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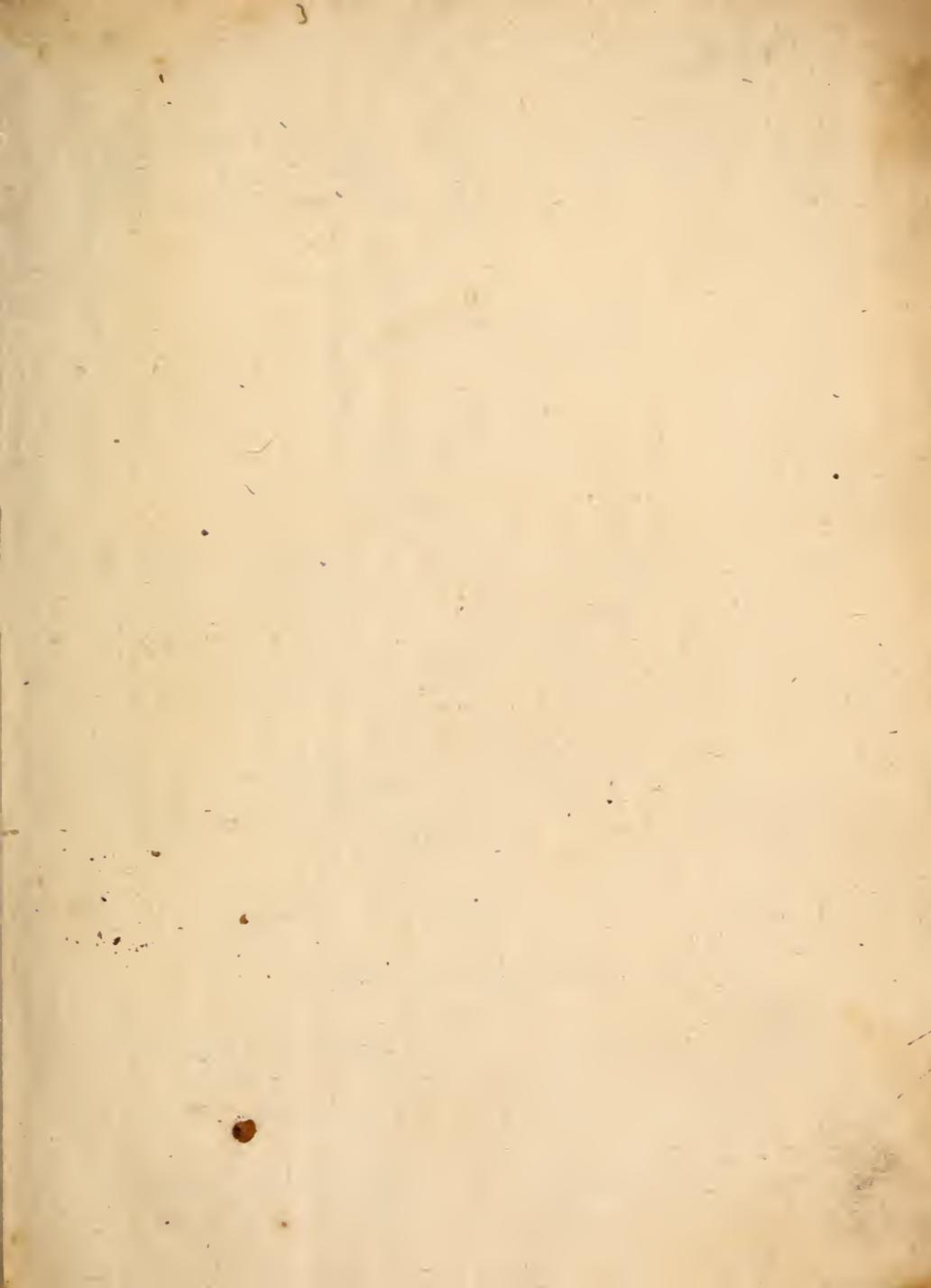
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*Andrew Thomson
min^r at Maerms*

THE ANATOMY

Of { Secret Sins,
Presumptuous Sins,
Sins in Dominion,
&
Uprightness.

A. Thomson

WHEREIN

Divers weighty Cases are resolved in Relation to all those Particulars : Delivered in divers S E R M O N S. preached at *Mildreds* in *Bread-street London*, on P S A L M 19. 12, 13.

TOGETHER

With the Remissibleness of All Sin, and the Irremissibleness of the SIN against the HOLY GHOST Preached before an Honourable A U D I T O R Y.

By that Reverend and Faithfull MINISTER of the Gospel,
M^r. Obadiab Sedgwick, B. D.

Perfected by Himself, and published by those whom he intrusted with his N O T E S.

L O N D O N,

Printed by *T. R.* for *Adoniram Byfield* at the sign of the three Bibles in *Corn-Hill* near *Popes-head Alley*; Anno 1660.



TO THE
CHRISTIAN READER.

THE Name of the Reverend Author of this Work, will commend it to the Acceptance of them all, who were either acquainted with his Ministry, or have attentively perused his Treatises formerly published. He was a Work man who needed not to be ashamed: As the matter of his Discourses was solid and profitable, so his language was pregnant and delightfull, both which took much upon his gracious and ingenuous Auditors. This is to be acknowledged a great abatement of the Churches loss by his death, that though he be dead, he yet speaketh from the Press by the usefull Treatises

A 2

To the Reader.

left written by his own hand, which through Gods Mercy, may prove rich blessings unto posterity, by edifying Christians in Grace and Comfort. As the reasonable immortal soul is the more noble part of man, so Supernatural Grace doth truly ennoble it by introducing the likeness and life of God. This Grace which is The good work ^p The good and perfect gift of God ^o may be promoted both in its habit and exercise, by such helps as this, which Divine Providence putteth into thy hand. And therefore since sanctifying Grace (which is the strength, beauty, riches of the soul, and the best thing on this side Christ himself, From whose fulness we all do receive Grace for Grace ⁿ) is wrought, preserved, enlarged, and quickned by these means, they should be gladly welcomed, and diligently improved by all serious sincere Christians. And whereas Humility and Sincerity are Graces eminently excellent, and useful throughout the whole course of Christianity rendering every other grace, and every duty the more lovely and acceptable. Helps in both these thou mayest expect from this ensuing Treatise. The Text here handled doth hold forth at the first view

(p) Phil. 1.6.

(o) Jama. 1.
17.

(n) John 1.16.

To the Reader.

view, both Sinfulness and Uprightness of Gods servants: Their sinfulness bitterly bewailed, and their uprightness seriously designed; whence we have The Anatomy of secret sins, Presumptuous sins, Sins in Dominion, and of Uprightness.

Every self considering Christian doth see so much sin in his heart and life, that he is abased under the Burden^b of it; how heavy then is this thought upon his heart, that there are many thousands of secret unseen Errors chargeable upon him by the All-knowing-heart-searching God. And yet this adds further load unto the burnd Spirit, that besides his former guiltiness of, and inclination to presumptuous sins, (things heinous and horrid) the seeds also of that unpardonable sin (the thoughts whereof are amazing and dreadful to every Gracious heart) do lie and live in his depraved nature. These particulars are here largely and convincingly discoursed of, by means whereof the secure sinner may be well awakened, and the proud heart deeply humbled. What examples of Bitter Mourning^e, self-loathing^f, and lamentable outcries^g, upon this account are recorded in the holy Scriptures. How

(b) Psal. 38. 4.

(e) 1 Sam. 7. 6.

(f) Ezek. 36.

(g) Rom. 7. 24.

To the Reader.

needfull and seasonable this too much neglected
Indeavour would be in these loose luke-warm
times, might easily be manifested. The mani-
fold precious Benefits of this practise may per-
(h) Psal. 51. 17 swade it; Besides, Divine Acceptance^h and
(d) Isa 57. 16. familiar Communion,^d together with many
& 66. 2. rich Promises hereby possessed. By meanes
hereof the soul will patiently submit to Gods
(e) 1 Pet. 5. 5, Afflicting hand^e, and seriously set upon re-
6, 7. al Reformation^g: Thus Christ will become
Job 21. 29. much more precious and sweet unto the
Lev 26. 41. soul^a; And as we shall be made more Meek in
Mic. 7. 9. our deportment towards all, so more peculiarly
(g) 2 Cor 7. 10, 11. compassionate towards Bleeding, Repenting
(a) 1 Tim. 1. 12, 13, 15. sinners^h, viewing the number and heinousness
Rom. 7. 24, 25. of our own Irregularities, considering how much
(h) Tit. 3. 2, 3. we our selves do still lie under Sins Dominion^o,
(o) Rom 7. 18 19, 21, 23 with the guilt of some presumptuous Iniquities^e.
(e) Mat. 26. 75

Good Reader, thou shalt not only be thus e-
dified in Humility (his Product of sins dis-
covery) but in Sincerity also by that which
followeth in the Anatomy of Uprightness.
Unexpressible are the Comforts which come
into the soul by clearing up its Sincerity from
Scripture evidence. If there be a Messen-

To the Reader.

ger an Interpreter, one of a thousand to
shew unto man his Uprightness, ^c then he is ^{(c) John. 33}
gracious unto him, and saith, Deliver him ^{23, &c.}
from going down to the pit; I have found a
Ransom; his flesh shall be fresher then a
Child; And for the Enjoyment of satis-
faction out of Gods All-sufficiency is assured
in the Covenant of Grace unto upright
walking with his Majesty ^f. Herein consists ^{(f) Gen. 17. 1.}
Gods image in man ^d which is his fairest beau- ^{(d) Eccl. 7. 26.}
ty, and his greatest Glory. The imperfect
performances of the Sincere, do not only find
Acceptance ^c, but Delight in the Lord ^d; unto ^{(c) 2 Chro. 30.}
them he will not deny either Grace or Glory, ^{28, 19, 20.}
or any thing may be truly Good ^p; and not with- ^{(d) Pro. 15. 3.}
standing the saddest dispensations imaginable, ^{(p) Psal. 84. 1 &}
God will be constantly and superlatively good
unto them ^c: How bad soever they be in their ^{(c) Psal. 73. 1.}
own eyes, yet they are perfect in Gods
Account ^d; and they may alwayes rejoyce with ^{(d) Ps. 37. 37.}
Thanksgiving before the Lord, and with
gladsome Boldness ^h: look Pale death it self in ^{(h) Psal. 33. 1.}
the face when it doth approach ^t. But we ^{(t) 2 Cor. 1. 32.}
will not enlarge our selves in these matters, con-
tenting our selves with these short hints sug-
gested

To the Reader.

gested to give thee a tast of that sweet fruit
which thou mayest expect to reap by the carefull
perusal of this very savory usefull Book, which
we commend to thy Improvement, and thy self
therein to the Blessing of the Almighty, through
Iesus Christ, in whom, and for whom, we are

Thy faithfull friends and servants,

Septemb. 1. 1659.

Humphrey Chambers,

Edmund Calamy,

Simeon Ash,

Adoniram Byfield.

THE



THE
Anatomy
OF
SECRET SINNES:

PSALM 19. 12.

*Who can understand his Errors? Cleanse thou me
from secrets: or from secret sins, or faults.*



Saint *Chrysostom* conjectures that the main intention of the greatest part of this Psalm consists in the discovery of divine providence, which manifests it self in the motions and courses of the heavenly bodies, concerning which the *Psalmist* speaketh much, from v. 1. to the 7. Saint *Austine* (upon the place) is of a quite different opinion, who conjectures that Christ is the whole subject of this Psalme: whose person is compared to the Sunne for excellency and beauty, and the course of whose doctrine was dis-

persed round about the world by his Apostles, to which Saint Paul alludes, (*Rom. 10. 18. Have they not heard, yes, verily their sound went into all the earth, &c.*) and the efficacy of whose Gospel is like the heat of the Sunne, which pierceth into the very heart of the earth, so that into the secrets of the soul.

I confesse this allegorical exposition, is not altogether impertinent, neither is that literal Exposition of Saint *Chrysoftom* to be blamed, for it hath its weight.

But to omit all variety of conjectures, this Psalm contains in it.

The contents of the Psalm. A double knowledge of God by the book of the creature.

A double kinde of the knowledge of God, of which one is by the book of the Creature; and this Divines call a natural knowledge: there is not any one creature, but it is a leaf written all over with the description of God, his *Eternal power and God-head may be understood by the things that are seen*, saith the Apostle, *Rom. 1. 20.* And as every creature, so especially the Heavens do lead us to the knowledge of a God: so *v. 1.* of this Psalm: *The Heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handy work*: they are the Theatres as it were, of his wisdom, and power, and glory.

The book of the Scripture.

Another is by the book of Scripture: And this knowledge is far more distinct and explicite: with the other, even the Heathens do grope after a Deity, but with this, Christians do behold God as it were with open face: The Characters here are now fresh, spiritual, compleat, and lively: The Word of God is the singular means to know God aright: Look as the light which comes from the Sunne, so that Word of God, which is light, is the clearest way to know God who is light it self. Hence it is that the Psalmist stands much upon this, from *v. 7.* to *v. 12.* where he sets open the words in its several encomiums and operations, *viz.* in its perfection, its certainties, and firmnesse; its righteousness, and purity, and truth, and then in its efficacy: That it is a converting word, an enlightning word, an instructing word, a rejoycing word, a desirable word, a warning word, and a rewarding word.

The experimental knowledge of himself.

2. A singular and experimental knowledge of himself, so it seemeth that that word, which David did so much commend, he

he did commend it from an experimental efficacy; he had found it to be a righteous, and holy, and pure, and discovering word, laying open, not only visible and gross transgressions, but also like the light of the Sunne; Those otherwise inobserved and secret atomes of senses flying within the house, I mean in the secret Chambers of the soul.

Now in this there are two things which the *Psalmist* sets down. The parts of the Text.

1. *A sad complaint of his ignorance*, [*who can understand his errors?*] As *Paul* in his case spake, the *Law is holy, and just, and good, and spiritual*, but *I am sold under sin*, Rom. 7. 12, 14. so *David* here, the *Law of the Lord is pure, and righteous, and perfect*, but *I am very sinful*; many sins I see in my self, and more there are which I cannot espy, I cannot find them out, nay, I think saith he, every mans sins do arise beyond his accounts, he cannot give a full and entire list of them, *who can understand his errors.* A sad complaint of his ignorance.

2. *An earnest request*, and that for three things.

One is to be cleansed from secret sins, which words some expound that he desires to be pardoned, not only his known, but also his unknown sin; Yet others conjecture that his desire reacheth to sanctification, which might prevaile not only against open, but the private and cloier methods of sinning. An earnest request. To be cleansed from secret sinnes.

2. Another is to be kept from presumptuous sins, v. 13. *Saint Austin* and others read it, *a superbiis contine servum tuum*, keep back thy servant from prides. I think their reason is because, 1. Pride is a bold and presuming sinne. 2. And it is that which is the maine ingredient of a presumptuous kinde of sinning: even good men have the root of high transgressions within them, into which they may fall, If corruption might have its svinge; and if they do not fall into them, it is not because they are able alone to keep themselves, but because God doth by his spirit of grace keep them back. To be kept from presumptuous sins.

3. A third is, *the ordering of his words and thoughts*, which he desires might be so composed, that they might be always acceptable in the sights of God, v. 14. as if he had said, O Lord, I do not The ordering of his words and thoughts.

only desire to be kept from the viler wayes of sin, but from all whatsoever, I would not only not be wicked, but I pray thee that I may be good: As I would not do evil, so I would not speak evil, nay as I would not speak, so I would not thinke evil, I desire to be soe, as that I may be acceptable before thee; I desire to do, as that I may be acceptable with thee; I desire to speake so, as that I may be accepted: yea and I desire to thinke so, that I may be acceptable in thy sight.

In my poore Conjecture you have in *David* here a lively copy of an upright heart; which is truly plain all over, and pitcheth upon this, that it may be acceptable with God, and that it may be so, it would be wrined of all sins, not only notorious and visible, but invisible and secret, and it would have not only an outward decency of religion in pious actions, but also an inward conformity even of the very thoughts and Meditations of the heart.

I shall not speak of *Davids* complaint, v. 13. *who can understand his errors?* only a word and a way.

What is meant
by errors.

By *errors*, he meanes his unwitting, and inconsiderate mistakes: There are sins, some which are committed when the Sun shines (*i.*) with light and knowledge, and then as it is with colours when the Sunne shines, you may see them, so these a man can see and know, and confess them particularly to be transgressions: there are other sins, which are committed either in the times of ignorance, or else (if there be knowledge) yet with inobservance: either of these may be so heaped up in the particular number of them, that as a man did (when he did Commit them) take no notice of them, so now after the commission, if he should take the brightest candle to search all the records of his soul, yet many of them would escape his notice. And indeed this is a great part of our misery that we cannot understand all our debts: we can easily see too many, yet many more lie as it were dead, and out of sight; To sin is one great misery, and then to forget our sins is a misery too: If in repentance we could set the battel in array, point to every individual sin, in the true and particular times of acting and re-acting, O how would our hearts be more broken with shame and sorrow, and how would we adore the rich-

richnesse of the treasure of mercy which must have a multitude in it, to pardon the multitude of our infinite errors and finnes.

But this is the comfort, though we cannot understand every particular sin, or time of sinning, yet if we be not idle to search and cast over the books; and if we be heartily grieved for those sins which we have found out, and can by true repentance, turn from them unto God, and *by faith*, unto the blood of Jesus Christ, I say, that God, who knowes our sins better then we know them; and who understands the true intentions and dispositions of the heart, that if it did see the unknown sins, it would be answerably carried against them; He will for his own mercy sake *forgive them*; and he too *will not remember them*. Nevertheless, though David saith, *who can understand his errors?* as the Prophet Jeremiah spake also, *The heart of man is desperately wicked, who can know it?* yet must we bestir our selves at heaven to get more and more heavenly light to finde out more and more of our sinnings: So the Lord can search the heart: And though we shall never be able to finde out all our sins which we have committed, yet it is possible, and beneficial for us to finde out yet more sins then yet we do know: And you shall find these in your own experience, that as soon as ever grace entred your hearts, you saw sin in another way then ever you saw it before, yea, and the more grace hath traversed and increased in the soul, the more full discoveries hath it made of finnes: It hath shewn new sins as it were, new sins, not for their being, not as if they were not in the heart and life before, but for their evidence, and our apprehension and feeling: we do now see such wages, and such inclinations to be sinful which we did not think to be so before: As physick brings those humours which had their residence before, now more to the sense of the Patient: or as the Sun makes open the moles of dust which were in the roome before, so doth the light of the word discover more corruption.

Simile.

But I passe by that point of the impossibility of a full apprehension of all finnes committed ignorantly, and inconsiderately.

Dauids request I now proceed from *Dauids* complaint to *Dauids request*, and here I shall speak of his first Request, viz. *Cleanse thou me from secrets*, or secret sins. Saint *Austin* upon the words, *Ab occultis meis munda me domine*, expresth it thus, *A cupiditatibus in me latentibus munda me*: (i.) from those concupiscences which lie so hid, and so close, and so private within me: O Lord *cleanse thou me*, And in his second exposition of this *Psalm* (for he expounded the *Psalm* twife) *Tolle ex corde malam cogitationem*, (i.) O Lord take out of my very heart even the sinful thoughts.

I will name the Proposition, and then we may perhaps open things more fully.



CHAP. I.

Doct.
It is the desire of a holy person to be cleansed from secret faults.

IT is the desire of an holy person to be cleansed, not only from publick, but also from private and secret sinnes, Rom. 7. 24. O wretched man (saith Paul) who shall deliver me? Why, O blessed Apostle! what is it that holds thee? what is it that molests thee? thy life, thou sayest, was unblamable before thy conversion, and since thy conversion, *Phil. 3.* Thou hast exercised thy self to have a conscience void of offence, toward God and toward men, *Acts 24. 16.* And yet thou criest out, O wretched man, and yet thou complainest, who shall deliver me? Verily brethren, it was not sin abroad, but at home, it was not sin without, but (at this time) sin within, it was not Pauls sinning with man, but Pauls sinning within Paul, O that Law of his members, warring (secretly within him) against the Law of his minde, This, this made that holy man so to cry out, so to complaine: As *Rebekah* was weary of her life, not as we read for any forraine disquietments, but because of domestique troubles, the daughters of *Heth* within the house, made her weary of her life: so the private and secret birth of corruption within Paul, the workings of that, that was the cause of his trouble, that

was

was the ground of his exclamation and desires, *who shall deliver me?* I remember that the same *Paul* adviseth the *Ephesians* as to put of the former Conversation, so to put on the renewed spirit of the minde, *Ephes. 4. 22, 23.* intimating that there are finnes which are lurking within, as well as sins walking without; and that true Christians must not only sweep the doore, but wash the Chamber, my meaning is not onely come off from sins which lie open in the Conversation, but also labour to be cleansed from finnes and sinning, which remaine secret, and hidden in the Spirit and inward disposition.

Now for the beneficial discovery of this assertion, let us enquire four things.

1. In what respects sins are called secret?
2. What it is to be cleansed?
3. Why we are to desire a cleansing from them?
4. What of all this to us?

SECT. I.

1. **I**N what respect finnes are called secret? for the resolution of this know, that sinne hath a double reference.

Either to God, and so really no sin, nor manner of sinning is secret, *Can any hide himself in secret places, that I shall not see him?* saith the Lord, *do not I fill heaven and earth,* saith the Lord, *Jer. 23. 24.* it is true, that wicked men with an Atheistical folly imagine to hide themselves, and their sinful ways from God, they seek deep to hide their Council from the Lord, and their works are in the dark, and they say, *who seeth us, and who knoweth us,* *Isa. 29. 15.* But really it is not so, though the cloud may somewhat eclipse the light of the Sun, and though the dark night may shut it forth altogether, yet there stands no cloud, nor curtain, nor moment of darknesse or secrecy twixt the eyes of God and the ways of man: *The ways of a man are before the eyes of the Lord, and he pondereth*

In what respect sins are called secret.

Not to God.

pondereth all his goings, *Prov. 5. 21.* He speakes principally there of the wayes of the adulterer which usually are plotted with the most cunning secrecy, yet God seeth all thoe wayes, so *Heb. 4. 13.* *There is not any Creature that is not manifest in his sight, but all things are naked, and opened (Anatomized) even to the eyes of him with whom we have to doe.* Not a creature, not a thing, not any thing of any creature, but it is naked, it is without all figge leaves, it is uncased of his colours and pretences, ye it is opened as it were unbowelled, cut into distinct pieces, the very inside of it turned out to the eyes of God.

But to man.

O: to man, and thus indeed comes in the division of sin into, 1. open: and 2. secret: Now in this respect sin may be Termed secret diversly.

In respect of the person sinning.

1. In respect of the person sinning: when his very sinning is (formally considered) hidden from himselfe (i.) he doth a thing which is really sinful, but to him it is not Apprehensively so what outrages did *Paul* breath out against the Church in times of his Ignorance which he did not know to be acts of sin, but thought to be motions of a warrantable zeal; In this sense all the obliquities which may be fastned, at least, upon Invincible Ignorance, may be stiled secret sinners.

In respect of the manner of sinning.

2. In respect of the manner of sinning, and thus sins may be Termed secret.

When cou'ered and disguised,

Either, 1. *When they are coloured and disguised*, though they doe flye abroad, get not under that name, but apparelled with some semblances of vertues: *Cyprian* complains of such tricks in his second Epistle which is to *Donatus*.

When kept off from the eye of the world.

2. *When they are kept off from the stage of the world*, they are like fire in the Chimney, though you do not see it, yet it burnes: so many a person, like those in *Ezekiel*, *Commit abominations in secret:* (i) so as the Publicke eye is not upon them: He is sinful, and acts it with the greatest vileness, All the difference twixt another sinner and him, is this; that he is, and the other saith, he is a sinner; just as twixt a book shut, and a booke opened; that which is shut, hath the same lines and words, but the other being opened, every man may see and read them.

3. *When they are kept, not only from a publicke Eye, But from*

from any mortall Eye: (i.) The carnall Eye of him who Commits the finnes sees them not, He doth indeed see them with the eye of Conscience but not with an eye of naturall sense: even those persons with whom he doth converse, and who highly commend the frame of his wayes, cannot yet see the secret discourings and actings of sin in his minde and heart: for Brethren, all the actings of sin are not without, they are not visible, but there are some, yea the most dangerous actings within the soule: where corruption lies as a fountaine and root. The Heart of man is A scheme of wickedness, nay, a man faith that in his heart, which he dares not speak with his tongue, and his thought will do that which his hands dare not to execute, well then sin may be called secret, when it is sin, and acted as sin, even there, where none but God and Conscience can see; me thinks sin is like a Candle in a Lanterne where the shining is first within, and then burſting out at the windows: or like Boyls and ulcerous Humors which are scabbes and scurvy ſtuffe, first within the skin, and afterwards they breake out to the veiw on the outside, so it is with sin, it is a malignant Humor, and a fretting leprosie, diffusing it selfe into severall secret acts and workings within the minde, and then it breaks abroad and dares adventure the praſiſe of it selfe to the eye of the world, and be it, that it may never see the light, that it may be like a Child born and buried in the wombe, yet as that Child is a man, a true man there cloſſetted in that hidden frame of nature, so sin is truly sin; though it never it gets out beyond the wombe which did conceive and enliven it.

When kept
from the eye of
him that com-
mits it.

Now whether *David* doth speak of secret sins in opposition to the eyes of men, or to his own sensible eye, (i.) Such as corrupt Nature did commit within his own heart; or whether he intends it of both? it may be much disputed: for my part I conjecture that it may be understood of both such which he might commit in private, & so the words respect the actings of sin in secret, & also which his own heart & thoughts might commit within themselves, and so the words respect the secret, actings of sin. though Principally they may be most fitly Expounded in this latter sense.

But what were those secret sins from which *David* desired to be cleansed.

Nay that is a secret; he doth not Instance in any one because his desire is to be freed from Every one: he speaks Indefinitely, He found many secret inclinations (without all doubt in several kindes of sinne, now in one, now in another, from all of which (not some onely) he desires to be Cleansed.

SECT. II.

2. **B**ut what is that to be Cleansed.
There be two Expositions of it.

What it is to
be cleansed.

1. One is that *he desires to be justified*, to be pardoned those sins and so the Hebrew word **קָפַח** doth import in the second conjugation *immunem aliquem facere a Culpa vel a pœna.*

To be justified.

And indeed the blood of Christ which justifies is a Cleansing thing, it wipes off the guilt.

Now if this be it, Then thus much is evident, that secret thoughts and inclinations may be sinful and are damnable, or else they were not pardonable.

To be more
sanctified.

2. Another is that *he desires more to be sanctified*, and that his Nature might be more changed, not only that outward sinnings might be abandoned, but even inward actings or motions might be subdued.

3. Things Im-
plied in this
desire.

And observe, he doth desire to be *Cleansed*, he doth not desire to be dipped only into the water, or sprinkled, he doth not desire only to be a little rinsed, but he desires to be washed so long untill he be cleansed, untill his soule be made cleane and pure, and free from those secret sinfulnesses.

Where observe by the way three things.

Hee who hath
received true
grace needs
more grace.

First, *he who hath received True Grace needs more grace*: our lives need to be still reformed, and our hearts stil to be cleansed, the soul is such a vessel as continually is gathering in and sending out what is corrupt and evill. It is like a fountaine which you need still be laving of it out.

The Progress
of cleansing
the soule be-
longs to God as
well as the
beginning.

2. Againe the *progress and perfection of cleansing the soule appertaines to God as well as the beginning*, The physicion must goe through with his cure, or else the patient will relapse, the disease will prevaile, no not the created Grace in the soule

soule is hard enough to keep down sinne, much less to put it out, unless a divine & new assistance comes to the soul, Therefore David, though an Holy man, prays to God to cleanse him.

3. Lastly, persons Truly Holy, and sensible desire yet further measures, of Holiness: David was cleansed before, and yet he desires to be cleansed: why, because though he had a radicall purity, yet he had not the graduall purity, The whole man was cleansed, but it was not cleansed wholly: some grace he had, but more he did want, some sins he was prety well rid off, but others he felt yet stirring and working: Though no man saw them, yet he felt them: Noe combat, serves the Christian but that which Lookes to victory, and he thinks the day is not yet won, if he hath not yet the conquest of every sin, as well as any one.

Persons truly holy, desire more holinesse.

SECT. III.

3. **B**ut why should we desire to be cleansed from secret sinnes: Either from secret acting or secret motions.

I will give you diverse reasons of it.

1. Because secret sins will become publike sins, if they be not cleansed. It is with the soule, as it is with the body wherein diseases are first bred, and then manifested; and if you suppress them not in their root, you shall shortly see them to break out in the fruit: or as it is with fire catching the inside of the house first, and there if you doe not surprise it, it will make way for its selfe to get to the outside. Lust when it hath conceived it bringeth forth sin, Jam. I. 15. Beloved, remember this, that though the first ground of sin be within the heart, yet the propagation of sin is to come forth into publicke: the Child in the wombe hath nor stronger throwes to get out of its private lodging, then sin secretly wrought to fly into open and manifest action: Ammon is sick with the sinful Conceptions of incestuous lust, and what ado was there till he had committed that villany: let a man set up any sin in delightful Contemplation and meditations that same inward acting of his sin, Either doth actually

Why we should desire to be cleansed from secret sins. Secret sins will become Publike sins if not cleansed.

Cast him upon the outward adventures, or invites them. This is the least that it doth, it doth strangely ripen his naturall inclination; and besides that it doth prepare him for a temptation that suits that way: Satan shall not need to tempt him much, who hath already tempted himself: and he who will work sin in his heart, a weak occasion will draw it out into his life, *thirty pieces of silver* will prevaile with a *covetous Judas*, who had already sold his Master in his heart.

Object. But what of that, will you say, suppose that secret sins uncleansed do become publicke.

I say therefore, should we the rather labour to cleanse them: for as much as the more publick sin becomes, the worse it is you know, that if the word or letter of the minde be written in paper, now it becomes a copy for others to write after, whilst secret sins are confined the house (i.) to the soule only, and break not out into visible act, though they be very damnable, yet they are but of personal and proper danger, they indanger him only who maintaines them, as poyson doth him who takes the poyson; But when they come to publick and visible actings, then they are a copy, they are exemplary sins, & like the Plague infecting other persons, others are capable to imitate them, and soe more souls are tainted, and God now receives a common dishonour.

Secret sins are
apt to deceive
us most.

2. *Secret sins are apt to deceive us most,* & therefore cleanse there; there is a deceitfulnesse in all sinnings whatsoever, the soule is coufused by sin whensoever it doth sin; but now secret sins deceive us most, they are most apt to prevaile with us: partly,

1. Because *we have not that strict and spirituall judgement of the inwards of sin, as of the outwards*: many times we conceive of them as no sins at all, or elie as slight and veniall, to draw a sword, and run a man thorow the heart; O this is a fearful murder, to draw a false word, and slanderously to pierce thorow his good name, we likewise imagine that this may be bad, but to kill a man with malicious thoughts, with revengeful plots and desires, nay, this is scarce thought as a matter culpable, or at least very excusable. Beloved, it is the ingenium of sin to come off easily in the soule without stir and debate, and no sins come off so easily, as those with we scarce imagine to be sins. Now we are apt to think that secret sinnes are scarce sinnes.

