of God; nor were the fierceness of their dispositions, and the impoliteness of their manners, any bar unto it. Remarkable is the saying of Anacharsis the Scythian, who being reproached by a Grecian, because he was a Scythian, replied <sup>f50</sup>,

“my country is a reproach to me, but thou art a reproach to thy country.”

It matters not of what nation a man is, so be it he is but a good man; especially in Christianity, all distinctions of this kind cease. It is added,

*bond or free*; the grace of God in regeneration is not bestowed upon a man because he is a free man, or withheld from another because he is a bond servant. Onesimus, a fugitive servant, was converted by the Apostle Paul in prison; and whoever is called by grace, if he is a free man in a civil sense, he is Christ's servant in a religious one; and if he is a servant of men, he is, in a spiritual sense, the Lord's free man. It is not nation, nor outward privileges, nor the civil state and condition of men, which are regarded by God, or are any motive to him, or have any influence upon the salvation of men:

*but Christ is all, and in all*; he is “all” efficiently; he is the first cause of all things, the beginning of the creation of God, the author of the old, and of

the new creation, of the regeneration of his people, and of their whole salvation: he is all comprehensively; has all the fulness of the Godhead, all the perfections of deity in him; he is possessed of all spiritual blessings for his people; and has all the promises of the covenant of grace in his hands for them; yea, all fulness of grace dwells in him, in order to be communicated to them: and he is all communicatively; he is their light and life, their wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, their food and clothing, their strength and riches, their joy, peace, and comfort, who gives them grace here, and glory hereafter, So, with the Jews, the Shekinah is called **l k**, “all”<sup>f51</sup>: and this likewise, with the Cabalists<sup>f52</sup>, is one of the names of the living God, and well agrees with Christ, who has all things in him; and is the reason they give for this divine appellation: and Christ is “in all”; in all places, being infinite, immense, and incomprehensible, as God, and so is everywhere by his power, upholding all things by it; and in all his churches, by his gracious presence, and in the hearts of all his regenerate ones, of whatsoever nation, state, and condition they be: he is revealed in them, formed within them, and dwells in their hearts by faith; and is all in all to them, exceeding precious, altogether lovely, the chiefest among ten thousands, and whom they esteem above all creatures and things. The Arabic version reads, “Christ is above all, and in all”.

**Ver. 12.** *Put on therefore*, etc.] As the apostle had argued for the putting off of the members of the body, from their having put off the old man himself; so he now argues from their having put on the new man, to their putting on of his members; that is, to the exercise of the various graces of the Spirit, and the discharge of the several duties of religion; which though they would not be a robe of righteousness, or garments of salvation to them, yet would be very becoming conversation garments, such as would be adorning to themselves, to the doctrine of Christ, and their profession of it, without which they would be naked in their walk, and exposed to shame, **hçwdq j wrb açbl thl**, “to be clothed with the Holy Spirit”, is a phrase used by the Cabalistic doctors<sup>f53</sup>; and is indeed a Scripture phrase, “the Spirit of the Lord came upon”, **hçbl**, clothed Zechariah, (<sup><1200></sup>2 Chronicles 24:20) and so Esther is said, by the Jewish writers<sup>f54</sup>, to be “clothed with the Holy Ghost” Here the metaphor is taken from the putting off of clothes; and what is here directed to, is like Joseph's coat, a coat of many colours. The arguments made use of lie in the characters under which the saints are addressed,

