

EXPOSITORY THOUGHTS ON THE GOSPELS.

FOR FAMILY AND PRIVATE USE.

WITH THE TEXT COMPLETE,
And many Explanatory Notes.

BY THE REV. J. C. RYLE, B. A.,

CHRIST CHURCH, OXFORD,
VICAR OF STRADBROKE, SUFFOLK;
Author of "Home Truths," etc.

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JOHN XVII. 17–26.

17 Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.	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.
18 As thou hast sent me into the world, even so have I also sent them into the world.	24 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.
19 And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.	25 O righteous Father, the world hath not known thee; but I have known thee, and these have known that thou hast sent me.
20 Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word;	26 And I have declared unto them thy name, and will declare <i>it</i> : that the love wherewith thou hath loved me may be in them, and I in them.
21 That they all may be one: as thou, Father, <i>art</i> in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me.	
22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one:	

THESE wonderful verses form a fitting conclusion to the most wonderful prayer that was ever prayed on earth,—the last Lord’s prayer after the first Lord’s Supper. They contain three most important petitions which our Lord offered up in behalf of His disciples. On these three petitions let us fix our attention. Passing by all other things in the passage, let us look steadily at these three points.

We should mark, first, *how Jesus prays that His people may be sanctified*. “Sanctify them,” He says, “through thy truth: Thy word is truth.”

We need not doubt that, in this place at any rate, the word “sanctify” means “make holy.” It is a prayer that the Father would make His people more holy, more spiritual, more pure, more saintly in thought and word and deed, in life and character. Grace had done something for the disciples already,—called, converted, renewed, and changed them. The great Head of the Church prays that the work of grace may be carried higher and further, and that His people may be more thoroughly sanctified and made holy in body, soul, and spirit,—in fact more like Himself.

Surely we need not say much to show the matchless wisdom of this prayer. More holiness is the very thing to be desired for all servants of Christ. Holy living is the great proof of the reality of Christianity. Men may refuse to see the truth of our arguments, but they cannot evade the evidence of a godly life. Such a life adorns religion and makes it beautiful, and sometimes wins those who are not “won by the Word.” Holy living trains Christians for heaven. The nearer we live to God while we live, the more ready shall we be to dwell for ever in His presence when we die. Our entrance into heaven will be entirely by grace, and not of works; but heaven itself would be no heaven to us if we entered it with an unsanctified character. Our hearts must be in tune for heaven if we are to enjoy it. There must be a moral “meetness

for the inheritance of the saints in light,” as well as a title. Christ’s blood alone can give us a title to enter the inheritance. Sanctification must give us a capacity to enjoy it.

Who, in the face of such facts as these, need wonder that increased sanctification should be the first thing that Jesus asks for His people? Who that is really taught of God can fail to know that holiness is happiness, and that those who walk with God most closely, are always those who walk with Him most comfortably? Let no man deceive us with vain words in this matter. He who despises holiness and neglects good works, under the vain pretence of giving honour to justification by faith, shows plainly that he has not the mind of Christ.

We should mark, secondly, in these verses, *how Jesus prays for the unity and oneness of His people*. “That they all may be one,—that they may be one in Us,—that they may be one even as We are one,”—and “that so the world may believe and know that Thou hast sent Me,”—this is a leading petition in our Lord’s prayer to His Father.

We can ask no stronger proof of the value of unity among Christians, and the sinfulness of division, than the great prominence which our Master assigns to the subject in this passage. How painfully true it is that in every age divisions have been the scandal of religion, and the weakness of the Church of Christ! How often Christians have wasted their strength in contending against their brethren, instead of contending against sin and the devil! How repeatedly they have given occasion to the world to say, “When you have settled your own internal differences we will believe!” All this, we need not doubt, the Lord Jesus foresaw with prophetic eye. It was the foresight of it which made Him pray so earnestly that believers might be “one.”

Let the recollection of this part of Christ’s prayer abide in our minds, and exercise a constant influence on our behaviour as Christians. Let no man think lightly, as some men seem to do, of schism, or count it a small thing to multiply sects, parties, and denominations. These very things, we may depend, only help the devil and damage the cause of Christ. “If it be possible, as much as lieth in us, let us live peaceably with all men.” (Rom. xii. 18.) Let us bear much, concede much, and put up with much, before we plunge into secessions and separations. They are movements in which there is often much false fire. Let rabid zealots who delight in sect-making and party-forming, rail at us and denounce us if they please. We need not mind them. So long as we have Christ and a good conscience, let us patiently hold on our way, follow the things that make for peace, and strive to promote unity. It was not for nothing that our Lord prayed so fervently that His people might be “one.”

