

Sermons on John 17 – By Samuel Pierce – Sermon 22,

Joh 17:26

And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.

This verse, which stands in close connection with the former, ends the chapter. There is a most regular connection runs throughout the whole of it; this I have endeavored again and again to observe. As in the second part of this prayer, which began at the sixth and ends with the nineteenth verse, the eleven apostles are particularly prayed for; so the whole church are the subjects whom our Lord particularly mentions in the third part of this prayer, the introduction to which is at the twentieth verse. Our Lord, as I conceive, offers up his whole soul in prayer for them, in the twenty-first, twenty-second, and twenty-third verses. The twenty-fourth verse is rather a demand, I do not like to call it prayer. It seems to me the whole prayer is finished 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. 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 me; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them as thou hast loved me. I look on this as the close of the prayer; most certain it is no petition follows after. These words of the twenty-fourth verse, Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world, are authoritative. It is a demand; so that I cannot look on them strictly prayer, although they most certainly stand in connection with our Lord's Prayer. Then the words which follow: O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me, belong, I

conceive, to the apostles; it is our Lord's discriminating between the world and them; it is his speaking to the Father in praise of them as I may so say. Whilst I cannot but consider these words, and those also now before us, which is the following verse, must particularly belong to the apostles; yet not so, but by way of inference, the church of God may derive instruction and consolation from them also. In unison and connection with the words of verse 25, follow these now to be spoken on verse 26: And I have declared thy name unto them, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them. In what follows immediately before my text, our Lord speaks of what qualified his eleven disciples for glory. He had in the former verse spoken of glory, and then he immediately upon it, expresses wherein their meetness for it consisted. He expresses the unfitness and incapacity of the world, or unregenerate persons for it; saying, O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee. He speaks of himself, saying, but I have known thee. Then he speaks of the origin or originality of these his eleven apostles meetness for glory. These persons were meet for glory, because they knew the Father, and Christ which was sent by him: I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. They knew Christ was sent by the Father to be the glorious and all-sufficient Mediator. The world knew neither the Father nor the Son, therefore they could not believe, nor have fellowship with the Father and the Son; these elect persons had the knowledge of the Father and the Son, and in consequence of it, they exercised faith on our Jesus, as the sent one of God. All this is most certainly included and contained in these words: O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me. Then our Lord adds, and I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them. In which words our Lord speaks of the blessings and benefits he had bestowed on these elect persons, and which he would further bestow upon them. And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them. In which words we have the

following particulars, and which, through the good hand of my God upon me, I will endeavor to set before you.

First, what Christ had already done, and what he would further do, I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it.

Secondly, his aim and end therein; it was for the clearer apprehensions of the Father's love to their minds, that the love wherewith thou hast love me, may be in them.

Thirdly, the ultimate end which would be produced hereby, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.

I have thus given you the division of my text; and we are through the good hand of God upon us, brought to the closing sermon on this seventeenth chapter of John. May the Lord be with me, and so let in the light of his heavenly truth upon my mind, whilst I am opening these words before us, as may increase his praise, and glory, and our spiritual good! Even so, O Holy Ghost! Who proceedeth from the Father and the Son, and who art in God, co-essential with the Father and the Son in the incomprehensible Godhead; even so, O Holy Spirit! Amen.

I am, under my first head of this discourse, to speak of what Christ had already done, and what he would further do: And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it.

These words are so united to the former, that it appears to me necessary to express them again: O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee, but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me; and I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it. Our divine Lord here repeats what he had uttered to his Father when he began his prayer on the behalf of his eleven apostles, which was at verse the sixth of this chapter. He then said, I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the

