

A
DISCOURSE
ON
CHRISTIAN FRUITFULNESS,
BEING A
CHARITY-SERMON,
PREACHED JULY 30, 1769,
FOR THE
PUBLIC INFIRMARY
AT
LIVERPOOL.

By JOHN BREKELL.

Sic mutuo, quod doletis (i. e. Ethnici) amore diligimus, quoniam odisse non novimus: sic nos (i. e. Christiani) quod invidetis, fratres vocamus, ut unius Dei parentis homines, ut confortes fidei, ut spei coheredes.

M. MINUC. FEL. OCTAVIUS.

LONDON:

Printed for J. BUCKLAND, in Pater-noster-Row;
W. DAVENHILL, in Cornhill; and J. GORE,
in Liverpool.

M.DCC.LXIX.

[Price Eight-pence.]

TO
 JOHN TARLETON, Esquire,
 PRESIDENT,
 NICHOLAS ASHTON, Esquire,
 TREASURER,
 AND
 The OTHER TRUSTEES
 OF
 The PUBLIC INFIRMARY

AT
 LIVERPOOL,
 THIS DISCOURSE

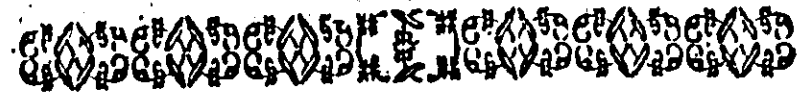
Is respectfully Inscribed

BY
 Their most humble Servant,

Liverpool,
 August 26, 1769.

THE AUTHOR.

国立公衆衛生院附属図書館	
受入先	
受入日	
登録番号	
所在	
Library, National Institute of Public Health	



PHILIPPIANS I. II.

*Being filled with the Fruits of Righteousness,
which are by Jesus Christ unto the Glory
and Praise of God.*

THIS Epistle is addressed in the name of *Paul and Timotheus*, the servants of *Jesus Christ*, "to all the Saints in *Christ Jesus*, who are at *Philippi*, with the bishops and deacons (a)." On a certain occasion there appeared to *St. Paul*, in a vision, a man of *Macedonia*, saying, "Come over into *Macedonia*, and help us." And the first city in *Macedonia*, where he preached the Gospel, in obedience to that divine call, was *Philippi*, a Roman Colony. In which place he unjustly incurred the displeasure of some

(a) Ver. 1.

interested persons, by casting out of a certain damsel the *spirit of divination*. For, “when her masters saw, that the hope of their gains was gone, they caught *Paul* and *Silas*, and drew them to the marketplace (or court of justice) unto the rulers, (b) or civil governors; and brought them also to the magistrates (c), or military officers, saying, These men, being Jews, do exceedingly trouble our city; and teach customs, which are not lawful for us to receive, neither to observe, being *Romans*,” or, citizens of *Rome*. The consequence of which proceedings was, that *Paul* and *Silas* were both severely whipped, and sent to prison; though afterwards they obtained an honourable release, and left the city (d).

St. *Paul* having met with so much opposition and bad usage at *Philippi*, it is probable he made few, if any, converts there upon that occasion, besides the two families of *Lydia*, and of the *Jayler* (e). But at the

(b) Ἀρχοντας, i. e. *Archons*.

(c) Στρατηγους; probably the captains of a Roman garrison at *Philippi*. See *Acts* v. 26.

(d) *Acts* xvi. 9—23.

(e) *Ibid.* ver. 15—33.

time,

time, when he wrote this Epistle to the *Philippians*, about eleven years after (as it is computed) the number of Christians in that city seems to have been much increased. For, we see, they had formed themselves into a regular church-society, under proper officers, both superior and subordinate, called by the names and titles of *bishops* and *deacons*. And as the members of that church might now be grown pretty numerous, so they appear to have been a commendable body of Christians; Christians of the primitive stamp, and spirit. For St. *Paul* speaks of them in very respectful terms; and expresses no little *confidence*; “that he, who had begun a good work in them, would perform (or *finish*) it, until the day of *Jesus Christ*.” Then he subjoins the following pious and affectionate prayer for them, saying, “And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more (f), in knowledge, and in all judgment; that ye may approve the things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of *Christ*;

(f) Ἐτι μᾶλλον καὶ μᾶλλον. Vid. *Hutchinson*, in *Χειρῶν Κυροῦ*. page 532.

B 2

“ being

“being filled (so it follows in the text) with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God (g).”

From which words we may observe, for our present instruction, that—“It is a very desirable thing, that Christians be filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God.”—In discoursing upon which point I propose,

First. To inquire, *When* Christians may be said to be filled with the fruits of righteousness.

Secondly. To shew the special *Obligation*, which lies upon them to be filled with these fruits; which are by Jesus Christ. And,

Thirdly. To insist upon the *argument*, or motives suggested in the text, further to recommend, and to enforce the practice of this christian duty; viz. the consideration of its being unto the glory and praise of God.

“Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God.”

(g) Ver. 6-11.

First.