We should mark, finally, in these verses, *how Jesus prays that His people may at last be with Him and behold His glory*. “I will,” He says, “that those

whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am: that they may behold my glory.”

This is a singularly beautiful and touching conclusion to our Lord’s remarkable prayer. We may well believe that it was meant to cheer and comfort those who heard it, and to strengthen them for the parting scene which was fast drawing near. But for all who read it even now, this part of his prayer is full of sweet and unspeakable comfort.

We do not see Christ now. We read of Him, hear of Him, believe in Him, and rest our souls in His finished work. But even the best of us, at our best, walk by faith and not by sight, and our poor halting faith often makes us walk very feebly in the way to heaven. There shall be an end of all this state of things one day. We shall at length see Christ as He is, and know as we have been known. We shall behold Him face to face, and not through a glass darkly. We shall actually be in His presence and company, and go out no more. If faith has been pleasant, much more will sight be; and if hope has been sweet, much more will certainty be. No wonder that when St. Paul has written, “We shall ever be with the Lord,” he adds, “Comfort one another with these words.” (1 Thess. iv. 17, 18.)

We know little of heaven now. Our thoughts are all confounded, when we try to form an idea of a future state in which pardoned sinners shall be perfectly happy. “It does not yet appear what we shall be.” (1 John iii. 2.) But we may rest ourselves on the blessed thought, that after death we shall be “with Christ.” Whether before the resurrection in paradise, or after the resurrection in final glory, the prospect is still the same. True Christians shall be “with Christ.” We need no more information. Where that blessed Person is who was born for us, died for us, and rose again, there can be no lack of anything. David might well say, “In Thy presence is fullness of joy, and at Thy right hand are pleasures forevermore.” (Psalm xvi. 11.)

Let us leave this wonderful prayer with a solemn recollection of the three great petitions which it contains. Let holiness and unity by the way, and Christ’s company in the end, be subjects never long out of our thoughts or distant from our minds. Happy is that Christian who cares for nothing so much as to be holy and loving like his Master, while he lives, and a companion of his Master when he dies.

NOTES. JOHN XVII. 17–26.

- 17.—[*Sanctify them, etc.*] In this verse our Lord proceeds to name the second thing He asks for His disciples in prayer. Preservation was the first thing, and sanctification the second. He asks His Father to make the disciples more holy, to lead them on to higher degrees of holiness and purity. He asks Him to do it “through the truth,”—by bringing truth to bear more effectually and powerfully on their hearts and consciences and inner man. And to prevent mistake as to what He meant by truth, he adds, “Thy Word, Thy revealed Word, is the truth

that I mean.”

Some, as Maldonatus, maintain that the sentence only means “sanctify them truly,”—in opposition to that legal sanctification of priests, of which we read in Exodus and Leviticus. This, however, seems a very cold, thin, shallow sense to put on the words.

Some, again, as Mede, Pearce, and Burgon, maintain that our Lord is only praying that His Apostles may be consecrated, fitted, and set apart for the great work of the ministry, and that this is all the meaning of “sanctify.” This appears to me an imperfect and defective view of the sentence.

No doubt the word “sanctify” originally and primarily means “set apart, separate for religious uses;” and it might be used of a vessel, a house, or an animal. But inasmuch as in human beings this separation is principally evidenced by holiness and godliness of life and character, the secondary sense of “sanctify” is “to make holy,” and holy and godly people are “sanctified.” This I hold to be the meaning here most decidedly. It is a prayer for the increased holiness and practical godliness of Christ’s people. In short, the petition comes to this: “Separate them more and more from sin and sinners, by making them more pure, more spiritual-minded, and more like Thyself.” This is the view of Chrysostom and all the leading commentators.

Four great principles may be gathered from this text.

(a) The importance of sanctification and practical godliness. Our Lord specially asks it for His people. Those that despise Christian life and character, and think it of no importance so long as they are sound in *doctrine*, know very little of the mind of Christ. Our Christianity is worth nothing, if it does not make us value and seek practical sanctification.