world, thine they were, and thou gavest them me, and they have kept thy word. Our Lord there makes election the ground, why he did declare God's name unto them. It had been the motive in the Father's heart, why he had by election given these persons unto Christ, Thine they were, and thou gavest them me. The Father having designed by election these persons to Christ, he did ordain that he should manifest his name unto them, as that which had moved him to elect them. So that our Lord in this 26th verse repeats over for substance the same words with which he began his prayer on their behalf; saying, And I have declared unto them thy name. Our Jesus had opened all the secrets of the divine will unto them; he had inlaid in their minds all which could be known of the Father's everlasting love to the elect; he had inwardly revealed the vast ends and designs of God towards them; so that nothing was wanting in this respect: when the Holy Spirit should come on them, then their spiritual faculties would be more opened, and they would more fully apprehend what their divine Lord had taught them. Our Lord's address is full of meaning, I have declared unto them thy name: it implies he had taken great satisfaction herein. It is altogether wonderful, to consider our Lord came from the bosom of his Father, brought down with him in his own vast mind, all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and opened and made known all the depths of God's counsel and will respecting his church. It was his real delight to be thinking, and speaking out the whole of it, so far as it could be done consistent with the capacities of his regenerated disciples, and he here speaks of it, as yielding great and real pleasure to his great mind, that he had acted thus. I have done it. I will pursue this most delightful work. When I am in heaven, glorified with thee, O Father! Even then I will pursue this, as that which will bring in a revenue of praise and glory unto thee. We should learn from hence to know, that every attempt and design to increase the knowledge of the Father's love, is to promote the glory of God; and that in all our intercourses with real saints, this should be our very end and aim. If this was a great part of Christ's work on earth, it should be of ours also. And as Christ bore with his beloved ones, notwithstanding all

their weakness, and little knowledge of this so vast, and infinite a subject, so we should bear with real saints, although they take in so little of the subject. I have declared unto them thy name; all which thou art in relation and love unto them, I have fully uttered it; I have freely expressed it; I have done it for thine honor, that by the revelation of thine everlasting love to their persons, and the infinite delight thou takest in them, as thou beholdest them in me, their hearts may rejoice, and they may be glad and rejoice in thee. As I have declared unto them thy name, that they may have the knowledge of thee, in thy relation unto them; in thy love to their persons; in thy covenant of grace; in thy rich and free grace towards them; and they have kept thy word: for I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me, and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me: so I will go on further to declare thy name unto them. When I am exalted to glory everlasting, to sit on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, I will send down my Spirit, that he may bring to their remembrance all I have spoken in their hearing, and unto their minds, on these most sublime and heavenly subjects. What I have done for them, in declaring thy name, yields me real joy; and what I will further do by the teachings of my Spirit in them, increases my joy. I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them. Oh, that the Holy Spirit may give us such a view and apprehension of our Lord's grace, expressed in these words, as may spiritually animate our minds! We have our Lord here speaking on earth of what he would do when in heaven, exalted above all blessing and praise. He loves to teach us the doctrine of everlasting love; he loves to open all the mysteries of it; he loves to admit his beloved into such discoveries of it as fills their souls with wonder and surprise. It is one way in which his own vast mind is fed; it is a subject he fully comprehends; he only could realize and manifest it. The Holy Spirit, in his office capacity, comes to set his seal to the truth of it, and shed abroad a sense of it in the hearts of real believers. Our Lord's mind will be kept up for ever, in

the knowledge he hath of the Father's love to him, and to the church in him. If the knowledge of it be sufficient to keep up his vast mind in glory everlasting, it most assuredly is sufficient to keep up the minds of his saints here below, and those above. Indeed, it is God's communicating himself in love to his people, in all the fullness thereof, will be the eternal heaven of enjoyment saints will be favored with, when admitted to the full and free communion with the Eternal Three throughout the ages of eternity. I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it. Our Lord only could so say, and so do: it had been the work; it would be his work; and he will continue so to exercise himself towards his church for evermore. The love of God in Christ can never be more fixed; in cannot increase; it will never be more or less to his people than it is now this present moment; but the manifestations of it, the outgoing's of it, the fresh discoveries of it, will be increasing for ever and ever. The minds of saints in heaven will never be able fully to comprehend the love of God, his love to them in the person of Christ, God-man: they will have the everlasting enjoyment of it in Christ; in him the whole fullness of it is contained; he hath the full comprehension of it; he hath the uttermost enjoyment of it, as the Head of his body the church; he will reflect the knowledge of it on the minds of his beloved for ever: and thus they will be everlastingly swallowed up in the enjoyment and joys thereof for ever and ever! But this is heaven, therefore it is not my immediate subject; our Lord is here speaking on earth; he is speaking to his Father concerning saints on earth; he is speaking of what he had done for them; he is speaking of what he would further do for them: I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it. This is all Christ could do. The subject was infinite, the love was everlasting; its duration would be throughout all generations of times and ages; it would never vary, but as an act in the mind and will of God, be always one and the same. There will be no addition to any part of the revelation made concerning the love of Father, Son, and Spirit; nothing can be added, no, not in glory. Our Jesus had given his eleven apostles the knowledge of the mysteries of grace; he had opened the love of the

