

Let all be exhorted to cleave to the Lord, and tremble at the thought of turning aside from him. Be exhorted, with purpose of heart to cleave unto the Lord, Acts xi. 23. Turn not aside from his precious truths, his holy ordinances, the way of holiness and tenderness in the whole of your conversation; but cleave to the Lord, his word, his way, and to whatever bears his stamp. Turn not aside, whatever may be the temptation or allurement. Know of a truth, that it is but poison presented in a golden cup to you, which will work the ruin of your condition; it is but a gilded vanity, to cheat you to cut off a substantial good: it is what will not fail to be bitterness in the end. Have your eyes in your head, then, and forfeit not God's favour or smiles for lying vanities.

Again, turn not aside, whatever be the hazard of holding on. Let devils and men run that as high as they will, as sure as God's word is truth, the greatest hazard is ever on the other side; and they who turn aside run the most fearful risk.—Wherefore, take it home with you, lay it up in your hearts, and improve it in your daily walk; decide all your controversies with temptation, managed by a subtle devil, a carnal heart, or the men of the world, by this,—That you cannot turn aside, but “after vain things, which cannot profit, nor deliver, for they are vain.” Amen.

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JESUS COMPLETELY QUALIFIED FOR HIS WORK.\*

### SERMON XLVI.

ISAIAH lxi. 1,

*The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me.*

THIS text is that upon which our Lord Jesus himself preached to the congregation at Nazareth, Luke iv. 16—19. And if we ask of whom the prophet spake, Jesus tells you, ver. 21, that it was of him. Though the prophet perhaps had an eye to himself, and to the promised deliverance from the Babylonish captivity; yet certainly Christ, and the spiritual deliverance by him, is the principal subject. Jesus is here described as the Mediator between God and man. In the words we have two things:—

1. The glorious qualifications of our Mediator: “The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me.” Here are the three persons of the Trinity

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distinguished. The Lord God, his Son, and his Spirit. Our Lord Jesus being both God and man, the Holy Spirit, with all his gifts, was put on the man Christ. At his baptism the Spirit descended upon him like a dove, Matth. iii. 16. On him also the Spirit rested, and never again departed from him, but continued filling him at all times with graces and gifts for the discharge of his great trust. So that he says the Spirit *is* upon me, not *is come* upon me.—We have,

2. The *reason* of these glorious qualifications. This was, because they were necessary for the office to which he was called: “Because the Lord God hath anointed me.” It behoved him to be both God and man. As he was God, he could have nothing added to him; but as he was man, it behoved him to be endowed with unparalleled qualifications for this unparalleled office.—Here consider his call to the work. The Lord anointed him, as prophets, priests, and kings were wont to be, and thus were called and set apart to their respective offices; in like manner was Christ called of the Father to the Mediatorial works, not with material oil, as they were, but with the Holy Spirit, which was signified by that oil.—Again, consider his mission: the Lord *sent* him. He did not come unsent to the world; but his Father having called him, and furnished him for the work, sent him away to exercise his commission, and to perform his work.—Consider, next, the work he was called to, and sent out upon. Consider this work with respect to Christ himself; and it is threefold. *First*, As a prophet or preacher of the gospel, revealing the Father’s mind. *Secondly*, A priest or healer, a spiritual physician, for sin-sick souls, to bind up the broken-hearted. *Thirdly*, As a king, to issue out proclamations, far more joyful than those of Cyrus to the captives, as the spiritual captivity and imprisonment is far worse than a corporal one.—Consider the work as it respects the different sorts of people with whom he has to deal; and it is twofold. *First*, Some of them have some good in them wrought by his Spirit; and of these, some are the meek, others are broken-hearted. *Secondly*, Some of them have no good in them, they are captives, prisoners to Satan. Both sorts are in his commission, as persons he has to deal with.—Consider this work as it respects the different cases of these sorts of persons; and it is fourfold. *1st*, To the meek, he has to carry good tidings. *2dly*, to the broken-hearted, he has to bind up their wounds. *3dly*, To the captives he has to give deliverance, and *4thly*, To the prisoners he has to open the prison doors. Thus he is, by the Father’s special appointment, to give suitable help to each case. A more particular explication of these things will be given as we advance in the subject.

Now, here is a great work; and because of it, (or, as it is in the

Hebrew, answerable to it), he is endowed with the Spirit, with his graces and gifts, without which he could not be qualified for it.

The subject of our present discourse, is our Lord's qualification for his work: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me." Here our Lord commends himself to poor sinners, that they may come to him, and be happy in him. Who can commend him to purpose but himself? He commends himself to us, from the fulness of the Spirit lodged in him, as in Rev. iii. 1, "And unto the angel of the church of Sardis write, These things saith he that hath the seven Spirits of God, and the seven stars." As when the soul is gone, the body can move and act no more; so where the Spirit of God is gone from men, they can do no more good. While destitute of the Spirit, they are shut up under an uninterrupted barrenness. Now, this is the natural case of the whole world. To the world, then, under the want of the Spirit, Christ here makes public proclamation where the Spirit is to be found; as if he had said, "O all ye spiritless, lifeless sinners, dead to grace and goodness, be it known unto you, "the Spirit of the Lord God is upon me." He says as Joseph said to his brethren, Gen. xlv. 9, and downwards. The Spirit came upon Moses and the prophets, but they could spare none of their oil; if they could, they could not have communicated it. But the Spirit is on *me*, as the oil in the cistern, to be dispersed by the pipes of conveyance to poor sinners who will come to me. This is indeed a proclamation of a well-stored and cheap market, to a country perishing under famine, to which they should all resort.