(b) The wide difference between justification and sanctification. Justification is a perfect and complete work obtained for us by Christ, imputed to us, and external to us, as perfect and complete the moment we believe, as it can ever be, and admitting of no degrees.—Sanctification is an inward work wrought in our hearts by the Holy Spirit, and never quite perfect so long as we live in this body of sin. The disciples needed no prayer for justification; they were completely justified already. They did need prayer for their sanctification; for they were not completely sanctified.

(c) Sanctification is a thing that admits of growth; else why should our Lord pray, “Sanctify them”? The doctrine of imputed sanctification is one that I can find nowhere in the Word of God. Christ’s imputed righteousness I see clearly, but not an imputed holiness. Holiness is a thing imparted and in-wrought, but not imputed.

(d) The word is the great instrument by which the Holy Ghost carries forward the work of inward sanctification. By bringing that Word to bear more forcibly on mind and will, and conscience, and affection, we make the character grow more holy. Sanctification from without by bodily austerities and asceticism, and a round of forms, ceremonies, and outward means, is a delusion. True sanctification begins from within. Here lies the immense importance of regularly reading the written Word, and hearing the preached Word. It surely, though insensibly, promotes our sanctification. Believers who neglect the Word will not grow in holiness and victory over sin.

Calvin remarks, “As the apostles were not destitute of grace, we ought to infer from Christ’s words that sanctification is not instantly completed in us on the first day, but that we make progress in it through the whole course of our life.”

Hutcheson remarks, “It is not enough that men have a begun work of sanctification in them, unless they grow up in it daily more and more. Christ prayeth for those who were already converted and sanctified.”

Augustine thinks that “Thy Word” in this place means the Personal Word, Christ Him-

self. But in this opinion I can find no one holding with him, except Rupertus.

18.—[*As thou hast sent Me, etc.*] The connection between this verse and the preceding one seems to me to be this: “I ask for the increased sanctification of my disciples, because of the position they have to occupy on earth. Just as Thou didst send Me to be Thy Messenger to this sinful world, so have I now sent them to be my messengers to the world. It is therefore of the utmost importance that they should be holy—the holy messengers of a holy Master,—and so stop the mouths of their accusers.” Believers are Christ’s witnesses, and the character of a witness should be spotless and blameless. For this reason our Lord specially prays that His disciples may be “sanctified.”

19.—[*And for their sakes I sanctify myself.*] This is a rather hard passage. In one sense, of course, our Lord needed no sanctification. He was always perfectly holy and without sin.

I believe, with Chrysostom, the meaning must be, “I consecrate myself, and offer myself up as a sacrifice and a priest, for one special reason, to say nothing of others: in order that these my disciples may be sanctified by the truth, and made a holy people.—Is it not as good as saying, “The sanctification no less than the justification of my people is the end of my sacrifice? I want to have a people who are sanctified as well as justified. So much importance do I attach to this that this is one principal reason why I now offer myself to die as a sacrifice.”—The same idea seems to lie in the text: “He gave Himself for us that He might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people.” And again: “Christ loved the Church, and gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify it.” (Titus ii. 14; Eph. v. 26; 1 Pet. ii. 24.)

Melancthon remarks, “The word ‘I sanctify myself,’ in this place, without doubt, is taken from priests and victims.”

20.—[*Neither pray I for these alone, etc.*] In this and the three following verses our Lord proceeds to name another thing that He prays for His people. He asks that they may be “one.” He had already named this on behalf of the eleven Apostles. But He takes occasion now to enlarge the prayer, and to include others beside the eleven,—the whole company of future believers. “I now pray also for all who shall believe on Me through the preaching of my disciples in all future time, and not for my eleven apostles only.” All believers needed preservation and sanctification in every age; but none so much as the eleven, because they were the first to attack the world and bear the brunt of the battle. In some respects it was more easy to be “one” at the first beginnings of the Church, and harder to be kept and “sanctified.” As the Church grew, it would be more difficult to keep unity.

Let us mark how wide was the scope of our Lord’s intercessory prayer. He prayed not only for present, but for future believers. So should it be with our prayers. We may look forward and pray for believers yet to be born, though we may not look back and pray for believers who are dead.

George Newton observes what an encouragement it should be to us in praying for others, for a child or a friend, to remember that perhaps Christ is asking him or her of God too. He here prays for those who did not yet believe, but were to believe one day.