Father unto them in sundry discourses; he had realized it unto them in his own person; he was going to give the utmost evidence he could thereof, by his being made sin and a curse; and when he should be on his throne, he would send down the Holy Ghost to direct their hearts into the love of God, and enlarging their apprehensions and views thereof. Our Lord finds holy satiety in thus exercising himself: and in the real experiences of saints so it is; and they all willing acknowledge it, that in the knowledge and views, in the apprehensions and conceptions which they have of the Father's love to their persons in Christ Jesus, it is with them as it was with Ezekiel in his visionary waters; it is first to the ankles, then to the knees, then to the loins, then it becomes a river to swim in, so boundless as to issue in eternal glory; where it will be an ocean, such as can never be passed over. It was so in the case of the apostles; their knowledge comparatively was nothing, whilst our Lord was with them in his incarnate state; it was greatly increased after the descent of the Holy Spirit on them; it was continually increased in their minds as they were admitted into real communion with Christ, and the Father in him; and their minds have a more full knowledge of it now they are in heaven, and they will be increasing in the knowledge of it for ever; and their knowledge of it, will be the cause of their increasing enjoyment of it for ever; their enjoyment of it in glory will always be in proportion to their knowledge of it. We should learn to prize the knowledge of the love of God to us above and beyond our enjoyment of it, because the one is the cause, the other is but the effect. We should esteem the love of God, beyond all the blessings and benefits which flow from it; we should value the love of God to us above all our enjoyments of it; we should labor to apprehend from the Scriptures, the freeness and eternity of God's love. It affords the infinite mind of the Father's delight, that he loves his elect in Christ; and the knowledge and belief of this should yield an unspeakable satisfaction to our minds. It would be well to remember, whilst we are here below, our minds cannot revolve on the acts which pass on them, but there is an absolute void. It is only as the mind is kept up and borne up above sin and self in this present time-state; and in

heaven, that which will keep up the mind to all eternity, is the perpetual exercise of it on the God-man, and on the Father and the Spirit, revealing and making known their mutual loves to the persons of the elect in the person of Christ, for he will be the medium of manifestative union and communion to the ages of eternity. I have declared thy name. This was a part of the work and office of the glorious Mediator, to declare the person, love, and mercy of the Father to his elect. The Lord Christ had performed this part of his office so completely, that he could say to his Father, And I have declared thy name. The persons unto whom he had declared the Father's name were now present before him. These eleven apostles were such as he had admitted into this knowledge; he therefore speaks of, and as it were points with his finger unto them, And I have declared unto them thy name, (he speaks of it with real pleasure and delight; he expresses it as what he would still pursue) and will declare it. It is here to be seen, in these expressions of our Lord, how his whole soul delighteth and rejoiceth in his people, and over his people to do them good. He seems to find such a knitting of affection, such a drawing forth of his whole heart and soul towards his beloved ones, that having mentioned them to his Father, he knows not how to stop. Oh! That we could be but persuaded of the truth which this idea contains! It is, in the hand of the Holy Ghost, calculated to produce peace and joy in our minds: it would fill us with holy delight in and affection to our dear Lord. We know, such of us as have tasted that the Lord is gracious, when we are engaged in speaking spiritually of our most precious Jesus, we know not where and how to stop. This is sometimes the case with us; but to find this should be the case with our blessed Lord towards us, this is grace indeed! It is unspeakable grace! Yet so it is; it refreshes his mind, it enlarges his heart towards us, every time he is pleased to speak to us, to speak for us, to speak of us to his Father. Hath he begun to declare unto us his Father's love? He will proceed herein; he will continue the subject; he will follow it with increasing light; he will admit us into more clear and higher views hereof. I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it. It will be a real

satisfaction to his great mind to do so. Like as saints who are richly filled with the saving knowledge of Christ, and of the Father's love in him, are really pleased to communicate their knowledge, to the intent, and with a design to comfort others who belong to the household and family of faith, and for the increase of the Lord's glory and praise: so our Jesus, the Head of saints, his very soul delighteth in communicating light, life, knowledge, and understanding in the knowledge of the mysteries of the Father's love, that his people may be instructed and confirmed thereby.