That this is the true intent of these words, appears *first*, Because it is plain from the original accentuation, that the principal purpose of the text, is not to shew why the Spirit was on Christ, (for in that case the chief stop within the verse had been at broken-hearted), but to shew, that the Spirit *is* on him, (for there the great stop is.) "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me," &c. *Secondly*, Because an amazing change is prophesied, in the preceding chapter, to come upon the church of the Gentiles; and so here follows the accounting for it: "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me," to be communicated for effecting this change.

From this part of the subject, I observe the following

DOCTRINE, That the Spirit of God was eminently on Jesus Christ, to be communicated to poor sinners.

This was typified by the ointment poured out on the head of the High Priest, Psalm cxxxiii. 2. Compare John i. 16.

For illustrating this doctrine, we propose,

I. To shew in what eminent sort the Spirit of the Lord was upon Christ the Mediator.

II. To confirm this point, That the Spirit is put upon Christ to be communicated.

III. I will consider the reasonableness and suitableness of this glorious device, of the Spirit's being put on Christ, to be communicated to poor sinners.—And then,

IV. We shall improve the subject.—We are,

I. To shew in what eminent sort the Spirit of the Lord was upon the Mediator.—Here we observe,

1. That the gifts and graces of the Spirit were conferred on Christ's human nature in a singular measure: Psalm xlv. 7, "God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows." What these are you may see, Isa. iii. 2, 3. Others have had much of these, but never any so much of them as the man Christ, though they were not infinite, which is a property peculiar to the divine perfections. Thus his enemies were obliged to confess, that he spoke as never man spoke. And in this sense that testimony, John iii. 34, "God giveth not his Spirit by measure unto him," may be applied even to Christ's manhood; namely, that God gives not his gifts and graces to him sparingly, as out of a measure, but with a full hand most abundantly.—We observe,

2. The fulness of the Spirit was upon the Mediator; and that is an infinite fulness, for he is God as well as man: Col. ii. 9, "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." The Holy Spirit is an infinite Spirit of boundless perfections, all which Jesus Christ as God doth fully possess. The divine nature, an unfathomable depth of perfections, was united to the human nature in our Mediator; so that he has not only a portion of the Spirit, but the whole fulness of the Spirit, John iii. 34. Saints have, and can have, by their measure; but the ocean of perfections, which knows no bounds, and all grace, were and was in him.—We observe,

3. That the Spirit was at all times alike on that Mediator. The Spirit came sometimes on the prophets, instructing them what to say, and exciting them to say it; but sometimes the spirit of prophecy did not blow, they had it not at their command: 1 Peter i. 21, "For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man; but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." See an instance, 2 Sam. vii. 2—5, where the prophet Nathan knew not how to direct David, till the word of the Lord came to him. So the Spirit of sanctification in the saints, though he never departs from them, yet how often is there a dead calm in their souls, which requires them to say, as in Song iv. 26, "Awake, O north wind! and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his



garden, and eat his pleasant fruits." But the Spirit rested on Jesus Christ, Isa. xi. 2; it dwelleth in him, Col. ii. 9. He never can be at a loss for want of the Spirit, whose waters in him are never shallow, but still continue alike deep. We observe,

4. That the Spirit is upon him in the fulness of a fountain, to be communicated to those who come to him: Zech. xiii. 1, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David, and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and for uncleanness:" so "Jesus breathed on his disciples," John xx. 22, and said unto them, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." All others, even the saints in heaven, have but the fulness of a vessel, what only may serve themselves. But he has the fulness of a spring, where the waters are ever flowing, and therefore can furnish all others who come to him, and yet have never the less to himself.—We come now,

II. To confirm this point, That the Spirit was in Christ to be communicated.—We observe,

1. That this is plain from scripture-testimony: Rev. iii. 1, "He hath the seven spirits of God." All the saints have the Spirit of God. He dwells in each of them; if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his, Rom. viii. 9. But then this is quite another thing than the simple having of the Spirit. Christ hath the Spirit as he hath the seven stars, that is, at his disposal, to give them or take them from whom he will: Psalm lxvi. 18, "Thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God may dwell among them." Compare Eph. iv. 8. Whence it is plain, that Christ received these gifts, received them to give them to men.—This is plain,

2. For Christ, as Mediator and surety of the new covenant, is a common person, as Adam was in the first covenant, who received the stock of all mankind in his hand, and lost it. Now, free grace has made up the stock again, and put it in a sure hand, where it never can be lost: Psalm lxxxix. 19, "I have laid help upon one that is mighty." He is the second Adam, and therefore the fulness of the Spirit and of his grace is put upon him, to be communicated by him to poor sinners.—Consider farther,

3. That Christ could not have been qualified to execute the office to which the Father had called him, without communicating the Spirit to those with whom he has to deal; therefore says the text, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath sent me to preach good tidings to the meek." How shall the poor meek ones, who see nothing in them or about them to recommend them to God, believe the good tidings, without the Spirit of faith? How can the broken-hearted have their wounds bound up without the

healing spirit? How can the captives and prisoners be delivered, unless the Spirit break off their fetters.—Consider,

*Lastly*, That it is from Jesus Christ that all who partake of the Spirit do receive the Spirit; there is no other channel of conveyance: John i. 16, “Out of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.” John vi. 63, “It is the Spirit that quickeneth: the words that I speak unto you are spirit, and they are life.” It is he who sends the Spirit, John xv. 16. It is true, the Father is said to give the Spirit to them that ask him, Luke xi. 13; but it is still in Christ’s name, and for his sake, John xiv. 29. Therefore he is called the Spirit of God’s Son, whom he sends forth into the hearts of his people.—We now proceed,

III. To consider the reasonableness and suitableness of his glorious device, of the Spirit being put on Christ to be communicated to poor sinners.