*as the elect of God, holy and beloved*; that is, “as becomes the elect of God”, as the Arabic version renders it; as such who were chosen in Christ from eternity, according to the sovereign will and pleasure of God, and his free grace unto salvation and eternal life; which carries in it a strong argument to enforce the performance of good works, since men are hereby chosen unto holiness, and good works are what God has foreordained that they should walk in, and especially to mercy, and acts of it; since hereby their salvation appears to be not of man's will and works, but of God, that shows mercy; and such who are the objects of this grace are vessels of mercy. The apostle calls all the members of this church by this name, though every individual of them might not be chosen of God; but because they were all under a visible profession of faith and holiness, and the greater part of them were truly believers, he in a judgment of charity gives them all this appellation, and upon the same foot, the next, “holy”; not by birth, for they were by nature unclean and filthy, conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; nor by baptism, which takes away neither original nor actual sin, but leaves men as it finds them, and who ought to be holy before they partake of that; but in Christ imputatively, as he was made of God unto them sanctification; and by him efficaciously, in virtue of his blood, righteousness, and sacrifice, by which he sanctifies his people; and by his spirit inherently and internally, who is the author of the work of sanctification in the heart; and they were likewise so externally in a professional way, and therefore it highly became them to exercise and practise the following graces and duties, to which they were still more obliged, inasmuch as they were “beloved”; that is, of God, as appeared both from their election and sanctification. God had loved them, and therefore had chosen them in his Son, and had given his Son to die for them, that he might sanctify them; and because of his great love to them, had quickened them when dead in sin, and sanctified them by his spirit: wherefore, since God had so loved them, they ought to show love again to him, and to one another, and put on

*bowels of mercies*; a sympathizing spirit with saints in distress, weeping with them that weep, suffering with them that suffer, being touched, as their high priest is, with a feeling of their sorrows and weaknesses: it denotes inward pity and compassion to distressed objects, the most tender regard to persons in misery, and such compassion as is free from all hypocrisy and deceit, and therefore is expressed by “bowels”; and what is very large, and reaches to multitudes of objects, and is displayed and

exerted various ways, and therefore signified by “mercies”. Now such a spirit is a very beautiful one; the apostle begins with the innermost of these garments, adding to it

*kindness*, which is this inward, tender, unfeigned, and abundant mercy put into act and exercise; this is doing good to all men, especially to the household of faith, distributing to the necessities of the saints, and a showing mercy with cheerfulness, and is very ornamental to a Christian professor: as is also

*humbleness of mind*; which lies in the saints entertaining mean thoughts of themselves, looking upon themselves as the chief of sinners, and less than the least of all saints; as inferior to others in knowledge, experience, gifts, and graces; in esteeming others better than themselves; in ascribing all they have, and are, to the grace of God; in doing works of mercy and righteousness without ostentation, and boasting of them, or depending on them; owning, that when they have done all they can, they are but unprofitable servants; and this is a beautiful dress for a believer to appear in: be ye clothed with humility; (see ~~1~~ 1 Peter 5:5). And of the like nature is

*meekness*; which shows itself in not envying the gifts and graces, the usefulness and happiness of others, but rejoicing therein; in quietly submitting to the will of God in all adverse dispensations of Providence, and patiently bearing what he is pleased to lay on them; and in enduring all the insults, reproaches, and indignities of men with calmness. This ornament of a meek and quiet, spirit is in the sight of God of great price, (~~1~~ 1 Peter 3:4). And what follows is natural to it, and explanative of it,

*longsuffering*: whereby a person patiently bears the evil words and actions of others, and is not easily provoked to wrath by them, but puts up with injuries, and sits down contented with the ill usage he meets with.

**Ver. 13.** *Forbearing one another*, etc.] Not only bearing one another's burdens, and with one another's weaknesses, but forbearing to render evil for evil, or railing for railing, or to seek revenge for affronts given, in whatsoever way, whether by words or deeds:

*and forgiving one another*; all trespasses and offences, so far as committed against themselves, and praying to God to forgive them, as committed against him:

*if any man have a quarrel against any*; let him be who he will, high or low, rich or poor, of whatsoever age, state, or condition, and let his quarrel or complaint be what it will, ever so great, or ever so just and well founded, yet let him put up with it, and forgive it:

*even as Christ forgave you*, so also do ye; what God is said to do for Christ's sake, (see Gill on "<sup>406</sup>Ephesians 4:32"), what here Christ is said to do: as Mediator, he has procured the remission of sins by the shedding of his blood; and as God he forgives sins freely, fully, forgetting the injuries done, not upbraiding with former offences, and that too without asking, and before there is any appearance of repentance; and so should the saints forgive one another, as they expect to have an application and manifestation of forgiveness to themselves.