But I will enter on the next head of my present discourse; which is,

Secondly, to show our Lord's end and aim herein. It was for the clearer apprehensions of the Father's love to their minds, that the love wherewith thou hast love me, may be in them. The words of the text are, And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them. Yet it is only these parts of the text which fall under our present head, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them.

As these words before us were spoken to his Father, as his closing words, so we ought under this very idea of them, to conceive them as expressive of the whole of his heart, to his beloved apostles, as also of his holy mind and will respecting the whole election of grace. To view our Lord's end and aim in them, is, and ever will continue to be, very profitable to the minds of his beloved church and people. On the first view of them, under the shine of the Holy Spirit, it cannot but appear, they are expressive of the desire of our most precious Lord Jesus, that his apostles might have more clear and distinct views of the Father's love; so as that they, taking the same into their minds, under the light and teaching of the Holy Spirit, might be so rooted and grounded in it, as to have a more enlarged comprehension of it. Our Jesus mentions the Father's love to him, as that which he longs for their greater knowledge of. As he here

speaks in this prayer, in every part, and throughout the whole of it, as God-man, Head, and Mediator of his church and people; so when he utters any thing respecting his Father's love to himself, I conceive it most agreeable to the subject of the chapter to consider it as spoken under these considerations. It is indeed an everlasting truth, that there is an incomprehensible love borne by the Three in Jehovah to each other; it is a part of their essential perfection and blessedness. Whilst the Scripture is not altogether silent on this most sublime truth, yet it speaks but sparingly of it, because it exceeds all created conceptions; it can no more be apprehended than the life, the blessedness, and all-sufficiency of Jehovah can. Yet, as in the order in which the Essential Three exist, and co-exist in the incomprehensible Jehovah, they have been pleased to make known and manifest their personalities in all their internal and external acts of grace, in election, salvation, regeneration, sanctification, perseverance, and eternal glorification; so their love to each other is intimated in those distinct displays of grace which are applied and attributed to each of them in the sacred word. It is expressly said, The Father loveth the Son. Joh 3: 35; and our Lord professed that he loved the Father: I love the Father, Joh 14: 31. And from the coequality of the Father, the Son, and the Spirit, in the Essence, or Godhead, and from the unity of the Holy Ones in the whole revelation of grace, it is evident, that the Spirit loves the Father and the Son. Yet as I expressed it before, so I say again, the Lord Jesus Christ is here speaking throughout the whole of this prayer as God-man, Head, Mediator, and High Priest of his church, and under all these views and considerations of him, he is the object and subject of his Father's ineffable love: he is so as God-man, of which having spoken in some former sermons which belongs to this grand and sublime subject, I would rather refer to, especially as it belongs to this prayer, than enter fully upon it here. Only would I say, our Jesus would his apostles should have clear and enlarged views of the love wherewith his Father loved him, as God-man, that they might thereby know, he was the first and highest, in all his Father's thoughts, and by their having some clear and spiritual apprehensions

of the infinite and unceasing love and delight, of the Father in him, their joy in the Lord might increase and abound. Our Jesus, as the Head of his body the church, is the object and subject of his Father's infinite and immutable love; and our Lord's words to his Father, here before us, implies, he would his apostles might have an enlarged comprehension hereof, to the end they might have a greater enjoyment in their spiritual minds of it, and be led hereby to a greater and more unshaken confidence therein. As the Mediator of union and communion between the Father and the elect, Christ is beloved of the Father; so he also is as the Reconciler and Peacemaker; so he also is as the great High Priest of his church and people; and a clear distinct, and spiritual apprehension of Christ, as beloved of the Father under all these considerations, is most truly divine; it is a part of the work and office of the Holy Ghost, in the souls of the regenerate people of God Most High; and it is hereby that the love of the Father is in the minds and hearts of such as are translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Our Jesus would send the Holy Ghost into the hearts of these his apostles, to shed abroad the love of his Father in them; and because he would, therefore he here prays the Father for them; saying, And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them. Oh! What an immensity of love is there, in the heart of Jesus Christ towards his beloved spouse the church, towards his beloved people, both as considered collectively and individually! He would have their minds continually fed and feasted with it; and that they may, he would lead them up to the spring and cause of it. He being their Head, and as such the object of his Father's supreme affection and delight, he declares all the riches of his grace unto them, to the very intent they may apprehend the Father's love to him, as their ancient, immutable, and ever-living Head. It is his will they should feed and feast their thoughts on the Father's everlasting love to him; that hereby the Holy Ghost letting down some bright beams of his heavenly light, and truth, the love of the Father to Christ, to him as God-man, to him as their Head, the Lord their Righteousness, as the Lord their High Priest, they might

