

Sermons on John 17 - By Samuel Pierce - Sermon 19,

Joh 17: 23

I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

These words conclude the last petition in this most solemn and important prayer, offered up by our Lord Jesus Christ to his Father, on the behalf, and for the benefit of all his church and people throughout the whole world. It is suited to them whilst they remain on earth, and the efficacy of it will extend to eternity. Some of the blessing here prayed for, cannot be enjoyed but in heaven. Our Lord here opens his heart to the very uttermost, and expresses it so fully, as that he cannot exceed it in glory. He is hereby pleased to show us how infinitely he loves us, as the elect of God; as the chosen of God, as the gift of the Father unto him; as his own bride; his own members; his brethren; his companions, who are to live in the closest union and communion with himself, to everlasting. Our Lord begins this which I style the third part of his prayer, in which he so particularly includes the whole body of the elect, with these words at the twentieth verse, Neither pray I for these alone, (i.e. for his apostles, for whom he hath been praying from the sixth to the nineteenth verse inclusive) but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. This is, as I may so say, his introduction to this part of his prayer. He hereby distinguishes it, from what he had offered up before. He then particularly expresses the persons whom he prays for. It is, For them also which shall believe on me through their word. These persons are the elect, Yea, they are all the elect, whether called, or uncalled, even down to the very end of time. The prayer itself is contained in three verses, i.e. 21, 22, 23. These are the words of it, That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us; that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one, I in

them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. The first of these verses contains the prayer, the two following are explanatory of it. We learn from hence, the goodness of our Lord. Who is pleased most graciously to condescend, to explain his own meaning in the words which he offered up in prayer for us. That we having right apprehensions of them, might enjoy the benefit and instruction contained in them. The prayer itself, with the first part of its explanation, contained in these words, And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one; this has been already opened and set forth. I am now therefore come to the second part of its explanation, which is contained in the words of my present text, I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. As the subject matter of this prayer, is for union to the person of Christ, and the Father in him, and for the fruits of it, which are, a communication of glory from Christ the head, to the elect as his members, so the words before us, explain and declare how it will be perfected by an indwelling of the persons in Godhead, in the bodies and souls of the elect, through the God-man, as the medium of it. This will be the consummation of it in eternal glory. In opening the words of my text, I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. I will attempt the following order and particulars.

First, I will speak briefly, of our union with God, and Christ, and of their indwelling in us. I in them, and thou in me.

Secondly, the perfection of the union between Christ, and the elect, is, that they may be made perfect in one.

Thirdly, that one end which will be answered by the open and full manifestation of this union, and the consummation of it, will be this;

that the world, the rest of mankind left out, who have no part nor portion in this union, shall know, that the Father hath sent Christ, (which will be at the last day). Our Lord's words are, I in them, and thou in me: that they may be made perfect in me, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me.

Fourthly, our Lord says to his Father, hereby it shall be known, that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. By union of saints with me, and thee, and by their being thus perfected in one. It shall hereby be openly made known, that I am their eternal head. It shall thus be made conspicuous to all the world, that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me, as their head of union.

These are the particulars of my present subject; in speaking to each of them. I hope to unfold my text unto you.

And first, I am to speak of our union with God and Christ, and of their indwelling in us, according to our Lord's words, I in them, and thou in me.

As it respects our, or the union of the elect to God, Christ, God-man, is the medium and sole foundation of it. The originality of it, or the source, and spring of it, is the love of the Three divine persons, to Christ, the head of his body the church, and to the elect church in him. As Christ was chosen to be the head, and the elect were chosen in him, and the head of Christ is God, so the elect are in God, as truly as they are in Christ. Their title is, the beloved of God. Ro 1: 7 which title is expressive of the everlasting love of God towards them. We find Paul writing to the saints at Thessalonica, he addresses them thus, Unto the church of the Thessalonians in God the Father. See 1Th 1: 1. It is a very peculiar phraseology. We have it again in his second epistle to that church, chapter 1: 1, Unto the church of the Thessalonians in God, our Father; we have it no where but in these two places in all the Bible. It is generally in Christ, but in the fore cited passages it is in God the Father, and in God our