**Ver. 14.** *And above all these things*, etc.] Bowels of mercies, kindness, etc.

*put on charity*, or brotherly love, for without this all is nothing; they will only be done in show and appearance, in mere guise and hypocrisy, if love is wanting; this actuates and exercises all the rest; it is only from this principle that true sympathy, real kindness, undisguised humility, and meekness, patient longsuffering, and forbearance, and hearty forgiveness proceeds: this is greater, and more excellent, than all the other, and adds a glory, lustre, and beauty to them; this is the upper garment that covers all the rest, for so the words may be rendered, "upon all these things put on charity"; whereby a disciple of Christ is visible, and distinguished, and is known to be what he is; this is like a strait and upper garment, keeps close all that is under it, and within it: and it is called

*the bond of perfectness*; either of the law, and the duties of religion, which it is said to be the fulfilling of; or rather of the saints, for this is the bond of union between them, which knits and cements them together, so that they are perfectly joined together, and are of one mind and one heart: it is the bond of peace among them, of perfect unity and brotherly love; and a most beautiful and pleasant thing it is for brethren to live and dwell together in unity; such are beautiful as Tirzah, comely as Jerusalem among themselves, and terrible to their enemies as an army with banners, being not to be divided or broken by them. The Claromontane exemplar reads, "the bond of unity".



**Ver. 15.** *And let the peace of God rule in your hearts*, etc.] By “the peace of God” is meant, either the peace believers have with God, which is his gift, and passes all understanding, and flows from a comfortable apprehension of interest in the blood, righteousness, and atonement of Christ; or rather that peace which does, or should subsist among the saints themselves, which God is the author of, calls for, and requires, and encourages in them. The Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and, Ethiopic versions, read, “the peace of Christ”; and so the Alexandrian copy, and some others. This may be said to “reign” in their hearts, when it is the governing principle there; when it restrains the turbulent passions of anger, wrath, and revenge, allays undue heats, moderates the spirits, and composes differences. The metaphor is taken from the judge in the Olympic games, who was the umpire, the moderator, and who determined whose the victory was, and to whom the crown belonged; the apostle would have no other umpire among the saints than the peace of God: and the arguments he uses follow,

*to the which also you are called in one body*; the saints in their effectual calling are called to peace by God, who is the God of peace; by Christ, who is the Prince of peace; and by the Spirit, whose fruit is peace; and through the Gospel, which is the Gospel of peace, and into a Gospel state, which lies in peace, righteousness, and joy in the Holy Ghost: and they are not only called to this, but they are called “in one body”; though they are many members, yet they are but one body; and therefore ought to be in peace, and that should bear the sway in them, seeing it is unnatural for members of the same body to quarrel with each other.

*And be ye thankful*; which intends either gratitude to men, to fellow creatures, for any service or kindness done by them, especially to the saints, the members of the same body, who are placed in a subservience, and in order to be useful to each other; or else to God, for all spiritual blessings in Christ, and particularly the peace he gives, for the effectual calling, and a place in the body, the church; and “to Christ”, as the Syriac version reads, for all those graces which come from him, and strength to exercise them, and for himself, and an interest in him, who is all in all; and a grateful spirit, both for spiritual and temporal mercies, is a very becoming and beautiful one, and is another part of the ornament of a Christian: this last is added to make way for what follows.

**Ver. 16.** *Let the word of Christ dwell in you*, etc.] The Alexandrian copy and Arabic version read, “the word of God”; by which may be meant the whole Scripture, all the writings of the Old and New Testament, which are by inspiration of God, were endited by the spirit of Christ, speak and testify of him, and were written for his sake, and on his account, and therefore may be called his word; and are what should be searched into, carefully attended to, diligently read, and frequently meditated upon; and which are able, under a divine blessing, to furnish with all spiritual wisdom, or to make men wise unto salvation: or by the word of Christ may be meant more especially the Gospel, which Christ is the author of as God, the preacher of as man, and the subject matter of as God-man and Mediator: it is the word concerning him, his person and offices; concerning peace and pardon by his blood, justification by his righteousness, and complete salvation through his obedience, sufferings and death. The exhortation to let it