First. I am to inquire, *When* Christians may be said, to be filled with the fruits of righteousness. And here a twofold subject of inquiry presents itself to us; namely,

I. What we are to understand by the fruits of righteousness. And,

II. What is implied in Christians being filled with the fruits of righteousness.

I. Our first inquiry is, What we are to understand by the fruits of righteousness. And in the general, I presume, the fruits of righteousness denote the practical force and influence, and all the good effects of religious principles, upon the hearts and lives of Christians, forming their moral temper, and governing their whole conversation. The fruits of righteousness presuppose a vital root of righteousness planted in a believing soul. And a right faith will infallibly be productive of all suitable works; because it is a living, vigorous, operative faith; but faith without works is dead (b). Therefore no true believer can be barren, or unfruitful, in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ (i). On the contrary, every sincere and real Christian will

(b) Jam. ii. 26.

(i) 2 Pet. i. 8.

study

study and strive, with holy zeal and diligence, to the best of his power and ability, to be *fruitful in every good work* (k). Every good work is a comprehensive expression, and can include no less than all the duties of a Man, and of a Christian, in the whole compass and extent of religious virtue. Because, they are all good in their kind, and beautiful in their season. Thus then, *divine duties, self duties, and social duties*, all properly come under the denomination of *righteousness*. For, they are all right, and fit, and perfectly reasonable in their places.

But let me further observe, and desire you, my Christian Friends, to take particular notice, that if any one set of these duties, above another, be *chiefly* intended here in the text, by the fruits of righteousness, they seem to be *those* last mentioned; that is to say, the *social* duties of truth, honour, and justice, benevolence, *love* and charity. For, just before (l), the Apostle devoutly prays for the *Philippians*, that their "*love*" might abound yet more and more, in "*knowledge, and in all judgment,*" or

(k) Col. i. 10.

(l) Ver. 9, 10.

sense,

sense, &c. Knowledge must direct us to the right *object* of our love and esteem; and having fixed upon proper objects of our charity and benevolence, we should pursue and embrace those objects with a warm *sense*, and feeling of christian affection. Which, having *approved the things that are excellent*, is the way to be *sincere, and without offence till the day of Christ*. For, love must be without *dissimulation* (m); and wherever it is so, Christians *will* be sincere, and preserve a uniform consistency of character through their whole behaviour from first to last.

In a word, the fruits of righteousness are the same, in effect, with the *fruit of the Spirit*. And in describing the fruit of the Spirit, the Apostle begins with *love*, as the principal and leading grace in the whole chorus. "But (says he (n), in contradiction to the *works of the flesh*, which he had mentioned before (o)) the *fruit of the Spirit* is *love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, (or fidelity; one essential property of true love and affection,) meekness, temperance.*"

(m) Rom. xii. 2. (n) Gal. v. 22, 23. (o) Ibid. Ver. 19—21.

Therefore,

Therefore, without excluding the duties we owe to *God*, and to *ourselves*, by the fruits of righteousness, in the words of our text, we may chiefly understand the *social* duties, before specified; more especially christian *love* and charity in proper exercise, under a wise and prudent direction. Accordingly a late judicious and learned Commentator, in his paraphrase on the text, expresses himself after this manner—"Being filled with the fruits of *liberality*, which are by *Jesus Christ* unto the glory and praise of God." "In which sense (as he observes) the word (i. e. *righteousness*) is often used, both in the LXX, and in the New Testament; and in this place 'tis most pertinent to the subject of the Apostle's discourse (*p*)."

Having now dispatched the *first* question, viz. What we are to understand by the *fruits of righteousness*, I proceed in the next place to inquire,

II. What is implied in Christians being filled with the fruits of righteousness; which will determine the main question, viz.

(*p*) Mr. Pierce in loc.

When Christians may be said to be filled with these excellent fruits. And here

(1) I cannot help remarking, (the notion lies so plain and obvious to every common understanding) that there is a fulness of *plenty*, of quantity, and variety, in the fruits of righteousness; which it highly becomes every Christian to aim at, aspire after, and zealously endeavour to attain, in the best manner he can. Every tree is known by its fruit. And "every good tree bringeth forth good fruit (*q*)."
But every Christian must not only bring forth fruit, and good fruit; he should likewise, according to his ability, bring forth *much* fruit unto the glory and praise of God. So *Christ* himself hath told us (*r*), "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear *much* fruit; so shall ye be my Disciples." In order then to the being properly filled with the fruits of righteousness, it is not sufficient that we bear good fruit in *kind*, but it is further necessary that we bear much fruit in *quantity* and *variety*. All the virtues and graces of the christian character must, every one in their place, be duly cultivated, and di-

(*q*) Mat. vii. 17.

(*r*) John xv. 8.

lightly improved, and regularly practised. But, what I am led, both by the *subject* and the *occasion* of my present discourse, to insist more directly upon at this time, is the most excellent virtue, and most amiable graces, of christian charity and benevolence. "And now (says the Apostle) abideth faith, hope, charity; these three; but the greatest of these is charity (s)." Let me now further observe,

(2) There is a fullness of *present satisfaction* in the fruits of righteousness. For, "the ways of wisdom are ways of *pleasantness*, and all her paths are peace (t)." But, rough and rugged are the ways of sin and folly; full of pricking thorns and briers. A guilty, self-accusing conscience is a perpetual torment and terror; whereas, on the other hand, the conscious sense of well-doing is a constant spring, and never failing source of solid joy, and lasting satisfaction. Above all, every generous act of christian love, and compassion, that god-like virtue, wonderfully dilates the heart, and swells the breast, with a sort of divine rapture, not to be expressed; but infinitely

(s) 1 Cor. xiii. 13.