Father, which fully expresses, that the elect are in God, as truly as they are in Christ; they cannot be in God, but they must have union to God. They were in him by everlasting love to their persons. They were in his heart from everlasting. They were in him, by his eternal act of election, which passed in his infinite mind before all worlds. They were in Christ before the foundation of the world. They could not be in Christ, but they must be united unto Christ. And if united unto him, they must be united and interested in all the persons in God. So far as to have a grace union, which will issue in a glory union, with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, so as for the Holy Three to delight in them in the person of the God-man, as one with him, as their ever-living, and everlasting head. If God, and Christ, have union to the elect, then there cannot but be a communion between God, and Christ, and the elect. And this communion must be agreeable to the nature of that union, with which God has been pleased to favor the elect. Now this union must be such, as is suitable with the goodness of God, and the state of the elect creature. It cannot go beyond the bounds of super creation grace. The elect cannot be taken up into immediate union with God. No, this is utterly impossible. Whilst there is an essential union, and communion with the eternal Three, in the self-existing essence, yet this cannot be imparted. No alteration can be made, or take place here. The man Christ Jesus cannot be taken into union with the essence. He is taken into union, and communion, with one in the essence. He is, by personal union, on with the essential word, the only begotten Son of God. Hereby it is that the whole fullness of the Godhead dwells immutably, and invariably in him, so as it cannot in any besides himself. He is God-man, the man in God. This grace of union, is the highest display of it, in Christ. None but the God-man, will be advanced so high, as to be one person with the Son of the living God. The union between God and Christ, and the elect, is far below this. I must say it is infinitely below this. I conceive it absolutely necessary thus to express myself, on this most wonderful subject. Lest any wrong thought of it should be entertained in the mind, concerning this most sublime doctrine of the gospel. Christ as

God-man, is indeed the foundation and corner stone of union, between God and the elect. But this comes under the consideration of his being constituted by the eternal Three, in their settlements of grace, the head of an elect body. As such, they being chosen in him, and united to him, as their head, they are united to God, who is head of Christ. And thus they have union to God, and Christ. Such as one, as is the uttermost manifestation of God's good will unto them; and his everlasting love is the bond of union unto them. Hence it is an immutable union, because his love is an everlasting love. So that Paul says, I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Ro 8: 38-39. God's love to us, is in Christ Jesus our Lord. All God's love to us, is fixed upon us in him. So long as God loves Christ Jesus our Lord, so long he will love us in him. As God cannot but love Christ Jesus our Lord, so he cannot but love us. Therefore there can be no separation from the love of God, in Christ Jesus our Lord towards us, because the Father loved us in him, before the world was. He loved us, as he loved him. Thou hast, (says Christ to the Father) loved them, as thou hast loved me. See the last words of our present text. Now as union is for communion, and the higher the union, so the communion must be in proportion to it, even so it is here. The elect being united to God, in Christ, and Christ their head being one with them, so he dwells in them, and they dwell in him. So also, God the Father dwells in them, and God the Spirit dwells in them. Hence, our Lord, here speaking of the perfection of the union to him, and his Father, at the last day, and for evermore, says, I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one. Which indwelling of the Father, and Christ, in saints, as here spoke of, and as intended by our Lord, is the fruit of union, and which will be the completion of it, in the New Jerusalem state, and to all eternity. All our communion with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, on earth, in grace, mercy, and salvation, is the fruit and effect of union. I in them, and thou in me. I, says Christ, dwelling in their minds, possessing all their spiritual

faculties, and filling them with all the fullness of God, so as to give them the fullest enjoyment they can have, of my person, love, salvation, and glory. And thou in me; as thou possessest me, as God-man, and also as their Head, and Mediator. As thou dwellest in me after an unspeakable manner, so do thou in them in a proportionable manner and degree, let them have their portion and enjoyment of our loves also, so far as they are, and shall be capable thereof. Thou dwellest in me, in the full knowledge of all thine infinite love to me, as God-man. In an infinite complacency of all thy vast designs, which were to be accomplished in me, and by me. I dwell in thee, as the object of thine everlasting delight, and joy. So Father dwell in these thine elect, for whom I am deeply engaged. On whose behalf I came from thy bosom. And on whose account I am going to lay down my all, to take it up again, when I have finished their complete salvation. Do thou, Holy Father, give them, through thy word, and the teachings of thy Holy Spirit, such a knowledge of their union, and interest in me, and thee, and do thou so lead their views forward to the nuptial day, when I shall openly introduce them into the kingdom of glory, as may animate their minds, and cause them to long for the most complete knowledge and communion they can ever have, of their union with thee, and me, founded on the ancient settlements of grace.

