

Christ is All in All

By Hanserd Knollys

The Apostle Paul, who was a chosen vessel unto the Lord, to bear His Name before the Gentiles, (Acts 9:15) wrote this Epistle to the Saints and faithful brethren in Christ, which were at Colosse (Chapter 1:2). And as the Ensign-bearer of His glorious Name, displayed the Magnificency, and transcendent Excellency of Christ, in the words of the text: "Christ is all, and in all". Col. 3:11. And that he might lift up Christ's All-Sufficiency, he nullifies all other excellencies whatsoever, (Chap.3 :11) where he gives the Colossians to understand that the advantage of a Jew above a Gentile, the dignity of a Scythian above a Barbarian, or the immunities of a freeman above a bondsman, however esteemed among men, are nothing without Christ; "who is all, and in all." These words have their dependence upon the exhortation unto mortification (or putting under, or killing, of sin) Chapter 3:5, which exhortation the Apostle pressed upon the Colossians, by telling them they had put off the old man, with his deeds, and had put on the new man, &c. Where in which state of regeneration, there is neither Greek, nor Jews, &c., but "Christ is all, and in all." The lesson to be learned hence, is this; To wit,

Doct. "Christ is all and in all, in the New Man.

Two things need some explanation in this Doctrine; viz. First, Who is here meant by the "New Man." And secondly how Christ is all, and in all, in the new man. By the new man here, we are to understand (as it was meant by the Apostle) a true BELIEVER, or a faithful brother in Christ, one sanctified in Christ Jesus, called a Saint; who is redeemed in the spirit of his mind, and hath put on the new man. (Eph.4:23-24) Which is done, when by the mighty operation of the Holy Spirit, in the promises given unto us, we are MADE partakers of the Divine Nature. (II Pet.1:3,4) Thus being by the Spirit and Faith united with Christ, we are made a new creature, or creation, (II Cor. 5:17) have a new heart (Ezek.36:26,27) and walk in newness of life. (Rom. 6:4) And such may be said to have put on the new man, the sum then is this: "Christ is all, and in all, in every true believer, in every justified sanctified person, who hath a new heart, and walk in newness of life." Touching the second particular, to wit, "How Christ is all, and in all, in the new man." The Lord Jesus Christ (who is all in Himself, for in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily, Col. 2:9, which was the pleasure of God, that in all things He might have the preeminence, Col. 1:18,19) is all and in all, in the new man. First, Fundamentally, I mean Christ is the Foundation of all, (I Cor. 3:11). For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ; I say Christ is the foundation of all that faith, repentance, love, and other graces, gifts, and fruits of the Spirit, which are in every true Believer: He is a living Fountain full of grace, and from His fulness have we all received grace for grace. (John 1:14-16) Secondly, communicatively; I mean, CHRIST doth communicate all unto the new man; to wit, life, light, grace, and glory, &c. We have NOTHING but what we have received, and we have received all from His fulness. (Eph. 4:7, John 1:16) The titles given to Christ in the Scripture Of truth, will make this appear more fully, viz., That "Christ is all in the new man, or in every true Believer": I shall instance some.

First, "Christ is our life." (Col.3:4) "Christ is the life of a Believer, even eternal life." (1 John 5:11-12) That is to say, the everlasting spiritual well-being of a Believer, is by union and communion with Jesus Christ, in whom he lives a life of Grace here, and with whom he shall live a life of glory hereafter. Yea, all those spiritual breathings of the hunger-thirsting soul, after the enjoyment of God in any of His holy Ordinances are from Christ; and from Him are all those quickening, and all that life we have in prayer, preaching, conference, and other spiritual duties. In a word, the Spirit of life Himself, who so sweetly refresheth the weary soul, comforts the

sorrowful heart, and quickens the sanctified affections, is from Christ: and He is called the "Spirit of the Son," (Gal 4:6) whom God sends forth into the hearts of His children.

