

HEAD III. - The outward means appointed to make the elect partakers of this covenant, and all the rest that are called, to be inexcusable.

Many are called. - Matt. xxii. 14.

I. THE outward means and ordinances, for making men partakers of the Covenant of Grace, are so wisely dispensed, as that the elect shall be infallibly converted and saved by them; and the reprobate, among whom they are, not to be justly stumbled. The means are especially these four: 1. The word of God. 2. The sacraments. 3. Kirk-government. 4. Prayer. In the word of God preached by sent messengers, the Lord makes offer of grace to all sinners, upon condition of faith in Jesus Christ; and whosoever do confess their sin, accept of Christ offered, and submit themselves to his ordinances, he will have both them and their children received into the honour and privileges of the Covenant of Grace. By the sacraments, God will have the covenant sealed for confirming the bargain on the foresaid condition. By kirk-government, he will have them hedged in, and helped forward unto the keeping of the covenant. And by prayer, he will have his own glorious grace, promised in the covenant, to be daily drawn forth, acknowledged, and employed. All which means are followed either really, or in profession only, according to the quality of the covenanters, as they are true or counterfeit believers.

II. The Covenant of Grace, set down in the Old Testament before Christ came, and in the New since he came, is one and the same in substance, albeit different in outward administration: For the covenant in the Old Testament, being sealed with the sacraments of Circumcision and the Paschal Lamb, did set forth Christ's death to come, and the benefits purchased thereby, under the shadow of bloody sacrifices, and sundry ceremonies: but since Christ came, the covenant being sealed by the sacraments of Baptism and the Lord's Supper, doth clearly hold forth Christ already crucified before our eyes, victorious over death and the grave, and gloriously ruling heaven and earth, for the good of his own people.