I have spoken in the former sermon, and I might say in former sermons, on this most divine prayer, concerning union to Christ, God-man, and the Father in him. And that it is of ancient date; that all the elect are, and were united to Christ God-man, their eternal head, and medium of union and communion with God, so as leaves me little, or nothing further of it now. There is no need of it, because my text is but an explanation of it; showing the blessedness thereof. It declares it to be an indwelling of the Father, and the Son, in the mind. When this is thus expressed, it is not intended, or designed, to set aside the Holy Spirit. No, he is as much interested in all this grace, towards the elect, as the Father and the Son are. He is understood by Christ, as thus equally interested in the elect, and their

communion with the Father, and himself, as such, our Lord had spoken of him in the sermon which he immediately delivered, before this prayer. But as he dwelt in Christ, and assisted him in this prayer, as he did also in offering up himself, therefore he is not mentioned by our Lord. Yet he it was, who according to the economy of the covenant of grace, helped Christ in this expressing his heart, and will to his Father. And therefore this is the reason why he is not mentioned. If this is the second explanation, our Lord Jesus Christ gives us of his prayer, contained in these words, That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me: then let us value the same most highly. Because the petition is the greatest which our Lord puts up for his people. And he having explained it, therefore it becomes us to study the same. Let us also from hence learn to estimate union to Christ, and the Father in him, beyond all times acts of grace. Let us value the love of Christ, in opening this blessing so feely and fully. Let us learn to study more than ever, what we were in Christ, before the foundation of the world; what we were in Christ, when he bore our sins, and carried our sorrows; what we are now in Christ; and what we shall be in Christ, when all is boundless eternity. Let us thank our most precious Lord, that he hath so fully and clearly explained himself, upon these important subjects, as he hath done. If the grace of union is followed with the most blessed and sacred indwelling of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, and that in a similarity to their indwelling in each other, and somewhat like to their indwelling in Christ, God-man; let us learn from hence, to consider what the great blessedness and perfection this union Christ hath been speaking of, will consist in. It will be in the indwelling of the Father, and Christ, and Spirit in us. I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one. And this brings me to my next head.

To show, secondly, that the perfection of the union, betwixt Christ, and the elect, is thus expressed by him, that they may be made perfect in one. His own most important words are these, I in them,

and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one. This will be manifested clearly, and accomplished openly, in the day of glory, that is at the latter, or last day. That day of wonders, when the whole mystery of God's will concerning the whole election of grace being accomplished, and the mystic Bride of Christ, being in the utmost meaning, made like unto her great Head and Husband, the glory union, with all the mysteries of it, will be openly revealed. This will be at the second coming of Christ. When the elect are raised from the dead, when they are in the kingdom state. Then all the elect of God, having been by redemption, and through the agency, influence, and workmanship of the Holy Spirit, brought up unto and formed according to election and eternal purposes, for the Lord's praise, they will be raised up most expressly, and exactly, to that amazing glory pattern drawn in the infinite mind of the Father from everlasting, in his predestination of love towards them. Then this part of our Lord's prayer will be exactly accomplished. That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us. Yea, one into us. So says a learned man, the original expresseth it. Then what our Lord spake in the former verse will take place, And the glory which thou gavest me, I have given them. That is in the transactions and settlements from everlasting. Then it was, Christ received glory as well as grace for them, that they may be one, even as we are one, in the open glory of these settlements, even as we are one; in the covenant and foundation of them. The Lord Jesus Christ is to have his open bride, the church, shine forth in all her glory. He is entered unto his open glory union, openly to stand in God's own Son, that now God and man are openly on person in the Mediator. And from hence arise the open glory union of all the members. At the latter day, he will cause them openly to stand in him, as he stands in God. And thus by him, to stand in God with him, and therewith to be one into them. I have quoted this from Mr. Joseph Hussey, as I think it casts great light upon the subject before us. Thus the union Christ here prays for, which subsisted from everlasting, and upon the foundation of it, the covenant of grace, and the suretyship engagements of Christ rested,