(t) Prov. iii. 17.

beyond any thing, that the sottish Epicure, or the sensual worldling, ever felt, or experienced in their mean, low and sordid gratifications.

Ever memorable are those words of the Lord Jesus (v); "It is more blessed to give, than to receive." Which excellent saying recalls to mind, what is related of *Ptolomy*, son of *Lagus*, who, as we are told (w), "loved to make his friends rich; for (he said) it is better to enrich others, than to be rich one-self." But the words of our Saviour aforesaid, point out a twofold ground and occasion of comfort and satisfaction to any liberal and generous mind. "It is more blessed (said he) to give, than to receive." Which is true on a double account. If persons are in want, it is confessedly an happiness for them to receive seasonable relief from any charitable hand. But for any one to be in such easy circumstances, as not to need the charity of others, is, in common estimation, a greater felicity still. What a pleasure must it give to any person here present, to reflect with himself that he is not *now* in the same

(v) Acts xx. 35. (w) Vid. *Aelian*. Var. hist. lib. xiii. cap. 13.

distressed condition with yond poor Creatures, who are glad to take sanctuary in an Hospital, or Infirmary, as a refuge from sickness and pain, and poverty at once!— But then further; if it is a blessed thing to be exempted yourselves from such complicated evils, how much *more blessed* must it be to *give*, and to lend an helping hand for the relief of such miserable objects! For any one to have both an *hand*, and an *heart* to *do good*; O what an happiness is this!

Thus you see, there is a fulness of *present satisfaction* in the fruits of righteousness. For, “the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever (x).” For *ever* is a great word, but not too great for the occasion; for to what hath been said, I must add one thing more.

(3) There is also the fulness of a *future reward* in the fruits of righteousness. An object worthy of every Christian’s holy ambition to pursue. For the delightful prospect of such a great and excellent reward, which is to be conferred upon true worth and dignity of character, will not narrow and

(x) *Isai.* xxxii. 17.

contract,

contract, but greatly enlarge the mind, and inspire the soul with the noblest sentiments of honour and virtue. Upon this principle it is that St. *John* says (y), “Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things, which we have wrought (or *gained*) but that we receive a *full reward*.” What the Apostle is here inculcating upon Christians is the great duty of *perseverance* in their holy faith, and profession; as appears from his next words (z). “Whosoever transgresseth, and *abideth not* in the doctrine of *Christ*, hath not the Father: he, that *abideth* in the doctrine of *Christ*, he hath both the Father and the Son.” Therefore we must *persevere*, “and not be *wearied* in well-doing; for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not. As we have therefore opportunity let us do good unto all men,” &c. (a) For, the more good we do, so much the better; the better, not only for others, but also and chiefly for ourselves. Remember what the *scripture* saith (b). “He, who soweth sparingly, shall reap also sparingly; and he,

(y) 2 *Ep.* ver. 8.

(a) *Gal.* vi. 9, 10.

(z) *Ibid.* ver. 9.

(b) 2 *Cor.* ix. 6.

“ who

“who soweth bountifully, shall reap also bountifully.” So shall he receive a *full reward*; a full crop, and a rich harvest of heavenly glory and felicity.—However, let us not be so vain as to imagine, we can properly *merit* heaven by our best good works. For, “the gift of God (his *free gift*) is eternal life through *Jesus Christ* our Lord (c).” Thus, the reward is of *grace*; though still it is a reward; and it will be conferred upon all fit and worthy objects. For “every man shall receive his own reward, according to his own labour (d).” And here it may be proper to remark, that when the Apostle, after mentioning the *wages* of sin which is death, adds, but the *gift* of God is eternal life, in the words just cited; he seems to allude to those *honourary* gifts which, over and above their common *stipend*, were conferred upon brave soldiers, when they had *acquitted themselves well* on any extraordinary occasion.

The sum then of all that hath been said of Christians being *filled* with the fruits of righteousness, is this. There is a fulness of

(c) Rom. vi. 23.

(d) 1 Cor. iii. 8.

plenty,

plenty, or quantity, and variety; there is a fulness of *present satisfaction*; and there is also the fulness of a *future reward*, in the fruits of righteousness. In all which valuable and important respects it must be no less the wisdom, than the duty of every Christian to be filled with these excellent fruits.—By the way; these fruits of righteousness are what the *scripture* terms (e) *fruits meet for repentance*. Because they are such fruits, as every truly penitent and reformed sinner should, and will bring forth; according to that advice of the prophet *Daniel* to king *Nebuchadnezzar* (f), “Break off thy sins by *righteousness*, and thine iniquities by shewing *mercy to the poor*.”

Secondly. I am now to shew the special *obligation*, which lies upon Christians to be filled with the fruits of righteousness. *Which are by Jesus Christ*, says the Apostle; and in these words, I suppose, *St. Paul* briefly hinted to the *Philippians*, and in them to all other Christians, the strong obligation they were under to the being filled with the fruits of righteousness, by virtue of their common relation to *Jesus Christ*, as

(e) Mat. iii. 8.