*dwell in* them, supposes that it had entered into them, and had a place in them through the spirit and power of Christ; and that it should have a constant and fixed place there, and not be like a stranger or wayfaring man, that tarries but for a night, or like a sojourner, that continues but for a while; but as an inhabitant that takes up its residence and abode, never more to depart; and intends not only a frequent reading, and hearing of, and meditating upon the word of God but continuance in the doctrines of the Gospel, with a steady faith in them, and a hearty affection for them; for such an inhabitation imports a very exact knowledge of the Gospel, and familiarity with it, and affectionate respect for it; as persons that dwell in a house, they are well known by those of the family, they are familiarly conversed with, and are treated with love and respect by them: and so the word of Christ, when it has a fixed and established abode in a man's heart, he has an inward, spiritual, experimental knowledge of it; he is continually conversant with it; this word of Christ is his delight, and the men of his counsel his guide, his acquaintance, with whom he takes sweet counsel together, and esteems it above the most valuable things in the world, and receives and retains it as the word of God. The manner in which the apostle would have it dwell is

*richly*; that is, largely, plentifully, in an abundant manner, as this word signifies; (see <sup><5087></sup>1 Timothy 6:17) and so the Vulgate Latin version renders it here, “abundantly”; and to the same sense the Arabic version. His meaning is, that not one part of the Scripture only should be regarded and

attended to but the whole of it, every truth and doctrine in it, even the whole counsel of God; which as it is to be declared and preached in its utmost compass, so all and every part of it is to be received in the love of it, and to be abode in and by; there is a fulness in the Scriptures, an abundance of truth in the Gospel, a large affluence of it; it is a rich treasure, an invaluable mine of precious truths; all which should have a place to their full extent, in both preacher and hearer: and that

*in all wisdom*; or, “unto all wisdom”; in order to attain to all wisdom; not natural wisdom, which is not the design of the Scriptures, nor of the Gospel of Christ; but spiritual wisdom, or wisdom in spiritual things, in things relating to salvation; and which is, and may be arrived unto through attendance to the word of Christ, reading and hearing of it, meditating on it; and especially when accompanied with the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, and which is to be desired and prayed for.

*Teaching and admonishing one another.* The Syriac version renders it, “teach and instruct yourselves”; and may regard not only publicly teaching Christ, his Gospel, the truths and doctrines of it, and all his commands and ordinances, for which he qualifies men, and sends them forth in his name; but private teaching, by conference, prayer, and singing the praises of God, according to the measure of the gift of grace bestowed on everyone: and so admonishing may not only respect that branch of the public ministry, which is so called, and intends a putting into the mind, or putting persons in mind both of their privilege and duty; nor only that part of church discipline which lies in the admonition of a delinquent, but private reproofs, warnings, and exhortations; and as by other ways, so, among the rest,

*in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs*; referring very probably to the title of several of David's psalms, **ܐܝܟܚܡ**; “Maschil”, which signifies giving instruction, or causing to understand; these psalms, and the singing of them, being appointed as an ordinance, of God to teach, instruct, admonish, and edify the saints; for the meaning of these three words, and the difference between them, (see Gill on “~~459~~ Ephesians 5:19”).

*singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord*; that is, singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; and what is meant by singing of them, see the note on the above place: the manner in which they are to be sung is, “with grace”; meaning either by the assistance of the spirit and grace of God, without which no ordinance can be performed aright, to the glory of God,

and to spiritual profit and edification, (see <sup><4415></sup>1 Corinthians 14:15), or with grace in the heart in exercise, particularly faith, without which it is impossible to please God, (see <sup><5106></sup>Hebrews 11:6) or with gratitude to God, with thankfulness of heart for his mercies, and under a grateful sense of them; or in such a manner as will minister grace unto the hearers, be both amiable and edifying, (see <sup><5106></sup>Colossians 4:6) all these senses may be taken in: that the phrase, “in your hearts”; does not mean mental singing, or what is opposed to singing with the voice, (see Gill on “<sup><4169></sup>Ephesians 5:19”). The object here, as there, is “to the Lord”; the Lord Jesus Christ, to the glory, of his person and grace: the Alexandrian copy, and the Vulgate Latin, Syriac, and Ethiopic versions read, “to God”: and indeed God, in the three divine Persons, and in all his perfections and works, is the object of praise, and his glory is the end of singing praise.

