

THE
SECOND EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO
TIMOTHY.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

IT hath been the generally received opinion in the Church, in all ages, that this *second* Epistle to *Timothy* was the last the Apostle ever wrote. And, from that memorable expression, in the last Chapter of it, where he speaks of the time of his departure being at hand; Chap. iv. 6. it certainly becomes highly probable. It is supposed to have been written after an interval of full nine years, from the former: and bears date, Anno 64.

We are more interested to ascertain the characters of inspiration in it, than to be particularly anxious in ascertaining the date. And this divine mark is in every Chapter and verse, more or less. Very plain and positive proofs we have, that He who guided *Paul's* tongue to preach CHRIST, here guided his pen to record him. I do not think it necessary, in these general observations, to go over the outlines of the Epistle, being in itself so short. But I cannot enter upon it, without first begging the LORD the SPIRIT, to open and explain all the blessed contents of it to our hearts, that our faith in Him may not be founded *in the wisdom of men, but in the power of GOD.*

CHAPTER I.

CONTENTS.

Paul opens his Epistle in his usual Manner: professeth his great Love to Timothy: admonisheth him on the great Offices of the Ministry; and treats of many blessed Truths of the Gospel.

PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, according to the promise of life which is in Christ Jesus,

2 To Timothy, *my* dearly beloved son: Grace, mercy, *and* peace, from God the Father, and Christ Jesus our Lord.

3 I thank God, whom I serve from *my* forefathers with pure conscience, that without ceasing I have remembrance of thee in my prayers night and day;

4 Greatly desiring to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy:

5 When I call to remembrance the unfeigned faith that is in thee, which dwelt first in thy grandmother Lois, and thy mother Eunice; and I am persuaded that in thee also.

6 Wherefore I put thee in remembrance that thou stir up the gift of God, which is in thee by the putting on of my hands.

7 For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind.

8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

There is somewhat very striking, in what the Apostle here saith, of *the promise of life which is in CHRIST JESUS*. Let the Reader notice it, for it is well worthy his notice. Here is life, that is, eternal life. And this is promised: not to be attained. It is of grace, a free gift, an unconditional gift, wholly of grace, and in distinction to works; in distinction to the law, and in opposition to it. And it is *in CHRIST JESUS*. CHRIST himself is life, and life eternal; and He himself is the promise. Hence, his seed, his children, are called *heirs of promise, and heirs of eternal life in CHRIST JESUS*. Heb. vi. 17. Rom. viii. 17. These are precious things. And *Paul* puts *Timothy* in remembrance of them, by way of stirring up this gift of God, which was in him. I do not in this *Poor Man's Commentary* wish to dwell upon things of lesser moment, having objects of an higher nature to regard. *Paul's* desiring to see *Timothy*, and his remembrance of *Timothy's* relations, with an account of their characters; these are things which have long since passed away, and with which we have nothing to do. Being limited, therefore, to compress what I have to offer on these holy scriptures, into as narrow a space as possible; I wholly wish to confine my humble observations, to the more important points of doctrine, which the HOLY GHOST hath graciously recorded, in these inspired writings.

9 Who hath saved us, and called *us* with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began;

10 But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought light and immortality to light through the gospel:

11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

12 For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

13 Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus.

I pray the Reader to mark, one by one, the blessedness of this most precious portion of scripture, with which the Apostle begins this paragraph; and then, under divine teaching, he will discover, in the blessed fruits which follow from what the Apostle hath said, how causes produce effects; and not effects give birth to causes.

And, first. *Who hath saved us.* Here is the divine glory, as set forth, independent of any motive, or cause whatever, but his own sovereign will and pleasure. God saving his people, with an everlasting salvation. No moving cause, no procuring cause, no assisting cause. Here is not a word said of either. *Who hath saved us.* It is spoken of, as a thing already done. And this, as we shall perceive, when we analyze the verse, as a given principle, given us in CHRIST JESUS, *before the world began.* Compare what is here said, with those scriptures. Ephes. i. 4, 5. Rom. ix. 11. John xvii. 6. Titus i. 1, 2.

Secondly. Now comes the effectual calling of the saved. For thus it is written. *Who hath saved us, and called us.* So then, salvation, or the predestinated purpose of God, of the Church to salvation in CHRIST, is *before* calling. A most plain, palpable, and decided proof, that nothing of creature-worth, or creature-ability, are taken into the account. But *calling* is the *effect*, and not the *cause* of salvation. For so the charter of grace runs. *For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate, to be conformed to the image of his SON, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified.* Rom. viii, 29, 30,

Thirdly. The Church is said to be saved, and called, *with an holy calling*. Not any holiness in the Church, or from foreseeing holiness in the Church; for it is immediately added, *not according to our works*. It could not be according to our works, for the saving is said to have been *before* the world began. Neither could it be from any works *after*, for when the Church is quickened, in every individual member of CHRIST's mystical body; the sinner is said to be quickened, that was before *dead in trespasses and sins*. Ephes. ii. 1. Neither could it be from the prospect of any thing to be wrought of holiness in us, *after* grace is received; for this scripture saith, that it was God's purpose, and grace given us in CHRIST JESUS, and that *before the world began*. Hence, every testimony bears a beautiful correspondence to all the other parts of scripture, that grace, and salvation, are all of God, not of man. *We are saved by grace through faith; and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast*. Ephes. ii. 8, 9. Hence, the Apostle, in another place observes, that *it is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the HOLY GHOST shed on us abundantly through JESUS CHRIST our SAVIOR*. Titus iii. 5, 6.

Fourthly. The Apostle, having thus laid down all the grand particulars, of being first saved, then called; and called with an holy calling, even his holiness which called; and in his holiness, in whom we are called; next runs up the whole of the blessedness of the Church, to Him in whom the Church is holy, and in whom made blessed; by declaring, that all this was done by God's purpose, and grace, in giving the Church to JESUS, and giving all our holiness, and blessedness, in JESUS, and to be received by us *from JESUS; before the world began*. And thus manifesting the several express, and distinct personal acts, of the FATHER's purpose, grace, and gifts; the SON's holiness, in which the Church is saved, and made holy; and the SPIRIT's calling, and regenerating mercy, in rendering the whole effectual, for grace here, and glory for ever. Reader! pause, and contemplate the preciousness of this scripture, and see, whether the sense of it doth not bring the soul upon the knees, to cry out, with the Apostle: *thanks be unto God for his unspeakable gift!* 2 Cor. ix. 15. And while the impression is warm upon your mind, then observe what *Paul* hath said in the following verses, and enquire, whether his conclusion, must not be the natural, and unavoidable conclusion, of every regenerated child of God? Hath not CHRIST brought life and immortality to light, by his Gospel, which teacheth such precious things? Must not *Paul*, nay, must not every man, taught as *Paul* was, and through grace brought into the same views, and confirmed in the same truths; declare, that he knows whom he hath believed? Can there be any thing like a yea and nay Gospel, in these solemn assurances of JEHOVAH? And can an assurance that He, who hath saved, and called from the first, without works, will cause his grace to be doubtful as to the end? Will any man dare to reprove, for comforting God's elect with such assurances; and call it unscriptural, and highly dangerous, to teach them, what God hath in his holy scriptures taught them, that they shall never perish, whom he hath so saved, and so called? Oh! the preciousness of those sweet scriptures! *Yea, let God be true, but every man a*