(f) Dan. iv. 27.

his

his professed Disciples and followers, acknowledging him for their Lord and Master. In order then to point out this *obligation* more clearly and distinctly, let me observe, —The thing in question *Jesus Christ* hath strictly enjoined by his express *authority*; it is what he hath strongly recommended by his own bright and shining *example*; and he hath given the greatest encouragement to it by his rich and precious *promises*.

I. The being filled with the fruits of righteousness *Jesus Christ* hath strictly enjoined by his *express authority*. This positive injunction he hath laid upon all his Disciples (g), “Let your light so shine before
“men, that they may see your good works,
“and glorify your Father who is in hea-
“ven.” With regard to the particular grace, or virtue, of christian *love*, and *charity*, we have not only his express command for it; but our Saviour hath laid such a peculiar *stress* upon it, as to make it the *distinguishing* mark and characteristic of all his true and genuine Disciples (h). “A new com-
“mandment (said he) I give unto you, that
“ye love one another; as I have loved you,

(g) Mat. v. 16.

(h) John xiii. 34, 35.

that

“that ye also love one another. By this shall
“all men know that ye are my disciples,
“if ye have love one to another.” There-
fore St. *Paul* having enumerated, and re-
commended several of the christian graces,
adds (i), “And above all these things put
“on *charity*, which is the bond of perfect-
“ness.” This finishes and compleats the
christian character.

II. The same thing *Jesus Christ* hath strongly recommended by his *own bright and shining example*. The sacred history relates (k), “Now God anointed *Jesus* of
“*Nazareth* with the Holy Ghost, and
“with power; who went about doing
“good, and healing all that were oppressed
“of the Devil; for God was with him.” Thus, *Jesus Christ* did not shun, or decline, but industriously sought opportunities and occasions, for doing good; and that both to the bodies, and to the souls of men. Said he (l), “They, that are whole, have
“no need of the physician, but they that
“are sick; I came not to call the righteous,
“but sinners to repentance.” Next to curing the maladies of *sin-sick* minds, nothing

(i) Col. iii. 14.

(k) Acts x. 38.

(l) Mar. ii. 17.

D

engaged

engaged his attention, and exercised his charity, so much as healing men's *bodily* distempers of every kind. On which account people came far and near, and resorted to him from all quarters, to receive relief at his generous hands. Nor did his *patients* lie long under his hands; but, upon due application, they obtained a cheap and easy, a speedy and perfect cure. "That it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by *Esaias*, the prophet, saying, "He himself took our infirmities, and bore our sicknesses (*m*)."

It is at once a very pleasing, and surprising account, which we have of these transactions and operations in the Gospel history; more particularly in the following passage (*n*), "And *Jesus* went about all *Galilee*, teaching in their synagogues, and preaching the Gospel of the kingdom, and healing all manner of sickness, and all manner of disease among the people. And his fame went throughout all *Syria*: and they brought unto him all sick people, that were taken with diverse diseases and torments, and those who were possessed

(*m*) Mat. viii. 17.(*n*) Ibid. chap. iv. 23—25.

" with

" with devils, and those who were lunatick, and those who had the palsy; and he healed them. And there followed him great multitudes of people, from *Galilee*, and *Decapolis*, and *Jerusalem*, and *Judea*, and beyond *Jordan*." Thus, *Jesus Christ* went about doing good in the most open and public manner.

What a strange, affecting sight must it have been, to behold the divine Physician surrounded with such numerous crouds of infirm, and sick people, under all the different symptoms, and various forms of distemper, from time to time! Some wasted away to a skeleton by a long and lingering disease; others racked and tortured by violent acute pains; some convulsed in their limbs, and miserably distorted; others struck half dead with a palsy; some speechless; others deaf, as well as dumb; and a third sort of patients quite blind: some raging mad, and raving in their chains; and others such perfect ideots, that, alas, they had not so much thought, or sense, as to know their own ailment! What a sad spectacle was this! What a melancholy and moving sight, to behold human nature

D 2

in

in so many different shapes of misery and distress!

But lo the sudden and amazing change! By one word of his mouth, *Jesus Christ* speaks them all well in an instant; by a single touch of his hand he spreads health and vigour, ease and soundness through every constitution. The unhappy man, that was before disordered in his senses, is restored to his right mind, and feels the conscious pleasure of regular thought, and of a sound imagination. The blind opens his eyes, and looks around him with transporting wonder at every object he sees; but most of all at the pleasing sight of the divine Oculist. The deaf, with unstopped ears, hears with astonishment the loud Hosannah's with which the dumb breaks silence; and the lame man leaps and dances to the song. Moans and complaints give way to praises and rejoicings through all the relieved multitude; while every languid countenance puts on a sprightly bloom, and looks with an air of health and gladness.

Here now we might stand, and pause awhile in deep admiration. But what shall we wonder most at in this very extraordi-

nary case? The divine *power* of *Jesus Christ*; or his divine *compassion*? For, it is hard to say, *which* of the two is the more signally and illustriously displayed in these amazing miracles of mercy and pity. If I have insisted the longer upon such matters, it is in pursuance of my general plan; and with a view of recommending to *your* pity and commiseration *some* of the same sort of objects as those, who had so large a share in the charitable and compassionate regards of *Jesus Christ* himself. “Who hath left us “an example, both living and dying, that “we should follow his steps (o).” But the *dying* love of *Jesus Christ* is too copious a subject for me to enter upon at this time, without far exceeding the limits of a single discourse. Let it suffice then for the present, just to give you one *seasonable* hint upon that head, by reminding you that (p) “our Saviour *Jesus Christ* gave himself for “us, that he might redeem us from all “iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people *zealous of good works*.” And if we really are zealous of good works, we shall most certainly be *filled with the fruits of*

(o) 1 Pet. ii. 21.