1. It is most suitable to the Father’s honour, that guilty criminals partake of his Spirit through a Mediator. God looked on all the fallen race of man, and could be pleased with none of them: Psalm xiv. 3, “They are all gone aside; they are altogether become filthy.” But behold his own Son became man! and he is well pleased with him, with his person and mediation, and therefore with sinners in him, Matth. iii. 17. In Christ he meets with the sinner; and his justice being satisfied by him, he may, with safety to his own honour, communicate with the poor creatures, and they receive his Spirit, as members of his own Son, their glorious Head.

2. It is most suitable to the honour of the Son, who is appointed head over all things to the church, which is his body, Eph. i. 23. This is that honour which his Father has put upon him, that he be the great steward of heaven, the trustee for all the elect of God, the great dispenser of the Father’s favours, to the objects of everlasting love. And as Pharaoh put an honour upon Joseph, by ordering his petitioners to go to Joseph; so does the Father put honour upon Christ, his own well-beloved Son, by a similar appointment.

3. It is most suitable to the honour of the Holy Spirit; for in this manner the gift of the Spirit appears to be by the infinite value of the blood of the Son of God: Rev. v. 6, “The Lamb slain hath seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth.” No receiving of this holy fire, but from the altar where a Saviour was slain. No communicating of that Spirit, but through the blood of the Redeemer.

*Lastly*, It is most suitable to the sinner’s case; for Christ is bone of our bone, and flesh of our flesh. He is our near kinsman, through whom we come to God boldly: Eph. iii. 12, “In whom we have

boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him." We are not able to behold an unvailed God, his glory would dazzle and confound us; but through the veil of the flesh of Christ we may behold him and live.—We now come,

IV. To a practical improvement of the subject. And this,

*First*, In a use for information.

1. This lets us see the transcendent glory and beauty of Jesus Christ. Pharaoh could say of Joseph to his servants, Gen. xlvi. 38, "Can we find such a one as this is, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?" How does the firmament shine with the stars which sparkle in it! How beautiful is the earth, when decked with the variety of the gifts of nature in the spring! But what are all these to the Mediator's glory and beauty, in whom all the gifts and graces of God's Spirit do centre: Psalm xlv. 2, "Thou art fairer than the sons of men; grace is poured into thy lips." There is no man, however well qualified, that excels in all things, there is a want in every individual, but no want in Christ; Song v. 16, "Yea, he is altogether lovely." (Heb. He is all desires).—We may learn,

2. The absolute fulness and sufficiency of Christ to make the sinner who comes to him perfectly happy; he gives them rest, Matth. xi. 28. There is a fulness of the Spirit in him to answer all their necessities, be what they will. Behold the whole constellation of gifts and graces in our exalted Redeemer. Every good gift, natural, moral, or religious, comes from this Spirit. Some have one gift of him, some another; but our Lord Jesus Christ has all, which is more than all the excellencies to be found in angels and men. And what can he want to bestow, who has the Spirit to give to those who come to him?—We may learn,

3. The freedom of grace in Christ. He has all, and he communicates all freely. The spring runs freely without price or hire. It is a pleasure to have a full breast sucked: and it is a pleasure to our blessed Redeemer to do good and to communicate to undeserving sinners.—We may see,

4. The absolute need we have of Christ. Ye are ruined without the Spirit, ye will pine away in your guilt, rust away in your corruptions, and, like dead corpses, be buried out of God's sight, if ye get not the Spirit; and ye cannot have the Spirit but from Christ. This is the only market opened to relieve your necessities.

*Lastly*, Ye are inexcusable if ye continue without the Spirit, for you may have the Spirit if you come to Christ; but, alas! he may say of us, as John v. 40, "Ye will not come unto me that ye may have life." I would raise your dead souls, I would quicken you, I would make you as a well-watered garden: but alas! ye care not

for the Spirit. Prov. i. 25, "Ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof."—We shall improve this subject,

*Secondly*, In a use of exhortation.

1. I would exhort you, then, to come to Christ, that ye may partake of his Spirit. Christ is saying to you this day, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me." Come, and I will pour him out upon you. Alas for the want of the Spirit this day! it appears sadly in the whole church, in the congregation, in neighbourhoods, and in families. There is enough of a selfish, devilish, carnal, worldly, profane, and formal spirit, but little of a holy heavenly spirit, to be seen this day. But we may get the spirit, if we will by faith come to Christ for it. O that we were moving to him for this spirit!—To be more particular, we would exhort you,

1. Come to Christ, O thou dead and lifeless sinner, who art lying rotting under the power of thy lusts, who hast a heart within thee which cannot repent and mourn, or let go the dead grip it has taken of the world, and of sinful courses. His Spirit is a spirit of life, which will make the dry bones live, the withered soul flourish as an herb, the heart, which is like a clog now in duties, to be like the chariots of Aminadib: Eph. v. 14, "Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ will give thee light."

2. Come, drooping, fainting, dispirited soul, who art harassed with terrors, pierced with fearful apprehension, whose heart is like a stone, dying within thee. His Spirit is a spirit of light, life, and comfort: he binds up the broken-hearted, makes light to arise to those who go mourning without the sun, takes off the sackcloth, and girds with gladness.

3. Come, hard-hearted sinner, whom nothing can move, neither judgments nor mercies, who canst not mourn either for thy own sins, or the sins of the generation. His Spirit can soften the heart. He will take away your stony heart, and give you an heart of flesh. An outpouring of the Spirit would melt down the heart, and dissolve it in tears of godly sorrow, this would break the bands of iron and brass: Zech. xii. 10, "And I will pour out upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplication; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son; and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his first-born."