liar. Rom. iii. 4. And may that God, that hath commanded his servants saying, *Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God,* Isaiah xl. 1. comfort them himself, against all those, who would make the hearts of the Lord's people sad, whom the Lord hath not made sad; and confirm his word unto his servants, wherein he hath caused us to hope. May his *saving*, and *calling* purposes, given to them in CHRIST JESUS, before the world began, be followed up, by establishing them, as the Apostle was, *in the truth, as it is in Jesus!* And may every truly regenerated child of God shout aloud, with the same holy triumph as Paul did, for his confidence in CHRIST is the same: *I know whom I have believed; and am persuaded, that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day.*

14 That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost which dwelleth in us.

15 This thou knowest, that all they which are in Asia be turned away from me; of whom are Phygellus and Hermogenes.

16 The Lord give mercy unto the house of Onesiphorus; for he oft refreshed me, and was not ashamed of my chain:

17 But, when he was in Rome, he sought me out very diligently, and found me.

18 The Lord grant unto him that he may find mercy of the Lord in that day; and in how many things he ministered unto me at Ephesus, thou knowest very well.

The principal thing to be noticed by us in this paragraph, is in the first verse. And it is indeed, so highly principal and important, that I must beg the Reader's closest attention to it, as among one of the grand and momentous truths of our most holy faith. May the Lord be my Teacher, while I humbly attempt to speak of it! *That good thing which was committed unto thee, keep by the HOLY GHOST which dwelleth in us.* The first question, which strikes the mind on reading this blessed scripture, (for it is a very blessed scripture,) is, to enquire, what good thing the Apostle means? It cannot be the gift of the HOLY GHOST himself, for the Apostle immediately connects with it, that God the HOLY GHOST dwelleth in us. Then it will follow, that it is not God the HOLY GHOST's Person; but his graces, his gifts, his works, in shedding abroad the love of God the FATHER in our hearts, as his regenerated creatures; and directing our whole spirits, into the patient waiting upon, and enjoyment of, the LORD JESUS CHRIST. Reader! do observe the preciousness of this expression, which Paul makes use of, concerning that good thing. It is indeed, the *one thing*, and the *only one needful*. It includes God the FATHER, in our knowledge of his love, and favor, manifested in all his purposes, counsel, will, and pleasure, of his Covenant grace in CHRIST. And it in-

cludes no less, all that belongs to CHRIST and his Person, CHRIST and his relations, CHRIST and his offices, CHRIST and his salvation. The good thing, committed to the Church in CHRIST, by the gifts, and workings of the SPIRIT, includes the whole of this blessedness; for it is CHRIST *in you the hope of glory*. So that, GOD the SPIRIT first comes to renew the soul, and then fills the soul with his graces. He first inhabits our souls and bodies as his temple, and then gives grace to his inhabitation. He first enters our spirit, for his indwelling residence; and then gives that good thing for the spirit to keep, by his Almighty Power, being himself *that holiness which becometh his house for ever*. Oh! what a wonder of grace, in a wonder-working God! See I Cor. vi. 18, 19. and Commentary.

Reader! are you amazed at the grace of God the SPIRIT? So am I. But our amazement at the greatness of the mercy, doth not render it less true, and sure. According to human reasoning, we should be ready to say: Surely the HOLY GHOST, whose name is emphatically HOLY, will first cleanse the soul and body; and then inhabit them. How can it be possible to suppose, that a Being, *who is of purer eyes, than to behold iniquity*, will dwell in a body of pollution? But here, as in numberless other instances, God's *thoughts are not our thoughts; neither his ways our ways*. Most certain it is, that GOD the HOLY GHOST doth dwell in his people. So JESUS promised he should; yea, He himself so said: and the fact is unquestionable. John xiv. 17. Ezek. xxxvi. 25—27. And equally certain it is, that our bodies are still bodies of sin, and uncleanness; yea, and continue so, during the whole time-state of the Church upon earth. For though the spirit is quickened, and regenerated; *the flesh profiteth nothing*. Paul felt, and acknowledged to the last, and every man like Paul, whom GOD the HOLY GHOST hath brought acquainted with the plague of his own heart, will acknowledge the same; that in a man's own flesh, *dwelleth no good thing*. Rom. vii. 1. But is it not, by this very process, of GOD the SPIRIT's indwelling residence, we are sanctified? Doth not the LORD say: *I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness, and from all your idols, will I cleanse you*. Ezek. xxxvi. 25. And do we not, in the circumstances of common life, take pure water, to cleanse filthy vessels? Is not the HOLY GHOST *a Spirit of judgment, and a Spirit of burning*? Isaiah iv. 4. And will he not, as fire, purely purge our dross, consume all our lusts, and *take away all our tin*? Isaiah i. 25. Reader! it is very blessed, thus to know GOD the HOLY GHOST, both in his Person, and GODHEAD, and ministry; and also, in the exercise of his graces, by his indwelling power in our hearts. *That good thing, which is thereby committed unto us; we then keep, by the HOLY GHOST which dwelleth in us*. See Jude 20, 21.

I do not think it necessary to detain the Reader, with any long observations on the latter part of this paragraph. The departure of the mere professors, which the Apostle speaks of, in *Asia*, is similar to the departure of all such, in every age of the Church. Nothing short of regeneration, constitutes a child of GOD. Where this blessed work is wrought, there can be no possibility of departure, so as to fall away finally. Chap. ii. 19. And where this is not, there must be an everlasting falling away, and a final separation from GOD for ever. If the Reader will read Heb. vi. 1—8. with Commentary, he will

soon discover, under the LORD's teaching, the striking difference, between Professor, and Possessor; between the LORD's people, and the profane. It is very possible, that these men, *Phygellus*, and *Hermogenes*, were persons who had made more noise than others, in talking about religion. False meteors of the night, shine for a moment, with more glare than the stated planets. But soon go out, in obscure darkness. Oh! what numbers have there been, of such as *Phygellus*, and *Hermogenes*, in all ages of the Church! *Paul's* testimony of *Onesiphorus*, is short, but sweet. I admire the suitableness of his name which signifies, to bring *usefulness*. And the LORD made him very useful, to his servant the Apostle. But I add no more.