2. And because *Most men decline sinne upon outward respects*, which doe not reach the actings of secret sins, shame and fear, and observance are great, and the only restraints to many. They doe not live in, and visibly commit such sins, because they like not shame, and are afraid of punishment, but what are those to secret sinnings, where no Law of man can reach, and no eye of man can search. It is true, that God hath set some on or other to watch the sinner al over, as his law for inward, & outward actings; *his conscience* principally for the inward, and the *eyes and mouths, and hands of men* for the outward: but now for secret sinning, it being invisible, it doth therefore escape all the outward restraints by the seeing, and speaking, and judging of men; and it hath mainly to attend what conscience wil say, which perhaps is ignorant or drousy, & if it doth speak yet it is not regarded: Now mark of all sins eye them most, which do most easily deceive you, these a man commits most, affects most, and continues in longest, since therefore secret sins come under that form, is it not necessary to labour to be cleansed from them.

3. *The strength of sin is inward*, therefore labour to be cleansed from secret sins; if a man hath a fever, so that his tongue doth even fry in his mouth, and his flesh is even roasted with burning heat, yet the strength of that fever is in his spirits and inward parts, which are set on fire by some humorous distemper; so is it with sinne though the outward actings be bad enough, yet the strong holds are within the soule: The strength of a sin,

The strength
of sin is inward.

1. Lies in its *nearnesse to the fountaine*, from whence it can take a quick, immediate, and continual supply; and so doe our secret sins, they are as neare to Originall sin, as the first droppings are to the springe head: they are indeed Originall sin immediatly acting it selfe, which sin is a full sin, a feeding sin, a sinning sin, and never weary.

2. It Lies in the *acceptance of the affections*: love and liking set sin upon its throne: They are the Armes royall of a sinne; now of the two, men are more apt to like and love secret then open sinnings.

3. It lies in the *confidence of Commission*: Now a man doth take

take more heart and boldnesse and courage to commit secret sins then open.

4. It lies in the iteration and frequency of acting, for sinne often repeated & acted, is like a cable doubled in strength by the manifold twistings, but secret sins are more frequently iterated; an unclean heart can keep a whore in his thoughts every day and moment, who perhaps is afraid to be seen at the door of her house once a yeare: a proud person can disdain another in his heart all the week, who yet will not shew it once a month, so for the malicious, &c.

The principle
object of Gods
eye is the secret
frame of the
soule.

4. *The principle object of Gods eye, is the inward and secret frame of the soule*, therefore labour to be cleansed from secret sins, *Pla. 66. 18. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not heare me, Pla. 51. 6. Behold, thou desirest Truth in the inward parts:* Therefore is he often said in scripture to search the heart & the reins, which intimates this special observation of the secret frame: it is true, that God doth give in charge against open sins, why, because he would not have any to be profane; and so he doth give singular charge against secret sins, why? because he cannot endure any to be hypocritical: the man is most, in al to God what his inside is: if ye work wickedness in your heart, God will destroy you, plaister your visible part with all sorts of pious expressions, if yet you can set up a form of sinning within, you are notable Hypocrites? the Lord seeth you to be false, and rotten, and he will discharge himselfe of you: Treason is as bad as Rebellion, Rebellion is but open Treason, and Treason is but secret Rebellion; the King will exact life justly for either; so will God for the secret sinnings, as well as for the open.

The spirit of
God is grieved
by secret sins.

The spirit of God is grieved by secret sins, as well as dishonored by open sinnings.

SECT. III.

Use.

NOW I come to the Applications of this point, Is it the desire of an holy heart to be cleansed? not only from publike, but

but also from private finnes, not only from grosse and visible, but also from secret and invisible sins: then these things will follow from hence, as *informations*.

For Information.

1. That true holinesse hath a repugnancy and contrariety to all sins: It is not contrary to sin, because it is open and manifest; nor to sin, because it is private and secret, but to sin as sin, whether publike or whether private, because both the one, & the other is contrary to Gods wil & glory, as it is with true light, though it be but a beame, yet it is universally opposite to all darknesse: or as it is with heat, though there be but one degree of it, yet it is opposite to all cold; so if the holinesse be true and reall, it cannot comply with any known sin: you can never reconcile them in the affection: they may have an unwilling consistence in the person, but you can never make them to agree in the affection.

True holinesse hath a contrariety to all sin.

Beloved, there is a marvellous difference twixt things which are at difference by a respective and accidentall repugnancy, and by a naturall and pure contrariety, in the former there may be an accord, but in the latter none: an Hypocriticall heart may fall out with its sin for the consequence of it, for the shame it brings, for the stinging guilt which it causeth in the conscience, yet his heart hath (in absolute termes) an inward Cohesion and league with that sin: but now true holiness & sin are opposite with a natural contrariety, therefore you can never reconcile them in the heart: but the opposition is inward as well as outward, to sin wheresoever it is.

2. That sanctification is not perfect in this life, he who hath most grace, hath yet some sin: Else why doth David (an holy person) desire to be cleansed, he who needs to pray, that he may be cleansed, cannot yet totally say, *my heart is Cleane*.

That sanctification is Imperfect in this life.

There is a perfection of Integrity which an holy heart hath standing in opposition to Hypocrisie and essentiall defectivenessse, but there is not a Perfection of eminency which consists in an opposition to all want: Grace whiles in your hearts living on the earth, is as health rising in a sick body, or like heat getting into the water, or like light spreading it selfe more and more to chase away darknesse, there is yet more of sin to be conquered, and we have lesse grace then we should have, and where any

part

part or degree of sin is yet as an enemy, being and rising, there
gracethough it may be found and saving, yet is it not absolute
and perfect.

That secret
corruptions
are the Christi-
ans trouble.

3. Here you may understand the *grounds and reasons of the many troubles and heavy complaints of Christians*: It is true, that they may faile many times in their words and speeches (and he is a very perfect man who doth not trespass therein) and they may be overtaken with explicit sinnings, no holy person will professe himselfe to be an Angell, but he hath many outward sins to bewaile, as he hath many inward graces to bless God for; yet the load of his soule is within his soule; commissions doe justly humble him; but the secret inclinations of sinne they doe even burst his heart asunder.

Why looke ye so sad, say we oftentimes to good people, and why are yea so cast down? what is it which troubles you? you have a good God, and a good Christ, and a good Gospel, yea, I have, but withall, I have yet a bad heart in despite of all my conflictings, and and strivings, and prayings; I am yet so molested with sinful imaginations, with sinful inclinations: If I do, not performe duty with any life, I am troubled for my dulness: if I doe it with any life, I am troubled with pride: If I do not pray, I cannot bear the guilt of a willing omission; if I doe pray, I am even torne from my self; and the crowd of other thoughts do justle out the apprehension and affection of my praying. Another Christian he complains bitterly of secret blasphemies, Atheistical risings, Another with private murmurings, discontents, unbeleivings; though you hear no such words, and see no such carriages; *O wretched man that I am, said Paul*: and verily so great are the Insolences of secret corruptions, that the Christian is oftentimes weary of his life: Beloved the maine battle of a Christian is not in the open field, his quarrels are most within, and his enemies are in his own breast, when he hath reformed an ill life, yet it shall cost him infinitely much more to reform an ill heart; he may receive so much power from grace at the beginning, as in a short time, to draw off from most of the former grosse acts of sinnings, but it will be a work of all his dayes to get a through conquest of secret Corruptions.

4. Then *all the works of a Christian is not abroad*, if there be secret sins to be cleansed.

All the works
of a Christian
is not abroad.

There are two sorts of duties,

Some are *direct*, which are *working duties*, they are the colours of grace in the countenance and view of the Conversation, setting it forth with all holy evenesse, and fruitfulness, and unblamableness.

Some are *reflexive*, which are *searching duties*, they appertain to the inward roomes, to the beautifying of them, and reforming of them; for not only the life, but the heart also is the subject of our care and study: I am not only to labour that I do no evil, but also that I be not evil, not only that sinne do not distain my paths, but also that it doth not defile my intentions: not only that my cloaths be handsome, but also that my skin be white (i.) my inward parts be as acceptable to God, as my outward frame is plausible with man; yea, let me tell you one thing, that he is an hypocrite, who takes care to wash the outside only, forasmuch as the greatest solicitude for the life, may be without any reformation of the heart; not that the life must not be squared, but if that be varnished, and the heart neglected, the person hath not only the same natural and lively frame of sinfulness, but he deceives himself, or at least another with a meere pretence and shadow, therefore brethren let us have eyes to look inward, as well as outward, God hath given us a reflexive faculty; and besides that, know

1. That *Prima pars*, the first part of our work is to set upon the inward part; how vain is it to wash the brackish streames which are yet fed by a soure fountaine: and verily the conversation will be ever and anon unequal and unlike it self; if the heart remains unpurged and unchanged, corruption which hath often entertained your secret thoughts, will at length present these births to your very eye.

2. That *Maxima pars*, the greater part of your work is within: It is true, an ill tongue, a lustful eye, a stealing hand, they may challenge much prayer, care and observance, watchfulness to reforme them, but a beam of light is small to the vast body of light in the Sun, and the dribling rivers are with

more ease, turned and dried up, then the deep ocean, sin within, is sin in the fountain, and sin in the visible parts, is sin in the streames, yea, and as every thing is strongest in its cause (and therefore sin is highest in the heart) for the strength and vigour of temptations is at the inward part of man: Satan doth not stir a naked eye, but a filthy heart to look through that sinful window, he doth not come to the hand, and say steale, but first to the heart, which will quickly command the hand: he doth not say immediately to the tongue, swear and blaspheme, but the heart, which can easily command that Hellish language into the tongue. If thou shouldst pluck out thine eyes, and never see any object to excite thy unclean heart, yet mayest thou be as filthy a person, thine own corrupt heart, and Satan would alone incline thee; and though thou hadst never a foot to go, nor hand to stir, yet mightest thou be as very a thief as *Judas*: thy heart might rob every passenger, and steale from every house thou comest in: objects are but accidental things; to man, they have no necessary impressive influences; they do but deliver themselves in that nature wherewith God hath cloathed them: but that which in-venoms them, and makes them to work so wickedly, is mans wicked heart; you have many persons who complain much against objects, O they can see none, or deal with none, but wickednesse is stirring. Why, beloved, the objects are innocent, but our hearts are unclean and sinful: if thou couldest get another heart, thou wouldest look with another eye: the onely way to make temptations lose their force, is to decline occasions, and to cleanse the inward parts.

S E C T. V.

Use 2. Tryal.
We should try
our selves, be-
cause
So many wal-
low in secret
sins.

A Nother Use which I would make of this is, to try our selves, what care we have of secret sins: I will give unto you some Reasons why I would have you to try your selves in this,

1. *Because there be many persons, who wallow in secret sinnes.*

The

The Apostle complained of such in his time, *Ephes. 5. 12.* It is a shame to speak of those things which are done to them in secret, he speaks of such as lived in secret fornications and uncleanness; Brethren, how many are there, who do apparel themselves even with a form of godliness, who yet not only allow themselves in the secret thoughts of abhorred wickednesses, but even in the secret actings of the same, as if there were no God to look on them, nor conscience to espy them, nor judgement day to arraign them: O how infinitely odious must thou be in the eyes of that holy God, who dares to Court him in the publick, and yet dares to provoke him to his face thus in private; like a whorish strumpet, who dissembles marvellous affections to her husband abroad, and yet at home she will violate the Covenant of her God, before her husbands eyes; So thou to pretend so much for God before company, and yet in private thou wilt presume to sin before his face: for he seeth thee, and that thy conscience knows right well.

There be at the least three horrible sins which now thou dost commit at once.

First, that *every sin which thou wouldest so conceal*: And perhaps it may be a sin of the deepest dye. Yea, mark this, that usually the most damnable sins are such which are committed in secret, as *Sodom's* adulteries, and such fearful kinds of pollutions, and murders, and treasons, &c.

Secondly, *Hypocrisie*, which is a screen to thy sinne, an holy cover for an unholy heart and practice, which makes the sinner by how much the more vile in Gods eyes, by how much the more that he doth not only sin against God, but wrests (as it were) something from God to cover and palliate his rebellion against him.

A third is *Atheisme*: if there be not formal Atheisme, yet there is a virtual Atheism, as if God were no God in secret, but only in publick, that he could see in the light and not in the darkness; that his eye is as the eye of a man only: whereas he is an universal eye, and is a light without all darkness.

2. The principle of sinning is secret and common to every man.

The principle of sinning is secret and common to every man.

The motions of sinning are not like the motions of a bowle which runs only by the vertue of an imprinted strength, they are not violent motions whose cause is only extrinsecal, but they are natural motions, whose principle is within the subject: *out of the heart* (saith Christ) *proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousnesse, malice, deceit, lasciviousnesse, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishnesse, all these evil things come from within and defile the man*, Mark 7. 21, 22, 23. the nature which tempts thee, that nature is in thee, it is the womb of many and infinite sinful corruptions, and imaginations: it casts out wickedness as the fountain casts forth water; so the Prophet, *Jer. 5. 7.* it is very true, that outward occasions, and Satan by his suggestions may assist and quicken original corruption, as the bellows may enflame the fire, yet the fire hath heat, and an aptness naturally to burne. So original corruption, though it may grow monstrously active by temptations from abroad, yet it can and doth incline us, and can beget private actings of horrible finnes, from its own native strength, it can send out several forms of sinning, and incline us to contemplate upon them, yea to contrive the singular methods of transgression, yea, it can feed the soul with wonderful delights in them, so that in the eye of God, the finings are formed, and fashioned, and ripened with most of odious perfections.

There is a depth of hypocrisie in every man.

Divines distinguish of three sorts of hypocrisie.

There is an high depth of hypocrisie in the the souls of men, whose proper work is to have a secret way contrary to an open profession; as a player who takes on him to act the part of a King, yet in his private and absolute way, he may be a person of most ignoble birth, and unworthy qualities: so it is with the hypocrite.

1. One is *natural* and hath footing in every man: even the most upright heart hath in it some hypocrisie, and he doth sometimes seem to be that, which he is not: he may be sometimes more full in his profession, then he is indeed in his actions.

2. Another is *foule and grosse*, which is when a mans heart, is not at all what it seemes to be unto the world. Christ compares persons guilty of it to *whited Sepulchres*, which
within

within are full of dead and rotten bones, as when a man shall profess he loves God, and Christ, and his wayes, and yet secretly contemns and hates holiness, and resists the motions of Gods spirit: and is at defiance with all the heavenly rules of life and powerful obedience.

3. A third is *formal*, when a man not only deceives others with a shew of what is not in him, but also cozens and cheates his own heart with a false persuasion of his own happiness, partly from some specials, which he findes in himself above others, and partly from the pride of his own spirit, joyned with an affectation of happinesse; yet all this while, his heart keeps an haunt of some private lust and ungodliness, there is som sweet morsel under his tongue from which he will not part.

4. *Outward occasions can encline to secret sinnings*: Beloved (there lies a snare almost against us) in all society: we have such vile natures, that as a spark of fire will easily kindle a box of tinder, so but a word spoken doth many times kindle a world of passion, of malice, of revenge within us: yea, the miplacing of a look begets in us secret disdain and discontent, yea, the casting of an eye may inflame the heart with excess of lust: need we not then (putting all these things together) to search our inward frame, to see what care we have about and against secret sinnings: but you will say, *how may a man know whether he doth, or no, desire truly to be cleansed from secret sinnes.*

Outward occasions can incline to secret sinnings.

How a man may know he doth desire to be cleansed from secret sins Negative trials.

I will give unto you some observations for this, 1. *Negative*, then 2. *Positively*.

1. The *Negative discoveries* (i.) those by which a man may know that he doth not desire to be cleansed from secret sins are these.

1. *When the principal restraint of his sinnings is terminated only in man.* Beloved, really our conversing is either with God, or with our selves, or with men; and answerable to these, there are three severall reasons of forbearing sin; either because of God, whose will and holinesse is injured; or else because of our conscience, because our secret, quiet, and ease shall be interrupted, or else because if we should adventure to sin, we should hazard our estimations and estates, and safeties, and incur ignominy, blame, shame,

When the principal restraint of sin is terminated only in man.

shame, punishment, and loss with men.

Now mark it: when respect to man is the only reason, why I forbear sin, I am all this while loose and unconscionable in the inward frame, all my care is taken up about those actions and carriagees which fall under the eye and judgement of man; and none but the visible and open actings of sinne break out that way: If I forbear sin for mans sake, that men may esteeme well of me, and not censure or punish me, I therefore so far restraine sin as it may not be visible, but I do not strive against it, because it is sinful; I say, not because the thing is sinful before God, but only because it is culpable before man: now try your selves in this: what is the restraint of your sinning: suppose all men in the world were in a dead sleep, suppose that no eye did see thee, suppose that no tongue of humane justice would call thee to account: would not thy heart then with full sail spread out it self: wouldst thou not now, like the lions in the night, wander about for thy preys; would not thy heart turn out it self, let go it self, drive out its secret inclinations: wouldst thou not do that in any place which now thou committest in secret corners.

When the hindrances of secret sins are burdens.

2. *When the hindrances of secret sinning are a burden*, they are crosses. A man doth not desire to go out of the way of his delight: he is not weary of his affection, for delight is endlesse, and unsatisfied: though the body may be wearied, yet the affection of delight is never wearied: now brethren, a man may know his delights by his crosses, if I attain not that which I respect not, I am not moved, but if my spirit rise, and swell, and rage, or if I grieve, and complain, and am sad, because of an impediment of something which hath clapt in it self 'twixt me and my desires, this shews that I had a delight in it, that I would faine have had it. Now let me apply this to our business in hand, God doth many times hinder the sinner, he doth step in by his providence, and prevents him from encreasing his guilt: he puts forth some accident, some impediment or other which stands twixt the intention of sinne, and the execution of it: the sinner hath contrived and plotted the time, and place, and the manner of the sinning, but God (who over-rules all) hath disappointed him, by the unexpectedness

edness of other company, or some other occurrence of sudden sickness, or misadventure, if now the heart do grow into *Ahabs* turbulent fits, it is a signe it would have had *Naboths* vine-yard; if the hindrance of the sinful fact, whether (open or secret) be a grief to thee, this shews the bent of thy heart to the sin, but I passe on.

3. *When the nature of sinne is no burden, but some particular a-ctings are.* As *Joab* said to *David*, when he observed his sorrow for *Absolom*, I perceive (said he, 2 *Sam.* 19. 6.) that if *Absolom* had lived, and all we had died this day, then it had pleased thee well: So here, when the main trouble is for some actions irregularly starting out to the world, and not for the nature, which is a cause of that and all other sinful a^ctings, this shews that our eye is outward and not inward.

When the nature of sin is no burden, but only some particular a^ctings.

Brethren, mistake me not, I do not mean that sinful actions should escape our tears, nay verily all our sinful births and broods naturally, calls for sorrow and humblings, and the more sinful any explicit act is, the more dishonour God hath by it, the more scandal religion suffers for it; therefore, I say, the more sorrows and tears should we cast after it; but then know, that according to the guilty quality, according to the proportion of it, should be the answerableness of our grief and perplexity: am I grieved for a rash and hasty word, and not for a passionate and violent nature; am I troubled for an uncleane gesture or act, and not for an unclean heart; am I perplexed for a lie by my tongue, and not for an evil and false heart: verily then my eye is not on God, but man, it is not upon secret sinnes, but only upon open and manifest sinnes.

4. *When we cannot abide the spiritual efficacy and inward searchings of the word:* Beloved, the Word of God is quick and powerful, a two-edged sword, it divides between the joynts and the marrow, it is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart, Heb. 4. 12: you finde it to be so; that it comes into your closet, it findes you out in your most secret wayes of sinning, it follows you into the most dark corners, it pierceth into the imaginations and plots which you never yet brought out to the Sunne, it tells you of your very desires and

When we cannot abide the spiritual efficacy of the word.

affections, what you like most, crave most, do most. Now what do your hearts say, how do they bestir themselves, when they finde the word to haunt and pursue them, when they observe the word to come and close with the secret windings and turnings: do you not strive to keep out the light? do you not hold it off, as they do the enemy in a siege in the out-works, that he might not break into the heart of the City, would you not be spared, unsearched: nay, you cannot endure the word which comes to your private sinful gains; and to your private sinful pleasures, you will not endure to be ordered how to think, and how to desire: if it be so, where is then in you the property of an holy *David*, who doth not desire to guard and defend, but to be cleansed from secret sins.

Positive Trials.

The *Positive observations* by which you may know that you desire in truth to be cleansed from secret sins, may be these.

When the apprehension of Gods eye troubles the man, he wisheth there were no God to see or hinder his sinning.

Positive Tryals Consider Of what acceptance are secret temptations.

1. Consider of what acceptance are secret temptations; there are *open and broad temptations* which carry some expresse prejudice unto our names, and there are *implicit, and close temptations*, which carry a real prejudice to Gods glory, of this latter sort, there are again two kinds: some temptations there are which the ingenuity of a refined nature may perhaps start at as too infinitely gross, to yeeld unto them; as some kinds of blasphemy, and mockings, and revilings of God, or Christ, or the Gospel, and those hidious excitations to self-murder, or any unnatural villany: other temptations there are which may finde a principle within the soul more intimate and apt to take and receive the impressions, if not opposed by the advertency and purity of a spiritual heart: now assuredly the heart doth desire to be cleansed from secret sins which stirs up it self with all its might against those secret temptations, which deal for sin within the soul, which lighten and quicken natural corruption by representation, or by excitation, or by both: O it is the heavy day of the soul, when it is so inwardly assaulted and buffeted: the heart is so far from yeelding, that it is resisting with tears, with prayers; yea, and observe one thing which is this, that the temptation to the sinning is not only resisted, but it is made an occasion to the holy soul, the

more

more to labour against the corruption, unto which the temptation would secretly encline: as if Satan should tempt to secret pride; not only not to admit the temptation, but now to go to God and pray more earnestly against a proud imagination, and a proud spirit, yea, to be vehement for an heart more lowly and humble; or if Satan doth tempt to contemplative uncleanness, or secret actings, not only to resist and abhor them, but to pray more earnestly for a Chast and pure heart, and for chast and spiritual imaginations and thoughts.

2. Consider *how far forth thou desirest to approve thy selfe to God.* God is the God of our spirits as well as of our bodies, and he doth not only ponder our paths, but doth also search our hearts: That thou sendest forth some words in prayer, O this satisfies not because of so many distractions in the minde, and of so many deadnesses in the affection: that man cannot accuse thee for any habitual unevennesse, this is not enough, if God cannot approve of thee for a person *after his own heart*: if thy heart were such as God would like regard, approve, accept, then thou wouldest be better satisfied.

How far forth
thou desirest
to approve thy
self to God.

There is a twofold approving of our selves, one in the *conscionable exactnesse of duty appertaining to our callings*; hence the Apostle, 2 Cor. 6. 3. *giving no offence in any thing that the Ministry be not blamed*: vers. 4. *But in all things approving our selves as the Ministers of God in much patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses.*

Another in the *internal disposition of the soul*; which is when the private frame of the spirit is so endeavoured to be rectified, squared, beautified, and ordered, that the great and holy God may take delight, and proclaim his gracious testimony of the same: hear that of the Apostle, 2 Cor. 10. 18. *Not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth*; in the former respect is that phrase of Paul, Rom. 16. 18. *approved of men*, in the latter respect is that phrase of Paul, Rom. 16. 10. *approved in Christ*; and of Peter, Acts 2. 22. *A man approved of God.* Now verily, no man can sincerely desire to approve himself unto God (i.) to put him-

self over unto Gods sentence of tryal and decision so, that he might find an acceptance from his eyes, but he doth indeed desire to be cleansed from secret sinnes; why? because Gods sentence is righteous and according to truth, he doth not weigh so much, the actions as the spirits of men, not so much the outward expressions as the inward dispositions; not so much what they do, as what they would do; not so much that they do not, as this that they would do no iniquity. I remember that *David* is upon this very straine, in *Psal. 139. 23. Search me O Lord, and know my heart, and know my thoughts, v. 24. And so if there be any wicked way in me:* Here he puts himself intirely upon God, to try him, to search him, to see whether his heart be such as he should like and approve. *Paul* is in the same straine, *1 Cor. 4. 3. with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged of you; (i.) whether you approve of me or not accept of me, or condemn me, I tell you, this is not the main thing that I look on, v. 4. But he that judgeth me is the Lord, (i.) there is another Judge, a greater Judge, a better Judge, one who can canvaite the secret and inward parts, as well, as eye the meere visible acts and motions, to him do I look, to him do I desire to approve my self.*

Where dost
thou lay the
sharpest edge of
the Axe.

3. Observe, *where dost thou lay the sharpest edge of the axe: the axe, said Matthew in another case, is now laid to the root of the tree:* sinne is like a tree, it hath root and branches, that which we see of the tree, is the bulk and branches, that which is the life of the tree we see not, it is the root which is moored in the bowels of the earth. Now as a man may deal with a tree, so he may deal with his sinnes; the axe may be employed only to lop off the branches, which yet all live in the root, and he may apply his axe to the very root, to the cutting of it up, and so he brings an universal death to the tree: So it is possible for a man to bestow all his pains to lop off sinne onely in the visible branches in the outward limbes of it, and it is also possible for a man to be crucifying the secret lust, the very corrupt nature and root of sinfulness. Now this I say, he who bestows his study, his prayers, his tears, his cares, his watchings, his strength to mortifie corruption in the root, in the nature, in the cause, how unquestionable is it
that

that he doth desire to be cleansed from secret sins. Suppose a man hath an ulcerous part (undiscovered) in his breast: if he applieth such physick which will carry away the spring of that ulcer, it is a palpable signe he doth desire to be cleared from the secret ulcer it self: so it is in this case.

Beloved, we distinguish 'twixt these two things, *viz.*

1. *The restraining of sin.*
2. *The weakening of sin.*

A man whose sinnes may crawl in him, like the worms in a dead body, which may feed upon his most exquisite contemplations, and dearest affections, with fullest and sweetest contentment, may yet curb and restrain the habits, or sinfull propensions from breaking out into act; The vigor of a natural and enlightned conscience, and the ingenuity of a more nobly bred disposition; and the force of particular aimes and ends, may be able to rein up and bridle in thee. *Actus imperator* (as the School-men speak) the notable or visible deliveries or actings of sin; But that which weakens sin is grace; that which purgeth out the sin is alwayes contrary to it.

Again, we observe a difference 'twixt these two, *viz.* to have sinne and the heart asunder: and to have sinne and the *shame* or the *bitternesse* asunder: this latter a *Pharaoh*, an *Ahab* may desire; but the former, only that man who is truly holy, and would be cleansed from secret sins.

4. And this now leads me to a fourth discovery of a person who desires to be cleansed from secret sins, *viz.* *he who strongly desires to have another nature, another heart.* Another nature or heart is a heart replenished with most holy qualities, which stand in a present opposition to that of sin, and which in time will get the victory over it: Suppose a man be apt to much unbelief, secret mistrusts and distrusts, how know I that he would be cleansed from them? not only by this that he complains, but also that he is day and night with God for the grace of faith, and the strength of his Spirit to believe: And indeed it is the contrary grace which doth cleanse from sinne; secret grace which cleanseth from secret sinnes: forasmuch as the inward clensing, is not by outward medicines, but by a completed principle, both in nature and operation,

Doest thou
strongly desire
to have another
nature.

striving against the nature and operations of sin, as the Apostle elegantly shadows it, in *Gal. 5. Psal. 51. Create in me a new heart*, said David; the new heart is a new frame and temper to fill the soul with other inclinations and thoughts, and the life with other ways and actions.

SECT. VI.

Use 3.
For comfort to
such as have
such desires.

Their praise
is of God.

I Now proceed to a third Use which shall be for *Comfort* to such persons *whose desires are really carried to be cleansed from secret sins*, as well as publick and visible, they may comfort themselves in many things. For,

1. *That their praise is of God*, and he doth commend them, see the Apostle, *Rom 2.28. He is not a Jew which is outwardly, neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh*, verse 29. *But he is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, not in the letter, whose praise is not of men, but of God*: Now what a comfort is this that thou art a person whom the Lord will take notice of, yea, whom the Lord himself will praise and commend: to say of thee as of David. *I have found a man after mine own heart*; and that *thy heart is perfect with the Lord*.

2. *That conscience in a day of distresse will acquit and clear them*. Beloved, there are two sorts of people.

Conscience
will acquit
them in a day
of distress.

Some *dawbling, and dissembling, and kuffling*, whose care it is not, not to sinne, but to be cunning in sin; these shall find that in the day of their distresse, conscience shall rip up before their eyes their most private vileneses, and that God will set their secret sinnes before the light of his countenance; yea, and the more industrious and witty that they have been that way, the more shall conscience aggravate the hypocrisie of their souls.

Others *conflicting and agonizing* with secret motions, outward occasions, strong temptations: these persons in a day of distresse shall finde singular testimony from conscience; for though now, whiles their judgement is oppressed with variety

of arguments, and the minde is overladen with the heap of temptations, they are not able clearly to judge and decide their condition, yet when conscience (which is the great umpire in man) shall arise to examine fore-past actions and endeavours, it will there give sentence for thee, excusing thee, approving thee, *That in all simplicity, and sincerity thou hadst thy conversation, both towards men and towards God, and that it was the desire of thy soul, to fear the Lord, to do no iniquity, but to walk before him in all well-pleasing: conscience doth cleare, as the word clears, and whom the word doth clear.*

3. *They may with confidence make their prayers to God, and shall be heard.* The hypocrite hath *Moabs curse*, that he shall pray, but not prevaile, *Esay 16. 12.* for saith *David*, *If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not heare my prayer,* *Psalme 66. 18.* But saith *Eliphaz*, *Job 22. 23.* *If thou returne to the Almighty, &c. and shalt put away iniquity from thy Tabernacles, ver. 27. Thou shalt make thy prayer unto him, and he shall hear thee:* O how acceptable unto God are the sacrifices of a spirit truly and uprightly tempered.

They may with confidence pray and shall be heard.

4. *The Lord will more and more cleanse them:* he will by degrees put more beautiful ornaments on the inward man, and change their burdens; if *Paul* be troubled with himself, *Christ* will deliver him from himself; he hath this comfort, that for the present God observes his inward conflicts, and accepts his secret uprightnesse, and for the future, that he shall have the victory over his rebellions by *Jesus Christ*. There be two things, of which the soul, which deales with inward convictions (out of a pure respect) may be confident, *viz.* One is *grace to combate*, Another is *strength to overcome.*

God will more and more cleanse them.

Ob. 1. O but can a man be truly holy who hath such vile inclinations, abhorred thoughts and motions, such wonderfull eruptions of sinful abominations working yet within him?

Sol. 1. A word for this; you must know this, that an holy man is a man, and a man; he is compounded of a nature, and a nature; flesh and spirit, grace and sin.

Secondly, you must distinguish 'twixt the secret motions of sin, and the secret approbations thereof; as grace doth not utterly root out all the existence of natural corruption, so neither is it able absolutely to suppress (though to hinder) the operations or workings of sinful corruption.

Thirdly, we distinguish of secret workings of sinne, there is a double secrecy.