4. Come, tempted sinner, who art harassed with temptations, and art ready to say, One day I shall fall before this great adversary. The Spirit is a spirit of power, 2 Tim i. 7. It may be, that temptations come in on thee like a breaking forth of waters, threatening to



sweep all before them; but come to Christ for his Spirit, who is able to stem the tide, to create peace, and to make thee more than a conqueror.

5. Come, unfruitful sinner. The Lord is at much pains with you by ordinances and providences, yet you are barren! you bring forth no fruit answerable to the pains of the Husbandman. What is the reason the Spirit comes not with the word and providences? But you may have the Spirit from Christ, and this would make you fruitful: Eph. v. 9, "For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth." The blowing of that wind from heaven would make the spices flow out, Cant. iv. 16, and cause you to make progress in your journey to the Zion above.

6. Come, unholy sinner. The Spirit which Christ has to give, is a spirit of holiness, Rom. i. 4. He works like water in washing the polluted soul, like fire in burning up corruption. He is the great principle of holiness, who works it wherever he comes, and makes of the very worst a vessel fit for the Master's use.

*Lastly*, Come to Christ for his Spirit, whatever your case be; you will find a suitable cure from him, by the fulness of the Spirit in him; he is suited for every case that is put in his hand: Col. ii. 9, 10, "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, who is the head of all principalities and powers." He will be eyes to the blind, light to them that sit in darkness, legs to the lame, meat to the hungry, drink to the thirsty, clothing to the naked; all in all.—To prevail with you in coming to Christ for the Spirit, I would offer you the following motives:—

**MOT. 1.** The Spirit of the Lord is absolutely necessary for you to have, you cannot want him, you must have him. The world may as well want the sun, moon, and stars, as you can want the Spirit; for without the Spirit ye can do nothing but sin. When the soul is away, the body is dead, and can do nothing but lie and rot in a grave: and when the Spirit of God is not in a man, he is dead in sin, and can do nothing but sin: John vi. 63, "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you they are spirit, and they are life." Ye cannot have a good and acceptable thought, nor perform any duty acceptable: John iv. 24, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth." So that all pains are lost upon thee, as on the dead tree, to which summer and winter are alike.—Again, without the Spirit, ye are none of Christ's, Rom. viii. 9, "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." All those who are Christ's, they are sealed and marked with the Spirit of Christ: Eph. i. 13, "In

whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." Men set their mark on their sheep, and therefore says one, If such a one be one of my sheep, it has such a mark; so says our Lord, If one of my sheep, he has my Spirit in him; and so without the Spirit, without Christ, and without the Father, therefore without the Spirit, without God in the world.—Farther, without the Spirit, ye are undone for ever: for so ye are without God, and therefore without hope, Eph. ii. 12. The dead corpse may be kept a while, but when there is no hope of the return of life, it is buried in a grave; so, without the Spirit, ye may be kept a while through God's patience, but the end will be, to be cast into the pit, and buried out of God's sight in fiery flames.

MOT. 2. You cannot have the Spirit but from Jesus Christ. The blessed Mediator is the bowl from which this holy oil is conveyed to all the lamps which burn with it. The Spirit, says he, is on me: 1 John ii. 20, "But ye have an unction from the *holy One*, and ye know all things." Ver. 27, "But the anointing which ye have received of him, abideth in you." The Egyptians must have starved, if they had not been supplied with corn by Joseph, for he had all the corn at his disposal; and we must be for ever without the Spirit, if we receive him not from Christ. The Spirit dwells in none but as members of Christ: and whence shall the members have life but from the Head?

MOT. 3. Ye may have the Spirit, and that freely, from Christ: Prov. i. 23, "Turn ye at my reproof; behold, I will pour out my Spirit unto you, I will make known my words unto you." And the promise is very bountiful, ye may have all free of cost: Rev. xxii. 17, "And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." The Spirit on Christ is that water of life which gives life to the dead, and life more abundantly to the living; and the terms are, Ask of him, and he will give thee living water, John iv. 10. Not only drops of the Spirit, but the Spirit poured out, floods of the same: Isa. xlv. 3, "For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground: I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." John vii. 38, 39, "He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water. (But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive; for the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified)."

*Lastly*, By way of motive, if ye will not come to Christ for the Spirit, ye judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, ye are slightsers of Christ, and dreadful will your reckoning be: Prov. i. 24—27, "Because I have called, and ye have refused: I have stretched out

my hand, and no man regarded. But ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof. I also will laugh at your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh; when your fear cometh as desolation, and your destruction cometh as a whirlwind; when distress and anguish cometh upon you." It will be more tolerable for those who never heard where they might partake of the Spirit than for you.

In conclusion, I shall only add the following directions:—

1. Pray earnestly for the Spirit, in the name of Christ; you have a promise of the Spirit; says God, by the prophet Ezekiel, "And I will put my spirit within you." And said Jesus, "If ye then being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more should your heavenly Father give his Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" Take courage, then, believe the promise, press it and depend upon it.

2. Unite with Jesus Christ, accepting him in the gospel-offer, and giving yourselves away freely to him. Bring your dead soul to the Lord of life, and he will breathe in it, and ye shall be like the dead man laid in the sepulchre of Elisha, who revived, and stood upon his feet, whenever he touched the prophet's bones, 2 Kings xiii. 21.

*Lastly*, Wait and look for the Spirit in Christ's ordinances, especially the preaching of the gospel. They who would have the wind to blow on them, go out into the open air; though they may for the present miss it, they wait till it blows, when in like manner exercised, then you shall know that the ministration of the Spirit is glorious, 2 Cor. iii. 8. Amen.

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THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED.

SERMON XLVII.