REFLECTIONS.

WHAT a lovely representation *Paul* hath given in this Chapter, of the Covenant love, and faithfulness, of GOD the FATHER, in the promise of life which is in CHRIST JESUS! And how sure is it made, in having saved his people before calling them, and then calling them with an holy calling; not of their holiness, or of their works, but his own purpose, and grace. Oh! the faithfulness, and love, of a faithful Covenant GOD and FATHER, in CHRIST JESUS!

And no less blessedly doth *Paul* speak, of his adorable LORD and SAVIOR. He it is, saith *Paul*, which hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light, through his Gospel. Who then, with such views, can doubt salvation, while knowing whom he hath believed? Who can fear, but in the end, to be everlastingly happy in CHRIST; while living to CHRIST, and having communion with CHRIST; being persuaded, that He is able to keep that which the soul hath committed unto him against that day!

And, with equal joy we behold, how *Paul* triumphs, in the love, and favor of GOD the HOLY GHOST; (and so may all truly regenerated believers in CHRIST,) conscious of that good thing, committed to them by his Almighty Power! Blessed be the FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT, for these unspeakable mercies! LORD! let my poor soul, never be ashamed of the LORD's testimony; nor of the golden chain, of being CHRIST's prisoner!

CHAP. II.

CONTENTS.

The Apostle is exhorting Timothy in this Chapter, to Firmness, Constancy, and Perseverance. He useth several very beautiful Figures, in the Recommendation of those Graces.

THOU therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

2 And the things that thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to

faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also.

3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ.

4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of *this* life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier.

5 And if a man also strive for masteries, *yet* is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully.

6 The husbandman that laboureth must be first partaker of the fruits.

7 Consider what I say; and the Lord give thee understanding in all things.

I beg the Reader, at the entrance on this Chapter, to observe, the manner of expression made use of, concerning grace. *Paul* calls upon *Timothy* to be strong in grace. What grace? Not the grace in him, and which by regeneration he had received. But the grace that is *in* CHRIST JESUS. A very precious distinction. The grace that is in me, given by the LORD, is *from* the LORD, and depends, both for continuance, and to be kept alive, wholly upon the unceasing supplies issuing *from* JESUS; similar to those streams which are only kept running, as long as the fountain sends forth, to their continuance. If this was well observed, and well understood, we should learn a most important truth, for daily use. There is no living upon past attainments. The grace I had from CHRIST the first day, I need every day, and to the last day. My spiritual strength, is in CHRIST: not in what I feel, nor in what I have; but wholly in Him. And this life is kept up, in the constant receiving of fresh communications *from* Him, and living *to* Him, and living *upon* Him. This is to be *strong in the grace that is in* CHRIST JESUS. There is no other strength. No inherent, no progressive holiness!

And the conflicts to which *Paul* tells *Timothy* he will be called, while committing the glorious truths of the Gospel to faithful men; plainly shew the necessity of the measure, to bear him up, in a suited strength, which cannot be derived from himself, but from the LORD. The hardness of the soldier, and the enterprize of those, who contend in races; and the unwearied labor of the husbandmen: all imply the earnestness, which attend a life of faith in CHRIST. But these descriptions are very sweetly accompanied, with assurances, that the LORD will give his servants to be first partakers of the grace which they bring to his people. They shall eat of the bread they minister in his name to others. They shall drink of the river, whose streams make glad the city of God. 1 John i. 1. 2. Psalm xlvi. 4. I hope the Reader will not pass away from this view of the subject, before that he hath duly pondered it, and considered the vast importance of it. All grace is from CHRIST. And all the grace we receive from CHRIST, is fed and maintained by continued supplies.

in CHRIST. And faith is but one, and the same unceasing act, in receiving of his fulness, and *grace for grace*. John i. 16. None but those who perform every act of faith upon CHRIST, and his grace, know the blessedness of it.

8 Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel.

9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, *even* unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

10 Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory.

It is delightful to behold, how the LORD calls his people to exercises. *Paul* had eminently asserted the resurrection of the dead in all his preaching, as the foundation stone of a believer's hope. And this above every other point of the Gospel, brought upon him the indignation of the carnal world. *Paul* therefore bids *Timothy* remember, that his persecutions were on this account. And he insinuates thereby that *Timothy* must not be surprised if he meets with similar treatment. And he chargeth him not to shrink from it. But what I chiefly beg the Reader to keep in view in this passage is, what *Paul* observes, that it is for the elect's sake, he endured all things, Yes! *Paul's* whole labors, services, preachings, writings, are all directed to this one end. As his divine LORD and Master had all along in view his Church, and both laboured and suffered for them only; so *Paul* expressly declares that his sufferings were all to the same end. John xvii. 9. 1 Thess. v. 9.

11 *It is* a faithful saying: For if we be dead with *him*, we shall also live with *him*:

12 If we suffer, we shall also reign with *him*: if we deny *him* he also will deny us:

13 If we believe not, *yet* he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself.

Let the Reader particularly attend to the statement here made, for it is most blessed. Here is a presupposed case, the child of GOD is dead with CHRIST. And so he is. For by regeneration he is brought forth into spiritual life, proving thereby his being *chosen* in CHRIST, before the foundation of the world. Ephes. i. 4, 5. And *redeemed* by CHRIST, as a member of his mystical body. Ephes. i. 7. And, regenerated by the HOLY GHOST, he is quickened to a new and spiritual life in CHRIST. Hence he is dead with CHRIST. For when CHRIST was crucified, all his members were crucified with him. Gal. ii. 20. When CHRIST died; he died, not in a private capacity, but publicly, as the head of his body the Church whom he represented as their Surety; and consequently each member in the eye of the law, died

with him. Coloss. iii. 3. So that from that moment the whole body of CHRIST is dead, in a legal sense to a covenant of works. And therefore it must follow, that as in him they were all crucified, and died; so they are equally from their oneness with him, interested in his life. And, oh! what a faithful saying this is?