is to be made complete in all its glorious effects, and to the uttermost display of it, in the kingdom of glory, or the glory in which Christ, who is the head of his church, will present her to his divine Father, when he shall openly shine forth as the glorious bridegroom of his church, at the latter day. This may well be considered by us, the time, if we may so speak of it, when this part of our Lord's prayer, I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, shall be accomplished. We are sure, not a word of our Lord can ever fall to the ground. The depths of Christ's gospel are like his person, infinite. The union of Christ to his people, is an amazing subject. It is an ancient union; it is an eternal union; it is an union made known, and enjoyed in time; it is an union, which will be openly, and manifestly declared, in all its glory and perfection in the latter day; it is a grace union; it is also a glory union. As it is the foundation of all the gracious acting's of Christ, towards his church in a time state, so it is of all the glory, he will put on his church, and communicate unto his people at the last day. I cannot but lament we are most of us, so great strangers to these important and heavenly truths. Depend on it, we are great losers hereby. The people of God lose much, because they neglect truths of the greatest importance. In the present day, they are too neglectful of important truths. They are willingly ignorant of them. They do not see the glory and excellency contained in every part of divine revelation. We treat the Scriptures in the present day, as though the less we knew the deep things of God, so much the better. Alas! Alas! This, let us think of it as we may, is to cast contempt on God himself. Nor will it serve to say, we do not so mean or intend. It is a matter of fact, we are too neglectful of those divine truths and doctrines, which concern the glory of Christ. The ancient and glorious settlements of grace, are too little in our thoughts. It is sensibly felt and by some very expressively confessed, and acknowledged, that the influences of the Holy Spirit are very greatly suspended. Yet the cause is overlooked. Most assuredly one grand reason why we have so little of his sacred presence with us, and his power and influence manifested amongst us, may be laid to the account of neglecting to preach supernatural,

spiritual truth, and the mysteries of the everlasting gospel. The person of Christ; his union to his church; the church's union unto him; his love to his church; his Father's love, and his Spirit's love to him, as God-man; to him as the head of his body the church; and to the bride the Lamb's wife in him, are gospel truths. The everlasting delight Christ takes in his church; how he has viewed her through every state she has passed; what he has been to her, and done on her behalf; how he will one day present her as a bride, fully adorned for her husband; how she will then shine forth in all the glory in which he viewed her from everlasting, this is gospel. The presentation he will make of her to the Father, when all the vast designs of grace are fully accomplished in her, as raised up to that state of grace and glory, in which she was by eternal election; then she will be all glorious indeed. Her raiment will be wrought gold. Then her union to her grace, and glory head, will be consummated. Then this prayer of our Lord's will be fully accomplished, I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one. The mystic body of Christ, will then be made complete in her glory head. The whole stain of sin obliterated. There will be no sin in her, she will be adorned with all her nuptial attire, she in each and every individual, in all her various members will be complete. The whole church given by the Father to Christ from everlasting, will be made so thoroughly like, and conformable to her heavenly bridegroom, that she will be the glory of Christ. He the head, shining as the man in God, the glory man, the Lord from heaven, and she shining in him, her head, who is one person with the Son of God, hereby her union to him, and God in him, will be perfected for evermore. Then she in all her individuals, shall see the face of her heavenly bridegroom, and his name shall be in their foreheads. Then the scripture will be fulfilled, which sayeth, the Lord God giveth them light, and they shall reign for ever and ever. Then the spouse of Christ will be in the immediate presence and company of her Lord. She will see him face to face; she will be like him in body and soul; she will enjoy him, with every faculty of both, in the fullness of blessedness for ever and ever. Then the Father, the Son, and the Holy

Ghost, will admit the elect bride to the state of ultimate glory, where God will be all in all. And like as Christ, as God-man, hath all fullness of the Godhead dwelling in him, personally: so, as a part of the church's conformity to him, she shall be filled with all the fullness of God. So much I conceive to be necessary to speak of the glory union of the church. And thus I have done my best, in going through the two former heads, on these words, I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.

I now come to the next head of this discourse.

Thirdly, to show, that one end which will be answered by the open and full manifestation of this union, between Christ and his church, and the consummation of it, will be this; that the world, the rest of mankind left out, who have no part nor portion in this union, shall know that the Father hath sent Christ, which will be at the last day. Our Lord's words are, I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me.