ISAIAH lxi. 1,

*The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord hath anointed me.*

UNDER this part of the text, we propose to consider the necessity of the fulness of the Spirit being lodged in Christ. It was necessary, because the Lord hath anointed him unto, and sent him forth upon the mediatory work. The greatness of that work required it.—Here I observe the following doctrines:—

DOCTRINE I. That our Lord Jesus Christ was by the Father anointed to, and sent forth upon, the mediatory work.—Or, in other words,

That our Mediator, the Lord Jesus, was anointed by the Father unto this office, and sent forth by him to this work.

DOCTRINE II. That the work upon which Jesus the Mediator was sent forth, necessarily required the fulness of the Spirit to be lodged in him.—We begin with

DOCTRINE I. That our Lord Jesus Christ was by the Father anointed to, and sent forth upon, the mediatory work.—Or, in other words,

That our Mediator, the Lord Jesus, was anointed by the Father unto this office, and sent forth by him to this work,—In illustrating this doctrine, I shall,

1. Consider the anointing here mentioned.

II. Speak of the sending which flowed from and followed upon it.

III. Make some practical improvement.

I. I am to consider the anointing here mentioned. In attending to this I shall, *first*, shew what is meant by this anointing. *Secondly*, Wherewith Christ was anointed.

*First*, We are to shew what is meant by this anointing. Under the Old Testament, anointing was a ceremony used for consecrating kings, priests, and prophets: thus David was anointed king, Aaron was anointed priest, Elisha anointed a prophet. This ceremony signified two things:—The designation of the person to the office. It being a sign, by the divine appointment, that this was the person whom God had called to this work; it was also a discovery of the divine purpose, as thereby the person was consecrated to the office; though sometimes it was long after that he got his orders to proceed to the actual exercise of it. Thus Samuel, by the command of the Lord, anointed David king long before he assumed the government, 1 Sam. xvi. 13—Again, this ceremony also signified the endowment of the person with the abilities and qualifications necessary to fit him for the work. Thus, when Saul was anointed king, God gave him another heart, 1 Sam. x. 13, “And when David was anointed king, the Spirit of the Lord came upon him from that day forward,” 1 Sam. xvi. 13. Accordingly, Christ’s anointing signifies two things:—

1. His designation to the mediatory office. The Father pitched upon his Son, and set him apart for this grand work, to recover a ruined world. He made choice of him to be the repairer of the great breach, and put the breach under his hand. Hence he is called God’s elect or chosen one; Isa. xlii. 1, “Behold (says God)



my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth." Christ's anointing signifies,

2. His being fitted and furnished for that office to which he was designed and set apart: John iii. 31, "For he whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God, for God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him. Hence it is said of him, that he is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." It was an unparalleled work, and so unparalleled qualifications were necessary for it. He was pitched upon to be the Father's servant in the great work of recovering an elect world. He was infinitely wise who made the choice, and therefore could not but pitch on a suitable person: he was also infinitely powerful, and all-sufficient, and therefore could fully qualify him for it. We have both the choice and the furniture together: Isa. xlii. 1, "Behold my servant whom I uphold, mine elect in whom my soul delighteth: I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles." And this is the import of the anointing.—But let us view it more particularly,

In the designation or choice made by the Father. Infinite wisdom appeared in it most conspicuously, with infinite love to an elect world. When the divine decree and purpose of man's redemption was laid down by the Trinity, the great thing next to be considered was, who should undertake the work, and be the Redeemer. No mere man could be chosen, for none could have a back to bear such a burden. All were guilty, and could not satisfy for their own sin, far less purchase salvation for others. No angel could be chosen, for even they, with their stock, could not have been able to have discharged the debt, in regard it was infinite; wherefore the Father made choice of his own Son, as a person who could undertake it; Psalm lxxxix. 19, 20, "Then thou spakest in vision to thy holy One, and saidst, I have laid help upon one that is mighty; I have exalted one chosen out of the people; I have found David my servant, and with my holy oil have I anointed him." He being the Son of God, it doubtless became the divine perfections to pitch on him, as one who was to purchase for us the adoption of sons, and to bring many children to glory.—Let us view this anointing,

In qualifying him for the work, in which the same love and wisdom appears. Our Mediator had to die, for without shedding of blood, there could be no remission of sin." The divine nature was not capable of dying, therefore he prepared him a body: Heb. x. 5, "Wherefore, when he cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body thou hast prepared me." The same nature which sinned had to suffer; therefore he did not create

him a body out of nothing, but prepared him one of the seed of Adam. He was chosen out of the people: Gal. iv. 4, "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." But farther, our nature was corrupted, and our flesh sinful flesh; therefore it could not be immediately united to the divine nature; wherefore he sanctified the substance of which that precious body was formed, and made him a holy human nature: Heb. vii. 26, "For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." While what the human nature could do or suffer, would not have possessed sufficient virtue, if separated from the divine; therefore he unites it with it, John i. 14, "And the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." And hence the human nature was filled with all gifts and graces necessary to it, for that part which it was to act in the great work.—Let us now,

*Secondly*, Inquire wherewith Christ was anointed. Not with material oil, but with the Spirit, signified by it: Psalm xlv. 7, "God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness, above thy fellows." And while the designation of the person was from eternity, the Spirit's descending on him like a dove at his baptism was the discovery of that eternal choice, and served for the visible designation of him to the world: Matth. iii. 16, 17, "And Jesus, when he was baptised, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo! the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and, lo! a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." And by the same Spirit it was that he was qualified and fitted for the mediatory work, his holy human nature being with it.—If it be inquired, how his having been anointed can be the reason of the Spirit's being upon him, when the Spirit was that with which he was anointed? I answer, That Christ's having been anointed with the Spirit to qualify him for the mediatory work, is a very proper reason why the Spirit was lodged and continues to be in Christ, to be communicated from him to the members of his mystical body.