hereby be supernaturally lifted up to, and admitted into more free and full communion with God. This is our Lord's design and end; and we learn from hence, the necessity of increasing in the knowledge of the great and deep mysteries of God, to the end we may increase in real supernatural communion with him. They are not truths, bare truths, our Lord here mentions; but they are most profound; they are high, and most divine. It must be acknowledged what our Lord here mentions cannot be exceeded; for, next to a scriptural knowledge and acknowledgment of the doctrine of the Trinity, what can be comparable to the knowledge of the love of the Father, to the person of his coequal Son, as God-man Mediator, to him, as the Head of the whole election of grace, surely this will be a subject suited to keep up and feed the minds of saints in heaven to all eternity. And I think it follows from our Lord's words, here used on the behalf of his apostles in the first place, and on the behalf of all his church and people in the second, that the knowledge himself hath of the Father's love to him feeds his vast mind, and yields him everlasting satisfaction. I conceive one part of our Lord's meaning in the words before us, is to express his own happiness, and what it originates from; it is from the Father's infinite love and complacency in him. This must be the case, as we consider Christ as the Head of his church, and the Saviour thereof: I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them. If this our Lord's design and end in making known his Father unto us, what a prospect does it open to us of his unspeakable grace! Our Jesus himself cannot propose an higher end and design, whereby to express his love to his people in this present evil world. As he is united to his people, and they are united unto him, so the care of the Father is, and cannot but be exercised towards them, because Christ is in them; therefore he here saith, And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them. But how could the love wherewith the Father loved Christ be in the apostles? How is it, or how can it be in us? By the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. This is the answer, and the

only answer which can be returned to this question. The Holy Ghost was at the time Christ spoke these words with these eleven apostles. He dwelleth with you, says Christ to them, (Joh 14: 17) and shall be in you. As he was in them as an indweller, so he filled their minds, and possessed their hearts with the knowledge of the Father's love to Christ; not at the time our Lord thus spoke, but after his ascension into the highest heavens. And he dwells, and he will continue down to the very end of time, to dwell in all the regenerated elect; so he by his indwelling in them possesses all their spiritual faculties, and fills them with the knowledge of the Lord. Hereby it is what our Lord here says is realized in the minds of his saints; they are at seasons led into some free apprehensions of the Father and the Son; it is given unto them spiritually to apprehend our Lord's meaning in these words, so as for them to have clear, distinct, and gospel views of the Father's love to his beloved Son; to know and believe it; to see that all the love of the Father's heart towards them is but the overflowing's of his love to Christ their Head; that his love to them is the fruit of his love to him; that he loves their persons in the person of his first and best beloved; this most wonderfully enhances the love of the Father in their view and estimation. Such words of Christ as these before us, the Holy Spirit opening them to our minds, and opening our minds to receive what he shows us as contained in them, thereby we are admitted into such clear conceptions and apprehensions of the Father's love to his beloved Son, as fills our minds with unutterable delight and satisfaction. Hereby it is we enjoy what our Lord here expresses in these words, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them. And it is so in them, by the revelation and knowledge of it to their minds, through the sacred and secret influences of the Holy Ghost, so as from it their hearts are warmed, and their mouths opened to praise the Lord. Does it not arise from hence, as a most just inference, that it becomes the ministers of Christ, the churches of Christ, the people of God, who are partakers of Christ, to study, to ponder, and meditate on divine truths? Ought they not to be exercising themselves on them as essential and important realities? Should they not be looking up to