Our Lord left out the world in his prayer, they having no part nor portion in him. Yet in this part of his prayer for his whole church, he mentions the world twice. Not by way of prayer, but by way of expressing how in the execution of God's decrees towards them, so far external light from gospel truths and accomplishments, shall be reflected on their minds, as for them to confess Christ is the sent one of God. This is expressed by our Lord thus, Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word. That they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And here it is, I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one, and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. We learn from hence, the discrimination our Lord keeps up, and makes between the elect and non-elect. Between the church of the first-

born whose names are written in heaven. And such as are of the earth earthy, and have no part nor portion in him. Yet the non-elect, are the subjects of Jehovah's high decrees, as well as the elect, though to a different end and design. It was God's will they should have their all in Adam the head of nature. They were created in him pure and holy. They had every blessing suited to the being and well being of their natures bestowed on them in him. They would have been perfectly happy as rational creatures, had they continued in their creature state of innocency. They did not. The origin of it was the mutability of Adam's will. And their wills, and his were one, as it respects the mutability thereof. They fell in Adam their creation head. They never belonged to Christ, as his members. They would never have received any super creation blessing from Christ, if they had never fallen. They are continued throughout a succession of generations, and will be down to the very end of time. They are mingled with the elect, though they are not of them. They sometimes come out of the loins of the elect by natural generation, and sometimes the elect proceed from them. Here on this stage of the world, God exercises his will, his patience, long-suffering, and providence towards them, notwithstanding all their transgressions. In his dealing and dispensations in a providential way towards them, he discovers to open view, all that is in their hearts. For though we do not see it to be so, yet it is so, that every inclination and validity of the will, every desire of the mind, every sinful inclination is discovered, by thought, words, and actions of fallen men. God sets bounds to all sin and sinfulness. He sets bound to all sinners; they cannot go beyond the limits of his decree. It is well they cannot. The uttermost which sin can produce in the human mind it does, yet not in all alike. This under God, is confined to every particular constitution, which varies through the whole posterity of man. A variety of providence's, and providential dispensations the Lord God exercises towards each, and every individual of the non-elect. Some of them their lives are infamous; others of them are decent; some of them are naturally religious and devout; and some of them profess Christ, and have an external knowledge, and make a profession of

his gospel, yet they are not partaker's of the grace part of it. These non-elect, let them be diversified as they may, yet they were in the mind, and will of God, left out of the Book of Life. Their rejection or non-election was an act of the divine will, as such it was from everlasting. It was a sovereign act. They were not rejected because God foresaw, they would be sinful. But their rejection by the Lord, was an act of pure sovereignty, just as the act of election was. Their being left out of the Book of Life, was not the cause of their sinning. Their being left out would not have been the cause of any misery to them, had they continued in that state of creature purity in which the Lord God created them. If sin had never entered, there would have been no damnation. God damns none but for sin, yet sin is not the cause of God's decree. Nothing out of God can move the divine mind. If the fall had never been, election and non-election would have stood firm, as the acts of God's will. It would have been found that some of them were chosen in Christ to super-creational, and super-creation blessings. And these would have been raised up in God's own time and way, by virtue of their union to Christ, God-man, to see him, and enjoy him, so as to have been rendered thereby impeccable for ever. The rest of mankind, not predestinated to this supernatural grace, had they been without all sin, would have enjoyed all creature good, in the uttermost perfection thereof. They would also have had communion with God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as their creators, and been most truly blessed therein. They very state of Adam before the fall, would have been the state of all the non-elect, if sin had not entered into the world, and death by sin. It would be well were we to consider this. And most assuredly this is the true statement of the doctrine of election, and preterition, or non-election. Notwithstanding the fall, and the provision of salvation for the elect, yet the Lord Jesus Christ hath a wonderful display of providence to exercise towards each, and every individual of the non-elect. The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works. Jesus Christ is the judge of quick and dead. He will bring every secret thing into judgment: he will so open the minds of every individual of Adam's posterity; he will so state every act of