Some of God's children have been not a little alarmed, at what is said of the LORD's denying them if they deny him. As if CHRIST's love of his people depended upon their love of him. But blessed be GOD! our love of CHRIST forms no standard for his love of us. 1 John iv. 19. It is not the weakness and infirmity of CHRIST's dear children, in their daily frail and imperfect walk of faith that is here alluded to, which may truly be said to be a denial of CHRIST. For when I doubt his word, or call his providences or his promises in question, no doubt that these things proceed from unbelief. Such was the case of the Church. Isaiah, xlix. 14. Lament. iii. 18. But this is not the denial the Apostle had in contemplation. The apostacy of hypocrites, and the false profession of those who call themselves christians, which are so only in name, who deny CHRIST's GODHEAD, redemption by his blood, and the works of the SPIRIT; these, with others of a like nature, are the points *Paul* had in view, when speaking of the denial of CHRIST, which calls for his denial of us. And beyond all question, such denials must be followed with destruction. For so CHRIST hath said. Matt. x. 32. 33. Mark viii. 38.

But what a sweet relief is the following verse, to comfort the feeble minded who would rather die than intentionally deny CHRIST: *If we believe not yet he abideth faithful, he cannot deny himself.* Reader! cherish the blessed assurance, for it is most blessed. God's faithfulness doth not depend upon man's belief. His yea, and Amen, are founded in himself, and not in our improvement. It is indeed blessed and refreshing to the soul, when a regenerated child of God enjoys those love-tokens of GOD in CHRIST, by the lively actings of faith upon him. But the LORD's grace is not founded in human merit; and therefore depends not upon human improvement. Oh! the preciousness of an unchangeable God's purposes in CHRIST. Jer. xxxii. 40. Heb. vi. 16, to the end.

14 Of these things put *them* in remembrance, charging *them* before the Lord that they strive not about words to no profit, *but* to the subverting of the hearers.

15 Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

16 But shun profane *and* vain babblings; for they will increase unto more ungodliness.

17 And their word will eat as doth a canker: of whom is Hymeneus and Philetus;

18 Who concerning the truth have erred, say-

ing that the resurrection is past already ; and overthrow the faith of some.

We cannot sufficiently admire the very great attention of the Apostle in following up his advice to his beloved *Timothy*, how to conduct himself in the *Church of God*, as a minister of CHRIST. In these verses, he calls off his attention from using words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers; and directs him to study how to approve himself to God: becoming a workman that needeth not to be ashamed: rightly dividing the word of truth. The dividing rightly the word of truth, seems to be a figure borrowed from the custom in the Jewish Church, when dividing the sacrifice; wherein care was had, that the part consecrated as holy to the Lord might not be kept back; and that which was the portion of the Offerer might be preserved. So that a workman in the ministry which rightly divideth the word of truth, hath an eye to the whole family of CHRIST. He comforts mourners, supports the weak, rouseth the careless, allures wanderers, and holds up CHRIST for distressed weary souls, as a rest and consolation. And while speaking to men, hath chiefly his eye unto God: that his blessing may go before, accompany, and follow his labors. That man can never shew himself approved unto God, that doth not make CHRIST what God hath made him, the whole of salvation. Now if CHRIST be the Alpha, and Omega, in JEHOVAH'S view, in his concerns of the Church: he must be so in the ministry of his servants. And by thus holding up CHRIST as *Moses* lifted up the serpent in the wilderness; he follows the footsteps of the HOLY GHOST, and makes JESUS the whole of salvation, to every one that believeth, of the Jew first and also of the Gentile.

19 Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity.

20 But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honour and some to dishonour.
- 21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work.

Reader! what a glorious truth is here! How are all the persons of the GODHEAD brought into one view, in their Covenant offices and characters to confirm the everlasting purposes toward the Church in CHRIST. The foundation is in God's eternal decree, and therefore most sure. Ephes. i. 4. It is founded also in CHRIST the rock of ages. Deut. xxxii. 4, 18, 31. 1 Cor. iii. 11. And it is sealed by the HOLY GHOST. Ephes. i. 13. And the sure consequence resulting from this everlasting security, is that the LORD willeth them by hi

grace, while enjoining them by his precept, to depart from errors both in faith and practice. God's biddings are enabling where the work of regeneration hath passed on the heart.

The similitude which *Paul* adopts to illustrate the doctrine he is upon, is very beautiful. He considers the Church of CHRIST, as a great house, where many enter: for it is an open house. And both Professor and Profane, as well as the children of the household will come. But the difference is at once marked. The vessels of mercy are called *gold* and *silver*. Such are CHRIST's Jewels. Malachi iii. 17. The vessels of *wood* and *earth* are to dishonor. There needs no further comment. The figure explains itself. But how doth the subject strike the mind of the child of God, when he calls to remembrance from what source alone, the one is chosen to honor, and the other to dishonor! And how doth that question involuntarily arise in the mind, on such a review; LORD, *how is it that thou dost manifest thyself unto us, and not unto the world?* John xiv. 22.

22 Flee also youthful lusts: but follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the Lord out of a pure heart.

23 But foolish and unlearned questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes.

24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all *men*, apt to teach, patient.

25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

26 And *that* they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.

Paul is here again harping on his favorite string. His zeal for CHRIST's cause in the Church, is always uppermost in his heart. And therefore he can never say enough to *Timothy* to prompt him to watch over the flock. Oh! what anxiety he expresseth, that the youthful lusts of pride, and vain glory, which young men and young ministers too often feel in their preaching, should give way wholly to the preaching CHRIST. The fear of man, and the desire of praise in man, bring a snare. It is blessed, where grace abounds, to be kept low, and like *Paul*, to be content to be nothing, so that CHRIST be glorified.

REFLECTIONS.

BLESSED LORD JESUS! how sweetly hath thy servant taught the Church, and every humble member of it like myself, to seek strength only in thee, and the grace in my LORD; and not from any thing in our own attainments. Oh! for grace in a daily, hourly communication from CHRIST, to be strong in the grace that is in CHRIST JESUS: that I

may abide in thee, as thou hast said, convinced that without thee, I can do nothing. And may God the SPIRIT continually teach me my need, then lead to thee for a supply; then open a communication between my full LORD and my empty soul; and then keep it everlastingly open, to my joy, and my LORD's glory.

Glory to a faithful Covenant GOD and FATHER in CHRIST JESUS! may my soul never for a moment lose sight of thy faithfulness, amidst all my unbeliefs. Oh! the preciousness of that scripture. *If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful: he cannot deny himself: LORD!* I see nothing but evil, unbelief, and emptiness in all I do or say. I am content that it should be so. I am nothing, yea worse than nothing: that my poverty may make me hunger more for the riches of thy grace. Oh! to be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meat for the master's use, and prepared by grace for every good work.