(p) Tit. ii. 13, 14.

righteousness.

righteousness. The very thing, which *Jesus Christ* hath both strictly enjoined by his *express authority*; and likewise strongly recommended by his *own bright and shining example.* Nor is this all; for I must further add,

III. *Jesus Christ* hath given the greatest encouragement to it by *his rich and precious promises.* The fulness of a *future reward* I have mentioned before; and so need not enlarge upon it again in this place. However, it may be proper on the present occasion to put you all in mind that (q), “God-
“liness is profitable unto all things, having
“the promise of the life that now is, and of
“that which is to come.” And let me further observe, that the great end and design of the Gospel promises is, exciting and engaging us to be *filled with the fruits of righteousness*; as we learn from the practical use and application, which the Apostle *Peter* directs us to make of these *exceeding great and precious promises.* For, so he terms them (r); and that with the justest propriety; as, I am persuaded, you will all acknowledge, when you recollect, what

(q) 1 Tim. iv. 8:

(r) 2 Pet. i. 4.

these

these promises are; and that they are no less than promises of *mercy*, and of *grace*, and of *glory*; besides *providential supports* on our journey through this world to a better. Now, it is on the foot, and solid basis, of these very promises, that *St. Peter* grounds the following exhortation (s). “Giving
“diligence, add to your faith virtue; and
“to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge
“temperance; and to temperance patience;
“and to patience godliness; and to godli-
“ness brotherly-kindness; and to brother-
“ly-kindness charity. For (so he adds)
“if these things be in you, and abound;
“they make you *that ye shall* neither be *bar-*
“*ren*, nor *unfruitful* in the knowledge of
“our Lord *Jesus Christ.*” The same religious use and improvement of the divine promises *St. Paul* hath more briefly urged upon Christians in these words (t); “Having
“therefore these promises (dearly beloved)
“let us cleanse ourselves from all filthiness
“of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in
“the fear of God.”

I have now endeavoured to shew (as I proposed under the *second* general head of

(s) Ubi Supra. ver. 5—8.

(t) 2 Cor. vii. 1.

discourse)

discourse) the special *obligation*, which lies upon Christians to be *filled with the fruits of righteousness*; which are by *Jesus Christ*; who hath strictly enjoined the thing by his *express authority*; strongly recommended it by his own *bright and shining example*; and, finally, given the greatest encouragement to it by his *rich and precious promises*.

Thirdly. I am now, in the last place, to insist upon the *argument*, or motive, here suggested in the text, to recommend, and to enforce the practice of this christian duty; namely, the consideration of its being *unto the glory and praise of God*. But, when we speak of doing any thing *unto the glory* of God, we do not mean making any *addition* to his essential glory, which is a thing impossible. For, God's essential glory consists in his own glorious, infinite and unchangeable perfections. Therefore doing any thing unto the glory of God, is acting in such a manner, as to express, by our behaviour, an honourable, worthy and becoming sense of the divine perfections; representing the Deity, both to ourselves and others, as that glorious Being which he really is in himself. This is properly giving unto the Lord
the

the glory due unto his name (v); which redounds to his *praise*; for it reflects such a lustre and glory upon the name of God, as naturally tends to procure him honour and applause before all the world. And thus it is unto the *glory and praise* of God.—Now, that this is really the case, when Christians are filled with the fruits of righteousness, may be made appear in sundry important views; particularly, if we consider the divine Being as the *God of nature and providence*; as the *supreme object of christian worship*; and as the *original author of the christian Institution*.

I. As the God of *nature and providence*. Under this head I would chiefly confine my thoughts to the Deity, considered as the wise former of *human nature*, and the sovereign disposer of *human life*.

If we open our eyes, and look abroad in the world, and take a general survey of human life, in its various scenes and circumstances, we shall plainly perceive, that mankind are here placed in a state of *mutual dependance* on each other. And so they want one another's assistance, to make them

(v) Pf. xxix. 2.

as happy as they might be; and as the kind Parent of the universe is doubtless willing they should be. Particularly, "The rich and poor meet together; the Lord is the maker of them all (*w*): and he made them both for wise ends and purposes of mutual subserviency to one another's happiness. Such a constitution of things very clearly shews it to be the *will* of God, which is the supreme law, and agreeable to the *scheme* of his all-disposing providence, that we should be aiding and assisting to each other, by a proper discharge of every social duty, and friendly office. Consequently this behaviour is unto the glory and praise of God, regarding him as the supreme disposer of human life in its various scenes and differing circumstances.

Again; if from the *outward circumstances* of mankind we turn, and direct our thoughts to their *inward dispositions*, we shall find the one well and wisely adapted to the other (*x*). "For human nature is so framed *within*, as to be susceptible of any impressions from *without* according to the different state

(*w*) Prov. xxii. 2.

