their underſtandings and purify their hearts. The grace which he ſheds abroad is either external and general, or internal and particular. The former has been extended to the whole church of God under the patriarchal, Moſaic, and Chriſtian diſpenſations, in such a revelation of the divine will as was ſufficient to inſtruct men unto eternal life, whe­ther they had a clear view or not of that ſtupendous plan of redemption, by which the kingdom of heaven was open­ed to them after the forfeiture of the terreſtrial paradiſe ; for there have been “ holy prophets ever ſince the world began ; and prophecy came not at any time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghoſt@@\*." Hence it is that all ſcripture was given by inpiration of God to teach us every thing which it is necessary for us to know and believe ; and the ſcrip­ture is that work of the ſpirit which is extended to the univerſal church.

But the ſame ſpirit which thus generally reveals the object of faith to the church, does likewiſe particularly illuminate the minds of individual believers, working in them an assent to that which is taught them from the written word. It was thus that “the Lord opened the heart of Lydia @@\*, that she attended to the things which were ſpoken of Paul ;” it is thus that “ the word preached doth not profit if it be not mixed with faith in them who hear it @@\*;” and it is thus that “God deals to every man the measure of faith@@\*;” for “ by grace are we ſaved through faith, which is not of ourſelves ; it is the gift of God@@\*.” This illumination of the Spirit was conveyed to the apoſtles “ in a found from heaven as of a ruſhing mighty wind,” becauſe it was meant to teſtify to the world that they were choſen miniſters of the goſpel; but the ordinary Chriſtian receives it “ in the ſtill ſmall voice,” becauſe it is conveyed to him only to “ open his underſtanding that he may underſtand the scriptures.”

Another operation of the Spirit on the minds of believers is that which in ſcripture is called Regeneration ; for “ according to his mercy God ſaveth us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghoſt@@\*, which he ſheds on us abundantly through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord.” To thoſe who believe that we derive from Adam a corrupt­ed nature, this particular grace muſt appear ſo abſolutely neceſſary, that without it we could have no reliſh for heaven or heavenly things. “ The natural man (we are told) receiveth not the things of the ſpirit of God ; for they are fooliſhneſs to him ; neither can he know them, becauſe they are ſpiritually diſcerned.” Indeed whatever be the powers of our moral faculties, when compared with theſe of our first father, it is ſo long before they be completely developed, that we ſhould infallibly be loſt, if we were not bleſſed by a sin pernatural guide, when reaion is incapable of directing our conduct. Our passions and appetites are in their full ſtrength before experience has furniſhed the mind with ma­terials, by means of which motives may be weighed ; and therefore it would be impoſſible, during the giddy period of youth, to keep them in due ſubjection, or to prevent vicious habits from being formed, were we not influenced by divine grace. So true is it, that “ except a man be born again of water and of the Holy Ghoſt, he cannot enter into the king­dom of God.” This change in our diſpoſitions, from an immoderate attachment to earth to a reliſh for the things of heaven, is in scripture called“ a renewing of our minds, a new creation, a new man ;” in oppoſition to our natural diſpoſition, which is called “ the old man, corrupted accord­ing to the deceitful luſts.” The ancient fathers of the church, as well as ſome very eminent modern divines@@\*, ge­nerally ſpeak of baptiſm as the inſtrument in God’s hand of man’s regeneration ; and for the truth of their opinion they appeal to John iii. 3, 5*.* Epheſi v. 25, 26. and I Cor. vi. 11. in which great ſtreſs is certainly laid upon the waſhing of water, as well as upon ſanctification by the word.

A third office of the Holy Spirit is to lead, direct, and govern us through all the periods of our lives. Without ſuch a leader and guide, the temptations with which we are ſurrounded would certainly overcome us, and we ſhould faint long before we arrive at the end of our journey. By the very conſtitution of our nature we are ſubjected in ſome de­gree to the influence of ſenſe, of which the objects are pre­ſent, whilſt the enjoyments of heaven are future, and ſeen, as at a diſtance, only by the eye of faith ; but “ the law of the Spirit of life, in Chriſt Jeſus, hath made us free from the law of sin and death ;” for God worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleaſure ; and as many as are thus led by the ſpirit of God, they are the sons of God ; and while they walk in the Spirit, they do not fulfil the luſts of the fleſh.” Without the aid of the ſame Spirit, we could not even make our prayers acceptable ; for ſince “ our confidence in God is, that he heareth us only when we aſk any thing ac­cording to his will ; and ſince we know not what we ſhould pray for as we ought, the Spirit itſelf maketh the intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered@@\*."

A fourth operation of the Holy Ghoſt, as he is the sanctifier of Chriſtians, is to join them to Chriſt, and make them members of that one body of which he is the head. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body@@\*; and as the body is one and hath many members, and all the members of that one body being many are one body, ſo also is Chriſt.” “ Hereby we know that God abideth in us, by the Spirit which he hath given us ;” and as, in the or­dinary courſe of his dealings with Chriſtians, this Spirit is first given in baptiſm, ſo is it continued to the faithful by the inſtrumentality of the Lord’s ſupper. That ordinance we have elsewhere (ſee supper *of the Lord)* proved to be a federal rite ; and ſurely no time can be ſuppoſed ſo highly sanctified for the reception of the graces of the Holy Spirit, as that in which we renew our federal union with our Lord and Matter in the communion of his body and blood.

It is likewiſe the office of the Holy Ghoſt to give us an earneſt of our everlaſting inheritance, to create in us a ſenſe of the paternal love of God, and thereby to aſſure us of the adoption of ſons. “ As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God ; and becauſe we are ſons, God hath sent forth the ſpirit of his Son into our hearts. For we have not received the ſpirit of bondage again to fear ; but we have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry Abba Father ; the Spirit itſelf bearing witneſs with our ſpirit, that we are the children of God@@\*.”

As the gifts of grace are generally annexed to means, to the proper uſe of the word and ſacraments, it is a ſixth of­fice of the ſame Spirit to ſanctify ſuch perſons as are regu­larly ſet apart for the work of the miniſtry, and ordained to offer up the public prayers of the people ; to bleſs them in the name of God ; to teach the doctrines of the goſpel ; to adminiſter the ſacraments inſtituted by Chriſt ; and to perform all things neceſſary “ for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the miniſtry, for the edifying of the body of Chriſt@@\*." The ſame Spirit which illuminated the apoſtles, and endowed them with power from above to per­form perſonally their apoſtolic functions, fitted them also for ſending others, as they were sent by their Divine Ma­lier ; and for eſtabliſhing ſuch a conſtitution of the church as was beſt adapted for preserving Chriſtians in the unity of the Spirit and bond of peace. They committed a stand­ing power to a ſucceſſive miniſtry to be conveyed down to the end of the world ; and thoſe who are veſted with that power are obliged to “ take heed unto themſelves, and

@@@[m]\* Luke i. 70. and 2 Peter i. 21.

@@@[m]\* Acts xvi. 14.

@@@[m]\* Heb. iv. 2.

@@@[m]\* Rom. xii. 3.

@@@[m]\* Eph. ii. 8.

@@@[m]\* Titus i. 5, 6.

@@@[m]\* Clarke and Waterland.

@@@[m]\* Rom. v. 226.

@@@[m]\* I Cor. xxii. 12, 13.

@@@[m]\* Gal. iv. Rom. viii. 15,16.

@@@[m]\* Eph. iv. 12.