1. One is natural, and it befalls any man: for sinne naturally carries shame with it, and therefore hath a desire of secrecy.

2. Another is artificial, which is a cunning devising of sin: this kinde of secrecy is not so incident to holy persons: they do not frame methods of transgressing, no ways of dishonouring God, yet I will put forth a distinction, I think it good, there is a twofold artificial secrecy,

1. One antecedent and delightful, contrived on purpose to enlarge the way of the vile heart out of a deep love of the sinne, and to compassse the contiuall fruition thereof.

Another is a consequent and troublesome, and a kinde of enforced artificialnesse, as was that of David, which did arise from a sin secretly committed by him, in the hast of a temptation; Now I think that even an holy soul may possibly touch upon an artificial secrecy, by consequence having been violently and preposterously carried unto some precedent sin, which that it may be hid from the eye of man, it doth therefore spin out some other methods of sinning: however this is a very fearful course, there is no comfort at all in it, but a deeper aggravation of the former sinning, for as much as adding sinne to sinne is no remedie, but to repent of former sinnings is the onely and best way of help.

SECT. VII.

A Fourth Use of this assertion, shall be for *Exhortation to take heed of, and labour against secret sins*: its true, that all sin is to be declined: But I therefore stir you up to beware of secret finnes, because we are more apt to those then to the open; we sink our selves sooner with these then with any other sinnings.

There are three things which I will handle here, and so conclude this point, viz.

1. Motives to enforce our care.
2. Aggravations of secret sins.
3. Means which may present help against secret sin.

1. *The Motives.*

There be many arguments which may justly stir us up to take heed of, and to cleanse from secret sins.

1. *The Lord knoweth our secret sinnings as exactly as our visible sinnings*, Psal. 44. 21. *He knoweth the secrets of our hearts*, Psal. 139. 2. *He knoweth our down sitting and our uprising, and understands our thoughts afar off*, ver. 11. *If I say surely the darknesse shall cover me; even the night shall be light about me*, ver. 12. *yea the darknesse hideth not from thee; but the night shineth as the day, the darknesse and the light are both alike unto thee*, Ezek. 8. 6. *Sonne of man, see'st thou what they do; even the great abominations that the house of Israel committeth here*. Like one on an high mountain pointing at the thiefe robbing a man in a thicket, see you yonder thief plucking of him down, &c. so here the great and lofty God, whose seat is on high, beholds all the wayes and motions of the children of men, even thorow the thickest clouds, and nothing can barre out his obse vance, whose eye fills heaven and earth: what is the curtain to him, or the night, or the lock, or the chamber; or the whispering, or the thinkin, or the imagination of that thinking: he needs not to have his understanding to be informed.

use 4.
Exhortation to
take heed of
secret sins.

Motives.

The Lord
knows our se-
cret sinnings
exactly.

formed by the sensibleness of speech, or the visibleness of acting, who made the frame of spirit, and searcheth into the depths of the soul, and clearly observes all things in a perfect nakedness.

God will make manifest every secret thing.

2. *The Lord will make manifest every secret thing, Mark 4. 22. There is nothing hid which shall not be manifested: Neither is any thing kept secret but that it should come abroad.*

There is a twofold breaking out of a secret sin or manifestation of it.

One is *natural*: look as the childe formed in the womb naturally desires liberty to come forth, and as the fire within, to flie out and abroad, so the inward conceptions of sin, naturally propend and strive to thrust out themselves into visible acting and view: the soul cannot long be in secret actings, but some one part of the body or other will be a messenger thereof.

Another is *judicial*; as when the Judge arraigns, and tries, and scrues out the close murder, and the dark thefts: so God will bring to light the most hidden works of darknesse; for though the actings of sinne be in the darknesse, yet the judgings of sin shall be in the light: though they be secret, yet these are open: as though the times of theft be private, yet the places of Judicature are open, *Eccles. 12. 14. God shall bring every work into judgement with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil: he doth not say, some work, but every work, and not only works, but secrets, and not only secrets, but every secret; and not only secret good things, but evil too, whether good works or ill works, whether secret or open, all must be brought to judgement, 1 Cor. 4. 5. Judge nothing before the time unill the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darknesse, and will make manifest the counsels of the heart: Though thou mayest now cover thy sinfulness with much hypocrisie, yet then all vizards shall be pulled off, thou shalt be stript of all counterfeit shapes, as thou art, and as thou hast done, so shalt thou be made known to men and Angels, and to ail the world: thy whole heart, and thy whole course of life shall be pulled a pieces before thee.*

God will judge them.

3. *Thy secrets shall not only be manifested, but shall also*

be

be Judged by God, Rom. 2. 16. *In the day when God shall Judge the secrets of men by Jesus Christ*: we read sometimes that God will Judge our words, and God will Judge our works, and here that *God will Judge our secrets*, he will judge words and works as finnes ripened to expressions; he will judge secrets, as fins ripening and breeding, Job 31. 26. *If I beheld the sun when it shined, or the moon walking in brightnesse*, 27. *And my heart hath been secretly entised*, 28. *This also were an iniquity to be punished by the Judge*, Job 13. 10. *he will surely reprove you if you doe secretly accept persons*, Deut. 27. 15. *Cursed be the man that maketh any Graven Image, an abomination to the Lord, &c. And putteth it in a secret place.*

There is a twofold judging, to which secret actings of sin are obnoxious.

One is *Temporall*, and in this life; see this in David, 2 Sam. 12. 9. *wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the Lord, to doe evil in his sight, thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword* (this was done in a secret letter) and *hast taken his wife to be thy wife*, and v. 10. *Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house, because thou hast*, &c. v. 11. *Thus saith the Lord, behold I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thy eyes, and give them to thy neighbours*, v. 12. *Thou didst it secretly, but I will doe this thing before all Israel, and before the Sun*, Eph. 5. 6. *Because of these things cometh the wrath of God, upon the Children of disobedience.*

Another is *eternall*: that the Lord will Judge them with eternal wrath, for that is the portion of hypocrisie: though thou mayest escape the judgement of man, yet thou shalt not escape the judgement of God, Heb. 13. 4. *whoremongers and adulterers God will judge*, he will sentence them himselfe for their secret abominations.

4. *Secret sins are more dangerous to the person in some respects then open finnes.* For,

1. *A man doth by his art of sinning deprive himselfe of the help of his sinfulnesse*: like him who will carry his wound covered, or who bleedes inwardly; helpe comes not in because the danger is not descried nor known, if a mans sin breaks out, there is a Minister at hand, a friend near, and others to reprove, to

Secret sins are more dangerous in some respects then open sins.

warne, to direct: But when he is the artificer of his lusts, he barres himselfe of all publick remedy: and takes great order and care to damn his soule, by covering his secret sins with some plausible varnish, which may beget a good opinion in others of his wayes.

A man doth by his secrecy give the raines unto corruption; the minde is fed all the day long, either with sinful contemplations or projectings, so that the very strength of the soule is wasted and corrupted.

3. Nay, *secret actings doe but heat and inflame: naturall corruption*, as in shouldering in a croud, when one hath got out of the doore two or three are ready to fall out after: so when a man hath given his heart leave to ad a secret sin, this begets a present, and quick, and strong flame in corruption to repeate and multiply, and throng out the adts: sinful adts are not onely frutes of sin, but helps and strengths; all sinning being more sinful by more sinning: not only in the effects but in the cause: the spring, and cause of sin will grow mad and insolent hereby. & more corrupt, this being a truth, that if the heart gives way for one sin it will be ready for the next; if it wil yeld to bring forth once at the devils pleasure, it wil bring it forth twice by its one motion.

4 *A man by secret sins, doth but polish and square the hypocrisie of his heart,* he doth strive to be an exact Hypocrite, and the more cunning he is in the palliating of his sinnings, the more perfect he is in his hypocrisie.

Aggravations
of secret sins.

2. *The aggravations,* will you give me your leave to make a short digression, touching the degrees of agravation of secret sinnings, verily, perhaps they may sink deep and quicken us to repentance and caution.

The more
foule the sins
the worse if it
be secret.

1. *The more foul the sin naturally is, the worse is the secret acting of it:* you know that some sins have a fouler dye in them then others, all are not a like, but some are more intrinsically vile: A blasphemous thought, is worse then an Idle thought, and the secret stealing of a shilling though it be a sin, yet not so great, as the secret killing of a man.

The more rela-
tions are brok-
en by secret
sins the worse.

2. *The more relations are broken by secret sinning, the worse they are, and more to be wared,* for all relations are bonds, and cords, they are a file of reasons, why we should not sin; for a single
person

son to commit folly, its a damnable sin, but for one to break the covenant of her youth and God, for a person who is married, this very relation trebles the guilt: for any one to murder is a sin of death, but for the Child to murder the parent secretly, this very relation increases the guilt.

3. *The more profession a man makes the worse are his secret sinings*; forasmuch as he carrieth not only a badge, but also a judge on his shoulders, he not only weares a profession which is contrary to his practise, but which shall condemne and judge him; that he is not what he would seeme to be, yea, his contrary practise, doth ground and occasion the great reproaches and blemishes like dirt, to be cast upon the face of Religion: and wo to him by whom offences come.

The more profession a man makes the worse are his secret sins.

4. *The more light a man hath meeting him in the darke, and secret atings of sin, the more abominable is the sin*; when not only a discovering light, but a checking light, not only a checking but a threatening, not onely a threatening but also a troubling light, opposeth, and chargeth from the conscience against the sinning, this makes it the more out of measure sinfull.

The more light a man hath the more abominable the sin.

5. *The more repugnant secret sins are to the light of nature, the worse are they in their atings*. A sin is very broad when the light of nature without any ayd of knowledg from the scripture shall make the heart to tremble at the commission and to be terribly amazed, the Apostle toucheth at these kindes of secret sinings, *Rom. I. unnaturall lustings and burnings*.

The more against the light of nature the worse they are.

6. *The more art a man doth use to effect his secret sinings the worse they are*: forasmuch (as a about the same sin,) it is ever worse when it is breathed out by deliberation, then when it is forced out by a meer temptation: and sin is not to be reputed an infirmity, or weakness, when art or cunning is the cause of it, for as much as art is sober and takes time to contrive, and reason to place and disface; to help and forward its acts or intentions all which are contrary to surprisals and infirmities.

The more art a man useth in secret sins the worse they are.

7. *The more frequent a man is in secret sinings the deeper is his guilt*: when he can drive a trade of sin within doors: when it is not a slip, but a course; and he hath hardly scraped out the bitternesse of the former, but he is exercising the sin new and afresh againe.

The more frequent a man is in them the worse they are.

To wallow in them against conscience and resolutions makes them worse.

8. *The more gripes of conscience and resolutions a man hath felt and taken against secret sinning, and yet wallowes in them, the more stains and guilt lies upon his soule.* A wound to a sick man is worse then to an healthy man, forasmuch as the spirits are already wounded by sickness: no sinning wound deeper then such as follow the woundings of conscience; a sinner doth thrust the sword in againe to the same hurt.

Thirdly, the means.

The means to be cleansed of secret sins.

But you will say, this is fearfull to sin thus, what *Meanes may be used to get off, and to keep off the soule from secret sins?*

The rules of direction (which as soe many means) I would commend unto you are these.

Be humbled for them.

1. *If thou hast been guilty of secret sinnes, be humbled and repent:*

A man shall hardly stave off a new sin, who hath not been humbled for an old sin of the same kinde: for as much as future care seldome manifests it selfe without former sorrow: hast thou been a secret Adulterer, fornicator, thief, backbiter, oppressor, liar, drunkard, &c.

O hasten, hasten in by speedy sorrow, by speedy repentance: bewaile (if it be possible) with teares of blood thy secret wickednesse: if thou doest not judge thy selfe, God will surely judge thee, and thinke not that because thy sinning were secret, therefore thy compunctions must be small, nay, thou oughtest to abound the rather, and the more in floods of tears, and of bitter contrition, who didest dare to provoke God so, &c.

Take heed of secret occasions, and provocations.

2. *Take heed of secret occasions and provocations:* why is it that thou sayest, O this nature, O this heart, O that Satan. Thou hast, I confesse, shed many teares; thou hast felt many sorrows and troubles, thou hast made many vowes and resolutions; thou hast put up many prayers and petitions, and yet thou art in thy secret sinning, why, what should be the reason, do prayers do nothing against sin? yea, do tears nothing? do troubles nothing? do vows nothing? yes, all of those may do something, if something else be added, if the leake be stopped, if the windows be shut, if the doores be locked, I meane, if occasions and provocations be conscionably and carefully avoyded: otherwise they are nothing: if thou prayest and then adventures thy strength upon the occasion of thy secret sinning,

what

what dost thou but seek God first, and next rise up and tempt him. Keep close to heaven, and keep off from the occasions, and then tell me whether God will not keep thee from thy sinnings.

3. *Crush the temptations which come from the roots*, Though thou dost decline occasions, yet thou canst not decline thy self: And there is that in a mans self, which can fetch in the occasion by representation, by inclination, by contemplation: sometimes another provokes thee to sin, and this is in society; sometimes thine own heart provokes thee to sin, and this is when thou art solitary. Now the thoughts steal out, now imaginations present and confer with the minde, with the will, with affections: wouldst thou now free thy self from secret actings, then free thy self from secret thinkings.

Crush the temptations from the roots.

The picture in the glass may inflame as much as that in the natural face: so sin in the representation of the minde may fire our corrupt hearts, as well as the entisings of it by conversing occasions, *Psalme 19. 14. Let the Meditations of my heart be always acceptable in thy sight, O Lord my strength and my Redeemer.*

There are two things which will never faile you in your surprisal of secret sinnings, *viz.*

1. One is to be *digging up the intimate root of all sinnings.*

2. Another is to *stifle the first conception* of sins, to make sinne an abortive in the womb, that it shall never stretch out it self to actions. Beloved, to tye *Sampsons* armes, it was a vaine thing, his strength lay not there; but if the hair of his head be cut off, then his strength is gone, and he shall become weak. To tamper (only) with the acts of sinne is not the way to be rid of sinful acts. But the singular way to be rid of bad acts, is to be rid of a bad nature: the vertue of the effect alwayes lurks in the cause, and therefore it is the cause which gives life and death to it. If thou couldest once get an holy nature, which might be at defiance with sinne in its throne; know this, that a new nature and daily combat would much help against secret sinnings. That sinne is least of all acted with life, which is most of all combated within the heart:

for

for sinne hath least practise where it hath most opposition : And of all oppositions those that are inward are most weakning of sin.

4. *Get an hatred of sinne*, which will oppose sin in all kindes, and all times, and in all places.

Get the feare
of God.

5. *Get the feare of God planted in thy heart.* There are three sorts of sinnes which this feare will preserve a man against.

First, *Pleasant sinnes*, which take the sense with delight.

Secondly, *Profitable sinnes*, which take the heart with gaine, but *what shall it profit me to winne the whole world, and to lose my soul.*

Thirdly, *secret sinnes* of either sort. *Joseph* did not dare to sinne that great sinne of uncleannesse ; though the acting of it might have beene secret, and though perhaps the consequence of it might have been his preferment ; why, the feare of God kept him off, he had an awful regard to God, he knew the greatnesse of his holinesse, of his power, *How can I do this great wickednesse and sinne against God ? Gen. 39. 9.* Why (brethren) if we feare the Lord, it is not the night which the thief doth take, nor the twilight which the adulterer doth take, nor the seasons of secrecy or places of obscurity that will prevaille with us, &c. Yea, but God sees me, the great judge of heaven and earth, the holy one, the God who hates all sinne, whose eyes are brighter then the Sunne, and purer then to behold sin : and who is mighty in power, and just in his threatnings, he sees and beholds, therefore I dare not.

Believed Gods
omniscience:

6. *Believe Gods omniscience, and omnipresence*; that the Lord is every where, and all things are naked and open to his eye with whom thou hast to deal : thou canst not intend to think, thou canst not whisper out thy thoughts, thou canst not finger the closest bribes, thou canst not encline thy self to the most abstracted kinde of secrecy in the world ; but God sees thee clearly, perfectly ; now if a man could believe that God is fill with us, and there are two which evermore goe with us, the Judge and the Register,

God

God and conscience, that he is acquainted with all his thoughts, paths, wayes, this would put an awe upon him: would the wife be so impudent to commit folly and prostitute her whorish body in the sight and presence of her husband; would the servant be filching out of the box; if he saw his Masters eye upon his hand.

7. *Get thy heart to be upright*, uprightnesse is an inward temper: and hypocrisie is an outward complection, *Psalm 119.3. They do no iniquity, &c.* The inward man is the businesse of sincerity, to the forming and fashioning of that, doth it improve and employ it selfe? it knowes that God delights in truth, and this too in the inward parts: It endeavours to please God in all things, and there to be most to God, where man can be least in observation, and that is in the secret and hidden frame.

*Get thy heart
to be upright.*

PSALM:



PSAL. 19. 13.

*Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous
sinnes; let them not have dominion over me;
then shall I be upright, and shall be innocent
from that great transgression.*

CHAP. II.



Hese words containe in them *David's* second Petition and request: sinnes do not only differ in respect of opennesse and secretnes, but also in respect of the degree of hainousnes and greatnes: now because *secret sins* sticks closest, and are of a more easie and adventrous commission, therefore *David* prays much against them, *Lord, cleanse thou me from secret sinnes*: And because *presumptuous sinnes* are of a more fearful efficacy, and consequently (they being usually the bravings of God even to his face) therefore *David* prays as vehemently against them in this verse.

This verse may be considered two ways:

The words
considered:

1. *Respectively*, as in connection with the former by that word (*also*) *keep back thy servant also*, as if David had said, O Lord I have prayed unto thee to be cleansed from secret finnes, and I beseech thee let me be answered, but yet this is not all that I have to request, I have yet another request besides that, keep me also from presumptuous sins.

In conjunction with the former.

2. *Absolutely*, in regard of their proper matter, so they comprehend.

In their proper matter.

1. The Petitioner [*thy servant.*]

2. The Petition, which respects sins.

1. Presumption [*from presumptuous sins.*]

2. Dominion [*let them not have Dominion over me.*]

3. The Petitioner who is implied, and that is God, yet expressed by what he should do [*keep back, &c.*]

4. The Conclusion or inference which he makes from the grant of all this, which is his *uprightness* and *innocency*, innocency, not absolute, but limited, *innocent from that great transgression*. There is more matter in these words than you yet well conceive of, I will touch some Propositions, which might challenge a further prosecution, and then I will set down at large upon the main intentions and conclusions from the words considered as a connexion of a new request with the former request, these things might be observable, *viz.*

SECT. I.

Doct. I.

There may and should be a conjunction of great requests at once to God.

FIRST, *There may and should be a conjunction, even of great Petitions and requests (at once) unto God*: As they say of graces and duties, that they are connexed (and like so many pearls upon one and the same string) for we may say of requests to God, though they be many for kindes, and number, and matter, yet they may be put up in the same prayer to God. David ends not at that request (*keep me from secret finnes*) but goes on also, O Lord, *keep me from presumptuous finnes*, he multiplies his suits according to the

G

mul-

Note.

Our prayers
must be with

1.
urgent fervency.

2.
Importunity.

3.
Patient perseverance.

4.
Variety of
matters

multiplicity of his necessity and exigence.

There be divers qualities about our prayers, viz.

1. One is an *urgent fervency*; when the soul doth not nakedly commence the suit, propound it to God, and say, Lord hear me, but it doth inforce (as it were an audience and acceptance, it doth strive with God and wrestle with him, *I will not let thee go, unless thou blesse me*, Gen. 32. 26. as *Jacob*, And, *O Lord hear, O Lord hearken and consider; do and deferre not for thy name sake*, as *Dan. 9.* this is a following of the suit with God, as the woman did *Christ*.

2. *Importunity*: when a person renews the same suit, comes often to the door of grace and knocks.

3. *Patient perseverance*: *I will hearken, saith David, Ps. 85. I will wait, saith the Church, Mica. 7.*

4. *A variety or multiplicity of matter*, like as a patient who comes to the Physician; Sir, saith he, such an ach in my head, and such crudity in my stomach, and such a stich in my side: so when we come to the Lord in prayer, we may and should open not only one want, but all our wants; and crave help not in one thing, but in every thing: we should multiply requests, *O Lord, saith David, in Psal. 51. I was conceived in sinne, but do thou cleanse that, and I shed the blood of Uriah, do thou pardon that; and I defiled his wife, do thou wash that; and I lost thy spirit for these, but do thou restore that; and I weakned and wounded my graces, but do thou renew them: As Paul spake, Phil. 4. 6. In every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving, let your request be made known to God: so I say, for every thing let your manifold requests go up to God by prayer: And I think that phrase (in *Eph. 6. 18. Praying with all prayer*) will reach the point in hand: All prayer extending it self not only to all the kinds and forms of praying, but also to all the matters or things for which we do pray.*

Reasons.

1.
God hears every
Request, as
well as any one.

Reasons hereof are these.

1. *God can heare every request as well as any one.* A multiplied request as well as a single request: for he takes not, nor observes things by discourse, where one notion may be an impediment to the apprehension of another, but all things.

things (by reason of his omniscience) are equally at once present unto him.

2. Nay, *he can grant many and great requests, as easily as the single and smallest Petition.* The greatest gift comes as freely and readily out of his hand, as the most common mercy, even Jesus Christ, and pardon of many sinnes, are of the same price with our daily bread. Though the former gifts be (in comparison with the other) of a much more elevated nature and dignity, yet in respect of the fountaine of them, all of them come from the freeness of his goodness and love.

2.
God can grant many and great Petitions, as well as single and little ones.

3. *Christ* (by whom we are to put up all our requests (for he is our advocate and intercessor) *is as ready and able to implead many and great requests, as well as some and inferior:* As he is our mighty Redeemer, so he is our mighty Intercessor. And his blood is as efficacious and meritorious for many sins as for some.

3.
Christ is as able to implead many and great Requests, as few and small.

4. *God hath for this end made manifold promises;* therefore we may put up many and great requests at once; the promises are called *the wells of salvation, and the breasts of consolation.* Now the living wells will afford a plenty, as well as a scanting measure of water: the child may move from breast to breast, and draw enough of either, if one alone will not serve: If one promise comprehends not all thy wants, yet all of them do; And as God graciously comprehends all our supplies in all of his promises, so he hath propounded them all unto us, that we might then there urge him for the supply of all our necessities.

4.
God hath made manifold Promises.

5. *Lastly, God is rich in mercy, and plenteous in compassion;* his mercies are often stiled *manifold mercies,* and his goodness is called an *abundant goodnesse,* and his redemption a *plenteous redemption,* and his kindness a *great kindnesse.* Now mercy is a ready inclination to pity and help, and multitudes of mercies are as a compounded, and doubled, and redoubled opening (as it were) of Gods tenderness to do a sinner good.

5.
God is rich in Mercy.

Uses of this might be many, I will briefly touch a few.

Conceale no
one of thy di-
stresses from
God.

Then *conceale no one of thy distresses from God*: the heart and life of man are full of sinne, and as full of want; there is not any branch of the soul, nor limb of the body, nor turning of the life, but is replenished with some necessity or other. Thou hast a minde which yet needs to be inlightned, a judgement which yet needs to be captivated, an heart which yet needs to be converted, and humbled; how many sinful commissions are there which need to be bewailed; how many particular and vile inclinations which need yet to be subdued: besides all this every grace which thou hast (and there are manifold graces in an holy soul) every one of them is in exigence, and needs a more spiritual filling, both for the habit, and acts, and degrees: Yea, and all our duties are but lame handed motions, which needs more strengthening, or as mixt rivers which should runne more clearly.

In this case what should we do? to whom should we go? should we divide the principles of our helps, and go for some to God, and for the most to the creatures: O in no wise, for all our help is only in him, who alone can help all, or should we branch out our helps, and present them as a beggar doth his supplies, one day open one want, and some distance of time hereafter, open another; O no, come with all, and with all at once, to God, who is as able, and as willing for many sinners, as well as for one sinner; and for many finnes in one man, as well as for one in any. As they did with the *impotent and sick man*, they brought all of him (bed and all) and laid him before Christ, so should we bring body and soul, and every distresse of either, and present the whole bulk, root and branches all before the Lord at once, for a manifold supply; we should presse upon him for manifold mercies, for abundant strength: *for God is able to do exceeding abundantly, above all that we are able to ask or think*, Eph. 3.

Beloved, as a mans own unworthinesse should not prejudice him from being a Petitioner to the Throne of grace, so the variety of a mans necessities should not discourage him to commense his suits at the Throne of rich mercies: forasmuch as there is reason in God which will dis-hearten us, and there is reason in our selves to crave as earnestly,
and

and as simultaneously for all our helps, as for some: thou doest equally need the pardon of this sin, as that, and Mercy is as ready, and able for both, as for either. And if that corruption were more subdued, and yet this remained altogether untouched, thou wouldst have as many, and more forcible suspicions of the truth of thy estate from this division, and inequality of thy victory. Wherefore as *Abraham* in his suit for those of *Sodom* and *Gommorrah*, took up request upon request, descending from high to low, from many to few; so should we in our requests, ascend from one sin to more, from more to many, from many to all; you know that confession of sins, should not be particular only, but universal; and our sorrow for sin should respect the kinds as well as the particular acts: all which import an Amplitude of grants; so much Mercy and supply answerable to the required latitude of confessions and sorrow.

Ob. ect. 'Tis true, some one sin may (upon special reason, either of some guilt, or present insolvency) be more insisted on than another, (as one clause in the plea, may be more urged than any other) yet not with the exception of the rest. O that sin, Lord, by which I have dishonoured thee so much, and yet which rageth so much, pardon it, subdue it, out with it; and not that only, but such sins, and not them only, but all my sins, blot them out, cleanse me from them.

Another Proposition, which I will briefly touch on, shall be this, *viz.*

Object.

Sol.

SECT. II.

That even a good Christian should have a fear of great sins as well as a care of secret sins: Keep me also from presumptuous sins.

Reasons whereof may be these.

The latitude of original sin, which as it is yet remaining in the best, so it is in them an universal fountain naturally apt to any vile inclination: though actual sins may be divided in the

Doct. 2.

A good Christian should fear great sins as well as less. Reasons from, The latitude of original sin,

life, yet they are all united in their spring, (i) they are all of them virtually as so many potential effects involved and lurking in original sin, as their cause, which how far it may work, both from its own strength, and the assistance of temptations and occasions, if God doth not actually prevent and interpose, if we put not forth our fear, and watch, we may with miserable experience both know and bewail.

2.
The best
Saints have
been guilty of
great Trans-
gressions.

2. *The instances of great transgressions*: even those Saints, who have been as the highest stars, have left behind them their twinklings, and sad Eclipses. *Noah*, his actual distempers by wine: *Lot* his unnatural defilements by incest; *David* his wounds and bleeding by whoredom and blood; *Peter* his unkind and troubled denial of Christ against his knowledge.

Now when *Cedars* fall, should not the tender plants tremble? if the sins of others be not our fear, they may be our practise; what the best have done, the weakest may imitate, if they do not hear and fear: there being scarce any notorious sin into which self-confidence will not plunge us; and from which an holy and watchfull fear may not happily preserve us.

Use,
Blessed is he
that feareth al-
ways.

An *Instruction* from this, and so on: *Blessed is the man that feareth alwayes*, Prov. 28.14. When we read of great sinners in the Scripture, and see great falls, and sins in others, as we should thereupon seek to recover them who are thus fallen by our Counsel and prayers: so we that stand, should take heed lest we also fall, 1 Cor. 10.12. If that Satan, who would deal with us, could be procured to shape out only mean and vulgar assaults and suggestions, to common and unavoidable infirmities and sinnings, this might somewhat abate the vigour and intension of our holy fear and circumspection? yet not altogether, forasmuch, as he being a subtil enemy, trains and facilitates the heart by the frequency of small commissions, at length to the boldness of great Impieties; or if Satans suggestions were artificially and extremely laid, and pressing to great sins as well as small, yet if we had natures no way capable to receive the greatest impressions of sin, but were naturally averse, and stiffly indisposed to such temptations, then our careful fear were not so requisite: But we are

not shot-proof: Temptations (even to the greatest finnes) have within our breast some principles which would presently shake hands with them: The actual light and acting grace do sometimes happily turn them aside from closing, though they keep them at the door, as the Prophet caused the Messengers who came from the King to take away his life; Yet there is another Principle of corruption which would let them in, and which would co-operate with those temptations, even to Contemplation and inclination, and acting both inward and outward: nay, this corrupt nature of ours alone, (though it doth learn somewhat by temptations and occasions) yet it alone from it self can cast forth most sore temptations to most abhorred sinnings.

Therefore this we must do, fore-past sins must be eyed with grief, present inclinations with combat, and future with fear: we must not in our War imitate the *Syrians*, who were to fight neither with small nor great, but with the King of Israel: No, but we must oppose all sins, small sins as well as great, and great as well as small: those sins which do encounter us, we should force some out, and keep the rest off. He is a wise and sincere Christian who resists the smallest, and fears the greatest sins: *Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins.*

SECT. III.

Another Proposition which I might observe from the words, absolutely considered, is this, *That a good man is Gods servant,* [*Thy servant from, & c.*] We read of divers servants in the Scriptures; some are the servants of men, who apply all their gifts and parts, and sacrifice the whole method of their beings and expressings, to claw and humour the itch and pleasure of others: All flatterers are such, who are a people of slavish-bondage, having sold themselves from themselves to some persons. Some are the *servants of the world*, whose hearts and labors are bestowed upon earthly things, and they

Doct. 3.
A good man is
Gods servant.

they make even those noble souls of theirs to weary themselves for very vanity; and to increase only in that with the least toe, is too excellent to tread upon. Some are the *Servants of Satan*, mentioned in an instrumental Activity and readiness to entertain and execute his base and hellish inspirations and motions. Some are the *servants of sin*, who (*quales & quanti*) all that they are, and can do, is to fulfill the lusts of their flesh: there is no servant so obedientially attending the Command of his Lord, as they to receive, and act the pleasure of their sinful hearts. Some are *servants to themselves*, who, as if they were born, neither for God, nor man, apply all their will, and strength, and abilities, only to their own ends without any real effectual consideration to publique good of Church or Country. And some are *servants to God*; *Moses* was so, *Simeon* was so: *Moses my servant is dead*, said God: *Now letest thou thy servant depart in peace*, said *Simeon*: and *David* here, (*Keep back thy servant.*) Gods servants differs from all servants in the world: every other servant looseth himself by service; he is not *sui juris*, — in the Law: but the only way to find a mans self, is to be Gods servant. Every other servant looseth his liberty by his service; but liberty is then got, when we become servants to God: As soon as we enter the service, we obtain our freedom: Every other servant in strictness of Rule, is below a son, a child; but every servant of God is a son of God, and shall have not gifts as a meer servant may have, but the inheritance which the son who serveth his Father shall have.

Note.

There are two sorts of servants under God.

1. Some stubborn, who are *Servi victi*; (as *St. Austin* speaks) The Law of Creation is upon them, and so will they, nill they, they are in some obediential and serviceable Relation.

2. Others are servants, not of force, but of affection, not of compulsion, but of election they have chosen God to be their Lord, and have willingly resigned up themselves (in the purpose of their hearts) to an universal observance, and love of him, and obedience unto him, impartially, and constantly to do his work. Such a servant to God was *David*:

but

but this observation is very general, therefore I pass unto another, *viz.*

SECT. IV.