(*x*) *Format enim natura prius nos intus ad omnem Fortunarum habitum.*

HORAT. *De Arte Poetica.*

" and

"and posture of things;" as one of the ancients hath observed. Moreover, there is a natural inclination to *society* planted in the heart of man. For, as another celebrated writer of antiquity remarks (*y*), "We are framed by nature *sociable* creatures." And, whether *friendship* arises only from *weakness* and *want*; or, as the same author hints (*z*), from a certain *instinct* of nature; so it is, that there is a strong propensity in mankind to social intercourse one with another; and we seem to be linked together, as it were, by inclination, as well as by interest. Hence proceeds a natural *sympathy* with each other, as fellow-members of one and the same body. And so the human heart is instantly struck, and sensibly affected, at the sight of any miserable object. *Compassion* is indeed such a genuine property of human nature, as that it is commonly called by the name of *humanity*; as if he, who is destitute of this amiable virtue, had put off the nature, and deserved not the name of a man, much less of a Christian.

(*y*) *Ita natos esse nos, ut inter omnes esset societas quedam &c. M. T. CICERO, De Amicitia.*

(*z*) *Ibid.*

The question then is (if it can be any question at all) Who is it, that hath *formed* us thus, and fashioned our hearts so much alike, that they answer as *face to face* (a)? Who is it, that hath inspired these breasts of ours, with such a sensibility of tender feelings; and warmed our bosoms with such a glow of kind and benevolent affections? Who, but the *God of the spirits of all flesh*, hath planted his own oracle within us, like the *Urim and Thummin* in *Aaron's* breast-plate (b), and made every man a living *law to himself*? Therefore to abound in good offices, and to be *filled with the fruits of righteousness*, is most conspicuously unto the glory and praise of God, as the God of nature and providence; more particularly, as the wise former of human nature, and the sovereign disposer of human life. Because it is piously following a divine *instinct*, or *impulse* within us, and the *calls* of divine providence without us, at one and the same time.

II. It is likewise unto the glory and praise of God, as he is the supreme *object* of christian worship. This consideration may

(a) Prov. xxvii. 19.

(b) Exod. xxviii. 30.

have

have its use and weight still; though it was more peculiarly proper to be urged in the case of the *Philippians*. For, as we have seen before, *Philippi* was a *Roman Colony*; it was an *Heathen City*, where idolatry was publicly professed as the established Religion without a Toleration. Therefore in those days there was a sort of competition between the God of the *Jews* and Christians (who both alike maintained the doctrine of the *unity*) and the many idols, or false gods of the *Gentiles*. And as persons of all professions would naturally be solicitous for the honour and dignity of their several and respective Deities (witness that popular cry (c), "Great is *Diana* of the *Ephesians*") so it highly concerned every Christian to be prudently zealous for the honour of his own God, who alone deserved that name. And accordingly, when the Christians behaved well, maintained a good character, and excelled in *the fruits of righteousness*, this greatly tended to the *glory* and *praise* of the true God, whom they worshipped. For, when the *Gentiles* saw their *good works*, they would naturally be led

(c) Acts xix. 28—34.

thereby

thereby to glorify God in the day of visitation (d).
 —But, as I hinted before, the same consideration of advancing the glory of God, as the supreme *object* of christian worship, may still be of some weight and moment; and therefore it should have a proportionable influence, and proper effect, upon all christian professors. For, Christians in every age, and nation, ought always to have the honour of God much at heart; and do what they can, to support the credit of true Religion, by “walking worthy of God, who hath called us to his kingdom and glory (e).” “Whatever ye do (says St. Paul (f)) do all to the glory of God
 —To conclude this *Argument*.

III. The same thing is unto the glory and praise of God, as the original *Author* of the christian dispensation. “God, who at sundry times, and in diverse manners, spake in time past to the fathers by the Prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son;” says the Apostle to the *Hebrews* (g). Therefore the Gospel of *Christ* is the *word of God*. And it is a

(d) 1 Pet. ii. 12.

(e) 1 Thess. ii. 12.

(f) 1 Cor. x. 31.

(g) Chap. i. ver. 1, 2.

word

word of “*grace and truth*, which came by “*Jesus Christ* (b),” the *promised Saviour* of the world. If therefore we cultivate a right christian temper, and imbibe the true spirit of the Gospel, we shall thereby do honour to God, as the kind author of this gracious dispensation. We shall then “shew forth his *praises*, who hath called us into his “*marvelous light* (i).” Christians “walk “*worthy* of the Lord unto all pleasing, “when they are *fruitful* in every good “*work* (k).” And so this, in short, is the way to “*adorn* the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things (l);” more especially when we have learned, and are effectually “*taught of God*, to love one another (m).”

Thus, you see, considered as the God of nature and providence, as the supreme object of christian worship, and as the original author of the christian dispensation; in all these different views it is unto the glory and praise of God, that Christians be filled with the fruits of righteousness. But here let me add, there is one sort of fulness, which we should not desire, but be upon our guard

(b) Joh. i. 17.

(i) 1 Pet. ii. 9.

(k) Col. i. 10.

(l) Tit. xi. 10.

(m) 1 Thess. iv. 9.

I

against

against it ; I mean, a fulness of *satiety*. We should never *faint*, or tire, and be *weariy in well-doing* ; nor think that we have done good enough already, when we have a fair call and opportunity to do more. Upon the whole then we may briefly observe,

(1.) Barren, unfruitful Christians are a dishonour to God, a discredit to religion, and therefore a disgrace to themselves ; for they act *monstrously* out of character.

