

ORATION II

THE AUTHOR AND THE END OF THEOLOGY

They who are conversant with the demonstrative species of oratory, and choose for themselves any subject of praise or blame, must generally be engaged in removing from themselves, what very readily assails the minds of their auditors, a suspicion that they are impelled to speak by some immoderate feeling of love or hatred; and in showing that they are influenced rather by an approved judgment of the mind; and that they have not followed the ardent flame of their will, but the clear light of their understanding, which accords with the nature of the subject which they are discussing. But to me such a course is not necessary. For that which I have chosen for the subject of my commendation, easily removes from me all ground for such a suspicion.

I do not deny, that here indeed I yield to the feeling of love; but it is on a matter which if any one does not love, he hates himself, and perfidiously prostitutes the life of his soul. Sacred Theology is the subject whose excellence and dignity I now celebrate in this brief and unadorned Oration; and which, I am convinced, is to all of you an object of the greatest regard. Nevertheless, I wish to raise it, if possible, still higher in your esteem. This, indeed, its own merit demands; this the nature of my office requires. Nor is it any part of my study to amplify its dignity by ornaments borrowed from other objects; for to the perfection of its beauty can be added nothing extraneous that would not tend to its degradation and loss of its comeliness. I only display such ornaments as are, of themselves, its best recommendation. These are, its Object, its Author, its End and its Certainty. Concerning the Object, we have already declared whatever the Lord had imparted; and we will now speak of its Author and its End. God grant that I may follow the guidance of this Theology in all respects, and may advance nothing except what agrees with its nature, is worthy of God and useful to you, to the glory of his name, and to the uniting of all of us together in the Lord. I pray and beseech you also, my most excellent and courteous hearers, that you will listen to me, now when I am beginning to speak on the Author, and the End of Theology, with the same degree of kindness and attention as that which you evinced when you heard my preceding discourse on its Object.

Being about to treat of the Author, I will not collect together the lengthened reports of his well merited praises, for with you this is unnecessary. I will only declare (1.) Who the Author is; (2.) In what respect he is to be considered; (3.) Which of his properties were employed by him in the revelation of Theology; and (4.) In what manner he has made it known.

I. We have considered the Object of Theology in regard to two particulars. And that each part of our subject may properly and exactly answer to the other, we may also consider its Author in a two-fold respect—that of Legal and of Evangelical Theology. In both cases,

the same person is the Author and the Object, and the person who reveals the doctrine is likewise its matter and argument. This is a peculiarity that belongs to no other of the numerous sciences. For although all of them may boast of God, as their Author, because he a God of knowledge; yet, as we have seen, they have some other object than God, which something is indeed derived from him and of his production. But they do not partake of God as their efficient cause, in an equal manner with this doctrine, which, for a particular reason, and one entirely distinct from that of the other sciences, lays claim to God, its Author. God, therefore, is the author of Legal Theology; God and his Christ, or God in and through Christ, is the Author of that which is evangelical. For to this the scripture bears witness, and thus the very nature of the object requires, both of which we will separately demonstrate.

1. Scripture describes to us the Author of legal theology before the fall in these words: "And the Lord God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it:" ([Gen. ii. 16, 17.](#)) A threat was added in express words, in case the man should transgress, and a promise, in the type of the tree of life, if he complied with the command. But there are two things, which, as they preceded this act of legislation, should have been previously known by man: (1.) The nature of God, which is wise, good, just, and powerful; (2.) The authority by which he issues his commands, the right of which rests on the act of creation. Of both these, man had a previous knowledge, from the manifestation of God, who familiarly conversed with him, and held communication with his own image through that Spirit by whose inspiration he said, "This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh." ([Gen. ii. 23.](#)) The apostle has attributed the knowledge of both these things to faith, and, therefore, to the manifestation of God. He speaks of the former in these words: "For he that cometh to God must have believed [so I read it,] that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." ([Heb. xi. 6.](#)) If a rewarder, therefore, he is a wise, good, just, powerful, and provident guardian of human affairs. Of the latter, he speaks thus: "Through faith we understand that the world was framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." ([Heb. xi. 3.](#)) And although that is not expressly and particularly stated of the moral law, in the primeval state of man; yet when it is affirmed of the typical and ceremonial law, it must be also understood in reference to the moral law. For the typical and ceremonial law was an experiment of obedience to the moral law, that was to be tried on man, and the acknowledgement of his obligation to obey the moral law. This appears still more evidently in the repetition of the moral law by Moses after the fall, which was specially made known to the people of Israel in these words: "And God spake all these words:" ([Exod. xx. 1.](#)) and "What nation is there so great that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all this law, which I set before you this day," ([Deut. iv. 8.](#)) But Moses set it before them according to the manifestation of God to him, and in obedience to his command, as he says: "The secret things belong unto the Lord our God; but those things which are re-