Secondly, Christ is the true light of every Believer, or in the new man.

That was the true light, (John 1:9) even Jesus Christ, who enlightneth the eyes of our understanding, that we may know what is the hope of His calling, and what the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the Saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe. (Eph.1:17-19) And though the hearts of men and women be very dark, yet (God who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts 'who are Believers) to give light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (11 Cor. 4:6) And the Apostle tells the sanctified Ephesians, that they were Sometimes darkness, but now we are light in the Lord. (Lph.5:8) And indeed all that heavenly knowledge, and spiritual understanding, which Believers have in the Mystery of the Gospel, they had it from Christ: in whom are hid all the treasures of Wisdom and knowledge. (Col. 2:2-3)

Thirdly, Christ is the "Bread of Life" to Believers. (John 6:35,48,51) He is the spiritual meat and drink of our souls, who believe in Him, they that eat Him shall live by Him. (John 6:55-57) All that spiritual nourishment, and soul refreshment, which Believers have in promises, duties, ordinances, &c. is from Christ, whose flesh is meat indeed, and His blood is drink indeed, communicated by His Holy Spirit unto His people in those duties, promises, Ordinances, &c. Christ is milk and wine, to be had with out money. (Isa 55:1) that will quench the thirst of the new-born babe, in Christ, which for much desired the Sincere milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby. (1 Pet. 2:2,3) And that will make the mournful spirit of a doubting or backsliding Believer, to have a cheerful countenance, when his broken heart is cheered and warmed, yea melted, and comforted with the blood of Christ his Redeemer. Christ is water of Life, a pure River of Living water clear as crystals flows front this Fountain in the hearts of Believers. (Rcv.22:1 ,17, John 7:37-38, and John 4:10,12,14) This will satisfy the thirsty soul, as Christ promised, (Matt. 5:7,11) therefore He cried; "If any man thirst, let him come to me and drink." Christ is the tree of Life, which beareth twelve manner of fruits, and yeildeth her fruit every month, whose leaves are for the healing of the nations. (Rev.22:2) Christ is said to make a least of Wine and fat things full of marrow, (Isa. 25:6) and He thus speaks to Believers, "Eat, O friends, drink, yea drink abundantly, O my, beloved." (Cant. 5:1) I might be exceeding large in particularizing many other titles; as namely, Christ is a Believer's justification, sanctification, redemption, (I Cot.] :30). He is also our peace, (Eph. 2:14) our Righteousness, (Jer.23:6) our advocate with the Father, (I John 2:1,2) our King, High-Priest, and Prophet; our Father, Husband, Brother, our all. Thus it may appear that Christ is all in the New-Man: but how is Christ all in all, in the New-man? I conceive, it is spoken by way of preeminence, as it is expressed, (Col .1 :18,19). That is, in all which is in the New-man, or in a Believer, Christ ought to have preeminence; First, as He is the Author thereof. For instance, that precious faith of God's Elect, which is in the New-man, is an excellent Grace, but yet Christ must have the preeminence above that faith, because He is the Author of it. (Heb.12:2) and so above all other graces, gifts, and fruits of the Spirit.

Secondly, as He is the preserver of all in the New-man, every Believer is called and sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ. (Jude 1) And the Believer is not only preserved in

the state of grace by Christ, but the grace of God wrought in him, to wit, Faith, &c. is by Christ preserved also; namely, by the intercession of Christ. "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not."

Thirdly, as He is the finisher, who strengtheneth, stablisheth, and perfecteth all in the New-man. Christ is not only the Author, but the finisher of our Faith. (Heb.1 2:2) He is the "Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending," of all those graces, gifts, and fruits of the Spirit, which are in the New-man. (Rev. 1 :8) Thus Christ "is all, and in all, in the New-man.