Let us mark how the “word” preached is mentioned as the means of making men believe. Faith cometh by hearing. The Church which places Sacraments above the preaching of the Word, will have no blessing of God, because it rejects God’s order.

Hengstenberg thinks that the “word” here must include the writings of the Apostles as well as their sermons.

21.—[*That they all...one in us.*] The meaning of this sentence I take to be, “I pray that both these my disciples, and those who hereafter shall become my disciples, may all be of one mind, one doctrine, one opinion, one heart, and one practice, closely united and joined to-

gether, even as Thou, Father, and I are of one mind and one will, in consequence of that ineffable union whereby Thou art in Me and I in Thee.”

Here, as in verse 11, we must carefully remember that the unity between the Father and the Son is one which the unity of believers cannot literally attain to. They must however imitate it.

The true secret of the unity of believers lies in the expression, “one in us.” They can only be thoroughly “one” by being joined at the same time to one Father and to one Saviour. Then they will be one with one another.

Ferus thinks that one thing in our Lord’s mind in this sentence was the union of Jew and Gentile into one Church, and the removal of the “wall of partition.”

[*That the world...believe...sent Me.*] Here our Lord brings in one important reason why He prays for His people to be “one.” It will help to make the world believe His Divine mission. “When the world sees my people not quarrelling, not divided, but one in judgment, heart, and life, then the world will begin to believe that the Saviour, who has such a people, must really be a Saviour sent from God.”

Let us carefully note how well our Lord foresaw the effect which the lives, ways, and opinions of professing Christians have on the world around them. The want of unity, and consequent strife among English Christians in the last 300 years, has been a miserable example of the enormous damage that believers may do their Master’s cause by neglecting this subject. “How much,” says George Newton, “Our blessed Saviour and His Gospel suffer by the hot contentions of those who call themselves saints.”

22.—[*And the glory, etc., etc.*] In this verse our Lord repeats His deep desire for the unity of His people. He declares, “that in order that they may be one, He has given them the glory which the Father gave Him.” This is a very difficult expression, and one which seems to puzzle all commentators. The knotty problem to be solved is, what did our Lord mean by “the glory” which He gave.

(a) Some, as Calvin, think that “glory” means the image and likeness of God, by which the disciples were renewed. (2 Cor. iii. 18.)

(b) Some, as Bengel, think that “glory” means that insensible power, influence, and authority, which accompanied all our Lord did and said during His earthly ministry. Thus Moses had “glory” in his countenance when coming down from the mount (2 Cor. iii. 7.) This same power and influence Christ gave to the Apostles. (See Acts iv. 33.)

(c) Some, as Zwingle, Brentius, Gualter, and Pearce, think that “glory” means the power of working miracles, which was the special and peculiar glory of our Lord while He was on earth. Thus, we read, “Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father.” (Rom. vi. 4.)

(d) Some, as Augustine, Ecolampadius, Bullinger, and Manton, think that “glory” means the heavenly glory and immortality which our Lord promised to His disciples,—a glory which they should have after faithfully serving Him on earth. (Rom. viii. 18.)

(e) Toletus makes the strange suggestion, that the “glory” means that which is communicated to us in the Lord’s Supper! Burgon seems to take the same view.

(f) Stier and Hengstenberg hold that the “glory” means unity of mind and heart.

(g) Some, as Gregory Nyssen, Ammonius, Theophylact, and Bucer, think that “glory” means the Holy Ghost, who is elsewhere called “the Spirit of glory.” (1 Pet. iv. 14.)

The question will probably never be settled. If I must give an opinion, I prefer the last view to any other. It suits the end of the verse better than any other, Nothing was so likely to make the disciples “one” as the gift of the Holy Ghost.

23.—[*I in them and Thou in Me, etc.*] In this verse our Lord simplifies His declarations about unity, and expands them more fully, in order to show emphatically how great importance He attached to unity. I take the meaning to be something of this kind: “I pray that my disciples may be so closely united—I dwelling in them, and Thou dwelling in Me,—that they may be compacted and perfected into one body,—having one mind, one will, one heart, and one judgment, though having many members,—and that then the world, seeing this unity, may be obliged to confess that Thou didst send Me to be the Messiah, and that Thou lovest my people even as Thou lovest Me.”

In leaving this deep and difficult passage about unity, it is well to remember that the Church, whose unity the Lord desires and prays for, is not any particular or visible Church, but the Church which is His Body, the Church of the elect, the Church which is made up of true believers and saints alone.