LORD the SPIRIT! do thou seal my soul, unto the day of eternal redemption. This will form a blessed *nevertheless* to all my unworthiness. *The foundation of God standeth sure.* And in proclaiming this foundation, and this assurance, let all thy sent servants shew themselves approved unto God; and workmen which need not to be ashamed; and let all thy people *follow righteousness, faith, charity, peace, with them that call on the LORD, out of a pure heart.*

CHAP. III.

CONTENTS.

The Apostle in this Chapter, foretells of perilous Times. He speaks of certain Enemies of the Truth: and closeth with a warm Recommendation of the Holy Scriptures, as making wise unto Salvation.

THIS know also, that in the last days perilous times shall come.

2 For men shall be lovers of their own selves, covetous, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy,

3 Without natural affection, truce-breakers, false accusers, incontinent, fierce, despisers of those that are good,

4 Traitors, heady, high-minded, lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God;

5 Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof; from such turn away.

6 For of this sort are they which creep into houses, and lead captive silly women laden with sins, led away with divers lusts.

7 Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth.

8 Now as Jannes and Jambres withstood Moses, so do these also resist the truth: men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith.

9 But they shall proceed no further: for their folly shall be manifest unto all *men*, as their's also was.

We have here, an awful prophecy of awful times. And as it bears no date, we have authority to make application of it to any period, yea, and to every period of the Church, where is discoverable a correspondence, between the prediction and what appears to be the accomplishment. It hath been pretty much the custom with Commentators, to make a very general application of what is here said to the Church of *Rome*. And no doubt very many of the characters belong to that See. The merits of works, and supererogation; the pride and blasphemy, the form without the power of godliness; the creeping into houses, and leading captive silly women; with confessions, purgatory, penance, and the like which distinguish that creed; are high demonstrations, that the Apostle had in view, such a profession of religion, when he wrote these words in this Chapter. But had this heresy been the only one, here spoken of in relation to the perilous times of the last days; I should not have thought it necessary, to have dwelt upon it, with any observations in this *Poor Man's Commentary*. But convinced as I am, that the true Church of CHRIST hath as much to apprehend of danger from other quarters in the apostacies around; and which, unless I greatly err indeed, the HOLY GHOST in this scripture more immediately had in view; I cannot consider myself justified in passing over the passage now before us, as if the See of *Rome* was only meant, when I verily believe our dangers are greater from other sources, in and among ourselves, and that the spirit of prophecy in this scripture, had them in contemplation.

I have in the former Epistle of *Paul to Timothy*, (Chapter iv. and the first and following verses,) already stated my thoughts on some of the latter day heresies. It will not be necessary therefore in this place to enlarge. I shall dismiss the subject with only observing; that what GOD the SPIRIT, by his servant the Apostle, hath here said, is enough, surely, to keep every child of GOD upon the look-out, for those perilous times here predicted; which if not already come, (as it should plainly seem they are,) cannot be very far remote, and may be near indeed. One grand consolation to the true Church of CHRIST remains, to comfort her members during the most awful times; namely, her everlasting safety is in no hazard. *If it were possible*, JESUS saith, *they would deceive the very elect*. Mark xiii. 22. But our LORD's manner of expression proves, that it is impossible. And yet, though assured, that not one of CHRIST's little ones shall perish; it is enough to make the people of GOD to be deeply affected, with the prospect of those awful times, which threaten the LORD's indignation

on a sinful land. Isaiah, i. 4. The righteous soul of *Lot* was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked in his day, 2 Pet. ii. 7. *Moses* had his *Jannes* and his *Jambres* to oppose him with their enchantments. Exod. vii. 11. And *David* speaks of rivers of tears running down at beholding the breaches made by the wicked on God's holy law. Psm. cxix. 136. And if the LORD should remove the golden candlestick of Ordinances from us; or give up Professors to their form, as *Paul* here speaks, wholly void of all the power of Godliness: very awful will be the consequence, though the eternal safety of CHRIST's Church cannot be affected! But I forbear to dwell upon the subject. Precious Jesus! do as thou hast said. *Watch over thy Church, and water her every moment. Keep her night and day, lest any hurt her?* Isaiah xxvii. 2, 3. If the Reader wishes a sweet Chapter of consolation on this subject, I refer him to Zephaniah iii.

10 But thou hast fully known my doctrine, manner of life, purpose, faith, long-suffering, charity, patience,

11 Persecutions, afflictions, which came unto me at Antioch, at Iconium, at Lystra; what persecutions I endured; but out of *them* all the Lord delivered me.

12 Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution.

13 But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving, and being deceived.

I beg the Reader to notice, what a blessed relief the HOLY GHOST here proposeth to *Timothy*, from the melancholy statement, the preceding verses had given, in the example of his faithful servant the Apostle. The single character of *Paul*, was enough to bear down an whole host of heretics, and to remove from *Timothy's* mind, all concern for the apostacy of such characters. And the same holds equally good now. For what in fact are all the heresies of the present generation, but all springing out of one and the same deadly stock, in the fall of man. They vary in their branches, in shape and form; but their bearings are all one and the same. They appear differently to our dim-sighted view, in order to deceive more artfully; but they all arise from that original apostacy. The glorious truths, on which the very being of the gospel depends, are so little regarded by the generality of Professors, that they are seldom heard; and when heard, for the most part, by the great mass of the people, disbelieved and called in question. Men shrink from insisting upon the distinguishing features of our holy faith. The people love to have their wine mingled with water. And too often in compliment to the itching ears of such men, the blessed doctrines, which are the life of the soul, are kept in the back ground.

That such is the case, is evident from the stillness and quiet, into which the bulk is fallen. *Paul* saith in this account of himself

to *Timothy*, that he had fully known his doctrine, manner of life, long sufferings, persecutions, afflictions, and the like. And all these he opposeth, to the character of those who had a *form*, but not the *power* of godliness. The Apostle would have escaped these persecutions, had he temporized with such men. But because he simply preached CHRIST in the electing love of GOD the FATHER, the be-trothing and redeeming love of GOD the SON, and the regenerating love of GOD the SPIRIT, *what persecutions*, saith the Apostle, *I endured*. But Reader, was it ever known, in any age of the Church, that a preacher was persecuted for complimenting mens goodness at the expence of GOD's truth? Did ever the *Pharisee* take offence at exhortations delivered to the people, while he thought, however needful to others, he wanted them not himself. All that know not the plague of their own heart, will relish no doctrines, which tend to bring upon a level, the whole Adam-race, in the present fallen state; and bitterness enough will manifest itself from all of that complexion, to the Preacher that cries down the perfection of the creature, and exalts only the SAVIOUR. So equally sure is it now, in the present day, as it was in *Paul's* day, that *all who will live godly in CHRIST JESUS, shall suffer persecution*.