vealed belong unto us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of this law." ([Deut. xxix. 29.](#)) And according to Paul, "That which may be known of God, is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them." ([Rom. i. 19.](#))

2. The same thing is evinced by the nature of the object. For since God is the Author of the universe, (and that, not by a natural and internal operation, but by one that is voluntary and external, and that imparts to the work as much as he chooses of his own, and as much as the nothing, from which it is produced, will permit,) his excellence and dignity must necessarily far exceed the capacity of the universe, and, for the same reason, that of man. On this account, he is said in scripture, "to dwell in the light unto which no man can approach," ([1 Tim. vi. 16.](#)) which strains even the most acute sight of any creature, by a brightness so great and dazzling, that the eye is blunted and overpowered, and would soon be blinded unless God, by some admirable process of attempering that blaze of light, should offer himself to the view of his creatures: This is the very manifestation before which darkness is said to have fixed its habitation.

Nor is he himself alone inaccessible, but, as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts." ([Isa. lv. 9.](#)) The actions of God are called "the ways of God," and the creation especially is called "the beginning of the way of God," ([Prov. 8.](#)) by which God began, as it were, to arise and to go forth from the throne of his majesty. Those actions, therefore, could not have been made known and understood, in the manner in which it is allowable to know and understand them, except by the revelation of God. This was also indicated before, in the term "faith" which the apostle employed. But the thoughts of God, and his will, (both that will which he wishes to be done by us, and that which he has resolved to do concerning us,) are of free disposition, which is determined by the divine power and liberty inherent in himself; and since he has, in all this, called in the aid of no counselor, those thoughts and that will are of necessity "unsearchable and past finding out." ([Rom. xi. 33.](#)) Of these, Legal Theology consists; and as they could not be known before the revelation of them proceeded from God, it is evidently proved that God is its Author.

To this truth all nations and people assent. What compelled Radamanthus and Minos, those most equitable kings of Crete, to enter the dark cave of Jupiter, and pretend that the laws which they had promulgated among their subjects, were brought from that cave, at the inspiration of Deity? It was because they knew those laws would not meet with general reception, unless they were believed to have been divinely communicated. Before Lycurgus began the work of legislation for his Lacedaemonians, imitating the example of those two kings, he went to Apollo at Delphos, that he might, on his return, confer on his laws the highest recommendation by means of the authority of the Delphic Oracle. To induce the ferocious minds of the Roman people to submit to religion, Numa Pompilius feigned that he had nocturnal conferences with the goddess Aegeria. These were positive and evident

testimonies of a notion which had preoccupied the minds of men, "that no religion except one of divine origin, and deriving its principles from heaven, deserved to be received." Such a truth they considered this, "that no one could know God, or any thing concerning God, except through God himself."

2. Let us now look at Evangelical Theology. We have made the Author of it to be Christ and God, at the command of the same scriptures as those which establish the divine claims of Legal Theology, and because the nature of the object requires it with the greater justice, in proportion as that object is the more deeply hidden in the abyss of the divine wisdom, and as the human mind is the more closely surrounded and enveloped with the shades of ignorance.