EVEN this. *That we are Gods servants, should be used to move the Lord to help us against sins*; you know that in all relations there are mutual bonds and duties: the wife owes much of subjection to the husband, and the husband owes also much of love, respect and care to the wife: The Child owes much attendance, reverence, and affectionate duty to the Parents, and the Parents owe much of instruction, reproof, correction, nurture, provision of Estate for the child again: so is it betwixt the Lord and his servant, though to a near slave, there be no mutual obligation, or else it is in that which is weak; yet to a servant, who stands in that relation, which they call *Ingenuous*; as much is due from him to his Lord, so, something his Lord ought to do for him, to feed him, to clothe him, to house and lodge him, to defend him against wrong and injuries.

Doct. 4.
That we are Gods servants should be a plea for help against sinnes.

This is it in the case of *David, Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins*; as if he had said, O God, thou art my Lord, I have chosen thee, to whom I will give obedience, thou art he whom I will follow, I bestow all that I am on thee. Now a Lord will help his servant: his servant against an enemy, against an enemy who for the Lords service is the servants enemy. O, my Lord, help me. I am not able by my own strength to uphold my self, but thou art All-sufficiency. *Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins.*

I observe in Scripture many singular Methods to prevail in request upon God; sometimes he hath been urged from something in himself to do things for his Mercies sake, and for his truth sake, and for his goodness sake, and for his holiness sake: sometimes he hath been urged from something which he was very tender of, and at which he aims in all his dealings, *viz.* for his own glory, and for his names sake: sometimes he hath been urged, from some word or other

Note.

which he hath let fall, at which the believing soul doth catch, (as did *Benhadab* servants from *Ahab*; thy brother *Benhadab*) Remember thy word (saith *David*) upon which thou hast caused me to hope, Psalm 119. Thou saidst thou wouldst do me good, said *Jacob*, Gen. 32. Sometimes he hath been urged from the special relations twixt him and his people; as from that of a Father: *Isa.* 64. 8. But now, O Lord, thou art our Father: and this of a Lord. *Isa.* 63. 18. The people of thy holiness have possessed it but a little while; ; verse 19. We are thine; and in many other places, Remember thy servant, and remember thy servants.

Beloved, It is a great thing to stand in near relations to God: and then it is a good thing to plead by them with God: forasmuch as nearer relations have strongest force with all, the servant can do more then a stranger, and the Child then a servant, and the wife then a Child: but though this urging of God by vertue of our relation be an excellent point, yet because it is not the main intention of the place, I likewise pass it over.

Another observable Proposition may be this.

SECT. V.

Doct. 5.
Our special relation to God should make us carefull not to sin against God.

THAT our special Relations to God should be special Reasons to work a care not to sin against God. [Keep thy servant from, &c.] Thy servant: there be many reasons against sinning: the very nature of sin carries along with it a condemnation of sinning, because sin formerly is a transgression, an Anomy, and a Rebellion, which alone is an inglorious thing: Again, The Laws and threatnings of God should be as forcible cords to draw off the heart from sin: And again, All the Mercies and goodness of God should exasperate the heart against sin. Again, All the Attributes of God might hold us: Now with these this also may come in, viz. The specialty of our Relation to God, that we are his Children, and he is our Father, we are his servants, and he is our Lord: though the common obligations are many, and sufficient, yet

yet the special Relations are also a further tie : the more near a person comes to God, the more carefull he should be not to sin against God.

Let us who are of the day be sober, let us not sleep as do others.
 1 Thef. 5. 6, 8. *God hath not called us unto uncleanness, but unto holiness,* 2 Thef. 3. 7. *If you call him father, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear,* 1 Pet. 1. 17. *If I then be a father, where is my honor? If I be a Master, where is my fear?* Mal. 1. 6. *I will be sanctified, (saith God) of all them that draw near unto me.*

There is a double drawing near unto God.

1. One in respect of Office, as the *Priests* of whom he there spake, who because their Calling and Office is more high and heavenly, they therefore should be more religious and holy.

2. Another in respect of *Nature* and change by vertue, of which our Relation comes closer to God; even this nearness should occasion more care against sinfulness.

Reasons whereof are these.

First, *Admissions of sinnings here do diffuse a greater ingloriousness to God*: sin is most darkning in a white cloud, then in a black, as a spot is more eminently disgracefull in a fair then in a foul cloth. Though the sins of evil men do prejudice Gods Glory, yet the great sinnings of good men do occasion much more: for not only the particular sinnings send up a cloud, but other men by reason of them, form out of them a smoak of blaspheming and reproaching of the wayes of God, and the profession of Grace.

Reasons.

Their sinnings are most dishonourable to God.

Secondly, *Their great sinnings do make them the sorer wounds and work*: no sinning wounds so deep as such, which have more Mercy and goodness to control them; and these only good persons do most taste of: much grace received, and much kindness conferred, will in case of great transgressions, make the conscience eagerly to arise, and sting the Offender.

Their sinnings make the greater wounds.

Use.

Such as profess more interest in God, should walk more exactly with him.

What should this teach us, who profess more *Interest* in God, more Title to Christ, more purity of Religion then others? Why? if we be light, then to walk as Children of

the light: if we do profess the Gospel, then to walk as becomes the Gospel: if we be the Children of God, then to walk as dear Children, *cleansing our selves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit*. None needs to be more circumspect, then he who is called to holiness: his very relation is of a tender (though high) nature, he cannot sin but he grieves a father; yet this is as true, that none of our relations exempt us from temptations and assaults, which call upon us to be watchfull and prayerfull: If temptations drive thee not to thy knees, they will drive thee easily to the ground: no more but this; no man should sin, and no man should be more carefull, then he who is most good; for if he offends, then God suffers, Christ suffers, the Gospel suffers, Religion, Profession, Christians, and all.

O then let us improve our interest in our God: *Should such a man as I see*, said *Nehemiah*; so then, should such a man as I sin thus, walk thus, live, do thus? Why? God is my God, he is my Father, I am his Child, his servant. If I should sin, sin would not only be my own wound, but his dishonour: I may not so abuse his love, his mercies, his Calling, his honouring of me. Others look on me, but I must look on my God, and on his honour.

Thus have you the general observations of the Text, now I come to a more punctual and intimate view of them both in the petition, and in the conclusion of them, consider the words as a Petition, they yield unto us two main considerations.

1. One of sin in presumption, [*Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins.*]

2. Another of sin in Dominion, [*Let them not have dominion over me.*]

First, For presumptuous sins; there are divers expositions of these words.

1. Keep me *Ab alienis, scilicet peccatis*, from those sins which by the suggestion or temptation of others I am inticed to; or as others, *Ab alienis, (i) falsis diis*, from another, or false gods that I do not serve them, and be not captivated by them; these think the Word to be *Zurim* from *Zur*, which signifies *Alienari*.

2. Keep

2. Keep me a *superbiis* (*Mizedim a verbo zud*) which signifies *superbire*, aut *superbie*. & *temere agere*; the word in *Hiphel* signifies to do a thing, *de industria* & *per presumptionem*. Before *David* prays to be kept from sinnes of ignorance, and here from prides; from such sins as are done insolently and knowingly: Some translate it, keep me from proud sinnes, others from insolent sins, by which are meant manifest sinnes, open transgressions, committed with contumacy, and with a high hand; but to hold to the expression in the Text, Presumptuous sinnes. And the Observation is this.



CHAP. III.



Even the servants of God should pray to be kept from presumptuous sins.

Touching this I shall enquire into these particulars.

1. What presumptuous sins are.

2. Of that strength which keeps regenerate persons from presumptuous sinnings, and what difference 'twixt the withholdings and restrainings of evil men, and this keeping back of good men.

3. What reasons or causes of this desire to be kept back from presumptuous sins.

4. Then some useful applications of all this to our selves.

Doct.

The servants of God should pray to be kept from presumptuous sins.

SECT. I.

Quest. 1. **W**Hat presumptuous sins are;

Sol. Sinne (in the general) is any transgression of the Law: the Law of God is his revealed will, for doing, or forbearing, and it is the rule of nature, and actions;

What presumptuous sins are!

what-

Sins diversly distinguished.

whatsoever things stands in conformity to its good, and whatsoever varies or swarves from it, that same is sin.

For Matter.

Now sins are diversly distinguished, for all sins are not equal either for matter or manner: For matter some sins of themselves are more deep transgressions then others, as some diseases (in their own nature,) are worse then other some; to blaspheme and curse God is a sin naturally more vile then an idle thought, or an empty word: and to commit Idolatry, is naturally more vile then to steale a Shilling: to shed innocent blood is worse then to steale.

For Manner.

Againe, sins may be distinguished in respect of the manner of committing, and thus it may fall out, that even a sin in its own nature lesse then another, may yet for the manner of commission be more hainous: and a sin in its own nature greater then another, may yet for the manner of commission, be lesse guiltling then a lesser sin which is more intensively raised by circumstances; as to gather a few sticks on the Sabbath, was in it selfe not so great a sin, as deflouring of a virgin, yet because the person did commit the sinne with a contempt of Gods expresse prohibition, it became more hainous and guilty.

Sins of infirmity, and sins of presumption:

Now here falls in that distinction of sin into *sins of infirmity*, and into *sins of presumption*: which distinction is made, not from the different qualities of sin, but from the divers qualification of sinning; the same sin may be committed through presumption, which is committed through Infirmity, yet the committing of it through infirmity, is still much less and extenuating, then the committing of it through presumption: for as much as all passive failings, (which arise from unevenesse of strength) are not so high as the active trespassings, which arise more from the readie contributions, and concurrent assistances and furtherances of our own hearts: now to the thing in particular.

Presumptuous sins described.

Presumptuous sinnes are the bold darings, and proud adventurings of the heart upon things or wayes known to be unlawful against expresse threatnings; either upon a false confidence, or upon contemptuous slighting, or desperate wilfulnesse: I have in this description not only expressed the nature of presumptuous sinnings, but also concluded in it the several degrees and risings thereof:

thereof: all which, give mee now liberty to open and explaine: consider therefore.

1. *That presumptuous sinnings are proud adventurings of the heart upon sinne*; there is a large difference 'twixt foilings by temptation, and adventurings by presumption: Temptation beats down that actual strength of grace resisting: but presumption tramples down the light of the word opposing; therefore presumptuous sinners are said to sinne with an exalted, or *high hand*; the sinner doth put aside Gods will, and prefers his own: *Our tongues are our own*, said they, *who is Lord over us?* Psal. 12. yea, they are said to set their mouths against heaven, *q. d.* what tell you us of the Lord; of his displeasure or pleasure: As for *the word which thou hast spoken in the name of the Lord we will not do it*, said they in *Jeremiah 44.* A man doth even try it out with God, and provokes him to his face: and maintaines the devises of his heart against the purity and equity of Gods will.

Presumptuous
sinnings are
proud adventurings upon
sin.

Note.

2. *In presumptuous sinnings a man knows the thing and way to be unlawful*: and therefore the presumptuous sinner is opposed to the ignorant sinner, *Numb. 15.* not that every sinning against knowledge (absolutely whatsoever, is a presumptuous sinning, is against knowledge, and without grosse ignorance; the presumptuous sinner holds a candle in one hand, and draws out the sword with the other; my meaning is this, that he breaks through the light of knowledge, discerning the way to be sinful: yea, and flaming upon his breast, working in and checking his conscience, notwithstanding all which, yet he will presume to offend and proceed in transgressings; 'Tis true, even a good man in many particulars may and doth sin, not only against habitual, but against actual knowledge, but this is through infirmity, not through contumacy: he approves that light against the sinne, and doth not maintaine the sinne against his light, yea, he yeelds not only by approbation of judgement, but also by resolution and desire of will to imitate the light, yet through the weakness of his power, and from the force of an hasty tempration, he may fall down even at noon-day; but the presumptuous sinner sees light as an enemy, and therefore willingly breaks through

In them a man
knows the
thing to be un-
lawfull.

Objecti.

Sol.

through it to the way of his sinne: yea, he makes his heart to uphold the sin against the force of his knowledge, and drives back the arguments with a resolution, that however he will have his sin.

He adventures
against expreſs
threatnings.
Note.

3. The presumptuous sinner (in that kinde of sinning) adventures against expreſs threatenings: thus it stands with a man, his heart and Satan incline and egge him to sinne, but God and Conscience stand in the way against him; as he said of the sword to *Joab*, *Knowest thou not that it will be bitterneſſe in the end*, so God saith to him, thou shalt not have peace in this way, it is the thing which I hate and abhorre, and I have revealed wrath from heaven against it: but in presumption the sinning soul steps over the threatening to the committing of the sin: that sword of God which may keep back another man, yet though God sets the point of it to the breast of a presumptuous sinner, it will not stave him off from adventuring: therefore the presumptuous sinner is said to *blesse himself in his heart, though God threatens a curse*, Deut. 29. this is a truth that a presumptuous sinner is not changed by mercies, nor affrighted by threats, but as the *Leviathan* in *Job*, laughs at the shaking of the speare; so the heart of a presumptuous sinners puffs at all divine warnings and menaces: *come*, said they, *let it come that we may see him*: As there is not a love to the goodness of God; so there is not a fear of the greatness of God in presumption.

They arise
from a false
confidence.

Of the facility
of mercy.

4. *Presumptuous sins do arise from a false confidence*; there are two things upon which the presuming sinner doth imbolden himself.

1. One is the *facility of mercy*: when a man sets mercy against sinne, he doth well, (because Gods mercies should draw our hearts off from sinne) but when a man sets mercy against Justice, now he offends; yet thus doth the presumptuous sinner, perhaps there is not in every presumptuous sinner such a spirit of Atheistical madnesse; that he is absolutely carelesse of all that God threatens, nor is he so miserably prodigal of his soul, that he rejoyceth to have it damned, no, he may and sometimes doth apprehend threatenings, yea, so that his heart is caused to demurre, it may be a stopping apprehension (i.) such as may make him study

how

how to pursue his sinne, and yet to wave and decline the edge of the sharp threatenng, and this he doth by opposing mercy to justice; 'tis true, this is a sinne, and divine justice will not take it well, but I will adventure on it, hoping that divine mercy will pacifie the rigor of the threatenng, I will sin and offend Justice, but then I will decline that Court, by flying to the Mercy-seat: God is of a gentle heart, easie to be entreated, and will be presently satisfied and appeased: Just like a man who will break his bones, because he trusts to have them quickly set by a skilful Chirurgion, or like a lewd child, who adventures to outrages, upon the scope and allowance of his fathers good nature: This ground of presumption God fully intimates in *Deut. 29. 19.* when he beareth the words of the curse, that he blesse himself in his heart, saying, *I shall have peace, though I walk in the imagination of mine heart, to adde drunkenness to thirst, &c.*

Beloved, this is certain that presumption disposeth of mercy beyond all allowance, and writes a pardon which God will never allow nor seal: it will dare to runne in debt upon a conceit of a discharge, and clearing however: as if Divine mercy were nothing else but a present untwining of all the knots which we make, and a crossing of debts as soon as entred; and served for no other end, but that men should be bold to sinne, and cheerful after the commission of it; But verily mercy is more precious then so.

2. Another is *the self possibility and strength of future repentance*: he is one of the worst patients in a way of sinning, who is confident that he can be his own Physician: no soul wounds it self more then that which vainly thinks that it can presently cure them; presumption is not alwayes carried upon an absolute hope of mercy, but the sinner being more piercingly understanding knows that mercy is a special Charter, and such a balme as is spread only upon a returning and humbling soule; here it is that this presumptuous person will adventure to sinne upon a confidence that he will (notwithstanding all this) fashion and polish his soul to a meet capacity of mercy, by hereafter repentings and humblings: he doth foolishly delude his soul with a fancy of such

Of the self possibility of future repentance

things which exceed his power. There are two things which the sinner cannot assure himself of.

One is the *lengthning of his life*: for this candle is lighted and put out, not according to our desires, but according to divine pleasure: all life hath its limits from the Lord of life and death: he who sinneth to day, cannot be assured that he shall live till to morrow. Now repentance is a work of this life: death bindes us over to sentence, and then 'tis too late to return: And therefore every presumptuous sinner adventures boldly upon that which cannot be his, beyond the time present.

Another is the *returning of the heart from sinne*, though our natural principles can give the wound, yet they must be supernatural principles, which give the cure: our own hearts can cause us to fall, but Gods grace only is that which raiseth us; Now Gods grace is Gods gift, and not mans stock: though we alone can fall off from God by sinne, yet none but God can bring us back from sin by true repentance unto himself: yet presumption makes the heart bold, not only with time (which is in Gods hand) but also with grace, which is only in Gods gift: Though I sinne, yet I will hereafter repent, thus the presumptuous soul, whose life may be instantly cut off, and to whom God may therefore deny his grace to repent, because it did before-hand presume to sin.

It is with a
sighting con-
tempt.

5. In many *presumptuous sinnings there is a sighting contempt*: therefore, *Numb. 15.30, 31.* presumptuous sinning is called a *despising of the Word of the Lord*: the soul that doth *ought presumptuously, &c. shall be cut off, because he hath despised the Word of the Lord, &c.* to despise the Word of the Lord, is to esteeme of it as a vaine thing, to disregard it in his authority and Majesty over our consciences, and hearts, and wayes: As if a soul should say, what care I though God doth speak thus and thus; I will not be curbed, and limited, nor restrained: this is to contemn God: And it is called a *rebelling against him, Deut. 1.24.* *I spake unto you, and you would not heare, but rebelled against the Commandment of the Lord, and went up presumptuously to the hill.* It is called a *casting of Gods Law behinde our back*; God hath hemmed and

and circumscribed the soul with precepts, within which if a man walks, he hath God to be his security, but in presumptuous sinnings a man will exceed his limits, and yet believe a safety: this very thing is expressed in *Deut. 17. 11.* *According to the sentence of the Law, which they shall teach thee, and according to the judgement which they shall tell thee, thou shalt do, thou shalt not decline from the sentence which they shall shew thee, to the right hand or to the left, ver. 12.* *And the man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken to the Priest, &c. even that man shall die, ver. 13.* *And all the people shall hear, and fear, and do no more presumptuously;* There you see that presumptuous sinning consisted in the slighting of the sentence of the Law by the Priest: the Priest said, this is it which God would have you do: This is it which he would not have done. Now the person who sinned presumptuously, would not stand to this, but would break over this sentence; and would go in his own way, he disregarded what God spake; that should not be his rule, no not his.

6. Lastly, presumptuous sinnings may rise higher then all this, as when a man sinnes not only knowingly and wilfully, but *most maliciously, and despitefully against God and Christ;* the Apostle speaks of such presumptuous sinners, *who tread under foot the Sonne of God, and do despite unto the Spirit of Grace, Heb. 10. 29.* *And who crucifie to themselves the Sonne of God afresh, and put him to an open shame, Heb. 6. 6.*

This kinde of presumptuous sinning, is not only to sinne, though a man knows it, nor only to sin, because a man will sin, but it is also to sin on purpose to dishonour God, and to vex his holy spirit; the soul is grown unto that abominable insolency, that a man even plots deliberately how to crosse God, and will therefore apply himself to such words and acts, because he knows they will displease God; this is the very top and height of presumptuous sinning: when a man in a sober and calme spirit exempted from violent diseases and strong passions, and insolently turbulent temptations, shall in sober circumstances, desperately, and of malicious and set purpose encounter God, adventure iniquity, to provoke God: he knows that the worst which shall befall him is damnation,

It may arise to malice and despite against God and Christ.

but he cares not for that, he will however have his pleasure in sinne, and will strive to despise that God, who stands in a just enmity to his soul and sins.

SECT. II.

What that strength is which keeps back the regenerate from presumptuous finnes.

Quest. 2. **W**Hat that strength is which keeps back regenerate persons from presumptuous finnes; and what difference 'twixt the restrainings of evil men, and this keeping back of good *David*.

Sol. For a more distinct knowledge of this point, observe a few particulars.

Restraint is any kinde of stop betwixt the inclination and the object.

1. *Restraint is any kinde of stop 'twixt the inclination and the object*: when the nature is inclined to such or such a thing, and a barre falls in, to keep them asunder, this is restraint. As when God bridled up the fire from burning the three children; and the Lion, from devouring *Daniel*; and *Abimelech* from touching *Sarah*; and *Laban* from hurting *Jacob*, The natural inclinations of the former, and the morally evil dispositions of the latter, were chained in, they were stopped, they were hindred in respect of their actions and exercise. All creatures are capable of restraint, because under a Supreme power; only God cannot be restrained: but for all creatures, their natures, and inclinations, and operations, are under his command by the Lawe of Creation.

Restraint of any agent is from a greater strength of a superior agent.

2. *Restraint of any Agent, ariseth from a greater strength of a Superior Agent*: whatsoever keeps a man back from a sinful acting, it is (at that time) whiles a restraint of more actually strong force, then the present inclination is; as in the stopping of a stone or water, that which is unequal in strength, a lesser force is not able to keep in the stronger: the cords wherewith *Sampson* was bound, were no restraints to his motion and escape, for his strength exceeded them, and he easily brake them asunder: But Gods decree and providence is a restraint to the raging sea: and his power is a re-

straint

restraint to gird in the malice and rage of man, because, though sinfull inclinations be strong, yet God can over-rule, and bound, and bind it in.

3. *All Restraints presupposeth an aptness, a disposition ready to run, and get out.* The Child whose desire is to lie in the Cradle, is not there said to be restrained: and the Trades-man, whose shop is his paradise, is not therefore restrained from going abroad; but when a servant would be gadding, and yet is kept in, this is Restraint. In every man there is too much sin; Corruption is in us all, and it is with it, as with a Child in the womb which would be breaking out into the world; or as with fire kindled within, which would be flaming abroad; such an aptness is there in our sinfull inclinations to secrete, and then to open actings. Now the Cohibition, the inclosing, the locking of them in, is properly Restraint.

Restraints suppose a readines to get out.

4. *All Restraint of sin is from God.* That God whom David here desires to hold, or keep him back, did also with-hold *Abimelech*, keep in *Laban*, keep up *Esau*, keep off *Saul*; and it is granted that there are several means and ways of restraint, natural, moral, spiritual, (as you shall hear anon) but it is God in them which causeth restraint; he imprints such a vigour into those Arguments, into those Apprehensions, that they shall bind, and chain, and hold in the nature, which else would not judge so seriously, nor submit so easily to impedition or hinderance: as the horse rusheth into the battle, if left to his own swing and violence; so the heart of man, if left to it self, it would put no periods to wickedness, but would grow from evil to worse, and fill up all the measures of iniquity. There should not be one righteous *Abel*, but every *Cain* would kill him; not a *Jacob*, but *Esau* would pursue him; not a *David*, but *Saul* would hunt him; not an *Apostle*, but *Herod* would be-head him: All Christian Religion would lie in blood, yea, and the very order of nature would sink into confusion by the efficacy of that sinfull corruption which is equally divided amongst all, if God did not look down from heaven, and restrain the rage of sin in all.

All restraint of sin is from God.

Note.

5. *All evil men are not equally restrained by God; which are not equally appears restrained.*

appears both in the matter, and in the measures of sinning: some evill men do not break out into all horrible kinds of sin: some, though they be at the same school of particular sinning, are not yet in the same form, and height, or degree of sin, though they be at the same trade; yet their skill and thriving in the same sin is different: Every Drunkard is not the mighty man to drink, and every sweater lets not his tongue loose to the highest blast of Blasphemy. There is no man so high in sin, but if God should cease to restrain him, he would yet plunge himself into a deeper guilt.

Restraining of
the sinner is an
act of merciful
Providence.

6. *The restraining of any sinner is an Act of a mercifull Providence unto him.* Gods Justice begins already to smooke against a man, when he totally leaves the reins unto him, when he gives him up to himself to his own vile affections, reprobate mind, to his own Counsels and wayes, and will no more strive with him, but cast him off to himself. But it is a great Mercy when he restrains: though renewing grace be the saving Mercy, yet restraining grace is a great Mercy, when God will not let a mans sinfull corruption take its full walk: for restraint *diminisheth guilt*; whereas, if this bridle were off, a man would increase his sinfull accounts by infinite iterations and multiplications of sinning. Now he is kept from enlarging his debts, yea, and it *diminisheth sin*; whereas a man let loose, would diffuse sin, cast his fire-brands about, draw others to a consociation of evil, and so set up the trade: now by restraint, sinning is more contracted and narrowed: yea, and it diminisheth *wrath and judgement*: for according to the number and measures of sinning, there shall be an equal proportion of vengeance and punishment, the greater sinner shall have and feel the sharper flames of hell: but now restraint keeps in the sin, and at least makes it less sinfull, (for as sin sticking in the inclination is not so deep as that which flies out of that into actions and consummations) and so consequently is a means to lessen the heat of future torment.

God doth re-
strain both the
good and the
bad from sin.

7. *God doth restrain the good and the bad from sin.* The evil man is so wholly carried by a sinfull nature, that if God did not keep him back; he would bring all to confusion. *The good man is so weakly good, that if God did not prevent, and inter-*pose,

pose, and with-hold, he could not with-stand so much evil as now he doth.

How great a Mercy did *David* acknowledge a Restraint from sin to be, you may see in his own words; *1 Sam. 25. 32. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel which hath sent thee this day to meet me. Verse 33. And blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou which hast kept me this day from shedding innocent blood.*

The Father hath two Children, one young, and the other old: if he doth not keep in the elder, he will be like the *Prodigal*, sell all, and be riotous: if he doth not hold in the other, he will fall, and be like *Mephiboseth*, lame on both feet.

Evil men have strong corruptions, which God is pleased many times, many wayes to keep within door, he will not suffer all their intentions, desires, projects to see the light.

Good men have weak graces, their own legs are not able to bear them up, and strong temptations and occasions may soon lay flat a weak defendant, and therefore God is pleased yet to bridle in that remaining corruption to keep off the soul, or something off from the soul, lest it should sin: we see it in experience, that grace alone is not able to keep off sin: Grace can keep us, whiles God keeps the grace: but if God leaves us to the assayes of our own best strength, we are unequal Combatants in the field.

8. *God doth diversly keep back or restrain men from particular sins and sinnings: sometimes,*

1. *By enlightning the conscience*, which being strictly awakened, riseth to such an height of impatience, and choler, and rage, that the sinner is willing to let go the sinning, rather then to answer the scourging inditements and threats of conscience for it. As the luxurious patient, though he likes the sparkling wine, yet he dares not drink it, lest his spirit should be thereby inflamed; and burn him up; even an evil man, though he be not afraid of sin, yet he may be afraid of conscience, and may therefore be kept back from his sinning, as the *Colliar* from handling his coals, not because they are coals, but because they are burning hot.

God doth diversly restrain men from sin. By enlightning of Conscience.

By self-reflecting apprehensions.

to

to himself, may be a means to keep him off from some sinfull a&ings: for some sinning have such infamy, and charge, and envy, and loss, and danger indorsed on them, that the very present arrearages of sin do prevail, and keep off the man from adventuring; he will not strike the bargain for payment so sharp, and sure, and present.

By legal im-
printings.

3. *By legal imprintings*: God is pleased many times to set up the flaming sword, and the shadows of hell before the eyes of a daring sinner: tells him plainly that he will call him to an account, and wrath shall be his portion, if he will not forbear thus to provoke him: whereupon he forbears.

By denying op-
portunities.

4. *By denying and crossing opportunities*: when a man hath prepared himself for a sin, then God doth so secretly direct the wayes, and the eyes, and the presence of other creatures, that the sinner must keep in the cup which he hath tempered, and dares not draw the sword with which he is girded, nor a&t the evil which he did before earnestly intend to prosecute and finish. The sinner doth not always sin, not that he wants an heart, but because he hath not a conveniency; as the ship ridged may be wind-bound: though the greediness of sin thrusts on the sinner, yet the wisdom of the flesh will keep it in, till the season of sinning may suitably match with the former contrivances of sin. *Esau* deterred to slay, his brother *Jacob* till *Isaac* died.

By with-hold-
ing temptations

5. *By denying, or with-holding of temptations*. Beloved, Though evil men are under the power of the Prince of the Air, yet I conjecture, not in this sense, that they may tempt them when, and how he pleaseth; or that they must necessarily a&t every sin to which he tempts them. But as God is pleased, when Satan doth many times tempt them, yet sometimes to restrain them; so he is pleased, when Satan would tempt them, many times to restrain them, well knowing that his temptations would easily draw out matter already prepared: An heart which hath won it self to a sin, may without any more ado, by the very presence of a temptation and occasion be instantly wrought unto it.

By causing
diversions.

6. *By causing Diversions*, which may call aside the employ-
ment

ment of the sinner another way: As when *Saul* in malice raised a persecution against *David*, and had hemmed him in; God yet restrained *Saul*, by letting in the *Philistines* upon his County, with-drew back the execution of his ragefull intention against *David* at that time.

7. Lastly, *By beginning, and supporting, and enlarging the principle of sanctification*, which is the sweetest restraint of the heart from sin, drawing it off, inabling it against inclinations and temptations: and such a kind of holding back doth *David* pray for in this place, *v.z.* a sanctifying restraint, a renewing restraint, a subduing Restraint.

By a principle of sanctification.

9. *The restraining of good men are exceeding different from those of evil men*: though the sins from which either are restrained may be common, yet the keeping back of one by *renewing Grace*, and of the other by *meer restraining grace*, are very different. *v.g.*

The restraints of good men are different from those of evil men. They differ;

1. They differ in the *fountain* for keeping off by meer restrainings, proceed from the care of universal providence, but keeping back by renewings, comes from a special affection of God in Christ: God hath an eye over all his works, and a mercy over them too, he doth not totally leave, no not the sinfull Creature, but expresseth a Providence in permissions of somethings, contradiction of many things, restriction of many things, and ordination of all things: though men be desperately evil, and as it were the lords of sin, yet God will be known for ever to be the Lord of nature by circumscribing, and abridging, and commanding it in its propensions: But the keeping back by renewing grace, this doth arise from a tender love, a most gracious affection which God bears to his servants, like the Father with holding of his dear Child from a sword which might hurt him, or meat which might make him sick.

In the fountain

The restrainings of evil men are from the Wisdome of divine power, and the cohibitions of good men are from the goodness of special favour. They differ again in the form of *Impression*: for restraint of evil men arise only from argument, but those of good men, depend upon nature as well as argument. In the former, it is argument alone which makes

In the form of impression.

the stop. In the latter it is argument and nature both, as *Abner* said to *Asahel*; *2 Sam. 2.22.* If I should smite thee, how should I look thy brother *Joab* in the face? there was naked argument. How can I do this great evil, and sin against God? as *Josaph* said to his *Mistress*, *Genes 39.9.* there was a divine Argument, and an holy nature; bid a man to grasp a toad, his very nature shrinks back from this; bid him climb by a little rope to the top of an high mast in the midst of the sea, and here Argument or reason may withhold him: it is one thing for a new Argument to keep off an old heart; it is another thing for a new nature to keep back from an opposite corruption.

In their entrance and seizure.