14 But continue thou in the things which thou hast learned and hast been assured of, knowing of whom thou hast learned *them*;

15 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

16 All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

17 That the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

What a beautiful close the Apostle makes, in his advice to *Timothy*, as a security through grace from the general apostacy of the then times. And the same holds equally good now. A continuance in the delight and enjoyment of all the great truths of GOD, must follow divine teaching. And *Paul* doth not speak of it, as though the thing was doubtful. Here, indeed, lies the distinguishing glory of a regenerated state, as marked from all the flaming professions, void of it in the world. The child of GOD knows the inspiration of scripture to be such, from the correspondence of what is said in it bears to his own heart. And the threefold witness, the Apostle elsewhere describes, of the HOLY GHOST; the sacred word, and his own heart, confirms all he learns from GOD. 2 Cor. xiii. 1. But where there is no divine teaching; no work of GOD the SPIRIT, in regenerating the fallen nature; there the blindness of heart remains, untaken away, and bitterness breaks out in a variety of directions against that preach-

ing, which contends for the faith once delivered to the saints; and leaves no room for the Pharisee's righteousness to be puffed up. Reader! beg of God the HOLY GHOST, to be always under the LORD's teaching, that in his blessed scriptures, you may be made wise unto salvation, through faith which is in CHRIST JESUS.

REFLECTIONS.

READER! while the Apostle is thus speaking to the Church, of the perilous times that should come, may we not say with *John: Little Children, it is the last time. And as we have heard that Antichrist shall come, even now are there many Antichrists; whereby we know that it is the last time.* But, Reader! who can hear what the beloved Apostle hath added to this solemn scripture, without the most painful concern? *They went out from us, but they were not of us!* It is distressing enough to be told by the SPIRIT in prophecy, that the Church shall be assaulted by heresies, in the latter day dispensation; and that we are of those latter ages in which those heresies appear, but to be told, that even in the Churches, where the truth as it is in JESUS is professed, men shall arise *speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them*; these are trembling dispensations indeed. But, Reader! do not overlook the security of the faithful. That unction from the HOLY ONE, which all truly regenerated children of GOD in CHRIST possess, teacheth all things, and will keep the LORD's people; and the wicked one shall touch them not. This is our promise. And a blessed promise it is, in this present evil day.

And shall not you and I bless GOD the SPIRIT both for the information, and the means of security? Do we not behold in this chapter, sufficient marks of character, for discerning the signs of the times, to judge faithful servants of the LORD, from time-pleasers? Where we behold men lovers of their own selves, proud, boasters, and the like; and a leanness of soul among the people, who are content with the form of godliness, but deny, and are ignorant of the power thereof: and when we contrast such a state, with that which *Paul* describes of himself, (and which more or less must distinguish all like *Paul*), whose doctrine and manner of life cannot but beget hatred, evil speaking and persecution; from all Pharisees, and mere nominal Professors of religion; are not the different characters as clearly defined, as if drawn by a sun-beam? Blessed be GOD the HOLY GHOST, for his gracious foretelling of those perilous times; and for his divine teaching of his people to try the spirits, and to discern them. Reader! let us be waiting at wisdom's gate, in these awful days of heresy. And let us behold and see, how *evil men, and seducers*, among Pharisees, and mere Professors, *wax worse and worse*; more wretched, more lean of soul, deceiving men like themselves, not GOD's people, and being themselves deceived. And let those holy scriptures of our GOD, which are profitable for all things to the man of GOD, be daily in our hand, while GOD the SPIRIT is instructing our heart; that we may be found of that happy number, made strong by grace, in the faith which is in CHRIST JESUS.

CHAP. IV.

CONTENTS.

The Apostle is here closing his Epistle, and, therefore, impresseth his Exhortations on Timothy, with the tenderest Affection. He speaks of several who were Enemies to the Cross; and sends his Salutations to several, who were Friends: and concludes with his usual Apostolic Blessing, in praying for Grace.

I Charge thee therefore before God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and the dead at his appearing and his kingdom;

2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine.

3 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers; having itching ears;

4 And they shall turn away *their* ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

5 But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry.

I pray the Reader to remark, the earnestness, with which *Paul* chargeth *Timothy*, on this momentous ground, to be faithful, and diligent in his ministry. Though *Timothy* was very dear to *Paul*; yet the LORD JESUS CHRIST, and his cause, was infinitely dearer. And, let the Reader yet further remark, in what a solemn manner the Apostle introduceth the LORD, both FATHER and SON, including the HOLY GHOST, who is the Almighty Speaker by *Paul*, as looking on, while he thus chargeth *Timothy* to faithfulness. Yea, he seems by his expression, as if he had brought this young man before the presence of the LORD, and then bids him behold, who were witnesses to this renewed Ordination! Oh! that God the HOLY GHOST would carry the conviction of this solemn scripture, to the consciences of those, who run unsent of God; that the awful prospect of His coming to judge the quick and dead at his appearing, might stop the mouths of them, *who serve not our LORD JESUS CHRIST, but their own bellies!* Rom. xvi. 18.

And, while the Reader particularly noticeth the Apostle's charge to the faithful Preacher; let him no less observe, the special cause, for giving a command so earnest, in relation to the people. *The time will come*, (saith *Paul*,) *when they will not endure sound doctrine.* What an awful account. We read in the Old Testament scripture of some, *who said to the Prophets: prophecy not unto us right things,*

speak unto us smooth things, prophecy deceits. Isaiah xxx. 10. But here seems, if possible, a more awful delusion, when the sound doctrines of the Gospel, men will not hear, nor endure. It is worthy the Reader's observation, that the LORD JESUS himself, in allusion to the latter-day dispensation, declared, the delusion should be so great, that had not the LORD shortened it, no flesh could be saved. But, saith JESUS, (and a sweet saying it is, to the LORD's people,) *for the elect's sake, whom he hath chosen, he hath shortened the days.* Mark xiii. 20. *Paul*, in taking leave of the Church at *Ephesus*, beheld, with great concern, the alarming times of the latter-day heresies. Acts xx. 25, to the end.