Reason: This was the good pleasure of the Father's will, that all fulness, all sufficiency, all spiritualness, should dwell in Christ, and should by Christ be communicated to His people, that in all things Christ might have the preeminence. (Col.1 :18,19) And thus God will have it done to the Man Christ Jesus, whom He delighted to honor, for the service Christ did unto His Father in the Redemption of His people, therefore He gave Him a Name above every name, "Christ is all, and in all." Which honor and dignity, Christ will at the last day prostrate at the feet of His Father, that God may be "all in all." (I Cor. 15:28) Moreover, this being the design of God, that Christ should communicate all graces, gifts, &c. unto His people, it was requisite, that all fulness should be in Christ, and so we read. (John 1:14-16) Yea, the great necessity of the Lord's redeemed ones to have a constant supply of grace and spiritual gifts, also a continual growth of fruits of the Spirit, requires this all-fulness to be in Christ.

Seeing "Christ is all, and in all," in the New-man; let us hence be instructed. First, to prize Christ highly, to set an high esteem upon Christ, that He might have preeminence, who is "all in all." It is that which the Prophet complained of, (Isa. 53:3). He, to wit, Christ, was despised, and rejected of men, and we esteemed Him not. We are apt to slight Christ, and to disesteem Him, because we discern not that beauty, excellency, riches, and glory, which is in Himself, we are ignorant of the worth of Christ, and know not our need of Him, and therefore we do not prize Him as we ought.

These two considerations, I desire, to propound, as motives, to prize Christ. First, Christ His worth, which I may hint unto you in three particulars, to wit, (1) The invaluable preciousness of His blood which has in it a cleansing virtue. (I John 1:7,9) And the blood of Jesus Christ His Son, cleansed us from ALL sin, thereof, we are said, to "be justified by His blood." (Rom.5:9) Let me ask you, who now believe, How did you esteem of this precious blood of Christ? When you were fighting out your mournful request to God in secret corners, for one drop of Christ's blood, one drain of the grace of God, and faith of God's Elect, one word of promise, one smile of a reconciled Father, or one beam of the light of God's countenance, did you not prize the blood of Christ above all corruptable things, as silver, gold, honor, riches, pleasure, &c. Did you not esteem the least drop of it more precious, than all creature-comforts whatsoever, as friends, liberties, and life? Again the precious blood of Christ hath a purging quality. (Heb.9:14) The blood of Christ shall purge your consciencies from dead works, to serve the living God. Sin doth both contract guiltiness and pollution, and therefore the blood of Christ doth both cleanse, and purge, pardon, and purify. Therefore we are said to be "sanctified by the blood of Christ." (Heb. 13:12) Wherefore Jesus also, that He might sanctify the people with His own blood, suffered without the gate. Oh beloved, what can be esteemed so precious to a gracious heart, as this blood of Christ, which washes away all those defilements, and uncleannesses, which through our

corruptions cleave unto us, even in our best actions, and holy duties: such of you, (as have many times groaned in prayer to God under the feeling sense and sight of any corruption) know by experience, what high esteem you have had of the blood of Christ to save you from your uncleanness.

Secondly, the unsearchable riches of His grace, (Eph.3:8) To me who am less than the least of all Saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles, the unsearchable riches of Christ. Christ's riches are of such an height, depth, length, and breadth, that passes knowledge; yea thus much is spoken of the love of Christ. (Eph.3:18) Also faith in Christ is called precious faith. (II Pet.1:1) To them that have obtained the like precious faith with us, through the righteousness of God, and our Savior Jesus Christ; yea, all the graces of Christ are the riches of the poor Saints. (James 2:5) God "hath chosen the poor of the world, rich in grace," &c Tell me, beloved, how did you esteem of the riches of Christ, when you being poor in spirit, mourned for Christ and His grace, when you discerned faith, love, humility, &c. in others of the children of God, did you prize it highly in them? Did you not account them happy, rich, and blessed, whom Christ had enriched with those jewels, and adorned with such graces? Ah how much more should you now prize CHRIST, in whom is all fulness of these unsearchable riches, and especially considering, that from His fulness you have received grace for grace, (John 1:14-16)