3. They differ in their entrance and seizure; The Restraining of evil men are but as locks upon the out-door: and the keeping back of good men is as the lock upon the Closet; one is an impedit to the actions, the other is an impedit to the inclinations; one is a bridle upon the lips and hands, the other is a bond upon the heart and disposition; the one may seal up the lips that a man doth not swear: the other tempers the heart that a man fears an oath.

In their Efficacy.

4. They differ in their Efficacy: Restraining of evil men do not impair the state of sin, no more then chains and prisons do the nature of the thief or Lyons: Look as it was with the fire, into which the three Children was cast, the restraining of its burning Act did no way prejudice, either the nature of the fire, or the faculty of it to burn, only it did suspend the act: so it is with meer Restraints about moral things, though it doth give a *Superfedeas* to the evil act, (for the present) yet it grants not a *Capias corpus*, the body of sin is all one, as before. But in the keeping back of a good man, there is not only an inter-let of the Act, but some measure of diminution to the sinfull inclination.

In the fairness of equality.

5. They differ in the fairness of equality: Meer Restraints do not deal justly with sins, they make a stop in one, and leave open a gap for other sins: like a vessel of many holes, though the water break not out in one place, because it is stopt, yet it freely flies out in the rest: so where a man is restrained only, though that sin cannot find a way in that vein, yet it will find a course

course (like the water which is hindred under ground) another way: But the holdings back by renewing grace do indisp^{ose} generally and evenly.

6. They differ *in the fulness of duration*: for meer Restraints hold in the nature, no longer then the things remain, by vertue of which the mind was restrained. Let the fear of death expire, put aside the edge of the Law, be sure that shame shall not follow, and the only restrained sinner breaks open school, so that he goes to the sin: But holdings back by renewed grace are cohibitions of the heart upon permanent grounds, *viz.* the perpetual contrariety twixt God and sin, twixt sin and his Will, and Holiness, and Goodness, and Honour.

In the fulness of duration.

7. They differ in this, That the heart of a man only restrained, doth, being at liberty, (like waters held up) *pour forth it self more violently and greedily*, as if it would pay use for so bearance; it abounds in the sin, and makes a more fully wicked recompence for the former restrictions. But where the soul is kept back by *renewing grace*, it doth not multiply sin, because of less practise now, but is labouring a fuller diminution of sin, because of too much practise heretofore.

In Restraints men grow worse when at liberty.

Not so in re-
newings.

8. They differ thus: *An evil man is kept back as a prisoner by force against his Will*; But a good man is kept back as a *Petitioner*, it is his hearts desire, *O that my wayes were so directed that I might keep thy statutes: order my steps in thy Word, and let not any iniquity have dominion over me: Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins.*

Restraints are an evil mans force and cross, a good mans desire and joy.

It is an evils man cross to be restrained, and a good mans joy to be kept back from sin: when sin puts forth it self, the evil man is putting forth his hand to the sin; but when sin puts forth it self, the good man is putting forth his hand to heaven; if he finds his heart yielding, out he cries, *O keep back thy servant*: An evil man is kept back from sin, as a friend from a friend, as a lover from his lover, with knit affections, and projects of meeting: but a good man is kept back from sin, as a man from his deadly enemy, whose presence he hates, and with desires of his ruine and destruction: It is the good mans misery, that he hath yet an heart to be more

tamed and mastered: It is an evil mans vexation and discontent, that still, or at any time he is held in by cord or bridle.

And thus you see what *David* aims at, in desiring to be kept back from presumptuous sins, viz. not a meer suspension, but a mortification, not a not-acting only, but a subduing of the inclination, not for a time, but for ever. Nevertheless, methinks, there may be something more added for the opening of this point, *Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins.*

God keeps back his servants from sinne.

By preventing grace.

Take what I conceive, briefly thus, God keeps back his servants from sin.

1. *By preventing Grace*, which is by infusing such a nature, which is like a Bias into the Boul, drawing it aside another way: so that holy nature which God confers on his servants, doth secretly draw off the soul from the consent, appetite and practise of sin propounded to the soul.

By assisting grace.

2. *By assisting Grace*, which is a further strength superadded to that first implanted nature of holiness, like an hand upon a Child holding him in. This Divines call, a Co-operating Grace, which is an excess of divine strength, to that strength which God hath formerly imprinted in preventing grace: which whether it be an enlargement of habitual grace in the natural measure of it, (as when health is made to rise to a greater degree of strength) or whether it be an efficacious motion of Gods Spirit, powerfully strengthening the inherent Grace to the acts of averfation and resistance of sin and temptation; It is, I confess, an acute and disputable inquiry, yet whether the one, or whether the other, the soul is by either more confirmed, and established, and upheld, and kept from sin?

By quickning grace.

3. *By quickning Grace*, which is, when God doth inliven our graces to manifest themselves in actual oppositions, so that the soul shall not yield, but keep off from entertaining the sin: As when in the motions of sin, he inflames the heart with an apprehension of his own love in Ch.ist, and then excites our love exceedingly unto himself again, whereby the heart is made marvelously averse, and to detest any closure with this sin, by which so ample and gracious a love should

be

be wronged and abused; or as when in the temptations to sin, he excites that affection of holy fear, which works that filial and awful regard to a great God and a good Father, that the soul is brought into *Joseph's* temper, *how can I do this great evil and sinne against God.*

4. *By directing grace*, which is when God confers that effectual wisdom to the minde, tenderesse to the conscience, watchfulnesse to the heart, that his servants become greatly solicitous of his honour, scrupulously jealous of their own strength, and justly regardful of the honour of their holy profession. And therefore they decline all occasions of the sinne which may over-lay their own strength, and dailies not with the temptations, or with the first motions: But as they are in fear of themselves, so they are in defiance, not only with apparent sins, but also with the appearances of them: and shun not only the sins, but the inlets and preparations to the sinnes: and verily he shall be much kept from the secrecy of sin, as a King who is wise to keep off Parle with the Ambassadors of sin, I mean occasions, which do negotiate with the soul, and prepare it to lose its own strength.

By directing grace.

5. *By doing grace*, which is, when God effectually enclines the heart of his servants to the places and wayes of their refuge, safeties and preservations from sin: By enlarging the spirit of supplication which carries the soul to its strength; prayer engageth God, and this we finde, that the praying Christian is more kept from sin, then the disputing Christian: for though sinne be stronger then reason; yet God is stronger then sin: by framing the heart to the reverent and affectionate use of his Ordinances: A man many times comes to the word a combitant, but is sent away a Conqueror, comes hither as a pursued man, by sin and Satan, but here God gives him a safeguard, a protection; and sends him away armed with more holy resolutions, courage and defiance, by strengthening his graces, by assuring his love and strength, by making the sinne more vile and odious.

By doing grace

SECT. III.

Why David prays to be kept from presumptuous sins. *Quest. 3.* **N**OW I proceed to the third question, *What causes or reasons there should be which might move David to put up this prayer, Keep back thy servant from presumptuous finnes.*

Sol. Reasons thereof are many, I will touch them, though under a few heads, *viz.*

1. In respect of himself.
2. In respect of the sins themselves.
3. In respect of others.
4. In respect of God.

1. In respect of himself.

In respect of himself.

1. If he considered himself, there were sufficient grounds for such a petition, because

His aptness to presumptuous sins.

1. *His aptness* by vertue of original corruptions, even to *presumptuous finnes*. Beloved, I dare not traverse the extent and compasse of sinne (in respect of aptitude and possibility) even for a good man: of this I am sure, the least sin is farther then he should go, and the higher he mounts in sin, the deeper are his own wounds; no man can be safely bad, or comfortably sinful: Nevertheless, this may be said, that though there be some top-sins, which perhaps, a good man doth not commit, yet there is scarce any sinne for kinde or degree, which might not lay him flat, if God did not hold him up, and keep him back.

The reason whereof is this, because original sinne, which cleaves to the best) is not only a corrupt, but also an universal corrupt inclination; what the Phylosophers conceit of the capacity and disposition in their first matter, that it is illimited, unbounded, infinite, not restrained to this or that forme onely, but in a general way lies open to all impressions: That is most true of original corruption, even in all that it is (for its part) a capacity, an aptness to any actual villany and wickedness, a womb of all uncleanness, a seed of all iniquity, not

not distinguishing 'twixt the vilest and the fairest transgressions; *Paul* complained in *Rom. 7. 18.* *I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing*; the flesh (*i.*) the corruption of sinful nature is an utter vacancy of any good, that is the privative nature of it, and then the flesh, *i. e.* sinful corruption, is a diseased inclination, a filthy fountaine, a lewd womb, a sinning sin, impelling, intising, egging on the soule to consents and acts unlawful, and that upon all occasions without any distinctions of great or little, and that is the positive nature of it: Though inherent grace doth much abate and keep under that sinful nature (as a naughty servant may be held down by a good and stronger Master) yet it is of a false, deceitful, and capable nature for the vilest impressions of actual sins.

2. *His impotency and self inability to keep off himself from such finnes*: Beloved, it is true, that grace is a sweet and enabling quality; he who receives grace, doth with it receive a measure of strength proportioned to the degree of grace received, and no man is so vaine to conceive that a person receiving grace, can do no more against sin, then he who was never armed with such heavenly power: - But then Divines have well distinguished, that as there must be a first grace (which they call *gratia operans*) to change the nature within, so there must be a second grace which they call *gratia co-operans*, to assist the soul and the first grace, against the insolency of corruption, and of actual temptations; grace can do much, but (of it self) not alwayes enough to keep off a sin: it is true that the distance of the soul and sin depends on grace, but that the soul keeps a distance from such a sin, (*i.*) that such a sin doth not engage and lay flat the soul, this doth not owe it self to the meer and natural strength of the the first created grace, but to that grace, as assisted and supported by an higher hand from heaven: so far as I yet conjecture that principally effectual strength of created grace is more in its dependance, then in its self. As an arme is strong, and able to do much service, and to put off several assaults, but principally by reason of its communion with the head, from which if it were separated, it can do nothing:

His impotency to keep himself from such sins.

Note.

Note.

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but fall down : or as the beame of light from the Sunne, moves, irradiates, pierceth, and perhaps heates and melts, none of which could it do, if there were an eclipse, an intercision, a cutting of it off from its dependance on the Sunne ; so grace doth most and more, as it is most and more assisted from above, from its head which is Christ, and from God who is the father of lights. Suppose grace left intirely and solely to it self, a person would be exposed to many and foul miscarriages : though the water be well heated, yet remove the fire, and the natural cold will return and prevaile over that accidental heat : The natural habits of sin would easily have the better of the extrinsecal habits of grace, were not these held up, and backed by an higher arme, then that of it self, or then that in corruption working against it ; you know that all *Adams* strength was not Canon proof against Satans temptations ; he assaulted and entred his Castle, and laid him flat and all the world with him. *Peter*, though a very good man, and a very forward Disciple (one qualified with much grace, and high affections) yet was beaten down in plaine field, he could not preserve and keep back himself, though armed before-hand with a warning from his Master, but *denied him thrice*, and that with some high qualifications too : Nay, the great fals of the best men we ever heard of in Scripture, shew thus much, that it was not their sword, and their own spear, that it was not their own strength which could keep them intirely back, and point unto us, not only the impotency of our own guard, but also the name by which we stand, and therefore is it, that *David* prays, *Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins.*

2. *In respect of the sins themselves.*

The meere consideration of *sins* (as) *presumptions*, afford strong causes why *David* should pray to be kept back from them : for though every sin contains a natural reason of dislike and forsakement (every sin carrying a foule quality in it, and a condemning inconformity) yet some finnes are of a deeper dye, and of a more crying guilt, and of a darker blacknesse, and of a more wounding sharpness, and of a louder vilenesse then other some are.

In respect of
the finnes
themselves.

Amongst which higher ranks of iniquity are presumptuous sins and sinnings; which may appear thus.

1. *The more shining light of grace is trampled over for to all the sin, the viler is the sinning; for if naked light makes the spot the broader (the sinner ever sinnes the more, by how much the more clearly he sees his way to sin) then shining light makes it much more hainous, (i.) when knowledge doth as it were wrestle in the conscience, when it doth contend strongly with the soul by force of evidence and plain reasonings, to stay it: But now presumptuous sins and sinnings, they are the laying flat (as it were) of shining light: the soul doth (as it were) shut its eyes, and stop its ears, it doth break away to the sin, against all the discoveries and clear impleadings of knowledg, gain-saying and withstanding it, the presumptuous person goes not to sin ignorantly, but he doth it by imprinted light, so the sin as Gods enemy which yet he will embrace as his friend: yea the more *Inexcusable that a sin is, the worse it is*; when little or nothing can be said in behalf of the sinner: thus is it in presumptuous sinnings, the man cannot say I did not know it, I was not warned.*

2. *The more pride of heart accompanies any kind of sinning, this makes it the more vile: for pride lifts up the point of the sword, it shakes the speare against God: when the will of God, and the will of a sinner come into a competition about sinning, then pride growes high; Who is the Lord saith Pharaoh that I should let Israel goe, Exod. 3. Who is Lord over us, said they in Psalme 12. when the heart goes proudly to sin, it will acknowledge noe Lord, but its own pleasure, and no rule, but its own resolution, it can slight a precept, and scorne a threatning. Now presumptuous sinnings are filled with pride; I think St. *Austine* had an aime at this, in his exposition of this v. when he rendered the reading of it thus; *contine seruum tuum a superbiis*; keep back thy servant from prides: as if pride were knotted, and folded, & doubled in presumptuous sinnings, there was pride and pride again in that heart which durst thus to sinne: and verily so there is in presumptuous sinnings a manifold pride: a pride of judgement to approve that which God hath branded and condemned; a pride of will to rise up to that which God would have the sinner forbear. A pride of security to make a Sanctuary for the soul, when God hath threatned wrath, &c.*

Presumptuous sins are amongst the higher rank of iniquity. The more shining light we sin against, the viler the sin.

The more pride of heart in any sinning, the viler it is.

3. *The more impudency and boldnesse attends a sinning the worse it is.* There is a double impudency about sinning.

The more impudency in sinning, the worie it is.

One of *defence*, when the sinne hath been committed, of which I am not now to speak, which is no more but to paint a whore, or to cover a plain sore, to make that seeme good which really is stark naught.

Another of *entrance*, when the sinful soul layes aside all shame, and fear, and modesty, and restraints, and arguments, said he, whatsoever may be said come of it, whatsoever may come, yet I will on; let God take it well, or take it ill, let him beleech by mercy, or warne by threatnings, nothing moves, neither my peace nor comfort, nor soul prevail, nor my shame, nor trouble, nor misery keep back. But thus it is in presumptuous sinnings, the heart is bold and impudent, which can look so much mercy in the face, and yet will dare to sinne, which can look so many threatnings in the face, & yet will dare to sin, which can look its own great misery (in respect of the issue and end of the sinning) in the face, and yet will dare to sinne, nay, which can (perhaps) look many former experiences of bitterness and anguish for the same sinful adventurings, in the face, and yet will dare to sin: putting the hand into the fire again, which hath burned it, and venturing to swim in those waters, where (had not Gods mercy stept in) the soul had long since been drowned.

Note.

The more Mercy is abused, the more hainous the sin.

4. *The more abuse of mercy concurs to the sinning, the more hainous it raiseth the sinne:* for mercy is the sweetest stop of a sinner; and the kindness of it should smooth off the soule from offending: what is mercy but that unbreakable readinesse in God to forgive a sinner; a gracious willingnesse to sit down with wrong offered, if yet the sinner will come in, and the abusings of it, are affronts to the highest love. But now in presumptuous sinnings mercy is extremely abused.

First, *in that it hath not its direct end:* the direct end of mercy is to avert, and to keep off the heart from sinne: *There is mercy with thee, therefore shalt thou be feared:* Psal. 130. But the presumptuous sinner is less fearful; because God is so merciful, and the mercies of God should lead to repentance, Rom. 2. But the presumptuous sinner yet dares to hold on the sinful trade.

Se-

Secondly, when it is made to serve and to encourage sinne; O this is the imbasing of that high and tender attribute of God, when we draw out from his goodnesse to embolden the heart to wickednesse; as if that God whose soul abhorres sinne, would let fall any expression to hearten a sinner, yet thus it is with the presuming sinner, the very mercy of God makes him bold to sin against God; the confidence of that easiness in God to forgive, occasions him therefore to adventure and multiply transgressions.

3. *In respect of others.*

David had good reasons to pray to be kept from presumptuous sinnes in respect of others; as well as in respect of himself: whither you consider his general calling (a man of goodnesse, or his particular calling, a man of dignity and place) but I will fold them both together: thus then,

1. *Such sinnes would be exemplary and noted:* There are three things which set a man upon the stage, which lift up his actions on high to the eye of the world.

One is *his powerful and active auctiuy*; a very holy man is a kinde of a wondrous sight, after which many eyes are gazing: Godlineffe is a very rare thing, and therefore men look much upon him who professeth it.

Another is his *singular dignity*: lift a man out of the croud, advance him to a place and seat of honour above others, how busie is the multitude to eye, and judge, and imitate him. The wayes and actions of great persons (are usually) the present copies of the most.

A third is *his notorious miscarriages*, which are like the tayle of a blazing comet; the great sinning of good or great men, fall instantly into common discourse and (perhaps) also easily into common practice. Therefore great cause had David to pray against presumptuous sinnes, which by his practice might prove a common snare, for who will not confidently write after that sinful copy, which both goodnesse and greatnesse have begun: that which the great man doth, the inferior person will do; and that which the good man doth, that the evil man thinks he may now lawfully do: if knowledge will venture, ignorance supposeth that it may safely

In respect of others.

2. *Reasons.*
His sins would be exemplary.

follow, and if holinesse will adventure, why should profaneness be so nice as to stop: The way or fact is credited, either as not bad, or else not so dangerous, where either authority or profession are leaders.

Now this might be some cause to move good *David* to pray to be kept back from presumptuous sins, knowing how his actions were capital copies, wrote in Text Letters: And that the finings of great men are like the fallings of Cedars, which bring downe with them to the ground many lower shrubs: And that the finings of good men are easily snares, whereby other men would encourage and deceive themselves.

His sins would
be trophies to
evil men.

2. *Such finings from him would be trophies to evil men:* There are three things which flash evil hearts.

One is the accomplishing of their own projects and lusts.

Another is the distresses of the Church; *Aha, so would we have it.*

A third is the great falls of good men, now like the dog they will bark and insult over the wounded Lion: A good mans sins, which are his wound, and Gods dishonour, is their day of mirth and sport.

I observe that there are three mouths which the higher finings of good men do open.

The *mouth of God*, O how his word thunders his displeasure against the soul of such an one who is come so neere unto him, and yet hath adventured thus to sin against him, doest thou thus requite the Lord.

The *mouth of conscience*, if we do well and keep uprightly with God, then the mouth of conscience yeelds words of oyle and peace (it exceedingly excuseth, comforteth, acquitteth, upholdeth, &c.) but if we wickedly transgress and exceed infirmities, O then the mouth of conscience proves like the mouth of the sword, it speaks with sharpnesse, and woundings, and terrible amazement, &c. *breaks the bowes of David, Psal. 51. makes him roar, Psal. 32.*

The *mouth of evil men*; Now their voice is set on high, the trumpet is set to their mouth; O what Ragings, Raylings, Girdings.

Girdings, Scoffings, Obloquies, and Blasphemies are instantly heaped upon Religion and Profession, yea, these are they, this is their holiness, this their profession, this their niceness, this the hypocrisie of them all. Now (perhaps) this also might move *David* to pray to be kept back from presumptuous sins, though not the immediate, yet the colateral reason, *viz.* because he might not give occasion to the Adversary, that God might not suffer by him, nor Religion by him, that he might not sad the hearts of the righteous, nor weaken the Glory of holiness, nor stretch the mouths of them who can bless themselves in a course of vileness, and yet curse and accuse the godly for particular facts only.

In respect of
God.

4. *In respect of God.*

Here also might *David* frame strong and singular reasons to be kept back from presumptuous sins. I know there is nothing in God which a good heart might not urge as a sufficient argument against any sin; but I will contract my thoughts and matter.

2. Reasons.

1. *What God had been to him*, might cause him to pray against presumptuous sins.

What God hath
been to him,

For his temporal kindness, that was exceeding great, he raised him from the crook to the Scepter, from the Shepherds rent to the Kings Throne, and now after all this, to answer so great goodness with great sinfulness, this would be a high degree of odious unthankfulness.

His spiritual kindness, that was more then the former, he did set his love upon him, and made him a person after his own heart, gave unto him his good Spirit of grace and joy, comforted his soul in many adversities, compassed him about with favour, as with a shield, heard his prayers, granted him the desires of his soul; O then, how should *David* do such great wickedness, and sin against his God! God forbid that *David* should put forth an hand to such an high kind of sinning, who had received from the hand of his God such high kinds of mercy and goodness; Mercy should make the greatest distance twixt us and sin, and cause the purer walking twixt us and God.

What he was to

2. *What he was to God*, Why? *David* was his servant (see God,

the

the Text) and presumptuous finings are high oppositions to our service of God: *David* was his child, his son; and presumptuous finings are great, at least incongruities to the way of filial obedience. *Should such a man as I flee?* said *Nehemiah*: so here, should such a man as *David*, one to whom God was so near, one who was so near to God, should he break out into the ways of Rebellions, into the acts of an enemy, into the paths of hostility? not only sin, (which may befall the best) but sin presumptuously, which befalls the worst, not only to be surpris'd by temptation, but also to dare one in a sin by a proud presumption: What for a child to take arms against his Father, for a holy *David* to sin with so high a hand against so good a God, and so professed a Father? no marvel that he fears, and prays, and that earnestly, *Lord, Keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins.*

No other might be expected from men professing themselves haters of God, and Lover of sin: but for a friend, for a servant, for a child, how can my God take such vile dishonors from me? and who will honour him, if his own should adventure, and presume thus to dis-glory his name, and wrong his, and their relation?

SECT. IV.

Use I.

NOW I shall descend to the usefull Applications of this point unto our selves: there are four general uses which may flow from this prayer of *David*. 1. Of Instruction. 2. Of Examination. 3. Of Exhortation. 4. Direction.

1. For Instruction.

Instruction.

It may instruct and inform us in divers particulars, *viz.*

See our own danger.

1. To see our own danger: as the prayers of holy men for good things, should learn us faith and hope: so their prayers against great sins should teach us fear and watchfulness. There is a story of an heathen man, who prayed to *Jupiter* to be saved from his enemies, one who heard him so petitioning, willed him to mend his suit, and to desire *Jupiter* to save him from

from his friend, for he trusted them more, and therefore they might do him most hurt. I would add one thing more to have mended that petition also: He should have prayed to have been saved from himself; for there is more danger in our selves, then in all enemies or friends.

O Brethren, we carry about with us vile natures, and treacherous hearts: Even those abominations which sometimes we could have trembled at, unto the n will our wicked selves deliver our selves, if God keep us not back. Natural corruptions will bid fair for the foulest commissions; and that the match is not finished and acted, it is not because we want hearts, but because God restrains and hinders. *My soul is ev n among Lyons*, said *David*: In another case, assuredly our soul dwells with such a nature, as will not distinguish twixt small and great, but is then most like it self, when it is boyling in the vilest degrees of sinning.

The temptations cannot be so black and foul, but our corrupt hearts would easily kindle by them, and we should embrace them, unless there were a God to stay and stop us: you know that *Hazael*, when the Prophet wept, and told him of that Savage and barbarous Cruelty which should break from him in ripping up the woman, and butchering of the Children: *Is thy servant a dog?* said he, *g.d.* I abhor the thoughts of such unnatural villany; and yet being left to himself, he soon acted that which now he seemed to abominate: even those sins which made a cry to heaven, as *Cains* murder, and *Sodoms* uncleanness: and the mighty sins which the Prophet touched at, yet, and the highest and stoutest rebellions, they have all of them in all men a natural foundation, and seed and principle.

Secondly, *Not to boast our selves of our standing.* Learn **Boast not our selves of our standing.** *Pauls* counsel thoroughly, *Let him that stands take heed lest he fall*, 1 Cor. 10. 12. Even thou which hast heretofore bitterly judged another for his sinnings, art now in the same transgression, and thy conscience is all over running with blood; either thus thou art, or thus thou mayst be.

There be four things which the great falls of others should **Note.** work in us, *viz.*

1. *Great compassion*: It is an ill heart which can joyce at other men sins, and it is never right with us untill we can hate our own sins, and shed tears for others.

2. *Humbling fear, Considering thy self, lest thou also be tempted*, Gal. 6. 1. Thy Glass is made of the same brittle mettall, and that it falls not, and breaks, it is because of the hand yet holds it, not because it keeps it self. If God should permit Satan to *winnow thee*, thou wouldst (perhaps) more readily deny Christ, and his truths, then ever *Peter* did: many a man hath sound limbs, because he was never in the field at battle.

3. *Earnest prayer* for continued assistance: forasmuch as though our Combats and dangers are here below, yet our guards and safe-comes are there above, and only there.

4. *Tender jealousy*. When others fall into sin, it is good for us to fall upon our knees, and watch, since our forbearance depends not on the betterness of our nature, or greatness of our strength, but on the efficacy of Gods preventing and assisting grace.

What weakness
is there in the
strongest Chris-
tian.

Thirdly, You may here learn, *what weakness there is in the strongest Christian*: all his own strength is not sufficient for him against temptation or sin: if any thing could keep off sin, it is grace, but grace needs help, as well as sin needs a bridle: *Hold thou me up*, said *David*, so shall I be safe, psalm 119. Look as it must be a divine Power which implants Grace, so it must be an Almighty hand which must maintain it: we can neither form our own hearts, nor conquer our own lusts: What would become of the Child, if the Nurse did not hold him? And whether would the ship be driven by a Tempest, had it not a Pilot to steer and order it? None can say what shipwracks would befall even a good soul, were it not continually preserved and lookt unto by a good God. Our strength and safety is more in the name of God and Christ, then in our own defence: hence it is that our Saviour commended that petition, even to the best, (*Lead us not into temptation*) not that God tempts any man to evil, but that Satan would easily lead us into sin: Did not God lead us out? his suggestions are crafty, his temptations strong, our hearts deceitfull, our graces weak,

weak, our hands feeble, our resolutions insufficient, so that we may all cry out in this case, as *Peter* in another, *Help Master, or else we perish.*

'Tis true, we must resist, and we must handle all our weapons, and we must seek, and we must resolve, and we must study, and we must hear, and we must read, and we must decline, but in all these, yea, with all these, yea, above all these, we must take in the Lord, and depend upon his help, *Lord, Keep back thy servant,* or else none of these (without him) will keep off the sin. That soul is most kept from sin which keeps most to God: None can keep up a soul, keep off a sin, keep back a temptation, so as God can do.

Object.

Sol.

SECT. V.

2. *Of Examination.*

Use.

Examination.

NOW let us come yet more close to our own hearts, *Davids* care is here against presumptuous sins; *But how stands it with our souls?* Are we in the shallows only, or have we adventured into the deeps? it is true, that there are some presumptuous sinnings which are past all shore, they are out of the reach of all recovery, therefore I meddle not with them; but then there are other *Degrees which are, though very fearfull, yet recoverable.* Consider,

Degrees of presumptuous sinning very fearfull, yet recoverable.

1. *Presumptuous sinnings arise more from the manner than the matter,* it is not alwayes so much what is done, as how the soul behaves it self in the sinning, which make it presumptuous: A little sin committed with an high spirit may therefore prove an high sin.

Presumptuous sins arising more from the manner than the matter.

2. Again, *In times of much light, either there is much formal and explicate presumption, or else virtual and interpretative presumption:* for where so much is afforded to lighten and keep back, it must be reputed as presumptuous, yet to adventure on.

In times of light there is either formal or virtual presumption.

3. There is *Habitual presumption,* when a man will hold on in a course and way of sinning: and there is *particular presumption*

Habitual presumption and particular presumption.

sumption in respect of this or that fact: now one of these most men do touch upon.

I know you like not to be handled roughly in this thing: such is our hearts, we had rather have our sins concealed then uncased, and still conceive that we are not so bad as the worst; therefore let me propound things unto you more generally.

Discoveries of presumptuous sinnings.

When men venture upon the same sins they condemn in others.

When the heart will maintain its way against revelation of wrath.

When the soul suppresseth truth.

When a man blesseth himself in a sinful way.

When men will not repent till they be old.

When men return to those sins they have found bitter.

1. What call you that kind of sinning, *When we our selves will venture upon the same sins which we condemn in others?*

Rom.2.1. *Thou art inexcusable, O man, who soever thou art that judgest, for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thy self, for thou that judgest dost the same things.*

2. What kind of sinning call you that, *When the heart will maintain its way against the Revelations of wrath, (i) though God proclaims vengeance and death against such a sinning way; yet the man will adventure on in the commission: I say, will adventure: for through weakness a man may be troden down; but it is a stoutness when he will break through the Army: when a person will through the pikes, he will not give up his worldly and fleshly lusts, though the heavens be darkened round about his soul with threatnings; is not this presumptuous sinning?*

3. What kind of sinning call you that, *When the soul suppresseth truth, and holds back the light for unrighteousness sake? when it knows the fact or way to be sinful, and yet will not be held back.*

4. What is it for a person *to bless himself in his way, and to protect himself when God hath cursed his facts; to say, none of this evil shall befall me, but to morrow shall be as to day: The Prophet is a fool, and the spiritual man is mad: God will not do as he reports, therefore soul take thine ease, thy course, let us eat and drink, and to our sins still:*

5. What is that, *When men will not repent till they be old, or ready to die, and till then will continue upon that score of sinning, upon a presumption that sin will be easily discharged, and Mercy presently had?*

6. What is that *Returning of the soul to a fact or way which it hath found to be bitter already? and though it hath found Hell*

in the conscience for the same sinning, yet it will break out again upon a hope of great mercy.

Object. Yea, But alas! *The best have their infirmities* and escapes: we think no hurt, and God knows our hearts, sin we do, and who doth not? but it is not through presumption, but through infirmity. The spirit is ready, but the flesh is weak; we still carry flesh and blood about us, it is our weakness, and God we trust is mercifull.

Sol. It is most true, that the best are sick, and the strongest are weak, but then it is as true that the heart is deceitfull, and sin is subtil, and men are apt to raise themselves in a false opinion of their safeties, and to extenuate the height and parts of their sinning.

But to the objection, I will briefly discover unto you, whether your sinnings fall from *Infirmity*, or else proceed from *Presumption*.

Four things.
Whether our
sinnings be
from infirmity
or presumption.

This must be granted in the general.

1. There are sins of Infirmity as well as of Presumption.
2. Infirmities are of two sorts.

1. Meer Infirmities, sins arising from meer weakness without any deliberation of the mind or choice of the Will, as suddain evil thoughts, words, deeds, dulnesses, defects, shortness in good, &c.