Let the Reader observe further on this subject, that when the Apostle spake of a time that would come, when men would not endure sound doctrine, he then spake of a distant day. But if we consider the signs of the present time, that day is actually come. Surely it is impossible for any child in grace, to contemplate the circumstances going on in the Churches professing godliness, and where the Gospel is repeatedly said to be preached; without being struck with the most palpable conviction, that men *do not endure sound doctrine, but, after their own lusts, are heaping to themselves teachers having itching ears.*

If there be a doctrine of the Gospel of CHRIST, more eminently to be insisted upon, one than another, in being the bottom, and foundation of every other; surely, the everlasting love of God in the choice of his Church in CHRIST, is that doctrine. For from hence ariseth the redemption of the Church by CHRIST, from the *Adam*-fall of sin: and the regeneration of the Spirit, by GOD the HOLY GHOST. In short, all, and every one of the momentous doctrines of grace, are the result of this first, pre-disposing, and eternal love of God to the Church in CHRIST, before all worlds. Ephes. iii. 9, 10, 11. As such, can it be otherwise supposed, than that this glorious, fundamental article of our most holy faith, should be the constant, unwearied subject of every Preacher's discourse; and the joy of every hearer's heart, in all Churches of the Saints? From hence, as from a foundation, all the after-building in grace, must arise. And to this, every wise master builder, (as *Paul* calls preachers,) hath respect, as forming the basis of the whole superstructure. Could it ever have been supposed then, that any age of the Church, would be found, that would go off this foundation? Yes! saith the HOLY GHOST, the time will come, when they will not endure sound doctrine. That time is indeed now come; and come with such awful forerunners of evil, that the grand truths of our holy faith, are frittering away, so as by many to be nearly given up. The glorious doctrines of election; redemption solely by CHRIST, as a finished salvation; and the Person, GOD-HEAD, and Ministry of the HOLY GHOST: these truths are seldom spoken of by some, and relinquished by others. Nay, the departure from sound doctrine, hath been so great, that in the self-importance of vain minds, some have gone so far, as to form comparative statements, between the doctrines of election, predestination, the atonement, and the like; and what they call other topics, and in their view, of a supposed equally important nature, that in the presumption of their minds they have turned the attention of the faithful to the former, as disproportioned.

Alas! what blind leaders of the blind, must such men be! And what a leanness of soul must be found, in the congregations, where such men minister? For what proportion (to use their own words) can there be, between the drops of the bucket, and the ocean; or the small dust of the balance, and the whole earth? And yet, far less must there be, between the glorious purposes of JEHOVAH, in his electing love of his Church in CHRIST; than all the counsels, wills, and works of men, and angels, to all eternity. But such men see it not. And hence neither they, nor their congregations, can endure sound doctrine. The itching ears of the one, and the unhumbléd pride of the other, are in quest of somewhat, which shall gratify the lusts of both. The lust of the *Pharisee*, is satiated, in the compliment paid to his self-righteousness; and the lust of the *Professor* is not less indulged, in the having a name to live, while virtually dead before God. And both Preacher, and Hearer, sit down in the complacency of their own self-importance.

Reader! I pray you to pause over the awful prospect Persons of the complexion I am adverting to, with confidence tell us, that the piety of our days is reviving. Whereas, GOD the HOLY GHOST speaketh expressly, that in the last days perilous times shall come. And the SON of GOD hath left upon record, that so general will be the apostacy of the last days, that *if it were possible, they should deceive even the very elect.* Mark xiii. 22. If these men were taught of GOD, and acquainted with the plague of their own heart these things alone would be enough to convince them of their error. But, alas! they are too full of self-importance. *Paul's* charge to *Timothy*, before GOD, and the LORD JESUS CHRIST, to be instant *in season, and out of season, and to reprove, rebuke, and exhort with all long suffering and doctrine*, (which implies much opposition to a faithful ministry,) they know not. The fashionable congregations they address, according to their system, require neither reproof nor rebuke. And thus for the most part such men live, and, it is to be feared, too often die, full of their own good deeds, and literally strangers to their own corruptions before GOD.

But, what a blessed relief hath GOD the HOLY GHOST given, to the alarming view of such men, in the short, but sweet portrait he hath drawn, by the Apostle, of what form the outlines of a faithful servant of CHRIST. *But watch thou in all things; endure afflictions; do the work of an Evangelist: make full proof of thy ministry.* Without entering into all the parts of the ministerial character, which would form a volume, rather than to be comprized within the limits of a short observation, which this work can only allow; suffer me to ask, what afflictions from men, would the work of an Evangelist bring upon a preacher, whose chief bent is to compliment his hearers? And what watchings do those men go through, for the souls of the people, who know nothing of the doubts, and fears, and spiritual distresses, of exercised believers? What full proof can they give of their ministry, whose services are confined to the pulpit? *Paul*, who recommends this conduct to *Timothy*, and who preached the sound doctrines of election, redemption, and regeneration, continually; was himself a living example of what he enjoined. He entered into the spiritual concerns of all the LORD's people, and made their case his own. *Who is weak* (saith he) *and I am not*

weak? Who is offended and I burn not? 2 Cor. xi. 29. Faithful servant of JESUS! Hadst thou lived in these days, what burning of soul wouldst thou have felt, at the conduct of those, who, though professing CHRIST, cannot endure sound doctrine!

6 For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand.

7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith.

8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.

It appears very plain, that *Paul* knew his departure was near. And it is also very plain, he knew that he should finish his course by martyrdom. But what a firmness of mind he manifested in the prospect. He had before said, CHRIST *should be magnified in his body, whether by life, or death.* Philip. i. 20. And now the hour is arrived. He reviews the past, and contemplates what is to come. And, under the conscious assurance of an oneness and interest in CHRIST, he triumphs, in having fought *the good fight of faith.* I pray the Reader to notice this. The fight of faith, and the victory of faith, are both in, and from CHRIST. *Paul* utters not a word of his services, or labors, or sufferings. He well knew, that these added not an atom, to his acceptance before GOD. CHRIST, and CHRIST alone, was *Paul's* triumphs. Sweet, and precious consideration, to the child of GOD.

In like manner, the crown of righteousness laid up for him, was not for services, or sufferings, but wholly the respect of the free gift of GOD in CHRIST; and CHRIST's right, and the believer's right, from his union, and interest in CHRIST. And I pray the Reader particularly to notice the Apostle's expressions. He doth not merely call it a crown, neither a crown of glory, but *a crown of righteousness.* And, no doubt, eminently on this account; because it is CHRIST's due for his people, though not their's. CHRIST had purchased it for them, though to them it comes free. And it is but just in GOD, the righteous GOD, to give it to them as CHRIST's right; though on their part, they have no pretensions to it from their own merit. Reader! there is a great sweetness in this view. As sinners, all we have given to us, is GOD's free grace. But, as members of CHRIST, we have a claim to what is CHRIST's right. And it is, therefore, a crown of righteousness, to which all his redeemed family are justly entitled, by the blood-shedding, obedience, and death, of the LORD JESUS CHRIST.