Thirdly, the glorious liberties of His Spirit. For where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. (II Cor. 3:17) Not any carnal liberty to sin, and so fulfill the lusts of the flesh, (Gal. 5:13) but spiritual liberty, and freedom from sin. I mean not a perfect and total freedom from all sin, as if the people of God could never sin after conversion. For if we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. (I John 1:8,10) But I mean a freedom: first, from the guilt of sin. (Rom. 8:33) And the Apostle's faith in Colossian 2: 13 "That He hath forgiven us ALL trespasses." Secondly, from the pollution or filth of sin. (Zech. 13:1) "A Fountain set open to Believers for sin and for uncleanness." (Ezek. 36:25) God promised they shall be clean, and He will save them from all their uncleanness. Thirdly, from the reigning power of sin. (Rom.6:14) "Sin shall not have dominion over you" under grace. Fourthly, from the punishment due for sin, which is the curse of the Law. (Gal.3:13) "or condemnation," (Rom.8:1) or any other satisfactory punishment.

2. The great need you have of Christ, may move you to prize Him, and set an high esteem of Him. CHRIST is the only thing necessary, and therefore the Titles given Him in Scripture, are such as declare His usefulness to Believers, for He is our life, our light, our bread, water, milk, wine, His flesh is our meat indeed, His blood our drink indeed; He is our Father, our Husband, our Brother, our Friend, our King, Priest, and Prophet; He is our justification, Sanctification, and Redemption; He is our Peace, our all. We can have no access to God but by His Mediation, no acceptance with God without His Intercession. (Rev. 8:3,4) We cannot resist the next temptation, neither can we overcome the next corruption, nor shall we be able to suffer with patience the next persecution, or endure any tribulation, unless we have renewed strength from Christ. Believers have received that grace they have from Christ. (John 1:16) And they cannot increase of grace but by Christ. (John 15: 1,2)"Lord increase our faith" said the disciples; neither can they persevere in grace unless they be preserved in Christ. (Jude 1) To conclude, we are NOTHING have NOTHING, can do NOTHING without Christ. (John 15:5) "Without me you can do nothing;" that is to say, you cannot in your own strength nor in the strength of ANY GRACE

received, do any thing to please God or to glorify God; without me, unless you abide IN me, and have renewed ability and strength FROM me, you can do nothing that God my Father will own or crown with acceptance or reward: But yet we, who are Believers, have all and abound. (Phil. 4:18) Can do all things through Christ that strengtheneth us, (Phil.4:13) can suffer the loss of all, (Phil. 3:7,8,9) yea and conquer all, nay be more than conquerors through Christ, (Rom. 8:35-39). Oh, consider your need of Christ and learn to prize Him, may He be exalted highest in your hearts, as the pearl of greatest worth, as the one thing necessary which you most of all need, that He be all in all in your communication and conversation.