the divine procedure of the Lord from eternity to eternity to each, as will fully justify in the minds of all, that sin is wholly the act of the creature. That damnation is the most righteous displeasure of the Lord against it. That the exercise of God's providence towards all Adam's posterity has been in very faithfulness. This will be at the last day, which is commonly called the Day of Judgment. Because then Christ will settle the accounts of the whole world, and render unto every man according to his works. I thought good to say thus as much, as an introduction to this third head. The one end which will be answered by the open, and full manifestation of this union which we have been speaking of, between Christ and the elect, and the consummation of it, will be this. That the world, the rest of mankind left out, who have no part, nor portion in this union, shall know, that the Father hath sent Christ. Which will be at the last day. The visible descent of Christ from the third heavens, where he now is, in power and great glory, his raising the bodies of the elect who are sleeping in their graves, his changing the bodies of his then living saints, and causing them to be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, so as for all the elect to be then completed in one body, this will be self-convincing to the world, that Christ, is what he declared himself to be, the Son of the living God; the true Messiah; the sent one of God, which will fill them with everlasting shame and confusion of face. This I conceive to be our Lord's meaning in these words, both in verse, 21, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And also, here in my text, that the world may know that thou hast sent me. Nor can I at present conceive a more genuine interpretation thereof. Not that I am so self-conceited as to think there may not be a better, more clear, and more full. I can only at this time, and at all times, minister according to the ability which God giveth. I hope I have by no means weakened any truth. I would not wish to say, or think I had left no room for improvement. God forbid. Our Lord by the perfection of the union, between him, and his elect, purposes this as one end, which will be answered hereby, that the world may believe, and know that the Father hath sent him. Not believe and be saved. No, but as one saith,

believe and be damned. Not know that the Father hath sent him, and be the better for it. But know it, so as to be everlastingly confounded at all their hard speeches, which ungodly sinners have spoken against him. Not know him, so as to see his glory and rejoice therein. But so, know him, as to be everlastingly ashamed and confounded before him. When he shines forth as the man in God, openly and manifestively in the eye and view of all at the last day, and his whole church shine forth in him in all her glory, it will be a most astonishing evidence that the Father is in the Son, and that Christ is in the Father, that the church is in Christ, and that Christ is in the church. So that the open manifestation and consummation of it, will be this. Hereby, the world left out, who have no portion in this union, shall know that Christ was sent of the Father, I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me. And this end answered, will be a glorious one. This, as was said before, will be at the second coming of Christ. It will be at the resurrection morn. It will them break forth, when all the elect shall be raised, and Christ the sun of everlasting righteousness shall arise upon them. When the glory union will begin to break forth on their bodies and souls, so as they shall shine as they never shone before. It will be a presage of an everlasting day of glory. A full proof of their union to the person of Christ, and to God in him. Not that they will shine forth so fully, as when the new heavens, and the new earth being prepared for them, Christ will introduce them into it, saying, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world. Yet as the world will not see them in this state, and in glory, I have therefore treated it, of what they will see, when our Lord shall appear to the joy of all his saints, and his enemies shall be everlastingly confounded. It may be carried on to the open manifestation which will be made of all this, after the saints have lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years, in the New Jerusalem state, when he will gather all the non-elect before him, and with his Queen, the Church, at his right-hand, will say to all his, and her enemies, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire,

prepared for the devil and his angels. Then the union of saints will be openly manifested, the whole end of it obtained, and our Lord will be glorified in his saints, and will be admired; he will be wonderful in all them that believe. I in them, and thou in me, “that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.” His own raising himself from the grace and power of death, was a proof, of his Messiahship. He was declared to be the Son of God, by his resurrection from the dead (see Ro 1: 4); and his raising up all his mystic body from the grave, and power of death, will be a further proof of it. We look for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. See Php 3: 21. His resurrection of the bodies of his saints, and fashioning them according unto, and like his glorious body, will carry sufficient evidence with it of his union to them, and their union to him; and that they are raised, that they may be perfected in body and soul in his everlasting kingdom of glory. Thus at the last day, at the second coming of the Lord and Savior, there will be an open and full manifestation of the union between Christ and his saints. The world (the rest of mankind left out) who have no part nor portion in this union) shall know the truth of it. This end will be answered by the same. They shall know Christ was no imposter; they shall know that the Father hath sent him. And this leads me,

Fourthly, to observe, our Lord says to his Father, Hereby it shall be known, that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. By union of saints with me and thee. And by their being thus perfected in one, it shall hereby be openly made known, that I am their eternal Head. It shall thus be made conspicuous to all the world, that thou hast loved me, as their Head of union; and that thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me, I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me.