2. Mixt, which have a tange of presumption, but not enough to make the sin to be presumptuous; A knowledge, but not a practical Judgement, *pro hic & nunc*: some apprehension, but not a perfect deliberation: suddain passions perplexing the Judgement, and dazling of it; Inadvertencies, Inconsiderations. But more particularly,

1. *Acts owning themselves to infirmities, depend most upon outward strength*: they have not such an entire causality from the subject, but are produced from unequal power; It is granted, that even a good heart may yet be found in the dirt, it may be overtaken with some particular facts which are stark naught; but this irregular action ariseth principally from a strength of temptation, which exceeds the actual strength of the renewed heart: like a man in a crowd, though he strives another way, yet is over-born, he is over-set, he

Infirmities depend most upon outward strength,

is carried down, for all his strength cannot shoulder off the crowd, he is too weak: So when a man sins through infirmity, there is a nature which resists, as *Paul* had a *Law in his mind, warring against the Law of his members*, Rom. 7. yet the strength of that sinfull Law did over-bear the resisting strength of his renewed mind, in respect of particular facts, & therefore the acts were acts of infirmity. But what is this to him whose heart is set on wickedness, who imagineth sinfull devices, who shapes and contrives his way of sinning, who tempts even sin it self to sin, whose sinnings arise from affection, not from temptation, who provokes his corruption to get out, who is a devil to his own heart, inclining and stirring it to sinfull commissions, were our sinnings springing from a full principle, from a nature giving out it self, and that alone, I cannot judge them to be infirmities.

Infirmities are not habitual but particular.

Note.

2. Acts of infirmity, are not habitual, but particular; they are rather transient than permanent acts: they are acts, but not continued acts, like a land-flood, not like a river; and the reasons of it are these.

1. Partly because they spring from *Temptation*, which though it may now and then over-reach the soul, yet the renewed heart observing the flight of Satan, and the imbecillity of it self, provides therefore for stronger defence and strength to resist. And,

2. Partly because *They flow from passion and sudden distemper*, which is not a constant inclination, but only a fit, a present violence.

David in a sudden Passion, will kill *Nabal*, and every mothers child, but when *Abigail* met, and asswaged him, and made him understand reason, he was quite from his projects: But now where things fall into a habit, into a course, into a common practise, when a man is every day at his sin, when it proves an haunt, this cannot be called a business of infirmity: when our actions run, and fall into a kind of naturalness and custom, that a man is always tipling, and always swearing, and always filching, and always lying, when the way of his sin is a Trade, why this is no more to be reputed an infirmity, then for a *Mariner* to be in his ship, or a *Trades-man* to be in his shop.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, *acts of infirmity are involuntary acts*: the man doth them, but the will is against them: *the evil which I would not do, that do I*, said Paul, in *Rom. 7*. As the fact opposeth the Law, so that will opposeth the fact, it is that which a mans judgment disapproves, and which his will is averse from. The traveller, his will is to go the right way, and in that to stand, yet he may stumble and fall down, and this may be called an infirmity: But if he be himself, and should put off his cloaths, and lay himself down in the dirt, this were an act of a voluntary madnesse; so when a man sets himself to sin, when he will go and wallow in the mire; when with *Ahab*, he sells himself to work wickednesse, that he doth bargaine away his soul for a sin; when he gives up himself to uncleanness with greediness, this is no infirmity, it is a height of proud presumption; But through infirmity of prevalent resistance, a good man may be sold under sin, as Paul, he may be led captive, being over-surprized, he may be led with *Peter*, that way, or to that fact, which yet he would not willingly do.

Infirmities are involuntary acts.

Fourthly, *acts of infirmity is not a state of quietnesse*, or consistence, (i.) if a man sins from a weaknesse of withstanding grace; Though the temptation hath been his conquest, yet his sinning shall be his trouble: weak strength in grace, though it be not alwayes actually sufficient to prevent sin; yet it will be able to melt the soul for it; if temptation hath surprized the soul to sin, grace will then surprize the soul to mourne; neither will it lie with sin upon it: Even a weak child thrown down, will be scrambling up or crying for some to raise it; But if the places of our fall be the places of our peace and of our rest, it is a bad signe that our sinnings exceed infirmities: when the sinning is to us, as the sea to the fish, or as the centre to the stone, or as the bed to the labouring man; this is no infirmity.

Infirmities are not a state of quietnesse.

Fifthly, *in sinful acts of infirmities, the heart as it intends not sin, it condemns sin*; the heart is more sensible, watchful, prayerful against it, and exceedingly strives to mortifie it, and subdue it.

In infirmities the heart is against sin.

SECT. VI.

3. Of Exhortation.

Exhortation to be careful to be kept back from presumptuous sins.

Consider.

It is a great judgement to be left to our selves.

Note.

A Third Use shall be to exhort us to imitate holy David in a care against presumptuous sinnes, and to be kept back from them.

Consider seriously a few things.

1. *It is a great judgement to be left to our selves*: to be given up to a mans own heart, to be given up to Satan, to be given up to vile affections, to a reprobate sense, to our own counsels and wayes. As if God should say to a person, I have dealt with thee by my mercies, but thou wilt be unrighteous still, I have dealt with thee by my judgements, but thou wilt hold fast thy wickedness still; I have dealt with thee by my word and counsels, but thou wilt proceed on in thy sinning still; I have dealt with thee by my spirit in many convictions and motions, but thou wilt sinne still; I have dealt with thee by reproofs, and checks, and troubles of conscience, but thy heart is set in thee to sin still: Since thou wilt be unrighteous, thou shalt be unrighteous still, since thou wilt be filthy, thou shalt be so still; I will leave thee unto the hands of Satan who works mightily in the children of disobedience, and he shall take thee captive at his pleasure; I will leave thee to the vilenesse of thy own sinful nature, that since thou wilt not hearken unto me, thou shalt (as thou desirest) with all greediness fulfil the lust thereof, but I will withdraw from thee in my mercy, and in my loving care: go on, and fill up the measure of thy iniquity and of wrath: why brethren, this is a sad and forlorn condition; what is the estate of the patient, when the Physician gives him off, and relinquisheth him to his own sick palate, and his own vain appetite and diet, why saith he, physick will do him no good, it is in vain to prescribe him rules, let him do on, take what he will, I see well he is a dead man; thus it is with him whom God leaves unto himself.

Surely

Surely there is not a more direful judgement then for God to give over his keeping of us : whither will not our wicked hearts carry us ? what will not sinne (left to it self), dare to do ? how outrageously will it swell ? how irrecoverably will it sink the soul ? all helps are little enough to bound and keep in sinne, but if it be left to its own force and violence, then like the sea without a shore, what a deluge it makes.

2. *To sinne upon presumptuous grounds, upon a presumption of mercy, is the next way to cut us off from mercy: Knowest thou not O man that the kindnesse, and long-suffering, and mercy of God should lead thee to repentance; but thou through thy hardnesse and impenitency of thy heart, treasurest unto thy self wrath against the day of wrath, Rom. 2. 4, 5* God will not be merciful to the wicked transgressor, but he will wound the hairy scalp of such a one who goes on still in his sins: Mercy is a sweet City of refuge to the penitent sinner, but justice will tear off the presumptuous sinner, even from the hornes of the Altar: God never yet said that he would forgive him, who will not leave his sins; do not flatter thy self, thou dost forsake thy mercies; unlesse thou wilt forsake thy sins, God will not spare thee, nor pity thee.

To sin upon a presumption of Mercy, is the next way to cut off from mercy.

3. *Presumptuous sinning makes high work for the soul; The pricks of a pinne, the cut of a knife may do much hurt, but the gash of a sharp sword, forcibly followed, this will open death in thy sides. Every sin fetcheth blood in the soul, but presumptuous sinnings do even cleave the conscience asunder, be thou good or bad, who mounts up in an high kinde of sinning, good Lord, how it will, (in a day of judicial sense) make the very sinewes to crack, and thy joynts to tremble.*

Presumptuous sinning makes high work for the soul.

Of all sensible wrackings in the soul, there is not any one comparable to that of despaire: O! despaire, it is the death pang of the conscience, it is the soul in the Extremity of amazing throwes, it sees no heaven, and no shore, but lays the soul either in hell, or ready to be cast quick into it; now presumptuous sinnings prepare the way for despaire: when the soul would have its sinful course, it would not be beaten

Note,

beaten off by any method and warning of heaven, but went on in a secure confidence of the easinesse and largenesse of mercy: when God will not take these proud braveries any longer, but arrest the stout transgressor, and set his sins in order, both for the greatnesse of fact, and height of pride and darings, and that against all light and goodnesse, and warning and threatning, and the sinner sees himself fallen into the hands of a terrible and glorious God, from whose fierce displeasure it cannot now rid it self. O cries out the miserable man, what shall I do? woe to me that ever I was borne, I have shut up heaven against my self, I am rejected for ever; as I have dealt with God, so now he deals with me, I would not hearken to him, and now he will not hearken to me, O I shall never have mercy, I have adventured on so presumptuously, that I have distinguished my self from any hope and possibility of recovery: I was intreated, but still I would sin, I was warned, but still I would sinne, I saw it to be sinful but I would do it; I felt some trouble for it, but, &c. I despised counsel, and scorned reproof, I slighted mercy, I quenched motions, and these so often, O Lord, now thou hast met with me, now shall I never rise any more, I would have my finnes, and I have them still, and I shall have thy just wrath and hell with them too. Thus the presumptuous sinner makes way to the despairing sinner: for what is it which causeth despaire? when the soul sees justice to be exceeding great, and a cloud over the mercy-seat, now it sinks a pace, and what darkens the mercy-seat more then the greatnesse of sinning; and why doth divine justice seem so terrible, but because the person hath been so audaciously sinful: Now, he saith with *Cain*, *my iniquity is greater then can be forgiven*, Gen. 4. No, no, there is not balm for such wounds, there is not mercy for such great transgressions as I stand guilty of.

Note.

SECT. VII.

4. Of Direction.

THe last Use of the point shall be for *direction*, guiding us to the observation of some particular Rules, that so we may be kept from presumptuous sinnings.

1. Beware of a course of little sins: The stirrop, though it be low and small, yet it doth serve a man to mount; the great flames of fire took their beginning from a cole or a spark: And men, usually, have been first wading in lesser sins, who are now swimming in great transgressions: sinnings (supposed as little or inconsiderable) have not only this happinesse, that they are not so much regarded, but this unhappinesse that they are more often committed: And then this is certain: That the frequent commission of small sins is great in it self, and doth also dispose and prepare to greater commissions; many drops make a currant: he who makes no conscience of acting many little sins, will shortly take the boldness to assay and act some great sin.

For, 1. The more any sin is committed, the more is the judgement blinded and corrupted. 2. The more are the affections inclined and seduced. 3. The more is conscience benumbed and seared. 4. The lesser force have divine arguments with the soul, being surfeited with the pleasures of former finnes, and then it must well follow, that the heart being thus qualified, may easily be wrought upon to a foul commission: this I finde, that the way to be kept from an high sin, is to fear the least sin.

For little sinnings are not like a little inch of candle which goes off in an absolute period, but they are like a traine of powder, which takes fire from corn to corne, till at length the barrel is burst asunder, or like a little sicknesse which is an humour disposing to a stronger distemper: or like a little circle in a pond, which begets greater and greater.

I observe three things.

Direction.
Nine Rules
 How to be kept
 from presumptuous
 sins.
 Beware of a
 course of little
 sins.

Note.

Satan hath a strong hand over the soul which can bear with any sin.

1. *That Satan hath a strange hand over that soul which can bear with any sin:* he may by lesser things maintain his command: as it was said that the little childe did command the land, for the childe prevailed with the Queen, and the Queen with the King, and he over the land: Satan can prevail for a little sin, and a little sin can prevail with the heart, and the heart with the whole man.

Little sins are breeding sins.

2. *That little finnes are breeding finnes:* Now sinne will keep its bounds, but naturally would greaten it self; though it seeme modest at first, yet will it by degrees become familiar and impudent.

They are inciting sins.

3. *They are enticing finnes,* they are the advocates in the bosome for greater, they do not onely labour for their own lodging, but will deale strongly with the heart to embrace greater, as occasion and temptations present themselves.

Therefore this do give the water leave, no not a little: little streames makes way to the ocean. And thou studiest the present way, to become a great transgressor, to rise to presumptuous sinnings, who wilt allow thy selfe to be an habitually immoderate sinner.

Take heed of the Iterations of any sin.

Secondly, *take heed of the iterations of any sinne,* (viz.) do not go a sinne over and over: of all transgressions, which dispose the soule towards presumption, the repeated have a special influence, and I will give you a reason for it,

Note,

Because presumptuous sinnings depend much upon the boldness of the heart: when the heart becomes bold and fearlesse, it will then venture thorough thick and thin, it will presume far, they were men who *sinned with both hands*, and as high as *Sodom*, who came to this passe, that they *knew no shame*.

Now finnes of iteration, or repeated finnes, they frame a boldnesse in the heart (as repeated blows do the anvile) and the more hardened the heart is, the more bold it growes; partly because they delude the heart, they work false principles in the minde; forasmuch as we have gone on in these courses again, and againe, and no evil befalls us, therefore

fore to morrow shall be as to day, let us eat, and drink, and sinne.

It was a sweet advise that of *Elihu*, Job 34. 32. *That which I see not, teach thou me, if I have done iniquity, I will do no more:* for all sinne grows strong by practise, and the often going over it is like the motion of the feet from one round of the ladder to the other, still rising, or like the manifold turnings of the wheel, which mounts the weight still to an higher pitch; what *Job* therefore spake in another case, *Once have I spoken, but I will not answer, yea, twice, but I will proceed no further*, Job 40. 5. that I say unto thee, once thou hast sinned, thus, and thus, yea, twice, and yet conscience is tender, there is yet fear and sorrow, but proceed no further, least that become mighty to sinne. This is certaine, that the stronger sin grows, the more easily will a sinner presume. Now repeated sinnings do wedge in the sin with strength, as the more often the Schollar writes after the copy, the fairer he writes, and the more he is enabled to write: so often sinnings makes the soul more strong in that kind, and then more fit for a worser.

Thirdly, *do not stifle or reject the frequent checks of conscience*: God hath appointed several things to give the sinner a touch, like cords to twine him in, to keep him from sinnings, viz. the voice of the word, and the voice of judgement, and the voice of men, and the voice of his own conscience.

Do not stifle
the frequent
checks of con-
science.

Now mark it, there are two of these voices (more especially) which if a man will neglect and slight, a thousand to one, but he will fall to be a presumptuous sinner, viz.

1. *The voice of the Word*, Prov. 29. 1. *He that being often reprov'd, hardeneth his neck, shall suddenly be destroy'd, and that without remedy.*

2. *The voice of conscience*: when the conscience shall con-
curre with the word, in its inform: acts, and in its directing
acts, and in its warnin: acts, and in its restrictive acts, and
in its corrective and judicial acts, (i.) it shall point the way,
or fact, in the evil, and unlawful quality of it, and strive,

and reason, and fret, and reprove, and threaten, yea, and speak bitterly, yet a man will go on, I say, this man hastens to some great sin; to presumptuous sinnings.

I will give you a reason for it, because the Lord will forsake this man, he will leave him to himself, he will give him up to his own heart: since he will not hearken to the counsel of the word, nor to the advices of his conscience, God will strive with him no more, but he shall be left to himself, this is the usual course of Gods righteous and judicial proceeding. Now what can the heart do, being left to it selfe, as it hath no strength against a great temptation, so it hath sufficient strength and desire to; for the greatest methods of transgressings; if restriction be a merciful bond to corruption, then wrathful desertion; a desertion of the creature, (i.) a denial of preventing assistance against temptation or inclination, or acting, why it is as the unmuzzling of the Mastive, or untying of the Lion, Not that God sets on the heart, to sinne, but that the heart will in a moment be mighty in sinning, which is judicially deserted, or left by God for former sinnings.

Therefore, I beseech you take heed of scorning divine admonitions and reproofs: Consider that place well in *Psal.* 81. 11. *But my people would not hearken to my voice, and Israel would none of me, ver. 12. so I gave them up to their own hearts lust, and they walked in their own counsels:* if thy heart can rise above the word, it will rise above thy conscience, and if thy heart rise above thy conscience, thy next sinnings will rise above thy former: he will not be modest to sinne, who growes impudent against the word, and violent against his conscience.

Fourthly, *secure not the heart because of Gods present silence.*

Be not secure
because of Gods
present silence.

Note.

Beloved, I observe that God is silent (oft-times) when men are in either way, in the good and in the bad: a man may repeat his seekings of God, and yet God may be silent, *O my God, saith David, Psal. 22. 2: I cry in the day time, but thou heardest not, and in the night season,* and a man may re-

peat

peat his sinnings against God, and yet God may be silent, *Psal. 50. 21. These things hast thou done and I kept silence*: But then this silence is not an infallible testimony either way; though he be silent to the many prayers of his servants, yet the vision will speak at length, for as thou hast a time to seek, so God will finde a time to answer. And though he be silent many times at the sinnings of men, yet this is but forbearance, it is not an acquittance, if thou takes the times to sinne, God will take his turn to punish, *Psal. 50. 21. These things hast thou done, and I kept silence, thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thy self, but I will reprove thee, and set them in order before thine eyes.*

Obj. But you will say, what is this to the preventing of presumptuous sinnings.

Sol. Very much; for presumptuous sinnings depend much upon security: a man secures his facts and wayes from this, that God is silent and does not presently draw the sword, send for the arrest: and therefore presumes to a second or greater sinning, from Gods connivence and patience toward former. *Solomon* insinuates it clearly, *Eccles. 8. 11. Because sentence against an evil work is not executed speedily, therefore the heart of the sonnes of men is fully set in them to do evil, q. d.* There is now no ho, they make no bones of it, they will venture yet again: But brethren: take heed; if you sin, and yet you prosper in the world; if you sin, and yet conscience be quiet; if you sinne, and yet God presents not a present testimony of his displeasure; yet do not presume: for if you do evil; sinne lies at the doore: first or last, when you open it, your sins shall flie in your face: though the punishment of the sinner be not present, yet it is certaine: *it shall not be well with the wicked, though he prolong his dayes, Eccles. 8. 13. yea, the sinner of an hundred years old shall be accursed:* And this is observable, that Gods silence towards a forward transgressor, is made up at length, not only with certainty, but with number and measure: perhaps he will take such a time to account with thee, for thy sinnings, that he will break thee suddenly all to pieces, he will break thy estate, and thy conscience, and thy body, and thy soul, and all, and all irrecoverably for ever.

Note.
Study and improve
Mercy
straight.

When a man emboldens his heart to sin because of divine patience, God doth usually do two things, *viz.*

1. He riseth suddenly to the vengeance.
2. He curseth the sinner without all remedy, and so fully vindicates his silence, and glorifies his Justice.

Fifthly, If you would be kept from presumptuous sinnings, then both Study and improve mercy aright: Mercy it is the sweet savour of a sinfull soul: that gentle voice which speaks hope to a trembling spirit, that tender hand which supports and relieves a fainting soul. And yet even from this sweet flower doth presumption suck the vilest poyson: corrupting and inflaming the heart to the greater boldness of sinfull adventures, from the greater goodness of exceeding Mercifulness in God. But then mark it, that upright apprehension of divine Mercy would serve to keep off the soul from presumptuous sinnings. If a man did consider two things.

1. That Mercy, the very intent of it, the pulse of it, it is to draw a man off from sin: it is true, Mercy is an harbor, but not for the Traitor to thrust in his ship, it is a City of refuge, but not for the audacious man-slayer: O! No, Mercy it is the tenderest goodness, but withal it is a special goodness, and is set up not as a light by the sea, that a man may know thereby how to sail more freely, that a man should therefore sin more violently, but as a proclamation from a Prince, to draw in the rebel to sheath his sword, and to fall down on his knees. *There is Mercy with thee, therefore shalt thou be feared,* said David; *And knowest thou not, O man,* saith the Apostle, *that the goodness of God should lead thee to Repentance;* Rom. 2.4. *Hath God mercy to pardon me? with what heart can I then presume to provoke him; Hath he Mercy to pardon me? How canst thou then, O my soul, hold on thy sins, & not return when Mercy sends a Message after thee, it is the last, and most prevailing motive for a sinner to repent, even this that God will be mercifull to him.*

2. Mercy mis-proved to the sin, is both justly denied to the sinner, and also intends his sin: The only way to forsake our Mercies, is that we will not forsake our sins: God will never shew thee Mercy, if thou wilt not return from sinning against

against him : if we will not return, iniquity shall be our ruine.

Object. O ! but God is mercifull, though we be finfull.

Sol. Yea, But he is mercifull only to the penitent, and if thou wilt be impenitent, thou forsakest thy mercies, and treasurest wrath unto thy self against the day of wrath, Rom. 2. 4, 5. Nay, more, Mercy doth so infinitely upbraide thee that the very Devils will hiss at thee : in the day of Judgement they may cry out against thee, for the abominablest wretch living, yea, in this respect worse then they : Lord, may they say, we have sinned exceedingly against thee, why, what should we do? we had never any hope or proposition of mercy, it was never offered to us, nor assured us; but here's a wretch, that though he were a sinner, yet thou didst beseech him by thy mercies to leave his sins, thou assuredst him of free pardon, if he would return, and he not only refused the pardon, but because of thy goodness in it, therefore grew more proudly bold, and presuming to sin against thee.

6. Sixthly, Consider this, *That it is a difficult thing to repent*, and that the more a man doth sin, the more hard it is to repent of his sins. It is a difficult thing to repent

Object. Why will you say? what of this, to the prevention of presumptuous sinnings.

Sol. I answer, this conduceth much, because the presuming sinner leads on his soul to sin upon this ground and confidence, that if the worst come to the worst, he will yet at last put off his sins, and repent; whereupon his heart adventures far.

Now if a man were throughly convinced of two things, this ground would sink, and perhaps his heart might be taken off from presuming.

1. One is, *That it is a difficult thing to repent*; Why? Repentance is the new setting of the heart and life: it is the very contradiction of a mans former love and practise, it is the undoing of all his doings, it is the shifting (as it were) of his nature, and the transplanting of himself, the divorcing of the affections, the new bent and edge of the soul for all holy and pious obedience: and is this an easie thing? Is it easie

ease for a man to become an enemy to himself, to lay down his sweet delight, his precious profits, his closer nature, to judge and condemn his heart and wayes, for ever to forsake his own counsels, his own inclinations, his own courses: Know you not, that to sheath up but an idle word and form of language, is not so facile an act? how much more then to put off root and branch? Do we not stick in the same sins after many threatnings of wrath, after many executions of Judgement, after many invitations by mercies, after dayly counsels and directions by thy Word, after instances and examples of punishment; nay, after particular and personal experiences of the deceitfulness and bitterness of our sinnings: Doth not this shew that it is a difficult thing to repent?

Nay, Take an Assay of thy heart, begin the study of thy self, remember thy doings which have not been good, thy wayes that have been evil, summon up all the matter of Repentance, (for if Repentance be true, it must be an universal turning) and then set upon the work of Repentance, and tell me whether former sins cannot plead hard for future and constant possession, whether they cannot work mightily and deceitfully? tell me how willing and ready thou shalt find thy heart which comes to this duty as a Thief to the Executioner? Tell me whether Satan will easily give up his Title and interest, and will give Christ possession quietly without many fervent suits to heaven, yea, without bitter and strong conflicts, yea, unless the Almighty God himself come in, and turn him out of thy heart, and turn thy heart to him.

2. Another thing is this, *That the more a man doth sin, the more he disables himself to repent,* Tell me, seriously, Doth not the Debt weaken his ability of payment by greater engagements? Doth not the disease consume the powers of nature, by its encrease? Why? what is that which spoils us, and disarms us of strength, is it not sin? then the more sinning, still the less strength to return from sin. Nay, sin doth not only corrupt our strength, by multiplied sinnings, but withal increaseth its own strength: the more a man doth sin, the weaker and weaker he becomes; and sin thereby becomes stronger and stronger: Now tell me, if it be hard for thee in
strength

Strength to turn from sin, will it not be harder for thee in weakness to conquer strength? if thou canst not step over the brook, why dost imagine it easie to stride over the Ocean? If thou canst not stand before the child, thinks thou in a moment to cast down the strong man? surely by thy continued and multiplied course of sinning, thy mind is more blinded, and thy Judgement is more corrupted, and thy love is more inflamed, and thy heart is more hardned; and art not thou then more disabled?

Once again; by thy more sinnings, the Counsels of God are more despised by thee: and the Spirit of God is more grieved and resisted by thee, and the Mercies of God are more abused by thee, and the patience of God is more profaned and injured by thee, so that God in Justice may forsake thee, and deny his hand for ever unto thee, and then, thou, what wilt thou do? what canst thou do?

I beseech you lay these things to heart; they may check, and hold off your hearts from presuming: why thinks the soul, here is a temptation to sin; yea, but I must repent, and it is not so easie, that to do, if it be, let me try about my former sins, without a new addition now: and then this I am sure of, that the more sinnings will make the work of Repentance more hard, forasmuch as they wedge in the sin more into the affections, and provoke God more, &c. therefore it shall suffice me to have sinned already: I will adventure no more, nor no further.

Seventhly, Consider, *That thy life is short, and thy account is sure.*

Thy life is short, and thy account sure.

Thou sinnest this moment, and art not sure to live till the next day, and hast not assurance of life till to morrow: for what is our life, but a lease of time, which God lets to man, the date of which is only known to God, and commanded by him. Saint *James* would not have us talk of to morrow, and Christ would not have us think of any more then for two days: and *Paul* saith, *That the present time is the acceptable time, and the day of salvation.* Thou fool, said Christ, this night shall they take away thy soul, death attends thee every moment, it is even laying hands on thee in the womb;

Note.

and thou art never going to sin, but death saith, Lord shall I now strike him, arrest him in his very rebellion; Now if a man were effectually perswaded of this, perhaps he would not presume to sin; for presumption is usually confident of longer life, and therefore imboldens it self to stronger sins: a foolish error, and vain, for were it true, that in a natural probability, thou mightest yet live long, yet in a judicial course this is most true, that great sinnings shorten the life; the thief goes to the Gallows in his youth, because of his theft; and the sinner is suddenly laid in his grave by reason of his sinnings: And then, wo unto thee, better that thou hadst never been born, if thou lives and dies in thy sins; to the Judgement-seat of God must thou be brought with sin in thy bones, and presumptuous iniquity in thy heart: thou who now darest to out-face the Ministers of God, shall not then dare to look the holy, and just, and terrible God in the face, but he will fill thy breast with confusion, and all the veins of thy soul with flames of hottest vengeance and indignation.

Get knowledge sanctified.

Eightly, *Get knowledge sanctified.* Knowledge is like a sword, it may defend a man, and it may hurt a man, it may both arm him and kil him; or like the light of a Candle which may both direct, and also burn: and so accidentally, even knowledge it self may prove a great addition to our sinnings. That which serves to give us light against them, may yet improve the guilt of them upon us.

There is a two-fold knowledge.

1. One naked, which shews the evil.
2. Another *sanctified*, which keeps from evil: the former is good at the Object, but the latter is good with the subject; that looks upon what is to be done, or not to be done; this looks down to the heart, and inclines it strongly to embrace the good, and to resist and abhor the evil. This is certain that not all the spirits of speculation are a sufficient rescue of thy soul from presumptuous sinnings.

Object. Why? saith a man, I will not sin so, I know better then so.

Sol. Alas! The bullet strikes down the souldier for all his head-

head-piece; naked knowledge is at best but an head-piece, (and that not of proof neither) but sanctified knowledge is a breast-plate, and that keeps off the dart.

Lastly, *Renounce thine own strength* of nature, of parts, of gifts, yea, of graces, yea, of services: he shall be brought **Renounce thy own strength.** far in sin, who goes far upon his own strength; thy own strength will deceive thee: it is not enough to keep thee good, nor preserve thee from being bad: if thou couldest get a trembling heart, and a bended knee, and a believing eye, and an humble spirit, then thy Castle were impregnable, &c.

O 2

PSALM



P S A L. 19. 13.

Keep back thy servant also from presumptuous
sinnes; let them not have dominion over me.



Having handled Davids prayer against sin, as lying in presumption, now I shall touch on it, as it doth respect sin in Dominion, [*Let them not have dominion over me:*] There may be divers conjectures about the connexion and depending sense of these words.

First, As if they were a *distant* petition, *q. d.* Lord, I pray unto thee against high kinds of sinning, and perhaps I may sometimes be laid flat by them, but then I desire of thee that though they strike me down, yet they may not rule over me: though I stoop, yet I may not serve; though I fall, yet I may not lie, and rest; though they may be sometimes so strong as to over-come, yet never so full as to reign, *let them not have Dominion over me.*

Secondly, *As if they are but the same petitions greatly enforced, q. d.* O Lord, I beseech thee to keep back thy servant from presumptuous sins: all sins are bad, and inglorious, and foul, but none so as they, they are high transgressions, therefore I beseech thee, let them not have Dominion, (*i.*) never suffer.

Two Exposi-
tions of the
words.

1.
As a distinct
petition.

2.
As the same
petition enforced.

suffer them to prevail over me, never let them enter into my soul, or life, let them never over-come me, let them not over-take me, let me never commit them. Now which way of these you conjecture the sense of the words may be aimed at; it requires accurateness to determine, and cut the thred; For my part, I think that both may be commodious, and are pious, though the latter to me doth seem more genuine; yet in this I easily submit to better Judgements.

CHAP. IV.



OR the words themselves, this is evident, that they express the spirit of holy *David*, as vehemently carried against presumptuous sins in Dominion; for the better discussing of them, I shall inquire these particulars.

1. What Dominion of sin here may import, Four things wherein it consists.
2. Whether sins in Dominion may befall a *David*?
3. Why *David* prayes so against it?
4. Then some usefull applications.

SECT. I.

Quest. 1. **F**OR the first of these, *What Dominion of sin doth import?* What Dominion of sin imports.

Sol. Dominion is given sometimes to God, sometimes to Christ as Mediator, sometimes to man over man, sometimes to Satan over man, sometimes to death which is said to rule, and sometimes to sin, when it is betwixt sinne and the sinner, as betwixt a King and his Subjects. As a raigning King hath domi-

dominion, so sin, it acts in all things like a King. 1. It hath possession, original sin of our hearts; actual sin of our lives. 2. Hath a title, our forsaking of God, and voluntary election and compact. 3. Hath a throne, our souls. 4. Hath servants, our Members. 5. Hath a council, our carnal wisdom and corrupt reasonings. 6. Hath power to give Laws, and see them executed. *Paul* speaks of the Law in his members, and the Law of sin, *Rom.* 7. 21, 22.

Four things.

But more distinctly for the better understanding this, observe these particulars.

What is dominion properly.

1. That *Dominion* (properly) is the *Right and Power of a Lord over a servant*; it is a word implying Superiority and Subjection, one who hath Authority to command, and another whose condition is obediential, and to serve; so that in the dominion there is one who doth rule, and another who is ruled; one who doth command, and another who yeelds at least *virtute juris* (he is to yeeld and obey) and *ratione facti*, where dominion is exercised, there is actual command, and actual obedience; as the Centurion who had authority and dominion over his servants, he said to one *go*, and he did *go*, to one *come*, and he did *come*, to another, *do this*, and he did it.

Dominion is either,

Secondly, observe that *Dominion* is twofold, it is either,

Original and Absolute.

1. *Original and absolute*, and this is when the Lord hath a natural, and prime, and irrespective title, it belongs to him as so, to command, and impose obedience, meerly from his absolute right, and according to his own pleasure: such a dominion belongs only to God, who made all the world, and is Lord of all: All the creatures are his servants, and are fet by the Law of their Creation, to the obedience of his will; he doth rule the Nations, and hath power to order, limit, appoint, to require, to binde both bodies, and souls, natures, consciences and acts.