II. We are now shortly to speak of the sending of Christ by the Father. As he anointed, so he sent him. This means the Father's calling him out unto the exercise of his office for which he had been designed, and for which he had been qualified. He was seasonably sent to the work by the Father, and he willingly came and put hand to it, for his Father's glory, and the salvation of poor sinners: Psalm xl. 87, "Then said he, Lo I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me, I delight to do thy will, O my God! Yea, thy law is within my heart." We may observe three periods of this sending.

The *first* period was at Adam's fall, when all mankind was newly ruined by the first sin; then the Mediator came and looked on the ruins of the world, Gen. iii. 8; preached deliverance to the captives, ver. 15, telling them that the seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent. He healed the broken-hearted, by covering Adam and his wife with coats of skin, ver. 21, even the skins of sacrifices, a type of the righteousness of a slain Redeemer. Thus he underpropped the world by his mediation, when all was shaken loose by man's disobedience. He began immediately to repair the breach, and kept the world from absolute and irreparable ruin.

The *second* period was at his birth, in the fulness of time, when he became man, being born of the virgin: Gal. iv. 4, "When the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law." The world was then in a deplorable condition; the knowledge of the true God was lost among the Gentiles, religion was corrupted among the Jews, some few were groaning for the consolation of Israel. Then he came in the flesh, being born of a mean woman, and laid in a manger; but at his birth the angels sung, as in Luke ii. 14, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will towards men."

The *third* period was when he entered on the public exercise of his ministry at his baptism; then was he, in a special manner, sent out on that work to which he was called: Matth. iii. 17, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Matth. iv. 17, "From that time, Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand." Then he went about his work, preaching the gospel, to bring sinners to God; he also became obedient unto the death, according to the everlasting covenant between him and his Father.

III. We now proceed to make some practical improvement.

1st, In a use of information.

1. This subject informs us, that the salvation of sinners was the concern of a whole Trinity. How great a work must it be, when the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, each acted their part for bringing it about. The Father sent the Son, the Son submitted to be sent as Mediator, and by the Holy Spirit he was fitted for the work. Never, then, think little of that salvation, which required such causes and authors to bring it about.—It informs us,

2. That Jesus Christ is perfectly able to save sinners: Heb. vii. 25, "He is able to save to the uttermost." He was the Father's choice to that great work, which may assure us he was an able hand for it. He has all given him to fit him for it, which the fulness of the Godhead affords. The Father had never taken him cautioner, if

he had not been perfectly able to pay the debt. He had never laid the sinner's help upon him, if he had not been able to bear the weight of it.

3. See here the manifold wisdom of God, how it is displayed in the contrivance of salvation through Christ. The first creation was a work of wisdom; but the second was more so; the confused heap at first was little in comparison of the confusion sin brought into the world, but divine wisdom brought order out of this confusion. Truth meets with mercy, righteousness and peace embrace each other, sin is punished, and the sinner spared. Out of the greatest affront to God, rises the occasion of his greatest glory, his Son's obedience instead of theirs. When at the fall hell rejoiced, angels stood astonished, and men lay groveling in the depth of misery, wisdom found out a way of recovery, to the marring of the devil's joy, the dissipating man's fears, and giving angels a mystery of wisdom to pry into: Eph. iii. 10, "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Jesus Christ our Lord."

4. See here the amazing mercy of God to objects in the deepest misery. To have given rebel sinners some years' respite from their due punishment, to have locked them up in hell, to be released after some millions of years, would have glorified mercy; but for an offended God to provide a Mediator himself, proclaims the height and depth of infinite mercy.

5. See here the love of God to poor sinners. The love of the Father is wonderful, in sending his own Son to recover sinners by his obedience and death: John iii. 16, "God so loved the world, that he gave his Son, his only-begotten Son, unto the death, the most bitter death, even the death of the cross."—The love of Christ, which undertook that heavy work for poor sinners. Here is love admirable in all its dimensions: Christ coming in the room of sinners. If ye doubt his love, look into his pierced side, and behold its glowings there.—The love of the Spirit dwelling in Christ, as the Head, to enliven poor sinners as his members, being in him, exciting, moving him forward to the work, and fitting him for it.—I shall only add a use of exhortation.

O! sirs, let Christ be your choice, as he was the Father's. His Father is well pleased with him, be you also well pleased with him. Employ him in your every case, put all your cases in his hand, lay your help where the Father hath laid it. Receive him whom the Father hath sent, receive him for all the ends to which the Father hath anointed and sent him. He is called Messiah, and Christ,



to denote his being anointed as the Prophet, Priest, and King of his people; he was anointed for all these offices, receive and improve him in them all. He is anointed as the great Prophet, to declare the mind of God to sinners: Isa. lxi. 1, He is to "preach good tidings to the meek." Receive him for your Prophet, and teacher; renouncing your own wisdom, submit yourselves to be taught by his word and Spirit; and go to him for direction in all cases. He is an anointed Priest: Psalm cx. 4, "The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent, thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Receive him as your Priest, laying the weight of your souls on his sacrifice and intercession; renouncing all confidence in yourselves. Carry your guilt to him, to be carried off by his atonement, and put all your spiritual sacrifices in his hand, for only out of his hand will they be accepted. He is anointed King: Psalm ii. 6, "Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Zion." Submit yourselves a willing people to the royal Mediator to receive his commandments, to live according to his laws, to pursue the interest of his kingdom in the world, and to fight under his banner against the devil, the world, and the flesh; since for these ends he is sent, and has come, it lies on us to receive him as such. And that this may have weight with you, consider,