Moreover, the unity which our Lord prays for is not unity of forms, discipline, government, and the like; but unity of heart, and will, and doctrine, and practice. Those who make uniformity the chief subject of this part of Christ’s prayer, entirely miss the mark. There may be uniformity without unity, as in many visible Churches on earth now. There may be unity without uniformity, as between godly Episcopalians and godly Presbyterians. Uniformity no doubt may be a great help to unity, but it is not unity itself.

The unity which our Lord prays about here is that true, substantial, spiritual, internal, heart unity, which undoubtedly exists among all members of Christ of every Church and denomination. It is the unity which results from one Holy Ghost having made the members of Christ what they are. It is unity which makes them feel more of one mind with one another than with mere professors of their own party. It is unity which is the truest freemasonry on earth. It is unity which shakes the world, and obliges it to confess the truth of Christianity.—For the continued maintenance of this unity, and an increase of it, our Lord seems to me in this prayer specially to pray. And we need not wonder. The divisions of mere worldly professors are of little moment. The divisions of real true believers are the greatest possible injury to the cause of the Gospel. If all believers at this moment were of one mind, and would work together, they might soon turn the world upside down. No wonder the Lord prayed for unity.

24.—[*Father, I will...my glory...given Me.*] In this verse our Lord names the fourth and last thing which He desires for His disciples in His prayer. After preservation, sanctification, and unity, comes participation of His glory. He asks that they may be “with Him” in the glory yet to be revealed, and “behold,” share, and take part in it.

“I will” is a remarkable phrase, though it must not be pressed and strained too far. (See Mark vi. 25; x. 35.) The daughter of Herodias asking the head of John the Baptist, said, “I will that thou give me.” It may be nothing more than the expression of a strong “wish.” Yet it is the wish of Him who is one with the Father, and only wills what the Father wills. It is probably used to assure the mind of the disciples. “I will,” and it will be done.

Hutcheson says, “‘I will’ doth not import any imperious commanding way, repugnant to His former way of humble supplication; but it only imports that in this His supplication, He was making His last will and Testament, and leaving His legacies, which He was sure would be effectual, being purchased by His merits, and prosecuted by His affectionate and earnest requests and intercessions.”

Traill remarks, “Christians, behold the amazing difference betwixt Christ’s way of praying against His own hell (if I may so call it) and His praying for our heaven! When praying for Himself, it is, Father, if it be Thy will, let this cup pass from Me.’ But when Christ is praying for His people’s heaven, it is, ‘Father, I will that they may be with Me.’”

Stier maintains that “‘I will’ is no other than a testamentary word of the Son, who in the

unity of the Father, is appointing what He *wills*, at the second limit of the prayer where petition ceases.”

Alford says “this is an expression of will founded on acknowledged right.”

The expression, “Be with Me where I am,” is one of those deeply interesting phrases which show the nature of the future dwelling-place of believers. Wherever it may be, whether before or after the resurrection, it will be in the company of Christ. It is like “with Me in Paradise,” “depart and be with Christ,” and “forever with the Lord.” (Luke xxiii. 43; Phil. i. 23; 1 Thess. iv. 17.) The full nature of the future state is wisely hidden from us. It is enough for believers to know that they will be “with Christ.” It is company, and not place, which makes up happiness.

Traill remarks, “Heaven consists in the perfect immediate presence of Christ. Perfect presence is, when all on both sides is present; all of Christ, and all of the Christian. But now all of Christ is not with us, and all of us is not with Him. On His part we have Christ’s Spirit, word, and grace. On our part there is present with Him our hearts, and the workings of our faith and love and desire towards Him. But the presence is imperfect, and mixed with much distance and absence.”

The expression, “Behold my glory,” of course must not be confined to the idea of “looking on as spectators.” It includes participation, sharing, and common enjoyment. (Compare John iii. 3, 36; viii. 51; Rev. xviii. 7.)

The expression, “Which Thou hast given Me,” seems to point to that special glory which the Father, in everlasting covenant, has appointed for Christ as the reward of the work of redemption. (Philip. ii. 9.)