Derivative and depending.

2. *Derivative and depending*, and limited: such is the *Dominion* which God hath given man over the creatures: the great Lord hath made man a Lord over the works of his hands,

hands, a *pro-rex*, a deputy as it were: yea, and he hath derived dominion to man over man, to one man over another, to the King over his Subjects, to the Parent over the Children, to Masters over Servants. I say, he hath derived dominion unto them (*i.*) a power to command, and order, yet this is a restrictive dominion, and not absolute: it must not be against God, but for God and according unto God.

Thirdly, observe that there is a twofold dominion.

One is *lawful* (*i.*) such a dominion and subjection which the word and will of God doth or will warrant, as that of persons over persons, or of God and Christ over all persons and creatures: God may command us, for he made us; and Christ may command us, for he redeemed us, both our persons and our services fall unto him, *we are not our own, for we are bought with a price, therefore serve or glorifie God in your body, and in your spirit, which are Gods*, 1 Corinth. 6. 19, 20.

There is a dominion lawful.

Another is *unlawful*, and as it were usurped, which is when command is exercised, and obedience given, without any just title or right; and this Dominion is either assumed by Satan, who is called the *Prince of the aire*, and the *Prince of darknesse*, and a *Ruler*, and *one who works mightily in the children of disobedience*: or else it is exercised by *sin*, *sinne* is said to have a *Dominion*, a *Law*, a rule over a sinner, and the sinner is said to *obey the sin*, to *serve* it, to *fulfil the lusts* of it, &c.

Unlawful.

Fourthly, consider, that the dominion of sinne doth imply two things.

The dominion of sin doth imply.

One is *singular power and strength* joyned with authority. The authority of it consists in this, that it doth command the man (as a King doth his Subjects) and the strength of it consists in this, that it is able to make its commands to be obeyed and followed.

Singular power and strength with authority.

Another is *quiet, willing and total yeelding of subjection to that authority, law and command of sinne*: when a man is as chearfully and readily prepared to obey his lusts, as any Subject is to embrace the commands of his Prince, or any

Quiet yeelding of subjection to that authority.

Ser-

servant is to follow the will and pleasure of his Lord and Master.

The former of these is filed, in Scripture, sometimes the powers of darknesse, Col. 1. 13. Sometimes the *strong man*, Luk. 11. 21. Sometimes the *Law of sin*, Rom. 7. 23. Sometimes the *power of Satan*, Act. 26. 18. Sometimes the efficacy of the *Prince of the aire*, Ephes. 2. 2. by all which phrases, this is implied, viz. that where sinne doth reign or hath dominion, there it is of singular power, not only to stirre and assault, not only to tempt and provoke, but also to command and incline, to rule and dispose of the heart and wayes, that the will of a man is but as it were the will of his lusts; and the desires of the man are but as it were the desires of his lusts: he is taken captive at the pleasure of Satan: and sin needs not use any violent compulsion, or strength of argument to draw on the sinner, onely if sin speaks the word, it is enough, that's Law enough.

The latter of these is expressed; sometimes by *fulfilling the desires of the flesh*; and by *having the conversation in the lusts of the flesh*, Eph. 2. 3. and by *being servant to unrighteousnesse*, Rom. 6. and by *taking pleasure in sinne*, and by *sinning with greedinesse*, and by *selling of a mans self to work wickdnesse*, and by *giving up our selves, or our selves over to uncleannesse*; when a man doth as it were by a proper and voluntary act surrender up his soul to the obedience of iniquity, as the servant passeth away himself, when he takes such an one to be his Lord, that all his faculties, and strength, and designes, and maine intentions shall submit themselves to the service of his lusts and sinnes.

So that dominion of sinne on sins part, comprehends strong and compleat power, a commanding and disposing power, and on the sinners part, it comprehends resignation, and compleat subjection: A molesting power doth not constitute its dominion, (for sinne may molest as an enemy, where it doth not rule as a King) nor doth attempting and suggesting power (nakedly considered) constitute its dominion (for sinne may be a tempter where yet it is not a ruler.) But where the dominion of sin is erected, there it doth sit in the heart as a King in
the

Note.

the Throne, and gives forth its Laws and commands to the soul and body, as to its proper servants and instruments: the which commands are as cheerfully entertained, as they are unjustly prescribed.

But a little more to wade into this point, sinne may be said to have Dominion, or to reigne in a threefold respect.

Sin may be said to have dominion.

1. *In respect of assent*: when the understanding subjects it self to its motions: I say subjects it self, for there are two acts of the mind about the motions and commands of sinne; one is *apprehension*, another is *subjection*: a man may apprehend sin as working, and yet he may not embrace, but resist that working of sin: And then it is not sinne in dominion: If I see an enemy approaching, and rise up to oppose that enemy, he is now an enemy encountering, but he is not a King ruling: so that it is not meere apprehension, but subjection which puts up sin into the Throne, into a dominion: (1.) when sin gives the command, and the sinner yeelds thereto, Renders up himself to the obedience, freely gives way unto, and entertains the motions of sin.

In respect of assent.

Two sorts of subjection.

And hereto we must again distinguish of that subjection of assent which denominates Dominion, that it is not a meere passive subjection (as when a man is taken prisoner but an active subjection, a subjection of approbation, as when a servant hears the will of his Master, and he likes it so where sin hath dominion, the sinner doth not give a naked assent, but an approving assent, he allows his sinne and approves of his sinfull course.

Neither is this all, for every *active assent* is not sufficient to denominate dominion; a man may be on a sudden circumvented, he may be under the quickness and strength of a temptation, he may be so over-born by sudden passion, that possibly he may assent, and approve a sin in respect of the fact, in this or that particular, for this and that time, as a true subject (suppose one of *Dauids*) not understanding all thing aright, not pawing, was drawn to the conspiracy on *Absoleons* side, so a Christian, in whom sin hath not a proper dominion, he may on a sudden be so ensnared by sin and tempta-

Assent is either precipitated or deliberated.

tion, that he gives way unto it; yet afterwards he returns to himself, and condemns his own act by sound repentance.

Twofold assent that sets up sin in dominion.

1. Antecedent.

Therefore know, that the assent which sets up sin in dominion it is double.

One is *Antecedent*: and this assent is such a work of the minde, wherein sin is not only not rejected and condemned, but yeilded unto and approved: what *Abraham* answered in another case to *Isaac*, calling out, my father, he presently answered, *here am I my sonne*; so when sinfull corruption thrusts out the sinful inclination or motion, the sinner presently answers, *here am I, I am ready to do thy will, I like it, I allow it.*

.Consequent.

The other is *Consequent*: this is an assent not only when a sin is to be committed, but after it is committed, and that too, not whiles the heat of sinful deceit or temptation remaines, and lies upon the soul, but when that is gone off; when matters grow quiet, and sober and calme; then a man he likes his fact, he likes his course, he doth not only antecedently *dislike mischief on his bed*, and *abhorres not evil*: and *sets himself in a way that is not good*, (as *David* speaks, *P al. 36. 4.*) But he *rejoyceth when he hath done evil*, and *delights in the forwardness of the wicked* (as *Solomon* speaks, *Prov. 2. 14.*)

Even a godly man by temptation, and by infirmity may yeeld an antecedent assent, but then as soon as he comes to himself again, as soon as he recovers his judgement to be cleare, and his affections to be calme, he will then set upon himself and reverse his own acts; he will judge and condemn both his deed and his assent (*such a fool was I*, said *David*) and he will hate himself and his sinful yeeldings (*such a beast was I*, said *David* again) and he will not rest in such an estate; *Peter goes out and weeps bitterly*, so that even his underhanding will condemn his understanding, his understanding by a subsequent act of judiciary sentence will condemn and dis-allow, yea, and dis-avow the antecedent act of the understanding in assenting and yeelding: the serious judgement will condemn the rash judgement; As a man who hath foolishly

foolishly yeelded to the bond, if he can get it into his hands he will now blot out his name, and tear off his seal, so it will be in this case.

But where sin is in dominion, there is not only antecedently *permissio* (*i.*) a free and favourable leave given to the committing of sin, but consequently there is *adhesio* and *defensio*: the man approves and upholds that which was committed; there is not a revocation of the fact, a man doth not put in, and sue out a Writ of Error against himself (*i.*) that he was circumvented by deceit and mistake, nor doth he make protestation against his sinful commissions, but still owns them as being ready to proceed and advance on forward: he gave his hand before that sin should be done, and now the sin being drawn out, as it were, into a deed of his own approbation, he further confirms the same, by adding thereto his Seal, he approves it still, and saith, *To morrow shall be as to day, and much more abundant.*

Secondly, *In respect of the consent of the will*, when the will declares it self expressly as a party for sinne. Beloved! the disposition of the will is the fairest throne of sinnes dominion, and as we judge of the dominion of grace farre better by the will and affections, then by the workings and reaches of the understanding; so on the contrary we may more safely judge and determine of the dominion of sin by the frame and bent of the will, then by any other faculty: whatsoever may be discoursed about natural actions, for their prime and principal causation, whether by the will or by the understanding, yet this is most true in morals, that the greatest denomination is from the will, either for good or evil: and this holds in the case of sinnes dominion; the will hath (in a sort) the casting voice, it is one of the chief, of the Royal Armes and supporters of the sinful Throne: sin is strong indeed, when it hath taken seisure and possession of the will, the more corrupt a mans will is, the more strong is corruption in the man; sinne is high, when the sinner will sin, and will go on.

In respect of
the consent of
the will.

Note:
Three things
appertain to the
will.

The School-men observe three things which do appertaine

raine to the will, and they do all of them demonstrate finnes dominion.

Consent.

1. *Consensus*: you know that the consent of the will is that which makes the match 'twixt person and person (in Law, the Canon Law, *consensus, non concubitus facit matrimonium*) so here the consenting of the will, it is the espousing and contracting of the soul and sinne together: I will be a Lord to thee, saith sinne, and I will be a servant to thee, saith the sinner: I will give thee pleasure and profit, saith sinne, and I will give thee my heart and obedience, saith the sinner.

Election:

2. *Electio*: this is such an act or work of the will in which a man prefers one thing before another, or one way before another: And where sinne is in dominion, the sinner would rather be sinful then godly, he would rather go on in his sins then forsake them; *They love darkness rather then light*, Joh. 3.19. *Thou lovest evil more then good, and lying rather then to speak righteousness*, Psal. 52. 3. as it was with the Hebrew servant, when the year of Jubilee was come, liberty was propounded unto him, he might go free if he would, it did depend upon his own choice, but the servant (sometimes) he loved his Master, he would not go free: So when the Lord comes to a man in whom sinne doth exercise dominion, and propounds unto him several things, and several ways, here is Heaven, and here is Hell; here is Life, and here is Death; here is Holinesse, and here is Sin; here is the way of Duty, and here is the way of Disobedience; why as *Esau* made choice of the poore messe of pottage, or as the *Jews* of *Barabbas*; so the sinner, he makes choice of his sins and sinful ways, I had rather keep my drunkenesse still, my uncleanness still, my covetousness still, &c.

Command and Rule.

3. *Imperium* or *propositum*: the will is the chief wheel of the soul; it is that which in a sort commands all the faculties, and all their acts: now where the will is chief in sin, if sinning be the fruits of its lustful commands: a man hath set up his resolution, it is the purpose of his heart, to be as he hath been, and to do as he hath done, he will not learn to do good, he will hold fast his wickedness, here sin is in dominion.

Ne-

Nevertheless for the clear discovery of this part of sins dominion in respect of the will, be pleased to observe several things.

1. That there is a *twofold will*.

There is a twofold will.
Single.

1. One is *altogether single in its workings*, it doth not partly incline to good, and partly to evil, but either only to good, or only to evil; *v. g.* where the created nature (which is reasonable) was never morally deformed, or where the rational nature is gloriously reformed, there the will inclines only to good, (as in the Angels and blessed souls) so again, where the nature is totally deformed, (I mean in respect of spirituals) where it is intirely corrupted, there the Bias of the will draws the soul only to evil, the whole ponde, weight, and strength of the will is for sin: and the sinner (without any intrinsecal opposition of another nature in the will) will yeeld and surrender up himself unto sin. Now such a will as this plainly argues dominion of sin: where the will, what it is and can do, that it is and will do for sin; when we may say of the will as Saint *John* of the world; *the whole world lies in wickedness*, 1 Joh. 5. 19. so the whole will (the whole frame and bent of it) is universally obediential, or serviceable, where the whole nature of the will vents it self into an habitual and plenary consent; This is of it self manifest, that sin hath dominion.

Another is *mixt and compounded*: when the will is divided within it self, and consequently its consents and dissent (embracings and refusing) are likewise opposed one to another, and opposing each the other in the same man: you must know that original sin (which yet in part remaines) is diffused through the whole man, and into every faculty; and so renewing grace (which is oppositite thereto) is an universal temper, dispersed into every faculty too: Neither is it able utterly to dis-lodge sin in respect of being on some aetings: So that a regenerate man (as Saint *Austine* spake) hath in him an old man and a new man: his flesh is like a dead man, and his spirit like a living man; the living man moves up, the dead man hangs down; the living mans breath is sweet, the dead mans savour is loathsome; so far forth as the will is renewed

newed by grace, so far doth it reject and deny sinnes consent, but so far as it is affected and disturbed by remaining and working corruption, so far forth it is willing and ready enough to consent to sinful actings.

Now when we say that the dominion of sin depends upon the will, this is not to be understood of the compounded will, or of the assent and actions which do arise from a nature, and will imperfectly renewed and cleansed in respect of degrees: But of the single and corrupt, and so compleat will wherein the consent is total and plenary. Now the plenary consent of the will consists properly in the full and natural, and longing inclination of the will after sin; when the will embraceth an evil, sets the heart upon it, bends after it, and that without any resistance or striving: so that it is the embracing of sin, with an unstriving consent of the will, which sets up the dominion.

Whether all resistance impairs dominion and no resistance argueth it. All resistance doth not prejudice dominion.

Quest. 1. Here now falls in a subtle and deep enquiry whether *all resistance impairs dominion, and no resistance doth always infallibly argue it.*

Sol. I answer briefly to the first.

1. *That all resistance doth not prejudice dominion:* A man may hold a firme league with sin in his heart, he may be a servant to it, though sometimes in some particulars he may skirmish and quarrel.

A twofold resistance.

There is therefore a double resistance, or denying, or disputing with sin.

Collateral and Accidental.

One is *Collateral and accidental*; which doth not arise from an immediate contrariety of nature, but from a contrariety of effects: As now a man in whom sin hath dominion, his sinnings may be sent back with such bitter Writs of attachment, that he may stand at defiance, and be at some forbearance (a while) from sin: or he may have such affected apprehensions of death and hell, and shame and terror: whereupon he may resist sin as penal and painful: as a thing so bitterly vexing, and galling, and this grieves him too.

Natural and Immediate.

Another is *natural and immediate*: which depends on an holy nature implanted in the soul, which opposeth sinne as a thing formally evil and displeasing to God: This resistance doth

doth (I confess) prejudice sin in its dominion, but the former doth not.

Secondly, *No restraint doth imply the consent to be plenary*, and therefore sinne to be in dominion: when the estate of the soul is such, that no contrary quality stands 'twixt the command of sin and the obedience of a sinner, it is easie to point who is Lord of the House: and indeed what doth more palpably demonstrate dominion, then a quiet subjection.

No resistance doth imply a plenary consent

It is not all the commandings of sin (alone) which argue dominion infallibly (an enemy may command much, and highly, as *Sennacherib*, and yet not be obeyed) but it is consent, and the more full and quiet kinde of consent, which is that where no resistance is made) this shews that the strong man possesseth the house.

Note.

Quest. 2. But yet another question is raised, and to be removed, whether a good man, in whom sinne hath not dominion, may not yeeld a plenary consent of will: which if, then plenary consent argues not dominion.

Whether a good man may not yeeld a plenary consent in whom sin hath not dominion.

I will tell you what I conjecture about it, in a few propositions.

1. *It is possible that he may sinne willingly*: two Intensive aggravations of sin (in respect of particulars) may befall a good man, viz. he may sin knowingly, and he may sin willingly: the cause whereof is this because his will is but in part renewed, and therefore may be a willing principle; neither doth this set up sin in dominion, though it greatens sin in the commission; for as much as not every particular willingness, but an habitual & a compleat willingness assures sin of its dominion.

A good man may sin willingly.

Secondly, observe, that *there is a double concurrence of the wills consent to sin.*

There is a double concurrence of the will to sin. Recall.

One is *real*, when in truth the whole composition, and all the inclination of the will is for sin, the bent of it, and Bias, all runs that way: and where it is thus, there sin is in dominion.

Another is *sensible*; which is an observed acting of the will as embracing, and leaguering it with sin: when all (which may for

Sensible.

for the present be observed) is a corrupt inclination and consent: Now here I conjecture, that possibly sin may not alwayes have dominion, where yet, for the present, and for a particular, the whole sensible part of the will seems only for sinne.

Note.

My reason is this, *q.* the resistances of grace are secret and more hidden; and again, when the soul is hurried to a sin in the heate of temptations and passions, it is not easily able to observe every secret and transient regretting and opposition.

Distinguish
twixt domi-
nion of sin, and
a strong incli-
nation to sin.

Thirdly, you must distinguish *'twixt dominion of sin, and twixt a strong inclination to sin*: dominion of sin is a thing more natural, but the strong inclination may be preternatural: as a stone by strength may be vehemently carried upward, or an arrow out of a bowe, and yet the propensions of their nature are quite contrary and downward.

A man in a violent temptation, and under the strength of a seduced judgement, like a captive, he may be exceedingly haled, he may put on eagerly for a sin, yet with some little reluctancy, with some strivings on the other side, with some dissentings, though faint, though feeble, though not able to put by the actually greater strength of the temptation: so that the will may be strongly inclined, when yet it is not totally inclined; the violent flying out of the soul, may be but the hurrying strength of an enemy, which marcheth in haste: against which the Re-generate part of the will may put in its exceptions, and though unable to stay the soul, yet it may be able to appeal to heaven against this rash and strong working. &c.

Distinguish
betwixt facts
and courses.

4. Lastly, you must distinguish *'twixt facts, and 'twixt courses*; and *'twixt particular, and 'twixt general intentions*: and *'twixt too much yeelding, and a plenary yeelding and resignation*.

The will may come on to sin (where it hath not dominion) in respect of facts; and by a particular intention, and by a partial yeelding: but where the will comes on as to a course, and with a general intention, and with a plenary yeelding, there is dominion: Thus of the dominion of sin in respect of the will.

Third-

Thirdly, the *dominion of sin may be considered in respect of the work or service*; the working of sin, and obedient acting of it, doth also include and express its dominion; Hence they, in whom sin hath dominion, are said to *serve sinne*, and they are said to *obey sinne*, (*his servants ye are to whom ye obey*) and they are said to *commit sin*, ἀμαρτιαν ποιεῖν (to do it as a man would follow his trade) and they are said to *do the work of the devil*, Joh. 8. 44. as if the sinner had nothing else to do, but to follow and serve his sins: which we may evidently see in persons under the dominion of any lust, their whole and maine designes are to fulfil it: the drunkard, it is his work and life to fit and drink; the covetous person, it is his work and course of life to be scraping, and getting; As where grace is in dominion; why? the main work is to serve and please God, to learn his will and obey it; so is it on the contrary where sin hath Dominion; the service of the sinner is given up to sin, so that, obedience to sin (which is the doing of the work of sin) doth evidently demonstrate the dominion thereof.

Of the dominion of sin in respect of the service. 3

Nevertheless, you must wisely understand this as you have the other parts respecting sinnes Dominion; therefore Consider,

First, that there is a *twofold obedience unto sin.*

A twofold obedience unto sin
Material.

One is *Material*: when that thing is done or acted which is sinful: the work is repugnant to the will of God, yet this absolutely doth not constitute dominion; for as much as it may be with the soul, as with a Captive, who may do the same work which the subject doth, yet not with the same mind, and not in the same form of service.

Another is *formal*: when the work of sin is not only done, but it is done after the manner of sinning, as when a servant or subject do express service and obedience, they do it with the hearts of servants and subjects, and as to a Master and King: so where a man obeyeth his lusts, where he doth the work, as *Covenant-work*, as the work of a servant, as a proper work, and as a ready work, as an hearty work, indeed this argues Dominion.

Formal.

Q

Again,

Distinguish of
obedience to
the commands
of sin.
Simple and
absolute.

Again, we must distinguish of *obedience to the commands of sinne.*

One is *simple and absolute*: which is when to sin; though it be not every particular thing which a man doth, yet it is a principal thing unto which he applies himself: as that is a mans trade, not presently which he looks upon or deales in, but wherein he doth principally, and chiefly deale in, unto which he applies the current and strength of his stock: so it is here, sin is a mans absolute work, when it is his maine work, and he is besides his calling (as it were) when he is besides his sin: such an obedience is a respect unto sin in Dominion.

Cursory or
transient.

Another is *cursory or transient*: as a Bee may light upon a thistle, but her work is to be gathering at flowers, or a sheep may be in the dirt, but its work is to be grassing on the mountains, or in the meadows: or an honest traveller may be besides the way in a wood, or in an house, but his work is to go on in the Kings Rode. So is it possible for a man, in whom sin hath not dominion to touch upon sinful facts; But his maine way, his principal work to which he doth apply the intentions and strength of his heart and spirit, it is the obedience unto God, and his holy and righteous will.

3. Therefore in the third place observe another distinction: which though it doth hold some correspondency with the former: yet it saith a little more, and gives yet a further light.

There is an
obedience
Of course.

There is an obedience.

1. Of *course*: which is a continued applying of our selves to the work of sinne: it is our trade which we do drive, the mire in which we wallow, the mill which we help going on.

Of fact.

2. Of *Fact*, which may be but some particular and inter-venient acts: not a thred spun out and drawen, but a sword drawen, and sheathed againe, and laid down. There is something which steps in, interrupts the progresse, and takes off the soul from service, and then it is not sin in Dominion.

Quest. I. I know that that is a notable case, whether all interruptions of sinfull facts, impeach sinnes Dominion.

Whether all interruptions of sinful acts impeach sine dominion. All absolutely do nor. Two kinds of interruptions, Political.

Sol. For my part I think, that all absolutely do not, there are two kinds of abruptions, or interruptions, (i.) working causes, which do, if not untwine the thred, yet respire and hinder the finishing of it.

Some are *Political*: when the interruptions depend upon politick and private respects: as upon the wisdom of the flesh, the stings of conscience, the defect of occasions, the safety of our names and credit, &c.

Others are *Natural*, which depend upon a contrary nature, touching the heart for its particular trespassing, humbling it, recovering it again out of the snare of the devil, and this interruption, is not only a meer limit, or politique halt for a while where the sinner takes breath, and makes a pause before he will go on, but it is an undoing of a particular ill-doing; by an holy nature now recovering the soul.

Once again observe, that the work or obedience to sin is twofold.

The obedience to sin is twofold

1. Either by *surprisal*; and *compulsory*, and this work owes it self not to the intention of the heart, nor to the approbation of the judgement, but to the deceitfulness of sin, and to the strength of temptation.

Compulsory.

2. Another is *cheerful*, and as it were of nature, now remember that acts of surprisal, do not testify sin in dominion: indeed this they may testify that sin in its inclination, or Satan in his temptation, is (at that time very strong: but yet, not that they rule; for dominion in this case is not when a man is vanquished and captived, but when he yeelds out himselfe, and willingly follows.

Cheerful,

Though sin be acted, yet it is not therefore sin in dominion, unlesse it be a willing doing of the work of sin: though force and compulsion, may be sufficient to testify, that there is a tyrant, yet ready obedience is that which testifies homage to a King.

Thus have you heard a little in the general about the nature of Dominion, and about the nature and manner of sins dominions.

Sin in dominion is either,

5. I conjecture : that it is fit to adde one thing more in the general about the dominion of sin, as respecting its powerful commands that it is either,

Habitual, or,

1. *Habitual*, where sin in the course behaves it self as a King, it rules, and commands, and disposeth of the person to its base services and lusts.

Actual.

2. *Actual*: and this is not properly its dominion, though it be miscalled so, yet to give a little scope to freeness of language, I will call it an actual dominion, which is rather a particular prevalency of acts, then a Sovereignty or dominion in the nature, when though the heart and nature have surrendered themselves to Christ as the only Lord, and to his will as the only Law, yet in many particulars, sin gets the better over grace, though it cannot be said to rule, yet it may be said to conquer: it makes the man to fall down; it is too strong and prevalent for all the actual improvements, and particular resistances of grace and prayer at that time, and for that fact. Against which, if I mistake not, *David* doth here principally bend himself, when he prays [*Let not them have dominion over me*] that is, not only, let them not rule, but which is beyond that, let them not so much as prevail over me: Though I may meet with temptations to presumptuous and high sinnings, though I may finde a false nature ready enough to break forth upon a vain confidence, yet Lord, do thou then so effectually aide and assist me, that I may not only resist, but reſel them; though they may attempt, yet let not them once conquer nor overcome me; let me never yeeld to them, nor act them: yet if any think that he aimes at the habitual dominion of those finnes; I will not enter into the lists, let him enjoy his opinion, but I think this of actual dominion is more punctuall to the place.

SECT.

SECT. II.

Quest. **V V** *Hither sin in dominion may besal a David, or regenerate person ?*

Whether sin in dominion may besal a regenerate person.

For the resolution of this question remember these particulars.

There is a difference betwixt a conquest by sin, and the dominion of it.

1. That there is a difference twixt *peccatum vincens*, and *peccatum regnans*, 'twixt a conquest by sin and the dominion of sin: A Conquest is when sin prevailes: Dominion is when sin Rules: The Conquest respects power, Dominion respects the will; In Conquest the person resists, but his strength is too weak: In dominion the person yeelds up himself to the Will, and Law, and Power of another. Sin may overcome a Regenerate person, but it hath not dominion in him:

There is a tyrannical dominion and a regal dominion.

2. There is *Dominium Tyranni*, and *Dominium Domini*: A tyrannical Dominion is by force and constraint, a Regal dominion is by consent and choice; the former is incident to the Regenerate: *Paul* complains that he is sold under *sinne*, Rom. 7. But *Ahab* sold himself to work wickedness. *Paul* is brought into captivity to the Law of *sinne*, but *Judas* willingly offers himself to betray Christ: In tyrannical dominion there is unwillingness, hatred, dislike, conflict; weariness, trouble, and desire to be freed: In Regal Dominion there is chiefe Contentment, Delight, and Rest, &c.

The dominion of sin taken Strictly

3. The Dominion of sin may be taken either,

1. *Strictly* and *Properly*: where sin is absolute, and full, and uncontrolled, and the sinner freely and totally Resignes up himselfe to the lusts, and will, and commands of sinne.

Largely

2. *Largely*, and in some respect, when as to some particular act of sin, there is not (for a time) any actual or prevalent present resistance: even the will it selfe is surpris'd by carnal affections, but yet in the event, and at length, it is revived, and grace doth resume its *imperium*, and recovers:

vers:

Simile.

A compleat dominion cannot befall the regenerate.

Reasons of it.

vers the person again : In this sense sin may be said to reign, or to have dominion in a Regenerate person ; But it is as a Thief or Robber reigning and ruling in a royal Castle, which (shortly) he is forced to quit and leave.

But for a compleat, uncontrouled, habitual, final dominion of sin, this cannot befall the regenerate.

1. The Dominion of grace and Christ is eternal : True grace is an immortal seed, it cannot be totally quenched : a well of water springing to everlasting life.

2. The union with Christ is inseparable, and insuperable, which could not be, if a regenerate person might fall under such a dominion of sin.

3. The promise of grace must not faile, sin shall not have dominion over us, Rom. 6.14. I will subdue their iniquities, Micha 7.19.

4. The Covenant of God is, I will put my fear into their hearts that they shall not depart from me, Jer. 32.40.

5. Jesus Christ hath conquered, as well as other enemies, so our sins.

Why then doth David pray against it.

Reasons of it.

Quest. If sin in dominion cannot happen to the Regenerate, why doth David pray, &c.

Sol. Three things may be said of this,

1. If David or any regenerate person should be left unto himself, sin would have dominion over him : therefore he prays, acknowledging that it must be a strength greater then his own, &c.

2. Prayers are a means to fetch us out of the Dominion of sin, and keep off sin from having dominion over us : upon Pauls prayer, the answer was, my grace is sufficient for thee.

3. Although habitual, and universal, and final dominion of sin be incompetible or inconsistent with the state of grace, yet actual and particular dominion is possible, and there are great reasons for a regenerate person to pray, if it were no more then against particular, and temporary dominion of sin ; but of this more distinctly in the next Section.

SECT. III.

Quest. 3. **W**hy David prays against sin in dominion? **Sol.** Remember that precedent distinction of *actual dominion*, which comprehended a particular prevalency over the soul for particular acts of sinning: and of *habitual dominion* which intimated the full resignation of the heart to the commands of corruption.

Why David prays against sin in dominion.

In both respects there may be great reasons, why any man should pray against the dominion of sin.

I. Against *actual dominion*.

Reasons of praying against actual dominion. Actual dominion of sin is very bad.

1. Because though *actual dominion doth not infallibly testify the person to be bad*: yet it is ever a breaking forth of what is very bad: for as much as the action in this case is but sinne acted.

Now consider,

1. *That every sin (as acted) is therefore the worse*: you know that sin, though it be a vile thing, yet it tends towards a perfection (in its kinde) *lust, when it hath conceived, bringeth forth sin, and sin when it is finished, &c. Jam. I. 15.* He alludes to a childe in the womb, which in the conception is not so perfect and compleat, as in the birth and life: sin is naturally bad, if it be at all, it is evil, if in inclination it is evil, if in thought evil, if in acting, then much worse; when it is brought forth, then it is more ripened, and therefore the more sinful; now where sin hath but *actual dominion*, there it prevails, though not always to a full consent, yet to a sinful service or act: the person doth the thing which is evil.

Note. Every sin as acted is therefore the worse.

2. *That the acting of the greater sin is always a greater kinde of sinning*: I mean, *ceteris paribus*, if things be equally set together.

The acting of the greater sin is a greater kinde of sinning.

A high sin, a presumptuous sin in temptation is not so guilty, as the same presumptuous sin in dominion; for all sin in service is ever worse then any sinne in conflict: though sinne may trouble a man more when it inclines and tempts, yet it wounds a man more, when it prevails and overcomes.

Actual Dominion weakens the strength of grace. Secondly, *actual dominion though it doth not alwayes conclude the absence of grace*, yet it alwayes impaires and weakens the *strength of grace*.

sin prevailing doth not infer. There are two things which sin prevailing to act, doth not necessarily inferre.

Privation of grace. One is *Privation of grace*: for even a good man may stoop and fall, a good man may yet do that evill which he would not: an honest traveller may be struck down, and a faithful souldier may be taken captive, though to sin be the evill mans worke, yet it may possible be the good mans action.

Annihilation of grace. 2. Another is *Annihilation of grace*: There is a great difference twixt sicknesse and death: sicknesse though it removes health, yet it doth not remove life, it is death which doth that; particular dominion, or prevalence, it may lay flat, wound deeply, leave a man in a swoon (as ye shall hear presently) yet it is the habituall dominion which denies life.