(1.) Who sent him; the Father, the first person of the glorious Trinity: John v. 37, "The Father himself," said he, "that hath sent me, hath borne witness of me." And will we not welcome him whom the Father hath sent, and entertain him for the ends for which he is sent? The Father had a concern for the salvation of lost sinners, and hath sent them a deliverer, a Saviour. How will you answer if you slight him?—Consider,

(2.) Who is sent. The Father hath put an honour on man, beyond what he hath put on angels, in that he sent a Saviour for the one, not for the other. Had he sent a lower person, an angel, with what profound respect ought we to have received him as the messenger of the Lord? how much more when he hath sent his own Son?—Consider,

(3.) The errand and design on which he was sent; namely, to recover a lost world, to make up the peace between God and sinners: Luke xix. 10, "For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost." O! may not his errand make him a welcome messenger to the world? If we will not receive him on this errand, we are self-destroyers a second time, who having first given ourselves a dreadful wound, in the next place reject the Saviour, the Physician sent to us.—Consider,

(4.) The work he was sent upon for this end; doing-work, suffer-

ing-work. His doing-work we have in our text, it will be pleasing and acceptable to sensible sinners. His suffering-work was hard work, but was a necessary foundation for the other. He preached good tidings, but he brought them from his own death. He bindeth up the broken-hearted, but the healing medicine is his own blood; he proclaims deliverance, but the ransom was his own life.—Consider,

(5.) Whence and whither he was sent; from the Father's bosom to this earth, where he was entertained with all evil treatment, till they nailed him to a cross, and he was buried in a grave, Phil. ii. 6—8. He was sent from the regions of bliss to this lower world, and refused not the journey; he was sent from the hallelujahs of angels, to endure the contradiction of sinners against himself. And when he is come, will we not receive him?

*Lastly*, Consider the necessity of this mission: Psalm xl. 6, "Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast thou opened; burnt-offerings and sin-offerings hast thou not required; then said I, Lo! I come." The world had universally perished without remedy if he had not come. He bare up the pillars thereof, and warded off the blow of justice, by laying his own neck on the block. And now that he is come, he must be embraced and improved, else we perish; for, Acts iv. 12, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven, given among men, whereby we must be saved." There is no other salvation to look to: Heb. ii. 3, "How then shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation?"—I shall now go on to illustrate very briefly,

DOCTRINE II. That the work upon which the Mediator was sent forth, necessarily required the fulness of the Spirit to be lodged in him.

In illustrating this, all that I intend is, to confirm the point briefly, and then conclude with a very short improvement.

To confirm this point, we need do no more but give a short account of Christ's mediatory work.

1. Christ is the day's-man betwixt God and sinners. He was employed to take cognisance of the difference between the two parties, to decide who it was had done the wrong, and on what terms they might be reconciled. Hence we read, John v. 22, "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son." He has framed the covenant of reconciliation, as Mediator between the parties: Song iii. 9, "King Solomon made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon." In him is found what Job so much desired, Job ix. 33, "a day's-man to lay his hands upon both:," namely, to keep the dissenting parties asunder, lest they should

fall foul of one another. This the Mediator had to do ; this he did when he timeously stept in betwixt an offended God and guilty sinners, like the ram caught in the thicket, when Isaac was lying bound on the altar, which stopped the execution, and held the hand of justice, Psalm vi. 7, (quoted above).—He is a day's-man, to keep them together, lest they should quite separate, and the reconciliation of the parties blow up. Thus Christ deals with sinners, who otherwise would run away from God, and never come in terms with him. Thus he did with our first parents, whom he brought out of their hiding-place, to set matters on a new footing.

2. He is the Messenger that goes betwixt the parties, intimating the mind of the one to the other, in order to make reconciliation. And in the respect Moses was a typical mediator: Dent. v. 5, "I stood between the Lord and you at that time, to shew you the word of the Lord: for ye were afraid by reason of the fire, and went not up into the mount." So Christ is called the Messenger of the covenant, Mal. iii. 1. He brings the Lord's mind to poor sinners, unfolds the thoughts of love which were from eternity in his breast: John i. 18, "No man hath seen God at any time, the only-begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." Thus he brings down the covenant out of the register of heaven, and proclaims it to rebels: and if there be any among them content to come into it, and who accept of it, he reports their acceptance to his Father: John xvii. 8, "For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest unto me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee; and they have believed that thou didst send me."

3. He is a Surety betwixt the parties, and therefore is called the surety of a better testament, Heb. vii. 22; engaging and taking burden upon him on their behalf, that so the peace may be firm and lasting.—Christ the Mediator, is surety for man to God. In the first covenant, man had no surety for himself; and there needed none. He was able to do all that was required of him; for he was in good case, there was no flaw in his estate; but in his fallen state, God would not take his word, nor his most solemn engagement; it behoved him to have a surety to undertake for him, and that both by way of satisfaction and caution. Man was broken, was drowned in debt which he never would be able to pay, and so he needed a surety to make satisfaction, who should be able and would engage himself to pay the debt. Christ the Mediator then became surety for the broken man, undertook to pay all his debt, gave in his bond for it in the covenant of redemption, which the Father accepted: Psalm lxxxix. 19, "I have laid help upon one that is mighty;"