**Ver. 17.** *And whatsoever ye do in word or deed*, etc.] Whether in preaching the word of Christ, in hearing the Gospel, in singing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, and in conference and conversation with each other; or in whatsoever action, civil or religious throughout the whole life and conversation, in the performance of things natural, moral, and evangelical, relating to God or man, or one another, in the world or church:

*do all in the name of the Lord Jesus*; both in the strength of Christ, without whom nothing can be well said or done; and according to the mind and will of Christ declared in the Gospel, which is his name; and calling upon his name for assistance in the ministration of his word, administration of his ordinances, and in the performance of every duty, directing all to, and having solely in view his honour and glory:

*giving thanks to God, and the Father by him*; this shows, that singing of psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, is a distinct thing from giving of thanks, mentioned in the preceding verse. The things for which thanks are to be given, are “all things”; and the time when, always, as in (see Gill on “<sup><4169></sup>Ephesians 5:20”). The person to whom they are to be given is God the Father, the Father of our spirits, and of our mercies, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of us in him; and the person by whom they are to be given, is Christ, which is just and proper, since all mercies come from, and through him; nor is there any other way of bringing and offering the sacrifices of praise and thanksgiving to God; nor are they, nor can they be acceptable to God by, and through any other, but by him alone.

**Ver. 18.** *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands*, etc.] The apostle proceeds from those duties which related to them as church members one towards another, for their mutual good and edification, and the glory of God, to such as concerned them in their own houses and families, as in a natural relation to each other; as husbands and wives, parents and children, masters and servants; showing hereby, that the Gospel does not at all break in upon, but establishes the duties of common and civil life. Concerning the duty wives to their husbands, here exhorted to, (see Gill on “~~4922~~Ephesians 5:22”). The reason urging to a regard to it is,

*as it is fit in the Lord*; that is, Christ, as the Syriac version reads it. Subjection of wives to their own husbands is “fit” and proper in its own nature, by reason of the original creation of man, and of the woman from him: man was made first, and then the woman; and the woman was made out of the man, out of one of his ribs; and so, though not to be trampled under his feet, but to be by his side, and an help meet to him, yet not to be head, or to rule over him. Moreover, the woman was made for the man, and not the man for the woman; add to this, that the woman was in the transgression, and the means of the fall of man, which gave a fresh reason for, and made the obligation to subjection to him the stronger: and it is also a “decent” and becoming thing for wives to be subject to their husbands; for as it is giving honour to them, it is a real ornament to themselves, and is one of those good works which women professing godliness should adorn themselves with; and makes more comely and beautiful than broided hair; gold, pearls, or costly array, yea, than their natural favour and beauty: it is what is fitting “in the Lord”: it is what he requires, not only what the law of God requires, (see ~~4943~~1 Corinthians 14:34) and which was enjoined originally, (see ~~0086~~Genesis 3:16) and was charged as a duty under the legal dispensation; but is what is commanded by Christ under the Gospel dispensation, and is to be observed by all those that are “in” him, that profess to be new creatures, converted persons, that so the word of God be not blasphemed, and the enemy have no occasion to reproach, see (~~5016~~Titus 2:5 ~~5464~~1 Timothy 5:14) though this phrase may also be considered as a restriction and limitation of this subjection; that though it reaches to all things, yet only to such as are agreeable to the will of the Lord, and not contrary to the Gospel of Christ; for in these they are not to be subject to them, but to Christ the Lord; but in all other things they are, even as the church is subject to Christ: and when this is the case, such

subjection is regarded by Christ as if it was done to himself; and indeed his honour and glory should be the governing view in it; (see <sup><4872></sup>Ephesians 5:22).

**Ver. 19.** *Husbands, love your wives*, etc.] (See Gill on “<sup><4875></sup>Ephesians 5:25”).

*and be not bitter against them*; turning love into hatred of their persons; ruling with rigour, and in a tyrannical manner; behaving towards them in a morose, churlish, and ill natured way; giving them either bitter words, or blows, and denying them their affection, care, provision, protection, and assistance, but using them as servants, or worse. All which is barbarous, brutish, and unchristian, and utterly unbecoming the Gospel.