(2.) Fruitful Christians should aim and endeavour to be more fruitful still. By an holy *emulation* (which, by the way, is a different thing from vain *ostentation*) we should study and strive, to excel ourselves and one another in that respect. Therefore let us “ consider one another, to provoke unto love, and to good works (n).” And, to this end, let us put ourselves, and one another in mind, that “ God loves a cheerful giver (o).”

(3.) How amiable and excellent is the christian character ! Let it be the matter of our most zealous ambition to exemplify it in ourselves, and thereby set before others a fair pattern of the christian virtues, in all

(n) Heb. x. 24.

(o) 2 Cor. ix. 7.

their

their divine beauty and heavenly bloom.”
 “ Finally, brethren, (as the Apostle addresses himself again to the *Philippians* (p))
 “ whatsoever things are true ; whatsoever things are honest ; whatsoever things are just ; whatsoever things are pure ; whatsoever things are lovely ; whatsoever things are of good report ; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise,
 “ think on these things.”

The CONCLUSION.

HAVING now finished my *subject*, I take leave to add a few words upon the present *occasion* ; with an eye to that particular *object* of charity, which I am in a more especial manner to recommend to you and to myself at this time. What I mean (you know from the notice that was given the last Lord's day) is our *Public Infirmary*.—Every body, I presume, will allow it to be a *real* act of charity, which is exercised in this case. For, want and weakness, poverty, pain and sickness conspire

(p) Chap. iv. ver. 8.

F

together

together at once, to move our compassion and bespeak relief.—As it is a real, so it is unquestionably a *great* act of charity, to pity, and relieve such numbers of distressed and miserable Creatures, as may succeed one another from time to time upon this charitable Foundation; if it can be well supported.—How great a charity *that* is, which I am now recommending, must appear from the *extensiveness* of the noble plan, which takes in all fit and proper objects both in Town and Country. Thus yonder stately Edifice, stretches out its arms, as it were, and opens its large and hospitable bosom, to receive all comers from every quarter far and near, when properly recommended. But then, as a *consequence*, I must add,—This charity is an *expensive* charity, which cannot be maintained without the joint efforts, and united endeavours of charitable and well-disposed persons. For, such a multitude of Patients cannot be provided with food and physic, suitable attendance, and all proper accommodations for soul and body, but at a vast expence; even with the best œconomy, and most frugal management.—However, expensive as it

is, the thing is *practicable* after all. The grand scheme may be carried into execution by the combined force of many warm hearts and liberal hands. And, which may induce us to concur more chearfully in the good design, this same charity is a *well-known* charity. For, the scene of this charity lies *here* in our Town own and Neighbourhood; though its salutary effects, and the refreshing streams of this common *Bethesda* spread far and wide.—To all which let me add, it is a *well-ordered* charity. For, the Gentlemen concerned in the execution of this important trust, are persons of judgment, honour and integrity, in their several *departments* and *professions*. So that the whole affair is conducted with proper care and skill, and the desired success in all remediable or relieveable cases. Moreover, exact accounts are kept of all *subscriptions* and *benefactions*, *payments* and *disbursements*; and exposed every year in print to publick view and inspection. So that all persons may see how the balance stands; and satisfy themselves by ocular demonstration, that, whatever is contributed to the *Liverpool Infirmary*, is rightly applied, and so as

to answer the kind intention of the generous Donor.

After all, I am far from advising you, my dear christian Friends, to limit, or confine your charity to this one single object; great as it is. There be many other occasions for exercising your charity, both public and private. And I do not see, for my part, how any persons of ability can fairly excuse themselves from attending to every such call of providence, how often soever it is repeated.—Besides our *Infirmary*, there is another public and exceeding useful charity in this Town, which, I verily think, highly merits the attention of the rich and opulent among persons of all denominations.

I very well remember, that, some time after I had preached the first *Infirmary-Sermon* in this place, the late pious Alderman *Blundel*, in company with his worthy Son-in-law, the late Mr. *James Crosby*, waited upon me with a request, that I would please to do as much for the benefit of the *Charity-School*; after the example of the *Clergy*, in all the Churches of this Town.—My answer was; I would consult my friends upon the subject of his proposal; and,

and, if they agreed to it, I should not object against it. But, at the same time I made so free, as to tell him, that I was afraid the motion would meet with some obstruction amongst the Dissenters. For, they had often complained, that the *Charity-School* was erected upon a too *narrow*, not to say *uncharitable*, foundation. Because the *Latin* Inscription upon the front of the Building sets forth, That the School was designed for the education of youth in *the principles of the Church of England*.—To which Mr. Alderman *Blundel*, the generous Founder and Patron of that excellent charity, replied—“It was contrary to his own inclination that such an inscription was fixed there; but some zealous Churchmen, who had then great influence in the Town, insisted upon it; and had he not complied with their humour, he had too much reason to fear the whole design would have miscarried, and come to nothing.”—This I *then* thought, and think *still*, was a very good apology.