As our Lord is upon the subject of union, and it was so sweet to him, that the longer he is upon it the more his own heart is warmed with it; so it is very pleasing to a spiritual mind to take notice of this. He speaks out the very heart of his Father, and the greatest thing therein. It was love; he had loved those persons Christ is praying for, and he mentions it here, that he might suggest to us, the greatest thing in the heart of his Father was love. Thou hast loved them. What words are these, and that from the lips of Christ! He could not mention this, but it must inflame his own heart towards his beloved ones. Thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. I am their Head of union; thou hast loved them into union with me; thou hast loved them into communion with me; and I speak it out to explain to them, the union they have unto me, and how I stand related to them, as their external Head, on whom thou dost love them with a love, which will never decay; with a love founded on the good pleasure of thy good-will towards them; so as that thy love to them is in thine own will, as the everlasting spring thereof. Now, Holy Father, as thou hast loved me as thou hast loved them, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me, my petition is, that they all may be one, as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us, that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them, that they may be one, even as we are one; I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. This is all I have to say on their behalf. I, their Head of union, whom thou hast loved in that relation and capacity before all time, am their representative. I have enjoyed a love as their Head, expressed from thee to me, which is unspeakable. I know the love thou hast to me, as their Head, is the same wherewith thou lovest them, in me, as thine elect united unto me. Thou hast admitted me into a knowledge of all contained in thine own heart towards them, of all the love wherewith thou hast loved them. Thou hast loved them; they are the objects and subjects thereof. Thou hast loved them as my brethren, my spouse, as my portion and inheritance. Thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me, their

Head. It shall therefore be made conspicuous to all the world, that thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me, as their Head of union; when, at the close of time, all this will be openly displayed, by making them completely free from all evil, and by presenting them to thee, a glorious church, without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing.

I would here stop, and cry out, what words are these! What wondrous grace is here! I am so fully convinced that the depths of these expressions can never be unfolded, that I shall not even attempt it. I would only invite you who love the Lord Jesus Christ, to look them over, and ponder them in your hearts. As he was going to express his love to the elect to the very uttermost, so he looks into his Father's heart, and views the uttermost of his love to the elect, and to himself. Thou who art love itself, a fountain of love, hast freely, fully, and invariably loved all thy beloved ones in me. Thou hast reflected all the beams of thy love on me, as their Head, and thou wilt reflect them all as freely on them. Thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. Thy love to me knows no change, neither will thy love to them. I would have it kept in remembrance, that our Lord is here speaking as the Head of his church, when he saith, thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me: he is not speaking of the love of the Father to him, as coequal in the essence, the Son of his love; nor is he speaking of himself as god-man, although he was God-man when he spoke it. The love the Holy Three bare to Christ as such, belongs to him alone. We are not beloved with the same love wherewith the God-man is beloved; we are beloved in and according to the relation we stand in to him, and that is of members in an Head. That he was set apart as God-man to be our Head, and we were chosen in him; thus both Head and members, Christ and his church, were chosen of pure grace; it was the fruit of everlasting love. As Christ here speaks as the Head of his church, so he set the crown of all grace on the union between him, the Head, and the church in him: and all this he ascribes to his Father's love, thou hast loved them. Here our Lord sets a vast emphasis: he adds unto it, thou hast loved

them, as thou hast loved me, as freely as immutably. Oh, for a blessed apprehension of these most divine truths in our minds, from the sacred teachings of God's word and Spirit! The words, "that the world may believe that thou hast sent me, and hast loved me," are so closely connected together, as to show, that when, at the latter day, an open consummation of ancient settlements shall take place, in the glory of Christ, the Head, breaking forth on his Bride, in the solemnization of the nuptials between them at the latter day; the world, such as have no portion of this grace, shall be convinced, that all this was from eternity in the heart of God; that this is but the open execution thereof. So much for the explanation of the text: all that remains, is for us who know the Lord, to meditate on these truths, and seek to enjoy communion with Christ by faith in what he says. You may dwell on these words, and, whilst they will afford you unspeakable pleasure, yet you will never come to the full understanding of them; thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me. May the Holy Ghost, who knows all contained in these words, open them so unto your minds, as that they may be very dear and precious unto you! May he give you, in and from them, such views of the love of God in Christ to you, as may bring down such a sense of it into your hearts, as may afford you a present heaven! May he lead you so to view the love of God to you, in your eternal Head, as may fill your minds with holy admiration! Oh, that these words of your Lord may evermore sink down into your hearts, thou hast loved them, as thou hast loved me!

Thus, we are brought to the last petition in our Lord's Prayer, though not to the last words in it. The Lord set his own seal to what he approves of, even so Lord Jesus! Amen.