[*For Thou lovedst Me...foundation...world.*] This sentence seems specially inserted in order to show that the glory of Christ in the next world is a glory which had been prepared from all eternity, before time began, and before the creation of man, and that it was not only something which, like Moses or John the Baptist, He had obtained by His faithfulness on earth; but something which He had, as the eternal Son of the eternal Father, from everlasting. “Thou lovedst Me, and did assign Me this glory long before this world was made,” that is, from all eternity. This is a very deep saying, and contains things far above our full comprehension.

25.—[*O righteous Father, etc.*] In this verse our Lord begins the final winding up of His wonderful prayer. He does it by declaring the position of things in which He was about to leave the world and His disciples. I take the meaning to be this “I come to Thee from a world which knows Thee not, and has refused to know Thee throughout my ministry. But in the midst of this world I have known Thee and steadily adhered to Thee. And these my disciples have acknowledged and confessed that Thou didst send Me to be the Messiah.”

It is not clear why our Lord uses the expression, “Righteous Father.” It is one which stands alone. It may possibly be intended to bring out in strong contrast the wickedness of a world which “knew not the Word,” when the Word was in it (see John i. 10), and the justice of God in punishing this world, which refused to know Christ while the disciples received Him.

The expression, “I have known Thee,” seems to point to the veil of humiliation which covered our Lord during the whole period of His incarnation. “Even then,” He seems to say, “I never ceased to know and honour Thee.”

The high testimony borne to the disciples once more deserves notice. With all their infirmity, “they have KNOWN my Divine mission.”

26.—[*And I have declared...declare it.*] In this sentence our Lord briefly sums up what He had done, and was still doing for the disciples: “I have made known to them Thy name and

character and attributes, as the sender of salvation to a lost world, and will continue to declare it after my ascension, by the Holy Spirit.”

Here, as elsewhere, our Lord again declares that to make known the Father was one great object of His ministry.

The expression, “I will declare it,” says George Newton, is a proof that “Jesus Christ will be continually making further declarations of His Father’s name to other nations and other persons, to the end of the world. He will be ever teaching new scholars to spell it and understand it, in every generation, while the world endureth.”

[*That...in them...I in them.*] Our Lord ends His prayer by expressing His wish that the Father’s love may dwell in the hearts of His disciples, and that He Himself may dwell in their hearts. “My great desire is that they may know and feel the love wherewith Thou dost love Me, and that I may ever dwell in their hearts by faith.”

Let us not forget that one great wish of St. Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians, was that “Christ might dwell in their hearts by faith.” (Eph. iii. 15.) He also tells the Romans “The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts.” (Rom. v. 5.)

The expression, “I will declare my love,” is a difficult one. It can only mean, “I will declare it personally during the interval between my resurrection and my ascension,” or “I will continue to declare it by my Spirit’s continual teaching after I leave the world.” The latter seems the more probable meaning.

The expression, “Thy love may be in them,” is another grave difficulty. It must either be “That Thy love, the same love wherewith Thou lovest Me, may be directed on and toward them;” or else, “That they may feel in their own hearts a sense of that same love toward them wherewith Thou lovest Me.” I prefer the latter sense.

George Newton remarks on this verse, “If Christ is in you, let me give you this caution: let Him live quiet in your hearts. Do not molest Him and disturb Him; do not make Him vex and fret. Let it not be a penance to Him to continue in you. But labour every way to please Him, and give Him satisfaction and content, that so the house He hath chosen may not be dark and doleful, but delightful to Him.”

Manton remarks, “If an earthly King lie but one night in a house, what care there is taken that nothing be offensive to him, and that all be neat and sweet and clean. How much more careful ought you to be to keep your hearts clean, to perform service acceptable to Him, to be in the exercise of faith, love, and other graces, that so you may entertain, as you ought, your heavenly King, who comes to take up His continual abode in your hearts.”

We may well feel humbled, as we leave this chapter, when we think of our ignorance of the true meaning of many of its phrases. How much of our exposition is nothing better than feeble conjecture! We seem only to scratch the surface of the field. Let us only remember that the four things prayed for by our Lord are things that every Christian should daily desire,—preservation, sanctification, unity, and final glory in Christ’s company.

George Newton closes his Exposition of the whole chapter with these touching words:—“How earnest and importunate is Christ with God the Father, that we may be one here, and that we may be in one place hereafter. Oh, let us search into the heart of Jesus Christ, laid open to us in this abridgment of His intercession for us, that we may know it and the workings of it more and more, until at length the precious prayer comes to its full effect, and we be taken up to be for ever with the Lord, and where He is there we may be also!”