2 Use. Seeing Christ is all and in all in the new man, let every one examine whether Christ be in him. (II Cor.13:5) Examine yourselves, know you not that Christ is IN you, &c. This nearly concerns you beloved, for if you have Christ you have all. Christ is all but if you lose Him you lose all; you will lose your hopes, comforts, and all your duties, yea you will lose God, Heaven, and soul, and all. It matters not what you have if you want Christ. No gifts, duties, reformations, qualifications, or other things whatsoever, will make you happy without Christ; and if you enjoy Christ, it is not material what ever you want, for "my God," (saith the Apostle) "shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Phil. 4:19) Therefore make sure that Christ is yours. Some would ask this question, How shall I so examine, that I may know assuredly that I have Christ? I answer, you must bring your hearts to the touchstone of the Word of God, and cast them into the balance of the Sanctuary and weigh them there. And to this purpose, I shall propound one Scripture of truth for your examination and try all, to wit, II Cor. 5:17. "If any man be in Christ he is a NEW creature, or creation; that is to say, he is a new-born, born again, or born of God. (John 1:12-13) "But as many as received Him ... etc., were born of God." And our Savior urged the necessity of this new-birth. (John 3:38) "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God," he "cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." (verse 5) Now every one who is a new creature in Christ, all things are become new in him, or all things are made new (as the Greek words import), to wit; first he is MADE a new man, (Eph.4:21-24; Col. 3:11) and hath put on the new-man where Christ is all and in all. Secondly, he hath a new heart. (Ezek. 36:26) A new heart also will I GIVE you, &c. That is a new will, and new affections, yea and a new spirit "will I put within you." (Verse 26) That is (Eph. 4:22) to be renewed in the spirit of our minds, to wit, a new judgment or spiritual understanding in the knowledge of God's will. (Col.1:9) Thirdly, he walks in newness of life. (Rom.6:4) "Even we also should walk in newness of life." That is, the conversation of a new creature should be such as becomes the Gospel. (Phil. 1:27) To wit, humble, harmless, and holy (I Pet. 1:15-16) And thus God hath promised in the everlasting covenant of grace; that all and every one of His people SHALL walk. (Ezek.36:27)"And I WILL PUT my spirit within you, and CAUSE you to walk in my statutes, &c." Examine yourselves, Are you a new creature? Such of you as have not put off the old man, but still have your old hearts, and your old sins, and walk in your old ways, and fulfill the old lusts of your sinful natures, are not a new creature; you are not in Christ, nor is Christ in you.

But some may thus say within them selves, I hope my soul is in a better condition; I am not so wicked and carnal as some others are, neither am I so vile a sinner as I have been formerly; but I am somewhat reformed, and have forsaken my sinful course, and begin to delight to hear Sermons, and I pray with my family. To this I would answer, although your condition be not so desperate as others, who have lived long under ordinary means of grace, and yet are not at all

wrought upon, I must tell you, Professors may (through strong conviction, horror of conscience, and fears of hell) leave the Acts of some sins, and may customarily perform some religious duties, & yet be not regenerated. Professors may have leaves like the unfruitful Fig tree, and Lamps like the five foolish virgins, they may seem to be religious, and have a form of godliness; and not be a New creature, or creation. I might instance many such in the Scriptures. Herod, (Mark 6:20) heard John gladly, and did many things. Saul, (I Sam. 10:6-9) was turned into another man, had another heart, yet unconverted: So thou mayest be another man; and not a New man; may have another heart, but not a new heart.

But I speak not this to add sorrow to the afflicted, nor to break the bruised, for though some may deceive themselves herein; Yet such of you as are born again or born of God, though but newborn babes, who have put on the New-man, have a new heart, and walk in newness of life, are in Christ, and Christ in you.

3 Use. Seeing "Christ is all, and in all in the New-man;" Let it serve for the consolation of every true believer. Christ is yours, and all things are yours. (I Cor. 3:21-23) All are yours, and ye are Christ's, and Christ is God's. Christ is your life, your light, your food, your all, and by union with Christ, you are one in God. (John 17:21) God is your God and Father. (John 20:17) All that is Christ's is yours; His Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification, Faith, Love, Humility,&c. All in all fulness was in Him, and dwells in Him for His people, to communicate to them. (Eph. 4:7) Are you full of spiritual wants? You may have supply from the fulness of Spirituals in Christ. Do you want Wisdom, Faith, Love, &c? Whatever you want, go to Christ for that grace; There is enough in Christ to satisfy the most hunger-thirsting souls in spiritual things. (Eph.1:3) "God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings, in heavenly things in Christ;" in whom are hid all the treasures of Wisdom and knowledge. (Col.2:3) Do you want power against corruption? Go to Christ for strength: His grace is sufficient for thee. (II Cor. 12:8,9) There is an all sufficiency in Christ, Christ is all, saith the text, therefore the Apostle having Christ, said, "I have all, I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Phil. 4:13-18) And know for your further consolation, that Christ is in all in the New-man, or in every true Believer.