**Ver. 20.** *Children, obey your parents*, etc.] Both father and mother; (see Gill on “<sup><4881></sup>Ephesians 6:1”).

*in all things*; not in things sinful, which are contrary to the law of God, and Gospel of Christ; in things repugnant to the duties of religion, the ordinances of the Gospel, and the doctrines of Christ, parents are to be neglected and disobeyed. God is to be regarded, and not men; but in all things good and lawful, and in all things that are of an indifferent nature, which may, or may not be done, in these things the will of earthly parents is to be attended to; of which there is a considerable instance in the Rechabites, (see <sup><2886></sup>Jeremiah 35:6-10) and even they are to be obeyed in things that are hard and difficult to be complied with, and which are disagreeable to flesh and blood, as the cases of Isaac and Jephthah's daughter show.

*For this is well pleasing unto the Lord*; and is a reason sufficient to engage to the performance of the duty; for whatever is grateful and well pleasing to God ought to be done with pleasure by us, from a principle of love to him, by faith in him, and with a view to his glory; and then such an action is acceptable in his sight through Jesus Christ our Lord. The Alexandrian copy reads, “in the Lord”; and so the Vulgate Latin version.

**Ver. 21.** *Fathers, provoke not your children to anger*, etc.] (See Gill on “<sup><4884></sup>Ephesians 6:4”).

*lest they be discouraged*; or disheartened and dispirited; their spirits be broke through grief and trouble, and they become indolent, sluggish, and unfit for business; or, despairing of having any share in the affections of

their parents, disregard their commands, instructions, and corrections, and grow obdurate, stubborn, and rebellious.

**Ver. 22.** *Servants, obey in all things your masters*, etc.] That is, in all things relating to the body, and bodily service; not to the conscience, and religious worship; in things worldly, and not spiritual; in all things that are within a master's power, and it is lawful for him to command; and in all things that are fitting and proper that a servant should do; and even in such things as may be difficult, troublesome, and disagreeable to the flesh unto them; (see <sup><170></sup>Luke 17:7-9) who those servants are that are to obey, and who their masters, said to be according to the flesh, to whom they are to be subject, (see Gill on "<sup><105></sup>Ephesians 6:5").

*not with eyeservice, as menpleasers, but in singleness of heart*; (see Gill on "<sup><105></sup>Ephesians 6:5-6").

*fearing God*; who sees and knows all things, what servants do when their masters are absent from them, and to whom they are accountable; and a servant that fears God will make conscience of discharging his service faithfully, will not misspend his master's time, nor embezzle his goods, or waste his substance; but from a principle of reverential affection for God, and fear of him, with a concern for his name, and a view to his glory, will with all diligence, uprightness, faithfulness, and sincerity, do his duty, seek his master's good and interest, and cheerfully obey all his lawful commands. The Alexandrian copy reads, "fearing the Lord"; and so the Syriac version, "in the fear of the Lord".

**Ver. 23.** *And whatsoever ye do*, etc.] Some have thought that these words, and the two following verses, regard the Colossians in general, and the performance of any, and all good works by them; but by their connection with the preceding verse, and with the beginning of the next chapter, they appear to concern servants only, and what they do under that character, and under the discharge of their duty:

*do it heartily*, not by mere force and necessity, grudgingly, and with murmurings, but from the heart, and with good will, having a true, real, and hearty affection for their masters, having their good and interest at heart, and a delight in their service; like the Hebrew servant, that loved his master, as also his wife and children, and therefore would not depart from him, (see <sup><205></sup>Exodus 21:5),

*as to the Lord, and not unto men*; (see Gill on "<sup><107></sup>Ephesians 6:7").

