constantly present with the vilest reptile on which we tread, why should our minds recoil from the idea of a still closer union between the second person of the ever blessed Trinity, and the body and soul of Jesus Christ ? The one union is indeed different from the other, but we are in truth equally ignorant of the nature of both. Reason and revelation assure us that God must be present to bis works to preserve them in existence ; and revelation informs us further, that one of the persons in the Godhead assumed human nature into a personal union with himself, to redeem myriads of rational crea­tures from the miserable consequences of their own tolly and wicked­ness. The importance of this object is such, that, for the arrainment of it, we may easily conceive that he who condescends to be poten­tially present with the worms of the earth and the grass of the field, would condescend still further to be personally present with the spot­less soul and body of a man. Jesus Christ lived indeed a life of poverty and suffering upon earth, but his divine nature was not uffected by bis sufferings. At the very time when, as a man, he had not a place where to lay his head ; as God, he was in heaven as well as upon earth, (John iii. 13,) dwelling in light inaccessible: and while, as a man, he was increasing in wisdom and stature, his divinity was the fulness of him who filleth all in all, and from whom nothing can be hid.

Sect. II. *Of the Life and Teaching of Christ.*

What men earnestly wish to be true, they readily believe. Hence the Jewish people, losing sight of the yoke under which they and the whole human race were brought by the fall of Adam, mistaking the sense of the blessing promised to all nations through the seed of Abraham, and devoting their whole attention to the most magnificent descriptions of the Messiah's kingdom, expected in him a prince who should conquer the Romans, and establish on earth a uni­versal monarchy, of which Jerusalem was to be the metro­polis.

As our Saviour came for a very different purpose, the first object of his mission was to rectify the notions of his erring countrymen, in order to fit them for the deliverance which they were to obtain through him. Accordingly, when he entered on his office as a preacher of righteousness, he em­braced every opportunity of inveighing against the false doctrines taught as traditions of the elders ; and by his knowledge of the secrets of all hearts, he exposed the vile hypocrisy of those who made a gain of godliness. The Jews had been led, by their separation from the rest of the world, to consider themselves as the peculiar favourites of Jehovah ; and the consequence was, that, contrary to the spirit of their own law, and the explicit doctrines of some of their prophets, they looked on all other nations with ab­horrence, as on people physically impure. These prejudices the blessed Jesus laboured to eradicate. Having desired a lawyer, by whom he was tempted, to read that part of the law of Moses which commanded the Israelites to love their neighbours as themselves, he compelled him, by means of a parabolical account of a compassionate Samaritan, to ac­knowledge, that under the denomination of neighbour, the divine lawgiver had comprehended all mankind as the ob­jects of love, (St. Luke x. 25—38.) The importance in which Moses held the ritual law, and to which, as the means of preserving its votaries from the contagion of idolatry, it was justly entitled, had led the Jews to consider every cere­mony of it as of intrinsic value and perpetual obligation : but Jesus brought to their recollection God’s declared pre­ference of mercy to sacrifice ; showed them that the weigh­tier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith, claimed their regard in the first place, and its ceremonial observances only in the second ; and taught them in conformity with the predictions of their own prophets, (Jeremiah xxxi. 31, &c.) that the hour was about to come when the worship of God should not be confined to Jerusalem, but that “ true wor­shippers should everywhere worship the Father in spirit and in truth,” (John iv. 25—27.)

It being the design of Christ’s coming into the world to break down the middle wall of partition between the Jews and Gentiles, and to introduce a new dispensation of reli­gion which should unite all mankind as brethren in the wor­ship of the true God, and fit them for the enjoyment of heaven ; he did not content himself with merely restoring the moral part of the Mosaic law to its primitive purity, dis­encumbered of the corrupt glosses of the scribes and pha­risees, but added to it many spiritual precepts, which, till they were taught by him, had never occurred to either Jew or Gentile. The Hebrew lawgiver had prohibited murder under the penalty of death ; but Christ extended the prohi­bition to causeless anger, and to contemptuous treatment of our brethren, commanding his followers, as they valued their everlasting salvation, to forgive their enemies, and to love all mankind. Adultery was forbidden by the law of Moses as a crime of the deepest dye ; but Jesus said to his disci­ples, “ that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adultery with her already in his heart,” and is of course liable to the Divine vengeance. The *lex tali­onis* was in force among the Jews, so that the man who had deprived his neighbour of an eye or a tooth, was to suffer the loss of an eye or a tooth himself; but this mode of pu­nishment, which inflicted *blemish* for *blemish,* though suited to the hardness of Jewish hearts, being inconsistent with the mild spirit of Christianity, was abolished by our blessed Lord, who severely prohibited the indulgence of revenge, and commanded his followers to love even their enemies. Perjury has in every civilised nation been justly considered as a crime of the highest atrocity, and the Mosaic law doom­ed the false witness to bear the punishmcnt, whatever it might be, which he intended, by swearing falsely, to bring on his brother ; but the author of the Christian religion forbade not only false swearing, but swearing at all, except on so­lemn occasions, and when an oath should be required by legal authority.

By thus restoring the law to its original purity, and in many cases extending its sense, the blessed Jesus executed the office of a Prophet to the lost sheep of the house of Israel ; but had he not been more than an ordinary prophet, he could not have abrogated the most trivial ceremony of it, nor even extended the sense of any of its moral precepts ; for their great lawgiver had told them, that “ the Lord their God would raise up unto them but one prophet, like unto him, to whom they should hearken,” (Deut. xviii. 15.) That prophet was by themselves understood to be the Messiah, whom they expected to tell them all things. It was neces­sary therefore that Jesus, as he taught some new doctrines, and plainly indicated that greater changes would soon be introduced, should vindicate his claim to that exalted cha­racter which alone could authorise him to propose innova­tions. This he did in the amplest manner, by fulfilling pro­phecies and working miracles, (see Miracle and Prophecy) ; so that the unprejudiced part of the people readily acknowledged him to be of a truth “ that prophet which should come into the world—the Son of God, and the King of Israel.” He did not, however, make any change in the national worship, or assume to himself the smallest civil au­thority. He had submitted to the rite of circumcision, and strictly performed every duty, ceremonial as well as moral, which that covenant made incumbent on other Jews ; thus fulfilling all righteousness. Though the religion which he came to propagate was in many respects contrary to the ritual law, it could not be established, or that law abrogated, but in consequence of his death, which the system of sacri­fices was appointed to prefigure ; and as his kingdom, which was not of this world, could not commence till after his re­surrection, he yielded during the whole course of his life a cheerful obedience to the civil magistrate, and wrought a miracle to obtain money to pay the tribute that was exact­ed of him. Being thus circumstanced, he chose from the lowest and least corrupted of the people certain followers, whom he treated with the most endearing familiarity for three years, and commissioned at bis departure to promul­gate such doctrines as, consistently with the order of the