He is in you. (Col.1:2) "Christ in you, the hope of glory;" Christ liveth in me, saith the Apostle. (Gal.2:20) Christ is; and lives in a true believer by participation of His divine Nature. (11 Pet.1:3-4) By inhabitation of His Holy Spirit, (Gal.4:6) and by communication of His saving faith. (Eph. 3:17,47) Christ is in your hearts, in your gifts, in your graces, in your performances, in all, by whom you find acceptance of your persons, and services with God your heavenly Father. (Eph. 1:6) Christ is with you, and in you in all conditions, in all relations, in all afflictions. (Isa 63:8-9) And to conclude this use, know for your increase of joy; that Christ who is all, and in all in you will abide in you forever; nothing shall be able to separate Christ and your souls. (Rom. 8:35-39) Christ is the strength of you heart, and your portion forever. (Psa. 73:26)

4 Use. Seeing Christ is all, and in all in the New-Man, suffer a word of exhortation, which will concern every one to hearken to, viz. Both such as are in Christ, and out of Christ, and I am sure every one of you are in one of these two estates, either you are in Christ, or with out Christ. The first branch of the exhortation shall be to you, who are believers, and sanctified in Christ Jesus, called saints, seeing, Christ is all, in all, may He be all in all in your justification; take ye heed you bring not any righteousness of you own, nor any grace or work of His in you, to join with

Christ, and His righteousness in point of justification. (Phil. 3:9) This glory Christ will not give to another, He is our justification, or righteousness. (I Cor. 1:30-31) Christ will not permit any coadjutor (?) concause, or cooperater whatsoever in the justification of sinners.

Consider this you who will not believe, unless you could see yourselves so holy, so humble, except you can first have such a sin subdued, you will not believe any of your sins are pardoned, until you find and feel in yourselves a soft heart, a broken heart, a praying spirit, a mourning spirit, and you cry out you are not justified. Oh, say you, if I could pray, mourn for sin, profit by the as such and such do; then I would believe; but alas, I have a hard heart, a blind mind, a perverse will, carnal affections, &c. I cannot, dare not, I will not believe that my sins are forgiven. Thus most professors would bring in (if not their own righteousness) some grace or work of God in them, to join with Christ in their justification, not considering that God justifies the UNGODLY, (Rom. 4:5) and that Christ is all, and in all in the justification of sinners.

Secondly, may Christ be all, in all in the gifts of the Spirit, and graces of sanctification; for, as you heard, He is the Author, the Preserver, and the finisher of them all, therefore may He have the preeminence. Above all set an high esteem of every gift and grace of God, account a little grace better then all the riches, honors, pleasures, and creature-comforts of this world. But you ought to prize Christ far above all His own gifts and graces in us, for He is the life of them all, the marrow and substance of them all. What is all knowledge, unless ye know Christ? (I Cor. 13) Nothing. What is all Faith, except Christ be the object of it? Nothing. Patience, temperance, and all other virtues, what are they? But either natural qualities, or moral habits unless Christ be the root of them. Nature education, and acquired gifts of Art may produce the like, yea the same, in heathens. But Christ is the luster and beauty of EACH spiritual gift and grace: that influence believers receive from Christ and those rays that come from this Sun of Righteousness upon their graces, makes them shining Saints, beautiful and all glorious within.

Hear this you poor in spirit, you new born babes in Christ, who have the persons of believers (especially preachers) in admiration, and set them up on high in your hearts, and extoll them with your tongues; because you discern so much humility, love, patience, faith, and other gifts of the Spirit, and graces of sanctification in them: should you not rather admire Christ, exalt Christ, and extoll Him, who is the purchaser, the owner, the donor, and the author of all these spiritual gifts and graces? For we have nothing but what we have received, by His grace we are what we are, and all the grace we have, from His fulness we have received it, (John 1:16) therefore give Him the glory of all, and ascribe to Him the preeminence in all, for He is all in all.