(1.) Exceedingly numerous are the passages of scripture which serve to aid and strengthen us in this opinion. We will enumerate a few of them: First, those which ascribe the manifestation of this doctrine to God the Father; Then, those which ascribe it to Christ. "But we" says the apostle, "speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory. But God hath revealed it unto us by his Spirit." ([1 Cor. ii. 7, 10.](#)) The same apostle says, "The gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery, which was kept secret since the world began, but now is made manifest by the scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the everlasting God." ([Rom. xvi. 25, 26.](#)) When Peter made a correct and just confession of Christ, it was said to him by the saviour, "Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." ([Matt. xvi. 17.](#)) John the Baptist attributed the same to Christ, saying, "The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared God to us." ([John i. 18.](#)) Christ also ascribed this manifestation to himself in these words: "No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." ([Matt. xi. 27.](#)) And, in another place, "I have manifested thy name unto the men whom thou gavest me out of the world, and they have believed that thou didst send me." ([John xvii. 6, 8.](#))

(2.) Let us consider the necessity of this manifestation from the nature of its Object.

This is indicated by Christ when speaking of Evangelical Theology, in these words: "No man knoweth the Son but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father save the Son." ([Matt. xi. 27.](#)) Therefore no man can reveal the Father or the Son, and yet in the knowledge of them are comprised the glad tidings of the gospel. The Baptist is an assertor of the necessity of this manifestation when he declares, that "No man hath seen God at any time." ([John i. 18.](#)) It is the wisdom belonging to this Theology, which is said by the Apostle to be "hidden in a mystery, which none of the princes of this world knew, and which eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man." ([1 Cor. ii. 7, 8, 9.](#)) It does not come within the cognizance of the understanding, and is not mixed up, as it were, with the first notions or ideas impressed on the mind at the period of its creation; it is not acquired

in conversation or reasoning; but it is made known "in the words which the Holy Ghost teacheth." To this Theology belongs "that manifold wisdom of God which must be made known by the Church unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places," ([Ephes. iii. 10.](#)) otherwise it would remain unknown even to the angels themselves. What! Are the deep things of God "which no man knoweth but the Spirit of God which is in himself," explained by this doctrine? Does it also unfold "the length and breadth, and depth and height" of the wisdom of God? As the Apostle speaks in another passage, in a tone of the most impassioned admiration, and almost at a loss what words to employ in expressing the fullness of this Theology, in which are proposed, as objects of discovery, "the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, and the peace of God which passeth all understanding." ([Ephes. iii. 18.](#)) From these passages it most evidently appears, that the Object of Evangelical Theology must have been revealed by God and Christ, or it must otherwise have remained hidden and surrounded by perpetual darkness; or, (which is the same thing,) that Evangelical Theology would not have come within the range of our knowledge, and, on that account, as a necessary consequence, there could have been none at all.

If it be an agreeable occupation to any person, (and such it must always prove,) to look more methodically and distinctly through each part, let him cast the eyes of his mind on those properties of the Divine Nature which this Theology displays, clothed in their own appropriate mode; let him consider those actions of God which this doctrine brings to light, and that will of God which he has revealed in his gospel: When he has done this, (and of much more than this the subject is worthy,) he will more distinctly understand the necessity of the Divine manifestation.

If any one would adopt a compendious method, let him only contemplate Christ; and when he has diligently observed that admirable union of the Word and Flesh, his investiture into office and the manner in which its duties were executed; when he has at the same time reflected, that the whole of these arrangements and proceedings are in consequence of the voluntary economy, regulation, and free dispensation of God; he cannot avoid professing openly, that the knowledge of all these things could not have been obtained except by means of the revelation of God and Christ.

But lest any one should take occasion, from the remarks which we have now made, to entertain an unjust suspicion or error, as though God the Father alone, to the exclusion of the Son, were the Author of the legal doctrine, and the Father through the Son were the Author of the Evangelical doctrine—a few observations shall be added, that may serve to solve this difficulty, and further to illustrate the matter of our discourse. As God by his Word, (which is his own Son,) and by his Spirit, created all things, and man according to the image of himself, so it is likewise certain, that no intercourse can take place between him and man, without the agency of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. How is this possible, since the *ad extra* works of the Deity are indivisible, and when the order of operation ad

extra is the same as the order of procession ad intra? We do not, therefore, by any means exclude the Son as the Word of the Father, and the Holy Ghost who is "the Spirit of Prophecy," from efficiency in this revelation.