Well; according to my promise, I *did* consult my friends upon the occasion; but I met with no sufficient encouragement to proceed

proceed upon the good Alderman's plan. Nor, do I now mention the thing with any design at all to *impose* it upon you. For, as I believe many of you can witness for above *forty* years past, it was never my way to bear hard upon my people. However, I thought proper on this occasion to *point* towards the Charity-School, as an object worthy of general attention; and well-deserving the encouragement particularly of *you*, my rich and wealthy friends, in such way and manner, as you shall judge most expedient. And I rejoice that some of you contribute generously to it every year.

With regard to the *objection* aforesaid, it is, in my humble opinion, of no great weight or moment. For, as both Churchmen and Protestant Dissenters equally hold the *Scripture* to be the christian *Rule of Faith* (q); so their *principles* differ not so much in *essentials* or fundamentals, as in *circumstantials* and ceremonials. Besides, the children of Dissenters are not excluded the benefit of the Charity-School; but,

(q) See the VIth article of the Church of England, and the IIIrd answer in the Assembly's larger Catechism.

to my certain knowledge, when there is room, they are taken in, with other children, upon proper recommendation. And after all, when those same children come out of the Charity-School, they are at liberty to think, and to judge for themselves; and so they may chuse and embrace that religious system and profession, which they like best, and most approve, in riper years (r).

Now the Lord make you perfect in *every good work*, to do his Will, working in you that, which is pleasing in his sight, through *Jesus Christ*; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.

(r) "For my own part (says a very sensible and judicious Friend) while they are in a public charity, I think it absolutely necessary, they should all go to one place of worship; else there would be excuses made, and they would go to no Church at all, without a person to attend every party of *Scholars*: which would most certainly cause much trouble, and a deal of irregularity."

On the CHARITY-SCHOOL, and the
PUBLIC INFIRMARY, at *Liverpool*.

YOND *Hospital*, and *Charity fair School*,
Like guardian-angels, watch o'er *Liverpool*.
There *fruits of righteousness* with beauty grow,
From whence may double blessings ever flow.*
Kind Providence still smile upon the town,
With aspect mild, without a single frown.
Let party-zeal, good neighbours, now subside;
And take, in *doing good*, an holy pride:
Glorious ambition; when, in doing well,
All strive themselves, and others, to excel!

Christians, remember, it is mutual love,
Must form your souls for social bliss above.
Faith is but fancy; *hope* is mere presumption;
If sick'ning *Charity's* in a consumption.
What *Hospital* can heal, or *School* make wise,
The stupid fools, that know not heaven to prize?
Whose idol, *Mammon*, is their only trust,
A poor dependance when reduc'd to dust!
But, heavenly-minded men *lay up in store*
A good foundation, when *Time* is no more.

* See the Honourable and Reverend Mr. *Stanley's* judicious
Sermon (page 12, 13, &c.) preached in the old Church at
Liverpool, before the Trustees of the Public Infirmary,
May 9, 1750.

BOOKS published by the same AUTHOR,
and sold by J. BUCKLAND in Pater-
Noster-Row.

I. EUROCLYDON—Or, the Dangers of
the Sea, considered, and improved; in
some Reflections on St. PAUL's Voyage and
Shipwreck, *Acts* xvii.

II. LIBERTY and LOYALTY—Or, a Defence
and Explication of the Subjection to the present
Government, upon the Principles of the Revo-
lution.

III. DIVINE ORACLES—Or, the Sufficiency
of the Holy Scriptures, as a Rule of Religion,
asserted according to the *Sixth* Article of the
Church of England. And the concurrent Tes-
timony of Scripture and the Fathers, in Behalf
of Tradition discussed.—In Answer to a Book,
intituled, “A full, true, and comprehensive
“View of Christianity, &c. during the Four
“first Centuries—laid down in Two Cate-
“chisms,”

IV. HOLY ORDERS—Or, an Essay on Or-
dination.

V. AN ESSAY on the Hebrew Tongue; being
an Attempt to shew — That the Hebrew
Bible might be originally read by VOWEL-LET-
TERS without VOWEL-POINTS. In Two Parts.

VI. REGENERATION, &c.—Or, a Discourse on
Being Born Again. *John* iii. 3, 4, 5.

VII. A DISSERTATION upon Circumcision,
containing an Inquiry into the Original of this
Religious Rite, &c.

BOOKS sold by J. BUCKLAND.

VIII. The GROUNDS and PRINCIPLES of the
Christian Revelation, illustrated in Twenty Dis-
courses.

IX. A DISCOURSE on Music, chiefly Church-
Music, occasioned by the Opening of the new
Organ at St. Peter's Church, in LIVERPOOL,
April 30, 1766. Being the Substance of a Ser-
mon preached the Lord's-Day following.

X. The DOUBLE QUESTION discussed in a
Dissertation on *Jeremiah*, chap. xxxi. ver. 29.
Occasioned by a late Controversy about Children's
Suffering for the Crime of their Parents; and
Idolatry being punished by the Judge, as men-
tioned *Job* xxi. 19. xxxi. 26, 27, 28.

XI. A DISCOURSE on the Sufferings of *Christ*,
and the Sorrows of his Friends upon that Oc-
casion: Being a Sermon adapted to a late Funer-
al Solemnity, and preached *January* 31, 1768,
at *Kay-Street* Chapel, in LIVERPOOL; with a
Supplement.

✂ With Six Tracts on Baptism and Prayer.