Thirdly, may Christ be all, in all your affections, words and actions. Set your affections on Christ. Oh, let the discoveries of that superlative excellency, and glorious beauty of Christ, which are made out to your souls by the Spirit and Word of God draw you to set your affections on Him. (Col. 1:1,2) Love every one and every thing that God hath put the name of Christ upon, for His sake, but chiefly set your affectionate love upon Himself (sic) love Christ in His saints, love Christ in His messengers, in His ordinances. This will quicken your desires to enjoy more of Christ, more of Christ in His saints, ministers, ordinances, and in your own hearts. Oh, may Christ be chiefest in your affections, He is altogether lovely. (Cant. 5:16) Give Him your dearest love, He is the welbeloved of His Father and yours, (II Peter 1:17) so may He be YOUR welbeloved. Christ bears you in His arms, everlasting arms of mercy, yea in His bosom. (Isa.

40:11 and 63:9) Do you bear Him in your heart that Christ be exalted highest there? Again, let the absence of Christ be the chiefest occasion of your sorrow and mourning. (Matt. 9:15) Cry after Him, enquire for Him, give Him no rest until He return: this was the practice of the spouse in Song of Sol. 3:1-4; 5:4-8. Oh how was her affections set upon her Beloved! Tell Him I am sick of love. (Cant. 5:8) Though there be many other just occasions for mourning to the saints, yet this is the chief. If a loving wife cannot think of the departure of her dear husband without sorrow, how much more sorrowful will a gracious heart be in the absence of Christ? Mary who wept, and being asked the reason by the Angel answered: "Because they have taken away my Lord." (John 20:11-16) And as Christ should be all in your affections, so let Him be in your words and actions: speak for Him, do for Him, suffer for Him, may He be the master of your communications and conferences, that you may minister grace to the hearer: what ever you do in word or deed, let all be done to the honor of Christ, for He that honors the Son, honors the Father also.

The other branch of the exhortation is to such as are in their NATURAL CONDITION, without Christ, seeing. Christ is all and in all, be exhorted to seek Christ. Paul preaching on Mars Hill to the Athenians, tells them, "God made of one blood all nations of men, that they should seek the Lord." (Acts 17: 22-27) And there be many exhortations to this purpose: as Isa 55:6-7. "Seek ye the Lord while He may be found," etc. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts . . . let him return unto the Lord." etc. The apostle Peter in his speech to Simon Magus, (Acts 8:20-23) told him his heart was not right in the sight of God, that he was "in the gall of bitterness, and in the bonds of iniquity." And he exhorted him to repent and pray to God. (vs 22) Not that any man in his natural condition can of himself come to Christ, desire Him, or seek to enjoy Him, for none can come to Christ except the Father draw him. (John 6:44 & 65) It is God that "works in us to will and to do according to His good pleasure." (Phil.2: 13) So then, saith the Apostle, it is NOT OF HIM THAT WILLETH, NOR OF HIM THAT RUNNETH, but of GOD that sheweth mercy; only know this, God REQUIRING poor sinners to use the means (sic), He hath appointed, is pleased to make that means effectual for their conversion (not - regeneration) and salvation. For if God has purposed to shew mercy, and confer His grace upon your souls, He will CAUSE you to seek unto Him. (Ezek. 36:26,27,37) A new heart will I GIVE you, & I WILL PUT my Spirit within you, and CAUSE you to walk in my statutes: Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be enquired of by the house of Israel to DO IT FOR THEM." (verse 37) God's gracious and free promises do not exclude the means He hath appointed to attain the mercies therein promised. It pleaseth Him to tie His creatures to the use of such means, when He affords it them, though He will SOMETIMES WORK WITHOUT IT. Now the ordinary means which God hath in His infinite wisdom appointed to "convert" sinners, and also to build them up in Christ, is the word preached. (Rom. 10:8,17) (SIC) This word of the Gospel God will have preached to every creature in all parts of the world. (Mark 16:15) None are exempted or prohibited from hearing the Gospel preached, but every one that hath an ear is required to hear. (Rev. 2:7) And let such as neglect the hearing of the word of God (preached by such as are CALLED and SENT of Christ) consider what the Lord saith. (Prov. 1:20-32) But albeit some of you see it is that which you ought to do, and that you had need to do, to wit, to seek the Lord; assenting to what you heard in the first use of the doctrine, that there is much worth, beauty, and excellency in Christ, and that poor lost undone sinners stand in need of Him: Notwithstanding how to obey Christ, you know not as yet. Let me tell you, God gives Christ upon Gospel terms, which are these three:

First, God in the dispensation of the Gospel propounds Christ to LOST sinners, as the ONLY necessary, and All sufficient means of salvation: Christ is the ONLY NECESSARY MEANS OF SALVATION. (Acts 4:12) Neither is there salvation in any other. And Christ is the All-sufficient means of salvation, so that we need NONE BUT HIM. (Heb. 7:25) He is able to save them to the uttermost, &c.

Secondly, God doth give Christ to lost sinners without respect to price or person. He invites them that have no money, to come and buy wine, and milk (that is to say, Christ) without price. (Isa. 55:1) And any one that will are invited to take Christ freely. (Rev. 22:17) And, whosoever will, let him take the water of life (that is, Christ) freely.

Thirdly, God requires, that those, who do receive Him SHALL DEPART from iniquity. (II Tim. 2:19) "Live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world." (Titus 2:11-15) And that they SHALL FAIL ALL, LOSE ALL, and have ALL for the sake of Christ, and take up the cross and follow Him.

You will say to me, Alas, here is my misery, to wit, although God propound Christ upon good terms to poor sinners, to me among others, I have no power of myself to receive Christ, to believe in Him, and accept of Him. True, it is not (as I said) in him, that willeth, nor of him that runneth but of God, who sheweth mercy (Rom. 9:16) It is the exceeding greatness of His power to us-ward who believe, which must be put forth in your hearts, to MAKE you believe also, according to the working of His mighty power, which He WROUGHT in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead. (Eph. 1:19-20) And you ought to wait on God in the diligent use of means until the day of His power come upon you, and then you shall be a willing, a believing people. (Psa. 110:3) I may exhort you to repent of your wickedness, profaneness, &c. as Peter did: (Acts 8:22) But God must GIVE you repentance unto life. (Acts 11:18) It is my duty to preach the Gospel to you, and to exhort you to seek Christ, (Acts 17:22,27) but it is the mere mercy and free grace of God to DRIVE you to Christ, which nothing but His everlasting love can move Him to do. (Jere. 31:3) You ought to seek, and wait, ask, and use all the means which God hath appointed, and afforded you, both secret, private, and public. (Rev. 2:29) But God must make the means effectual. (Acts 16:14) And therefore I must say, it is not in me, I cannot draw you to Christ, that is the Father's work. (John 6:44) But having exhorted you to seek Him in the use of means, there I must leave you to wait on God for the moving of His Holy Spirit where you must lie and continue like the poor impotent man at the pool of Bethesda for healing: And though as he did, so you may see many a lame, blind, deaf, dumb, naked-leprous soul get healing and go away rejoicing and praising God, and you remain still so impotent, that you cannot get into the Fountain, set open for sin and for uncleanness, nor have any that can help you in, that you may be cured: yet be not disheartened, as Christ came suddenly and unexpectedly, and healed the impotent man after long waiting; so Christ will come according to His promise to your souls that seek Him. (Mal.3:1) The "The Lord whom you seek shall come, shall suddenly come, saith the Lord of Hosts."