the Holy Spirit to realize them in their hearts? This is one most important branch of the Holy Spirit's work in the minds of the regenerate; to reveal and state the truths of the everlasting Gospel in their minds, just as they are stated in the word; to realize the truths thus stated in the understanding, so as to bring the will under the mighty power and energy of them and hereby to give such influence to the truths received, as to lead the real children of God into real communion with the Father and the Son. Surely it is in this way, and no other, the Lord's words are fulfilled in the experience of his saints; hereby our Lord fulfills his word in us; thus we have inward evidence of his grace, and also of his truth and faithfulness. The Father's love to his beloved Son, possesses our minds; it inflames our affections; it influences all our spiritual faculties: and thus our Lord makes good his holy promise, in which he says, If a man love me, he will keep my words, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. Joh 14: 23. If our Lord's end and design in declaring his Father's name, and making the same more known to his apostles, was, that they might have clearer apprehensions of the Father's love, so as that their minds might be fully, and spiritually possessed therewith in real enjoyment of this most transcendent subject; we may learn from hence, what the end and design of the minister of Christ should be. As one in heart, affection, and desire with their most dear and precious Lord, they should labor to attain this very end, the establishment of the people of God in the truth as it is in Jesus, so as they may enjoy all the blessings, and comforts thereof; surely the words of Christ imply so much. Let us hear them afresh; who knows, but they may act as a stimulus, and serve to excite and draw out our minds and hearts towards the Lord's church and people: And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them. Surely if our Lord delighted to open, and unfold all the love of his Father's heart, and accounted it his glory to preach the salvation of God, to the intent that his beloved ones might hereby be brought to a saving knowledge of his Father's love to him, and to them; first, to a

knowledge of his Father's love to him, and then of his Father's love to them; we cannot have a better example. It will be very just and becoming in us to follow, as having such an example. Indeed it is the very end of the gospel to bring the elect out of their state of ignorance, of sin, and unbelief, to a knowledge of the Father and the Son; and thus they are led to have communion with the Father and the Son, and hereby their happiness is increased. As this is God's very design, which is to be brought about, and answered by ministering the gospel of Jesus Christ, so it should be the end and design of all who are called to preach it, to seek to promote this, in, and by all their efforts in preaching. We should aim at the glory of the Father, and the Son, as our highest end, and aim; then, and as closely connected with this, we should aim, and it should be our end to seek the real benefit, comfort, and blessedness of the Lord's people, which is more or less promoted, when the great and deep mysteries of grace are set before them, when they are explained and expressed. In them is contained the bread of life, and the wine of the kingdom; therefore to withhold the doctrines of the Gospel of God our Savior from the people, is to keep them from their daily bread; it is to keep them from receiving spiritual nourishment. Christ himself did not act thus with his disciples; yet such was their weakness, none among us can be more so. Neither were they without sin, and inherent corruption. Yet our Lord pitied them; he bore with them; he freely and fully forgave all. We should learn from Christ not to withhold truth from saints, or from churches, because there may be many, or great weaknesses among them. No, it is no good reason to withhold divine truth from a church, because there may be weak brethren in it. We should fill up our office according to our Lord's command; we should leave all consequences with the Lord. But I will go on to my next general head, which as proposed, was,

Thirdly, to show the ultimate end our Lord had in view, and which would be produced hereby, That the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them. I will recite the whole text again: And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it: that

the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them. In going over these words, I have spoken of what Christ had already done, and what he would further do for his apostles; of his end and design herein; it was that they might have clearer apprehension of the Father's love in their minds. And now I am come to show the ultimate end which would be produced hereby, That the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them. This is the sum total of all, in which the whole would issue and terminate, even an indwelling of Christ in his beloved ones. The love of the Father wherewith he loved Christ being in their minds, it could not be, but Christ must dwell in them, he being the object on which their minds were exercised, and the subject on whom their minds were exercised. They could not know him to be the Son of God's love, and be led by the declaration he had made unto them into a knowledge of the love wherewith the Father loved him, but their whole souls must go forth towards him, as their Lord, and Head. The Father loves the Son for himself, with the same love wherewith he loveth himself: As the Son hath life in himself, so the Father loveth the Son as coequal with himself in Godhead, majesty, glory, and dominion. The Father's love to us is a different love; it is founded on our union to Christ, our Head. Our union with Christ is such, that we are one with him; and hereby it is we become united to God; namely, through him who is God-man, our Head, in whom we were chosen before the foundation of the world. God's love is said to be to us in him: For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depths, 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 said to be in Christ. "Our union," says Dr. Goodwin, "hath the union among the Three persons for its foundation, pattern, and original. This union is let down to the man Christ Jesus first, and in him conveyed down to us. Behold the union of Three persons in One divine nature, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, one God blessed for ever, producing in imitation of them, an union of two natures, God and Man, in the person of one Christ, to whom