**Ver. 24.** *Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance,* etc.] This is said for the encouragement of Christian servants, who, though they may receive little or nothing from their earthly and carnal masters; yet they shall be used and treated as children by the Lord, and by whom they will be possessed of an eternal inheritance, after their work and labour is over: by “the reward of the inheritance” is meant the heavenly glory, called a reward, because the apostle is speaking to servants and therefore uses language agreeable to them; and who, though they may have no reward in this world, yet as there is a God that judgeth in the earth, there is verily one for them in the world to come: and though it is not given for working, yet it is given to those that do good, and continue in well doing; whose works follow, though they do not go before them; and is enjoyed after their work is over, as the servant receives his wages at evening and when he has done his work; though this will not be received as a reward of debt, but of grace; it cannot be of merit, as is clear from the nature of good works themselves, which are all due, to God, prior to the performance of them; and when done in the best manner, are no more than a man's duty, and are done not in his own strength, but by the grace of God; and in many things, yea in everything, he comes short of performing what is incumbent on him; and besides, there is no manner of proportion between: the best services of the saints, and eternal glory: to which may be added, that eternal life is the free gift of their heavenly Father to them, and is here called an inheritance, which never becomes the property of servants in a way of merit, but is the portion of children, from their Father's good pleasure. Wherefore the heavenly glory is such a reward as that it is an “inheritance”; or, as the Syriac version renders it, “in an inheritance”; it lies in an inheritance, an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, that fades not away, reserved in the heavens; and which is not got by industry, or obtained by the works of the law, nor bought with a price, but is a free bequest of God as a Father to his children; for an inheritance is peculiar to children, and this to the children of God, as these believing servants were; and which comes to them by and through the death of the testator; and it may be called an inheritance, because the heavenly glory is substantial, it is substance, a better and a more enduring substance than any inheritance in this world; and is a very plentiful possession and estate, it consists of all things, yea, God himself is the portion of his people, and they that are his children are heirs of God; there is not only a glory, but riches of glory, a plenty, a fulness of it in this inheritance; the way in which they come by it, is receiving it from Christ; “of the Lord ye shall receive it”. It is in a way of



receiving, and so by gift, as a man can receive nothing but what is given him; and as all grace is in a way of receiving, and therefore boasting in it is excluded, so glory is enjoyed in the same way, and from the same hands, even from Christ, the righteous Judge, that will give it; it is in him they obtain this inheritance, and are in him chosen and predestinated unto it; it is by his resurrection from the dead, and in consequence of it, that they through the power of his Spirit and grace are begotten unto it; it is his grace that makes them meet for it; and he has it in his hands for them; he is a feoffee in trust on their behalf, and is able to give it to them; and will at the last day introduce them into the full possession of it. Now these Christian servants “knowing” all this, having a lively hope of this inheritance, a full persuasion, and a firm faith of right unto it, and meetness for it, and having the Spirit of God as an earnest and pledge of it; the consideration of it must greatly tend to make them quiet and easy in their present servitude, and to encourage them, to the discharge of their duty with diligence, faithfulness, and cheerfulness: since they might assure themselves of the inheritance hereafter, how small soever their reward was now:

*for ye serve the Lord Christ*; who is a good master, and faithful to all his engagements and promises, all whose servants are respected by him, and honoured by his Father, and shall be for ever where he is.

**Ver. 25.** *But he that doth wrong*, etc.] Which may be understood, both of servants that do wrong to their masters through sloth and idleness, neglecting their business, embezzling their masters' goods, and defrauding them of their substance; and of masters that injure their servants by withholding from them proper food, and raiment; by cheating them of their wages, either giving them none at all, or too little, or detaining them too long, and by giving them bad language, and hard blows, and such like severe usage:

*shall receive for the wrong which he hath done*; either in this world, or in the other; God will avenge all such injuries, sooner or later; so that these words may be considered either as said with a view to deter servants from evil practices, or to comfort them under the maltreatment they may meet with from cruel masters:

*and there is no respect of persons*. The Vulgate Latin and Arabic Versions add, “with God”; which undoubtedly is the sense; he regards not the rich more than the poor; he makes no difference between bond and free, the

servant and the master; he will not take the part of the one, because he is a master, nor neglect, the other, because he is a servant, but will do that which is just and right with regard to them both; (see Gill on “~~400~~ Ephesians 6:9”).