And, there is one point more, which must not be overlooked, in this sweet scripture. *Paul* saith, that this crown of righteousness, is not laid up only for him; but for all them that love the LORD's appearing. Oh! how very blessed is this assurance. And who is there among the truly regenerate in the LORD's family, but what doth love his appearing? True, the moment is solemn. The first view of JESUS, on the spirit departing from the body, must be indeed over-

whelming. But yet, there is glory in it. We then see him face to face, whom by faith we have often looked at, and loved with a joy unspeakable, and full of glory. Still, the sight will be more rapturous, than confounding. We shall see him, as he is. And that is, all lovely. And, if we love his appearing now, we shall love his appearing then. If CHRIST in his ordinances, CHRIST in his visits, CHRIST in his work on poor sinners, and manifestations to his saints; if these are appearings, in which our souls rejoice; this is to love his appearing in grace, and very sure, all such must love his appearing in glory. Precious JESUS! keep my soul alive, in the daily expectation of thy coming!

9 Do thy diligence to come shortly unto me.

10 For Demas hath forsaken me, having loved this present world, and is departed unto Thessalonica; Crescens to Galatia, Titus unto Dalmatia.

11 Only Luke is with me. Take Mark, and bring him with thee: for he is profitable to me for the ministry.

12 And Tychicus have I sent to Ephesus.

13 The cloke that I left at Troas with Carpus, when thou comest, bring *with thee*, and the books, *but* especially the parchments.

14 Alexander the coppersmith did me much evil: the Lord reward him according to his works:

15 Of whom be thou ware also; for he hath greatly withstood our words.

16 At my first answer no man stood with me, but all *men* forsook me; *I pray God* that it may not be laid to their charge.

17 Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me; that by me the preaching might be fully known, and *that* all the Gentiles might hear: and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion.

18 And the Lord shall deliver me from every evil work, and will preserve *me* unto his heavenly kingdom: to whom *be* glory for ever and ever. Amen.

19 Salute Prisca and Aquila, and the household of Onesiphorus.

20 Erastus abode at Corinth: but Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick.

21 Do thy diligence to come before winter. Eubulus greeteth thee, and Pudens, and Linus, and Claudia, and all the brethren.

22 The Lord Jesus Christ *be* with thy spirit. Grace *be* with you. Amen.

The second *epistle* unto Timotheus, ordained the first bishop of the church of the Ephesians, was written from Rome, when Paul was brought before Nero the second time.

What is here said of *Demas*, may be said, and must be said, of all mere nominal professors, who follow CHRIST only for a name, and were never regenerated, and called by God. If the Reader would learn, under the LORD, to form this one estimate, for ascertaining real, from mere formal godliness; it would enable him, both for himself, and for all around him, to discern *him that serveth God, from him that serveth him not*: I mean, by the regeneration of the heart. Where the HOLY GHOST hath wrought this saving work upon the spirit; there the LORD dwells for ever. And none of this description, shall ever, *Demas*-like, forsake the LORD finally. Sweetly the scriptures bear testimony to this safety, when saying: *Though he fall, he shall not utterly be cast down; for the LORD upholdeth him with his hand.* Psm xxxvii. 24. Jerem. xxxii. 40.

What a blessed improvement the Apostle makes, from the defection of men, to remark the faithfulness of the LORD. It is sweet, yea, very sweet, from creature unkindness, to learn to value more Creator, and Redeemer love. *Paul*, no doubt, felt the wound at such a season, when he stood to answer for his life. But it afforded only greater blessedness, from the LORD's personal grace, and mercy. I hardly think it necessary to remind the Reader, of an infinitely greater than *Paul*, who at the hall of *Pilate* was treated thus by his disciples, when all forsook him and fled. Precious JESUS! pre-eminent in all things: sufferings, as well as glory. Reader! there is a time coming, when all friends, however reluctantly on all sides, must leave both you, and me, and we must stand alone before God. I mean, when the LORD shall undress our earthly tabernacle at death. Oh! for grace now, to say then: Notwithstanding, the LORD will stand by me, and strengthen me; notwithstanding all my unworthiness, and undeservings; JESUS's Person, blood and righteousness, will be *my strength and my song, for he is my salvation.* Isaiah xii.

I do not think it necessary, to dwell on enquiries about any of those persons the Apostle noticeth in the close of this Epistle. They are all passed away in the flood of time, and their dwelling place, like the flower of the field, knoweth them no more. Sweetly the Apostle folds up his Epistle, as I pray God, may be my portion, in the close of life: *The LORD JESUS CHRIST be with thy spirit: Grace be with thee. Amen.*

REFLECTIONS.

ALMIGHTY GOD and FATHER! may all, whom the HOLY GHOST hath made ministers in the service of the Church of JESUS, hear the solemn charge of *Paul to Timothy*, to prompt to faithfulness in their high calling. And, no less, Almighty JESUS! may the sure expectation of thy appearing, and thy kingdom, to judge the quick and dead, awaken such, to be diligent in thy service to thy coming. LORD! give them grace to preach the word, and to be constant, in season, out of season; and especially in these awful times, when the way of truth is evil spoken of, and men will not endure sound doctrine. And, oh! thou blessed, and Almighty SPIRIT of all truth, do thou guard, and guide, lead, and instruct all thy family; that the hearts of thy people, may not be turned unto fables.

Blessed be a faithful Covenant-God in CHRIST, for the fulfilment of his faithful promise, in the instance of *Paul*, in giving such a Pastor, after his own heart. The Church of God bless the LORD for this man's services, in all his past labors; and in all his future usefulness. Oh! grant, LORD, that all thy faithful, whether ministers, or people, may like *Paul*, and from the same cause, live and die, in the full assurance of faith, in expectation of the crown of righteousness, which the LORD the righteous Judge, will give at that day to all them that love our LORD's appearing!

Praises to the FATHER, SON, and SPIRIT, for this, and all the other precious portions of GOD's word; to make the Church, under divine teaching, more and more acquainted with the Person, and glory of JESUS, for the happiness of the life that now is, and that which is to come. Amen.

THE
EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE
TO
TITUS.

GENERAL OBSERVATIONS.

THIS Epistle of *Paul to Titus* is but short, though highly interesting, and we have much cause to bless GOD the HOLY GHOST for it. Very clear marks of the LORD's inspiration are discoverable in it.

It is supposed by some to have been written from *Rome*; and others have thought that *Paul* wrote it from *Ephesus*. In either case the time must differ, though it generally bears the date of our LORD GOD 55.