But there is another consideration in the manifestation of the gospel, not indeed with respect to the persons testifying, but in regard to the manner in which they come to be considered. For the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, have not only a natural relation among themselves, but another likewise which derives its origin from the will; yet the latter entirely agrees with the natural relation that subsists among them. There is an internal procession in the persons; and there is an external one, which is called in the scriptures and in the writings of the Father, by the name of "Mission" or "sending." To the latter mode of procession, special regard must be had in this revelation. For the Father manifests the Gospel through his Son and Spirit. (i.) He manifests it through the Son, as to his being, sent for the purpose of performing the office of Mediator between God and sinful men; as to his being the Word made flesh, and God manifest in the flesh; and as to his having died, and to his being raised again to life, whether that was done in reality, or only in the decree and foreknowledge of God. (ii.) He also manifests it through his Spirit, as to his being the Spirit of Christ, whom he asked of his Father by his passion and his death, and whom he obtained when he was raised from the dead, and placed at the right hand of the Father.

I think you will understand the distinction which I imagine to be here employed: I will afford you an opportunity to examine and prove it, by adducing the clearest passages of scripture to aid us in confirming it. (I.) "All things," said Christ, "are delivered to me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son." ([Matt. xi. 27.](#)) They were delivered by the Father, to him as the Mediator, "in whom it was his pleasure that all fullness should dwell." ([Col. i. 19.](#) See also ii, 9.) In the same sense must be understood what Christ says in John: "I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me;" for it is subjoined, "and they have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me." (xvii, 8.) From hence it appears, that the Father had given those words to him as the Mediator: on which account he says, in another place, "He whom God hath sent, speaketh the words of God." ([John iii. 34.](#)) With this the saying of the Baptist agrees, "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." ([John i. 17.](#)) But in reference to his being opposed to Moses, who accuses and condemns sinners, Christ is considered as the Mediator between God and sinners. The following passage tends to the same point: "No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father," [that is, "admitted," in his capacity of Mediator, to the intimate and confidential view and knowledge of his Father's secrets,] "he hath declared him:" ([John i. 18.](#)) "For the Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand;" ([John iii. 35.](#)) and among the things thus given, was the doctrine of the gospel, which he was to expound and declare to others, by the command of God the Father. And in every

revelation which has been made to us through Christ, that expression which occurs in the beginning of the Apocalypse of St. John holds good and is of the greatest validity: "The revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave unto him, to shew unto his servants." God has therefore manifested Evangelical Theology through his Son, in reference to his being sent forth by the Father, to execute among men, and in his name, the office of Mediator.

(ii.) Of the Holy Spirit the same scripture testifies, that, as the Spirit of Christ the Mediator, who is the head of his church, he has revealed the Gospel. "Christ, by the Spirit," says Peter, "went and preached to the spirits in prison." (1 Pet. iii. 19.) And what did he preach? Repentance. This therefore, was done through his Spirit, in his capacity of Mediator, For, in this respect alone, the Spirit of God exhorts to repentance. This appears more clearly from the Same Apostle: "Of which salvation the prophets have inquired and searched diligently, who prophesied of the grace that should come unto you: searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow." And this was the Spirit of Christ in his character of Mediator and head of the Church, which the very object of the testimony foretold by him sufficiently evinces. A succeeding passage excludes all doubt; for the gospel is said in it, to be preached by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." (1 Pet. i. 12.) For he was sent down by Christ when he was elevated at the right hand of God, as it is mentioned in the second chapter of the Acts of the Apostles; which passage also makes for our purpose, and on that account deserves to have its just meaning here appreciated. This is its phraseology, "Therefore, being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." (Acts ii. 33.) For it was by the Spirit that the Apostles prophesied and spoke in divers languages. These passages might suffice; but I cannot omit that most noble sentence spoken by Christ to console the minds of his disciples, who were grieving on account of his departure, "If I go not away the Comforter [or rather, 'the Advocate, who shall, in my place, discharge the vicarious office,' as Tertullian expresses himself;] If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you. And when he is come he will reprove the world, &c. (John xvi. 7, 8.) He shall glorify me: For he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you." Christ, therefore, as Mediator, "will send him," and he "will receive of that which belongs to Christ the Mediator. He shall glorify Christ," as constituted by God the Mediator and the Head of the Church; and he shall glorify him with that glory, which, according to the seventeenth chapter of St. John's Gospel, Christ thought it necessary to ask of his Father. That passage brings another to my recollection, which may be called its parallel in merit: John says, "The Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." (vii, 39.) This remark was not to be understood of the person of the Spirit, but of his gifts, and especially that of prophecy. But Christ was glorified in quality of Mediator: and in that glorified capacity he sends the Holy Ghost; therefore, the Holy Spirit was