he engaged body for body, life for life, like Judah for Benjamin, Gen. xliii. 9, in the fulness of time he paid the debt, and got up the discharge at his own resurrection from the dead. Man was false and fickle, and not to be trusted; so needed a cautioner who would bind for his good behaviour. Christ became cautioner for the poor prodigals, engaging himself that they shall consent to the covenant: John vi. 37, "All that the Father giveth me, shall come to me: and him that cometh to me, I will in nowise cast out." And that having consented, they shall hold by it, and never fall away totally and finally: John x. 28, "And I will give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any one pluck them out of my hand." By his Spirit of faith and holiness, which he puts in them, he accordingly secures them.—He is also surety for God to man. He undertook that God's part of the covenant shall be punctually fulfilled to us: 2 Cor. i. 20, "For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God by us." It is true, the infinite veracity and power of the principal leaves no need of a surety, in respect of himself; but poor guilty sinners, sensible of their own unworthiness, are timorous, misbelieving, distrustful creatures; and therefore, that they may be helped to believe, there is a surety of their own nature, even the man Christ Jesus, granted unto them. That all the promises of God in the covenant shall be fulfilled to those who come into it, he has completely ensured. He has given his cautionary word: John v. 24, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death to life." He hath given his Spirit as an earnest and seal of the promise, Eph. i. 13, "In whom also, after ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." He has given them the first-fruits of the Spirit in themselves, Rom. viii. 23. He has also given them the sacrament. He has gone to deal with it, saying, "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many, for the remission of sins," Matth. xxvi. 28.

4. He is an intercessor betwixt the parties: Ias. liii. 12, "He makes intercession for the transgressors." He, by his interest, manages betwixt the Lord and poor sinners, to set matters right, and keep them so. This is that which relates to the application of his redemption, and puts life in the Mediator's death, that it may be efficacious to his chosen ones. As the high priest appeared in the holy of holies, presenting the blood of the sacrifice to the Lord; so does Christ appear in heaven to intercede for those for whom he has



died. And he intercedes,—as a peace-maker, who actually makes peace betwixt God and every believing sinner; hence, Heb. xii. 24, he is “Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant;” and his blood is “the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel.” By his means, he who was before an enemy is reconciled to God, brought within the bond of the covenant of peace, and gets a right to all the benefits of it. As by his gracious Spirit he extinguishes the real enmity of the sinner against God, so by his intercession he removes the legal enmity in God against the sinner.—He intercedes as the Secretary, or favourite courtier of heaven, bringing in the sinner into the comfortable gracious presence of God, procuring him access to God, and communion with him in duties: Eph. iii. 12, “In whom we have boldness and access, with confidence, by the faith of him.” Thus, through the veil of his flesh, the believing sinner draws nigh to God, and God draws nigh to him with his quickening, sanctifying, and comforting influences. The sinner looks on God with the confidence a child does on a father.—He intercedes as a resident at the court of heaven: Heb. ix. 24, “He is entered into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us.” And by this means he maintains that peace which he has made betwixt God and believers: Rom. v. 1, “Being justified by faith, we have peace with God, through our Lord Jesus Christ:” he keeps the believer’s trade with heaven open and free for them: Rom. v. 2, “By whom also we have access by faith, into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in the hope of the glory of God.” He removes any emergent differences, Isa. liii. 12; and so ensures, by the covenant of peace, that there can never be a total rupture betwixt heaven and them: Heb. vii. 25, “Wherefore he is able to save them to the uttermost that come to God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them.”—He intercedes as an Advocate at the bar of God: 1 John ii. 1, “If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.” He pleads their cause before God, upon the ground of his own sufferings, against all their accusers and whatever is charged upon them, so that they are freed from condemnation, their right and title to heaven is still viadicated, notwithstanding their many failures; and wrath can go no farther against them than temporary strokes.—He intercedes as a Solicitor for his people before the Lord. He presents their petitions, and solicits for the granting of them. With much incense he offers the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne, Rev. viii. 3. They have many wants, both as to temporal and spiritual things. They must go to God for them, and put up their petitions. But he must present them, else they cannot be heard.

5. He is the Administrator of the covenant, God's deputy-governor, to dispose of the benefits of the covenant, and to manage the whole matter betwixt the Lord and sinners: Matth. xxviii. 18, "All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth." As Joseph was set over the land of Egypt, so he is set over his Father's house, all commerce betwixt the Lord and sinners being through his mediation. As they can offer nothing to God acceptably, but through him: so they can receive no benefit from heaven but through his hand: John v. 22, "For the Father judgeth no man, but committed all judgment unto the Son." He has to bring the elect to consent to the covenant; to rule and govern them in it; to protect, provide, and furnish them with all necessaries through the wilderness: and, finally, to give them the crown and kingdom at last; this is the office and work to which Christ was anointed; neither men nor angels could be fit for such a trust. Could any manage it without a fulness of the Spirit lodged in him? therefore, as in John v. 22, (quoted above), and in ver. 23, "All men should honour the Son, even as they honour the Father: he that honoureth not the Son, honoureth not the Father that sent him." All men should honour the Son, for none but one who had the fulness of the divine perfections could be capable of such a trust. Who else was fit to be day's-man between God and sinners? Who else could be the messenger of the covenant, for who hath known the mind of the Lord, but his only-begotten and well-beloved Son, who from eternity lay in his bosom?

I conclude with a very short improvement.

1. Learn hence, that the work of the salvation of sinners, restoring them to the favour of God, and to make them happy, is a great work, and a work which was not easily accomplished. It was a work above the power of men or angels, a work not to be performed but by him who has all power in heaven and earth. Think on this ye that judge it such an easy thing to obtain mercy; and assure thyself it is a work which can never be done but by Christ's own hand.

2. Highly esteem and honour Christ, particularly by believing in him, who is thus qualified for this great work. O what need of the fulness of the Spirit in him to support him under the load of the elect's debt,—in order to the discharging of it,—and to touch and turn the hearts of sinners unto God!

*Lastly,* See your absolute need of Christ. You must have an interest in him, else you cannot be saved. His mediation only can save you from the wrath of God, and from the lowest hell. Amen.