be all glory for ever! And that occasioning a third union; yea, the next that could be, though more removed. An union of persons, (though not personal) yea, of multitudes of persons united to one Christ Jesus, to make up one body, to the end we may be one spouse unto Christ, our Head, and Husband, and then to see the derived union the first hath, upon the man Christ Jesus, and upon this union of ours.” This is a subject worthy of our deepest study. Our Lord, speaking of himself as God-man, says, As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so he that eateth me, even he shall live, by me. Joh 6: 57. And again, to his apostles: I am in my Father, and you in me, and I in you. Joh 14: 20. These truths are important realities, which none but the Spirit of God can open to the mind, and give right views and conceptions of. And indeed it is his royal prerogative so to do; it belongs to him according to the settlements of grace. He was to reveal all; he was to set his seal to all; he was to testify of all. Thus he was to glorify Jesus, and enthrone him in the hearts of his beloved ones. These apostles being led already to know the Father, and Christ engaging to go on to instruct them more and more in these most blessed truths, hereby they would be led to know the Father’s love to him, their Head; in their having clearer apprehensions of this, a greater sense of it would possess their minds, and fill their hearts. Thus they would have the true knowledge of this great mystery abide and remain in their hearts; thus our Lord’s words would, in the blessed effects of them, be accomplished in their souls; the love wherewith the Father loved them would be in them; yea, the love wherewith the Father loved Christ’s person, would be in them in its divine power and influence, and Christ also would be in them; so that they would be most truly blessed persons: they could not be otherwise, seeing the knowledge of the Father’s love to Christ would abide in their minds, and Christ would also be in them: and I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them.

May we learn from hence how much the heart of Christ is delighted, in his people's spiritual good! He delights in the happiness of his people, which can only be promoted as their minds are enlightened and enlarged, to take into their minds the knowledge of the Father's love, and the love of Christ unto them. All our Lord had been speaking of, concerning his having declared his Father's name unto them, and his going on still to declare the same, was to promote and effect this end: that the love of the Father being more fully known, their minds might, more and more, be fully possessed, and they enjoy the same; as the knowledge of it would make way for faith to be more and more exercised on it; and they would also be hereby led to apprehend how all the love of the Father unto them, shone forth in all its fullness and glory on them in Christ, God-man, their Lord and Head; whose love to them would be also the more truly apprehended, as they should be led to the fountain-cause thereof, the love of God. Our apostle, when he is bringing the truths here before us into use and experience, says, Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us: God is love and he that dwelleth in love, dwelleth in God, and God in him. 1Jo 4: 15-16. Put our Lord's words in our text, and John's together, you will find they answer each other, and the one explains the other: I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them. You see all our real enjoyment of God's love, is the fruit of knowing it; in heaven itself our enjoyment of everlasting love will originate, from our real knowledge thereof. As we shall be enlightened and more fully enlarged in our spiritual faculties in the state of glory, to know God in all his persons, and his love in all the outgoings of it, from everlasting, towards Christ, and the church in him, so our enjoyment will be in exact proportion to all this. It is so even in the state of grace; in proportion as the eyes of our minds are opened and enlightened by the Holy Spirit, into the knowledge of the Father's love in Christ unto us, so we are filled, more and more, with the real enjoyment thereof, as the Holy Spirit realizes the same in our minds.

Indeed our Lord makes the upshot of all, in the words of our text, to consist in his indwelling in his people: And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare it, that the love wherewith thou hast loved me, may be in them, and I in them. He speakes of the Father's love to him. There is a great deal implied, and contained in this; this love being the subject of their minds, and he indwelling in them, so as to fill their understanding with himself, this would complete their happiness on earth, and would afford them uninterrupted blessedness in glory.

Thus I am brought to the close of my sermon; of which I must say, as of all the former, I can look on the truths contained in them, with holy pleasure and delight: not on what I have wrote; no; I have come very far short of opening the treasury of grace and glory contained in this chapter: it appears to me, I have only hinted at some inestimable worth contained in it. On the close of it, I think I must say, (this prayer,) to all the New Testament beside, is as the holiest of all.

May the Lord the Spirit open up the mysteries contained in it to the minds of his people more and more! Even so, O God the Spirit! Amen.

FINISH