sent by Christ as the Mediator. On this account also, the Spirit of Christ the Mediator is the Author of Evangelical Prophecy. But the Holy Ghost was sent, even before the glorification of Christ, to reveal the Gospel. The existing state of the Church required it at that period, and the Holy Spirit was sent to meet that necessity. "Christ is likewise the same yesterday, today and forever." ([Heb. xiii. 8.](#)) He was also "slain from the foundation of the world;" ([Rev. xiii. 8.](#)) and was, therefore, at that same time raised again and glorified; but this was all in the decree and fore-knowledge of God. To make it evident, however, that God has never sent the Holy Spirit to the Church, except through the agency of Christ the Mediator, and in regard to him, God deferred that plentiful and exuberant effusion of his most copious gifts, until Christ, after his exaltation to heaven, should send them down in a communication of the greatest abundance. Thus he testified by a clear and evident proof, that he had formerly poured out the gifts of the Spirit upon the Church, by the same person, as he by whom, (when through his ascension the dense and overcharged cloud of water above the heavens had been disparded,) he poured down the most plentiful showers of his graces, inundating and over spreading the whole body of the Church.

III. But the revelation of Evangelical Theology is attributed to Christ in regard to his Mediatorship, and to the Holy Ghost in regard to his being the appointed substitute and Advocate of Christ the Mediator. This is done most consistently and for a very just reason, both because Christ, as Mediator, is placed for the ground-work of this doctrine, and because in the duty of mediation those actions were to be performed, those sufferings endured, and those blessings asked and obtained, which complete a goodly portion of the matters that are disclosed in the gospel of Christ. No wonder, therefore, that Christ in this respect, (in which he is himself the object of the gospel,) should likewise be the revealer of it, and the person who asks and procures all evangelical graces, and who is at once the Lord of them and the communicator. And since the Spirit of Christ, our Mediator and our head, is the bond of our union with Christ, from which we also obtain communion with Christ, and a participation in all his blessings—it is just and reasonable, that, in the respect which we have just mentioned, Christ should reveal to our minds, and seal upon our hearts, the evangelical charter and evidence of that faith by which he dwelleth in our hearts. The consideration of this matter exhibits to us (1.) the cause why it is possible for God to restrain himself with such great forbearance, patience, and long suffering, until the gospel is obeyed by those to whom it is preached; and (2.) it affords great consolation to our ignorance and infirmities.

I think, my hearers, you perceive that this single view adds no small degree of dignity to our Evangelical Theology, beside that which it possesses from the common consideration of its Author. If we may be allowed further to consider what wisdom, goodness and power God expended when he instituted and revealed this Theology, it will give great importance to our proposition. Indeed, all kinds of sciences have their origin in the wisdom of God, and are communicated to men by his goodness and power. But, if it be his right, (as it un-

doubtedly is,) to appoint gradations in the external exercise of his divine properties, we shall say, that all other sciences except this, have arisen from an inferior wisdom of God, and have been revealed by a less degree of goodness and power. It is proper to estimate this matter according to the excellence of its object. As the wisdom of God, by which he knows himself, is greater than that by which he knows other things; so the wisdom employed by him in the manifestation of himself is greater than that employed in the manifestation of other things. The goodness by which he permits himself to be known and acknowledged by man as his Chief Good, is greater than that by which he imparts the knowledge of other things. The power also, by which nature is raised to the knowledge of supernatural things, is greater than that by which it is brought to investigate things that are of the same species and origin with itself. Therefore, although all the sciences may boast of God as their author, yet in these particulars, Theology, soaring above the whole, leaves them at an immense distance.

But as this consideration raises the dignity of Theology, on the whole far above all other sciences, so it likewise demonstrates that Evangelical far surpasses Legal Theology; on which point we may be allowed, with your good leave, to dwell a little. The wisdom, goodness and power, by which God made man, after his own image, to consist of a rational soul and a body, are great, and constitute the claims to precedence on the part of Legal Theology. But the wisdom, goodness and power, by which "the Word was made flesh," ([John i. 14,](#)) and God was manifest in the flesh," ([1 Tim. iii. 16,](#)) and by which he "who was in the form of God took upon himself the form of a servant," ([Phil. ii. 7,](#)) are still greater, and they are the claims by which Evangelical Theology asserts its right to precedence. The wisdom and goodness, by the operation of which the power of God has been revealed to salvation, are great; but that by which is revealed "the power of God to salvation to every one that believeth," ([Rom. ii. 16,](#)) far exceeds it. Great indeed are the wisdom and goodness by which the righteousness of God by the law is made manifest," and by which the justification of the law was ascribed of debt to perfect obedience; but they are infinitely surpassed by the wisdom and goodness through which the righteousness of God by faith is manifested, and through which it is determined that the man is justified "that worketh not, but [being a sinner,] believeth on him who justifieth the ungodly," according to the most glorious riches of his grace. Conspicuous and excellent were the wisdom and goodness which appointed the manner of union with God in legal righteousness, performed out of conformity to the image of God, after which man was created. But a solemn and substantial triumph is achieved through faith in Christ's blood by the wisdom and goodness, which, having devised and executed the wonderful method of qualifying justice and mercy, appoint the manner of union in Christ., and in his righteousness, "who is the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person." ([Heb. i. 3.](#)) Lastly, it is the wisdom, goodness and power, which, out of the thickest darkness of ignorance brought forth the marvelous light of the gospel; which,

from an infinite multitude of sins, brought in everlasting righteousness; and which, from death and the depths of hell, "brought life and immortality to light." The wisdom, goodness and power which have produced these effects, exceed those in which the light that is added to light, the righteousness that is rewarded by a due recompense, and the animal life that is regulated according to godliness by the command of the law, are each of them swallowed up and consummated in that which is spiritual and eternal.

A deeper consideration of this matter almost compels me to adopt a more confident daring, and to give to the wisdom, goodness and power of God, which are unfolded in Legal Theology, the title of Natural," and as in some sense the beginning of the going forth of God towards his image, which is man, and a commencement of Divine intercourse with him. The others, which are manifested in the gospel, I fearlessly call "Supernatural wisdom, power and goodness," and "the extreme point and the perfect completion of all revelation;" because in the manifestation of the latter, God appears to have excelled himself, and to have unfolded every one of his blessings. Admirable was the kindness of God, and most stupendous his condescension in admitting man to the most intimate communion with himself—a privilege full of grace and mercy, after his sins had rendered him unworthy of having the establishment of such an intercourse. But this was required by the unhappy and miserable condition of man, who through his greater unworthiness had become the more indigent, through his deeper blindness required illumination by a stronger light, through his more grievous wickedness demanded reformation by means of a more extensive goodness, and who, the weaker he had become, needed a stronger exertion of power for his restoration and establishment. It is also a happy circumstance, that no aberration of ours can be so great, as to prevent God from recalling us into the good way; no fall so deep, as to disable him from raising us up and causing us to stand erect; and no evil of ours can be of such magnitude, as to prove a difficult conquest to his goodness, provided it be his pleasure to put the whole of it in motion; and this he will actually do, provided we suffer our ignorance and infirmities to be corrected by his light and power, and our wickedness to be subdued by his goodness.

IV. We have seen that, (1.) God is the Author of Legal Theology; and God and his Christ, that of Evangelical Theology. We have seen at the same time (2.) in what respect God and Christ are to be viewed in making known this revelation, and (3.) according to what properties of the Divine Nature of both of them it has been perfected.

We will now just glance at the Manner. The manner of the Divine manifestation appears to be threefold, according to the three instruments or organs of our capacity. (1.) The External Senses, (2.) The Inward Fancy or Imagination, and (3.) The Mind or Understanding. God sometimes reveals himself and his will by an image or representation offered to the external sight, or through an audible speech or discourse addressed to the ear. Sometimes he introduces himself by the same method to the imagination; and sometimes he addresses the mind in a manner ineffable, which is called Inspiration. Of all these modes scripture most clearly

supplies us with luminous examples. But time will not permit me to be detained in enumerating them, lest I should appear to be yet more tedious to this most accomplished assembly.