Yet it may weaken grace. Neverthelesse, *particular dominion doth even weaken grace* (i.) any sin (much more a presumptuous sin at which *David* seems here to touch) prevails and winnes ground on the soule to yeeld to act, there the Corrupt nature improves it selfe, it hath the better: And this is certaine that sin is never improved but grace is weakned: weakned much in its measure, and in its strength; as all health by the prevalency of sickness, and all heat by the victoriousnesse of cold, sinful actings doe abate the vitality of grace, the edge and the spirit of it, and lay it in a swoone, so that a man may now have little heart to pray, Infinite distrust toward God, and which is as bad as the rest, if he takes not heed, *actual prevalencies* (at the least) incline and tempt him shrewdly to habituall actings, so a man shall hardly doe sin any one service, but sin to recompence him, will impose thereupon many **Commands** for more.

Actual dominion doth check the comforts. 3. Because *actual dominion, though it doth not alwayes cut off the union*, yet it may and doth disperse and check the *comforts*. It is an eclipse though it be not a night, He who made the *Le-prosie*, though he lost not right to his tent or house, yet he was interdicted the use and benefit of either. A Child who offends his father, though he doth not therefore presently cease to be a childe, yet his offence doth turne and change the countenance

nance of his father. Though it doth not break off the relation, yet it doth the respect; he shall not easily be admitted into his fathers presence, and then, he shall see bended browes instead of smiles, and sharp rebukes, and upbraidings instead of kinde and wonted wel-comes: so shall even *David* himselfe finde, if that great sins get dominion over him, if they doe prevaile, if he doth ast them, though God doth not cast off his person, yet he will draw off his Countenance: *why hidest thou thy face?* He shall quickly finde the difference twixt the service of God, and the service of sin: when he goes to pray, his sin shall meet him, and when he goes to heare, the Ordinances shall cast his sinne into his face: As *Sampson*, when he lost his haire, he could not doe as formerly, as at other times, so even actuall dominion of sin, though it doth not nullify the relations, yet it wonderfully varies the condition: The Sun seemes to be darkned at noon-day, the Ayre is filled with tempest, and thunders, which lately was overspread with beautifull light; God lookes in terror and displeasure, and the conscience wounds with closest bitterness: all former comforts seem to take leave of us; sometimes we are so distressed that we fear we are lost for ever: one such sinning may cost us many yeares of cruell vexation, and of this we may be sure, that till we are soundly humbled and renew our repentance, we shall never see a smile in Gods countenance, nor heare a good word from conscience: Now this is a dolefull case that a man shall heare the same promises from which he suckt much comfort, and yet he may not taste now he cannot rejoyce and that God whose communion was so sweet, now through his sinning, becomes so bitter and heavy, &c.

4. Because *actuall dominion*, (especially of great sins, and over a *David*) is accompanied with great prejudice to *Divine glory*: As they say of Fevers, that they are usually worst in the strongest constitutions; and of spots, that they are usually the greatest blemishes in the fairest garments: that we may say of sinnings: the better the man is, the more dishonorably foule his offendings are: God loseth more honour in the eyes of the world, by the slips of the good, then by the wallowings of the bad: evill men are hardned, good men de ided, Satan and sin advanced, and by all these God is infinitely dishonoured: There-

Actuall dominion is accompanied with great prejudice to divine glory.

fore good reason hath *David* to pray, Let them not have dominion over me.

Secondly, *Habituall Dominion.*

Reasons of praying against habituall dominion.

But then in the Second place, if we interpret the dominion here of an Habituall dominion of sin, the reasons of prayer against sinne, as in such a dominion, are very strong and urgent.

Habituall dominion decides the estate.

1. *Habituall dominion decides the estate*: the question of a mans soul is, whose servant he is, whether he belong to God and Christ, or to sin and Satan.

Now particular failings doe not determine this, but the dominion of sin doth, his servants we are whom we obey: you know what the Apostle hath said, Rom: 6. 16. *know ye not that to whom ye yield your selves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of sin unto death, or if obedience unto righteousness: if sin doth rule, and the sinner yields up his heart to the love and obedience of it: he professeth thus much, that Christ is not his Lord, and the Law of Christ is not the law which he will obey, as these Rebels spake of David, what portion have we in the sonne of Jesse? soe here the sinner, I doe not belong to Christ, sin is my Lord, The servant of sin am I, that is the thing which I have Chosen, and that is it which I will serve; Soe that on may without any scruple conclude, that if sin hath dominion, the man hath yet noe interest in Christ, noe one degree of true grace, he is a most wretched sinner: sin is his Lord, God is his enemy, Hell is his portion, unlesse he get from under this Dominion.*

Noe dominion so vile.

Secondly, there is *no Dominion in all the world so vile*: whether you consider it, First, In the *commands* of sin, or Secondly, In the *service* of the sinner.

First, The Commands.

The commands of sin are illegal.

The commands of sin are the vilest commands. For,
1. They are *Illegal*, any command which findes ground and title may be defended, but sin hath no reason to command: A
con-

condemned man loseth all command; sin is the only thing which Gods law hath condemned : And again, it hath no title to the soul, the soul owes not it self to it, either by a natural, or by a purchased subjection: we owe a natural subjection to God, because he made us; A purchased subjection to Christ, because he redeemed and bought us; but sins commands are meerly usurped, and Insolent.

2. They are *purely sinful* : all its edicts and desires are but Rebellions: that a man should transgress a righteous, and supreme, and good, and holy law: there is not any one thing which sin at any time commands, but it is that which God forbids, and which God will Judge the sinner for. Purely sinful

3. They are *extreamly unreasonable*; a command may be esteemed unreasonable, either *when one service runs contradictory against another*, as to command a man to run and yet to stand; so is it with sin, it commands a man to such a service as is opposite in particulars, for as all sin is opposite to grace, soe some sins are opposite to others; though not in the fountaine, yet in the actings; or a command may be esteemed unreasonable *when any service tends to the ruine of the obedient*; it were an unreasonable thing, and unjust, to command a man to run into the fire and burne himselfe, but the commands of sin tend directly, and intentionally to the destruction of the sinner, sin injoynes a man much service and paines, and all this is, to dishonour God, and to damne his owne soule. Extremely un-
reasonable.

Secondly, *the service.*

The service of sin.

The service of sin: it is the most *disloyall service* in respect of God renouncing him, denying him his due, and conferring it on his only enemy.

Is a disloyall service.

2. It is the most *injurious service* to our souls.

3. It is the *basest service*: if a man did serve a dog or a toad, this were a vile abasing of himselfe, but it is far baser to serve sin, for those creatures have some goodnesse in them, but sin is naturally bad: Nay, though we doe cry out at the devill, as vile and base, yet the Devil himself is better then sin, for it is his sin only which makes him so base, and he hath an absolute

An injurious service.

The basest service.

being

being, which he owes to God; but sin hath noe relation to God, and it is that which imbaseth all beings.

The most
drudging ser-
vice.

4. It is the *drudgingest service*: A man who is a servant to sin, he is at the command of every lust, and is taken captive at its pleasure, and there is noe hoe, nor measure, nor end: all the day will not serve, nor will the night satisfie: an age of yeares is spent, and when a mans strength doth faile him, yet sin sets him to work still. The cruelest Tyrant, wearies himselfe sometimes by his unwearied commands, but sin never relents nor spares: Nay that which shewes the extremity of this vassilladge, the sinner continues service there, and then, where he sees and knowes his misery; he hath felt the fruites, the bitter fruites of sinning, yet sin still commandes and easily puts him upon the same service afresh: soe that he often tyers his thoughts, and spends his estate, and consumes his strength, and breakes his sleep, and loseth his friends, his God, his soule, his all, to drudge at the Commandes of his owne base lusts.

The most un-
profitable ser-
vice.

5. It is a most *unprofitable service*: Though in some service there may be but an uncertaine gaine, yet in the sevice of sin, there is a most certaine and great los, *what profit had ye in those things whereof ye are now ashamed Rom. 6. 21.* therefore sinnes are said to *sowe the winde, and to reap the whirl-winde*, they deale in vanities which shall not profit, and every sin is a lye, let it pretend much, yet it advantageth nothing. Suppose a man had an estate worth 10000 li. and he should receive a baby for it, tell me what he got? O that precious soule of man which is more worth then a world, is uttely lost by sin, what then, doth the service of it profit him? *for what is a man profited.* (saith our Saviour) *though he gaine the whole world, if he lose his own soule;* thou Gets a little credit by thy sinning, yea but whith whom? And what is that whiles the great God doth disgrace thee: and thine own conscience doth often shame thee? Thou gets a little *wealth* by thy sinning, yea, but what is that Treasure of wickednesse, but a Treasury of wrath against the day of wrath? Thou gets a little *pleasure* by thy sinning; yea, but what are these short minutes of joy to those eternall nights of darknesse, in which they must end and be swallowed up? one fall breaks all the glasse to pieces, and one

one anguish of conscience, or peal of death, blasts and sinkes all the vaine triumphings of a sinfull heart: sin may pretend faire, and promise much, but the wages thereof (*i.*) that which thou mult expect for thy service, is death: yea, that death which is opposed to eternall life, *Rom. 6. ult.*

6. It is a *most uncomfortable service*: How oft is the servant of sin in the depths of feare, and in the heights of trouble, his very sinnings are more his torments then his joyes: he is many times vexed with thoughts how to sin, and afterwards he is hewed in his conscience for his sinning; though he hath not grace to make him grieue, yet he hath a conscience which can make him tremble: the very surfeits of his sins do distaste his soul, and make him oft times weary of his very life; he is ashamed of Company, and dares not yet to be solitary: The night is many times a terror unto him, and the day renewes his anguish: though the servant of sin (in the transient flash of his spirit) out-braves all counsell, yet he doth ordinarily feel infinite gripes within, either he is utterly unlesse of his misery, (which is one of the greatest judgements,) or he his sensible, and then he fees a Hell of horror for his lewd obedience: Nay, so exceedingly high do the distresses sometimes prevaile, that he his forced to disparte of all mercy, and thinking to ease himselfe of some flames, greedily throwes away himselfe into the very guise of Hell-fire: what shall I say more, where sin hath the dominion over a person, a man is a slave to the Devill, and a servant to that which will vex him and wound him, and damne him; he never enjoyes himselfe, nor shall he ever enjoy God, unless that yoke of service be broken: and therefore good reason hath any man to pray against the habituall dominion of sin.

A most uncomfortable service.

SECT. IV.

THUS for the explication, now somthing for the Application thereof unto our selves: where first let me begin with *inquirie*? what thinke we of the dominion of sin within our soules,

Uses.
Inquire whether sin have Dominion over us
You ver us

Object.

Sol.

You will say, we trust there is noe such thing. I Remember the Jewes said as much to Christ, in a case not much unlike, *we are Abrahams seed*, said they, *we were never in Bondage*, Job. 8. 33. But Christ replied, *verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin*, v. 34.

I will premise a few things at this time.

Some things premised.

Noe man but is borne a servant to sin.

1. *No man living but he is borne a servant to sin*: sin is his Lord before he can tell who is his Master, sin requires not age to set on the crown, but even in the very wombe, doth it begin its reign, and poysons, and impaireth our whole nature, therefore the Apostle saith, *that by nature we are the children of disobedience and wrath as well as others*, Ephesians 2. 2. it is the disposition, and sway, and bent of us to sin, and to walke on in sin.

It is a hard thing to get off the dominion of sin.

2. *It is an hard thing to get off the dominion of sinne*. Sin is a strong man, It hath possession, and goes not out by entreaty or bribe, but it must be by force, by one that his stronger: I assure you, that the almighty God must reveal his own arme, and he must cast down strong holds, he must worke a kinde of a miracle, or else sin will still be a Lord, and the sinner will be a servant to his lusts: A man may change any Master soever, and with more ease then sin?

It is manifest that sin hath dominion in many, as, In those whom noe kind of arguments can turne from sin.

Thirdly, it is *very manifest, that sin hath the dominion in many persons*; I will present unto you such instances which you shall confesse do evince so much.

1. What thinke you, hath not sin the dominion, where *noe kinde of arguments and dealings are able to disengage the heart and to turn it*? when no kindes of merciful Arguments, and no kindes of just threatnings, and no sense of bitterness, can yet discovenant and diservice the soul: but still it holds the league, keeps the agreement with sin, now then how often hath God come to many persons, and offered unto them his pardoning mercies, & the blood of Christ, and eternal life, if they would leave such a sin of drunkenness, such a sin of filthinesse, such a sin of worldlinesse, but unrighteous they were, and unrighteous still they are and will be: How often hath God set the point of the sword upon the breast of a sinner, revealing his wrath, threatning death and Hell if he will not leave the service of his sin; nay, scourged his estate

for

for his sinning, nay, scourged his body, nay, his soul & conscience, and all this to renounce his sinfull Lord, yet men hold fast their wickedness, they yet give over themselves to sin with greediness, they study how to fulfill their lusts, and rejoyce when they have done evil: doth not this shew, that the heart is indeed ideared, and totally emancipated by a strong and elective subjection unto sin.

What think you of such *whose hearts cannot endure the Dominion of Jesus Christ, and the service of righteousness*; it is even a tormenting slavery unto them, even the imaginations thereof are so. The Soule of a man cannot serve two Masters, and there are but two of them upon which our service can be bestowed, either sin, or Christ: the Apostle intimated as much, *Rom. 6. 16. Know ye not that to whom ye yeeld your selves servants to obey his servants ye are to whom you obey, whither of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness*; so that these divide the soule, if a man doth yield obedience unto righteousness, he is then no servant of sin; if he yields obedience unto sin, he is then no servant of righteousness; if he be an enemy to sin, he is then a servant to righteousness, If he be an enemy to righteousness, he is then a servant of sin. Yet many persons are enemies to righteousness, *we will not have this man to reigne over us*, said they in the Gospell, they cannot endure the dominion of Christ, either in his word, or in his spirit: The rules and precepts of the word are the *cords which they will break asunder*, Psal. 2. 3. They cast the laws of Christ behinde their backs, and hate to be reformed, Psal. 50. 17. There is nothing more unacceptable to them then to serve the Lord Jesus Christ in holiness of heart, and newnesse of spirit, and righteousness of obedience.

3. What thinke you of those *who are still overcome of their lusts*, and are *willingly intangled*; The Apostle Peter Conjectures, that sin hath dominion in such, *while they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of Corruption, for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage*, 2. Peter. 2. 19.

There is a twofold overcoming of a person, one is only in respect of the *action*: Another is also in respect of the *affection*.

In those who cannot endure the dominion of Jesus Christ.

In those who are still overcome of their lusts.

It cannot be denied, but that even an holy man (who is heartily the servant of Jesus Christ) may be overcome in respect of particular action; relapses are not impossible to him who is truly good, and they may consist with (though they do weaken and disconsolate) the service of grace, there is the same natural principle of sin in the best after repentance as before: there is the same Satan to suggest and incline, there may be the same occasions and provocations: But then there is an ove coming in respect of *assertion*, and this shews the dominion of sinne: Now this overcoming is, either when a man through policy forbears, or else in passion seemes to bid defiance to his sin, being either in sicknesse and apprehension of death, or in pangs and distresse of conscience (to which the Apostle seems to allude, *2 Pet. 2. 22. the dogge is turned to his vomit again;*) Now he cries out against sin, and thinks he doth detest it heartily, and will not for a world act the sin now, yet when this tempest is off, when the water grows cool, when circumstances are free, when the bitternesse either of death, or crosse, or conscience is over, and sin tempts and woos him again, he yeelds up himself, he gives over his heart and affections, he loves the sin and wallows in it as much as ever: he *turns from the holy Commandment* (as the Apostle speaks, *ver. 21.*) all his good moods of holy profession, and purpose are gone off, and he is more entangled, and renews his bondage with ardent and excessive delight, even with greedinesse, as the Apostle *Paul* speaks, *Eph. 4.*

Now if this be an argument of sins dominion, *viz.* the willing and affectionate re-entring of our hearts to the service of sin, then certainly many of us have just cause to feare and to suspect our selves, *who return with the dogge to the vomit, and with the sow to the wallowing in the mire;* who not only are surprized in action, but in affection; nay, and our affections are more eagerly carried to the sinning now then heretofore; our mindes are more on them, and our desires, yea, and the measures of sinning in the same kinde rise in an higher strength: we are more mighty to drink, more inlorious in swearing, more unsatiable in earthlinesse, more vaine in conversation more obstinate in our sinful courses against the

the reproofs of the Word, the checks of our conscience, the shame of men, the fear of Hell, and the hope of heaven, we grow worse and worse, &c.

Fourthly, what think you of such *who make choice of sin to be the Lord whom they will serve.* In those who makes choice of sin to be their Lord.

There are but two sorts of people in the world, viz. good and bad, and both of them do chuse their Lords.

The *good* they choose the Lord to be their God, *Josh. 24.* And they choose the things which please him, *Ezay 56. 4.* And choose the way of truth, *Psal. 119. 3.* and choose the good part, *Luke 10. 42.*

The *bad*, they also are said to choose their own ways, *Isa. 66. 3.* and evil, *Isa. 65. 12.* That in which God delights not: yea, and they are said, *not to choose the fear of the Lord*: when several things are propounded, & a man prefers this before that, this is called an election or choice: There is Christ and his way laid before the sinner, and sin and its lusts laid before him; now when he prefers the latter before the former, he is said to make a choice: which many do, they do prefer their sinful lusts before the commands of Christ, as appears in all the times of competition, and in the courses of action, yea, and when they may go free, yet with that *Hebrew servant they will not*, for they love their Master.

Lastly, what think you of many *who love their sins*; love is that which bestows the soul and the service thereof; the whole strength of a man goes that way which his love goes, for it is of a constraining and most serviceable nature. Now there are many who do love sin, there is, as it were, a conjugal match and union 'twixt their hearts and their sins, and be sure of this, that sin hath the whole man, if it hath won the love of the heart. In those who love their sins.

4. A person may possibly delude his own heart, and deceive himself about the dominion of sin, and therefore it is convenient to try our selves whether sinne hath not Dominion indeed. A man may deceive himself about the dominion of sin.

There are many erroneous deceits,

1. One is the *unsensibleness of its power*: when a man feels no violence of sinful inclination, no stirrings, no opposition, no commands, but there is a calme and quietness in his spirit, Six deceits from The unsensibleness of its power.

and in his way, which could not be as he thinks if sin had dominion and rule in him.

Now this is a deceit ; For,

1. It is most probable that sin hath the strongest dominion, where the heart is most unsensible of the Law and commands of sinne; when the strong man keeps the house, all is quiet, said our Saviour, where subjection is peaceable; there dominion is (in all likelihood) most absolute and compleat.

Nay, this is certain, that where Christ sets up his Scepter (which cast down the dominion of sin) there is the greatest stirre, the Law of the mind will warre against the Law of the members, Rom. 7. 23. And the spirit will lust against the flesh, Gal. 5. 17.

2. This unsensibleness and quietnesse may arise, partly from the oneliness of sin, and partly from the ignorance of a sinful condition, and partly from the habitual custome of sin: Whether the Sun doth shine or not, there are as many atomes and motes flying in the roome, there they are really, though not sensibly till the light comes in to manifest them. When a man is in a deadly disease, he may be void of all sense of it, his life may be even dropping out, and his disease may rule in his body, though he feels not any aches, or paine; for this unsensibleness depends upon the strength of his disease, which hath not only pierced his natural temper, but his senses also: so may a person be utterly unsensible of sin for want of all saving light, and holy experience which ariseth from a new nature, &c.

Nay, and as we see men in bondage, and slavery, when they are long in the same, grow unsensible, and the hand which is used to iron, and nettles, is not sensible of them; so the frequent actings of sin may suppress the inward sense of sinning, this being an easie observation, and most true, that much sinning adds to the strength of sin, and disables the sense of a sinner, sears his conscience, and makes his mind reprobate, and as it were without sense.

2. Another deceit may be a freedom from many courses of sinful actings: when a man is not like every whore, that prostitutes

Simile.

Simile.

Simile.

From a freedom from many courses of sinful actings.

tutes.

tutes her body to every lover, so he doth not rage and live in all sorts of wickednesse, nay, his ways seem to keep cleare of divers iniquities: to this I answer.

Sol. Though a man doth not all evil, and his wayes or cour-
ses is not universally spreading in all the kindes of sinning, yet
sinne may rule in that man, it may have dominion; foras-
much, as

1. *Particular subjection is sufficient to set up dominion:* Particular sub-
jection is suffi-
cient to set up
dominion.
Though a servant hath but one Master, and doth not serve e-
very man in the Parish, yet he is a true servant in respect of
that one Master: and though a subject doth not obey every
Prince in the world, yet if he obeys any one, it is enough to
prove that he is a subject: so though the sinner is not at the
the command of every lust, yet if he be the servant of any
one lust, sin hath the dominion over him; for it is not the
multitude of sins which doth absolutely and necessarily concur
to dominion, but a subjection to the power of any one.

2. *A man may do all that service to one sinne, which others* A man may do
do to many sins; he may devise, and study to fulfil it, he may all that service
cheerfully and greedily receive its commands; he may heart- to one sinne
tily love it, and go on in it, and for its sake oppose the Scepter which others
and Dominion of Christ, he may consecrate all his strength do to many sins
to the obedience of it; Now as they observe in the Poli- Simile.
ticks that there are several forms of government or domini-
on; as Democracy, and Aristocracy, and Monarchy, some-
times the dominion is exercised by many, sometimes by one
alone, yet the subjection to any of them, is true subjection,
and sets up dominion.

So though in some men many sins do rule, and in others
some one only, if the heart obeys many or few, or one,
it is enough to declare dominion: subjection to no sinne,
that indeed denies dominion, but if the dispute be of many or
few sins, then this know, that subjection to any argues do-
minion.

3. Yet again, another deceit may be, *not only declination* From the oppo-
of some sinnes, but also opposition; which a man thinks cannot sition against
possibly consist with dominion; for a Kingdom is not, or exemption
should not be divided against it self. some sins, and
from other
greater sins.

Sol. To this I answer, that there may be notable deceit in this also ; foras much as to that of *exemption from great and gross sins*: it is not the greatnesse, but the power of sinne which makes it reigning; the Princes in *Germany* have dominion; though the dominion of the Emperour be more large. The least sin acknowledged, loved, served, sufficeth to dominion: the dominion of sinne is most within the heart.

2. As to *that of opposition.*

1. There is a double opposition of sin : one depending upon office, another depending upon nature : a person advanced to some office in the Common-wealth , may oppose a sin with respect to his office , which yet perhaps he doth favour and dearly love in respect of his private nature and practice. A justice of peace may oppose many sins upon the bench, which yet he lies in , at home in his own house and dealings.

2. Again, there is a twofold opposition of sin ; one, *because it is sinne* ; another, *because it is shame*, and this latter may befall him, who is under the dominion of sin :

3. Once more, there is an opposition of a sin , either because of the *opposition which the sin hath to Gods will*, or because of the *opposition which the sinne hath to another sinfull way and inclination* : for though it be true that all sinne hath a contrariety to the rule , yet it is as true , that some sinnes have a contrariety among themselves, as prodigality to covetousnesse, &c. And a man may oppose the one, not from a respect had to its natural vilenesse , but from a respect had to his private and personal inclination ; this other being such a way of sinning, as likes not but it would overthrow that other sinne which he hath set up, and which he loves , and in which he is resolved to walk.

4. In a word, it is not *particular*, but *universal opposition* of all known sin , which denies Dominion : A man may oppose many sinnes, for our sinnes sake , as well as act any sinne for its sake , and both shew sinne to be in Dominion,

4. A fourth deceit may depend upon the troubles which a man may feel after some sinful actings; his soul may be grievously heavy and perplexed, and hereupon a person may conclude, that sin hath not dominion, because he conceives dominion of sin to exclude all trouble for sin.

From the troubles a man may feel after some sinful actings.

Sol. Nevertheless there may be error in this, for though hardnesse of heart after sin be as ill a symptome of wickednesse as impudency before sin, yet all trouble for sin committed, is not an infallible argument of in-dominion, which I cleare.

As trouble for sin is not an argument of indominion. Proved.

1. *By instance*: if the worst of men may have after-troubles for former sinnings, then it is not an infallible argument, &c. (because, if sinne hath dominion in any, then surely in the worst of men) but even they may have after-troubles.

By instance.

As it is with the most honest wife, and with the most dishonest strumpet, both of them, after their child-birth may have their after-throwes, so the most ingenious Christian, and the most lewd sinner may (after their sinnings) partake of great anguish and troubles of conscience: I refer you to *Ahab* and to *Judas*, and to those of whom he speaks in *Job*, that the terrors of God did drive them to their feet.

Simile.

2. *By Argument*: for trouble for sin in respect of the conscience only, it is but a judicial act, it is but a part of the wages of sin. Indeed trouble in the affections (which Divines call godly sorrow) that is an act or effect of grace, but meer trouble in the conscience, which consists in sense and accusation, that God brings upon the sinner, for his transgressions; he awakens the conscience after sin to accuse for sinning, whose directions and checks could not availe to keep off from sinning: so that a person whose heart is in no measure changed by grace, (and therefore of necessity is under sins dominion) he may be filled with extreame wrath, and bitterness; yea, the very terrors of Hell may shake and amaze, and confound his soul: why? the reason is, because, though grace be required to raise godly sorrow; yet conscience only awakened and actuated by light, and divine command is abundantly sufficient to accuse, condemn, vex and trouble the sinner.

By argument.

From the vacancies and interims of sinning.

5. A fifth deceit may be *in the vacancies, or spaces, or interims of sinning*; because a man doth not every moment, or every day lie at his sin, but there are oft-times some pauses and distances of time 'twixt sinning and sinning; he therefore conjectures that sin hath not dominion over him: why? because where sin hath dominion, there a man sells himself to sinne, and wallows himself in sinning, and makes it his trade, at which he spends his life and strength.

To this I also answer, that yet sin may have dominion, though there be some respites and breathings 'twixt sinning and sinning. For,

Simile.

1. Some respites do not arise from a nature which will not subject it self to sinne, but only from the defect of occasions, and opportunities of sinning: A thief doth not always steal because he may be sometimes sick, and there is not always an open conveniency for his hand; the like may be said of any sinnes which are capable of visible and corporeal actings.

2. Again, the dominion of sin doth not absolutely consist in an uninterrupted propagation or service of sinful acts, (i.) that a man doth not other particular acts, but sin, sin; the drunkard is under the power of drunkenness, though he be diverse times sober; and the filthy person is under the power of uncleanness, though he doth not every day see and embrace his harlot: But the dominion of sin is to be judged by the disposition of the heart, and the maine part of the course; if sinne be the main thing which a man intends, and the singular things to which he resignes and yeelds up his heart, whether he be always, or sometimes in the actings, this is not material.

3. Nay, for a man to give no respite to sinful actings, this were against that wisdom of the flesh, which concurs to make up the dominion of sinne; though the propension to sin may be and is constant, though the love of the sin may be, and is great, yet the actings of sin may often vary, and be suspended, upon private reasons and respects, either of safety, or quiet, or profit, or pleasure, &c.

From the practice of some actions contrary to outward sinings.

6. A sixth deceit may be from the practice of some actions which are contrary to all outward sinnings, at least in respect of

of exercise: because a man is perhaps a constant Church-man, and hath a course of duties (such as they are) in his family, and he is much in vowings, and can condemn sin to purpose: now surely sin hath lost its dominion.

I answer, that notwithstanding all this, yet sin may be in dominion: For,

1. *The dominion of sin is within.*

2. *It may consist with many visible acts of piety*: I will clear this unto you by propounding one case, what think you of an hypocrite, hath no sin dominion in him? you will confesse it hath, and verily it hath; but now even an hypocrite may step forth into all outward conformities, I know no visible act of impiety, which an hypocrite either doth not, or may not perform.

Secondly, though *those material good acts be formally opposite to sinful acts as acts*, yet as the denomination of a Christian, so that of a sinner is more from the affections than from the actions, and indeed this defines and decides the dominion, or indominion of sin immediately, viz. the disposition of the heart, which may be really rotten and false, and the true harbour of a sin, though the person doth get out to the acting of some visible duties of piety. There must be more then externals, in duty to evince, that sinne hath not Dominion.

Having delivered unto (in the useful application of the point already) the naturall community of sins dominion, and the difficulty of release from it, and the probability of its rule in many mens hearts, and the erroneous grounds by which men couzen and flatter themselves as free and exempted persons.

I now proceed to set down some instances by which it may appear, that a man is not under the dominion of sin, or that sin hath not dominion over him.

Five tryals?
That sin hath
not dominion.

1. *If Christ be his Lord*: the Apostle hath a sweet passage in Rom. 6. 17. *But God be thanked that ye were the servants of sinne, but you have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you, ver. 18. Being then made free from sinne, ye besome the servants of righteousness, (i.) you chose* Christ

Christ to be your Lord, and resigned up your selves to his service. This is a most undoubted truth, if Christ be my Lord, I am not then a servant to sin, sinne is not my Master. Christs Dominion is destitutive to, and inconsistent with sins dominion. It ever stands alone.

How this may be known.

Obj. But you will say, how may a man know that Christ is his Lord.

Sol. This is a great point, and much depends on it, I will touch it a little.

One may be a Lord in Respect of Title and Right. Of Authority and acknowledgement.

You know that one may be a *Lord* in a double respect, one in respect of *title* and *right*, another in respect of *authority* and *acknowledgement*; it is certain that Christ is the Lord of all the world, all the Nations of the earth are given unto him, and are in respect of his title and right, to stoop and bow down themselves, but he is not acknowledged as a Lord, he is not embraced (as so) by his enemies, yet some there are in whose heart Christ sets up his authority and rule, and who do acknowledge him, who do make choice of him to be the Lord of their hearts and lives; (*i.*) they prefer the government of Christ, they do consent unto him, that he only shall rule them, and they do resigne up themselves to his will, they do bestow their hearts and service on him.

Beloved I when a person makes choice of Christ to be his Lord, he doth consider the several kinds of dominion (of sin, of the World, of the Devil, of Christ) he considers them seriously, and compares them, and then he findes that no dominion for a mans soul, is like Christs; none so righteous and just, none so holy and heavenly, none so sweet and profitable: Christ hath the only right to the soul, and his government is infinitely best.

Now the person (hereupon) makes choice of Christ, and comes unto him with humble tears, and beseecheth him to reigne over him: O blessed Jesus! (saith the soul) thou art the only Lord, and there is none like thee, or besides thee; I have been a rebel, an enemy unto thee, I have been disobedient, and have served divers lusts and pleasures; I have served the world, and the Prince of darknesse, but now I renounce their service, and condemne my slavery, and come
unto

unto thee to be my Lord. Thy title is just and proper to my soul; it is thy purchase, and therefore the service of it belongs to thee. Thy precepts and commands are righteous and holy, therefore doth thy servant make choice of thee, and love them: thou wouldst have my heart, my will, my affections, my life, and who should have them but thy self, upon thee do I bestow my self, and most gladly do I consent to thy holy wil, and resigne up all the strength, and powers of all that I am, or have, or can do, to the service and honor of thee; though sin rage, yet I will serve thee; though the world frown or fawne, yet I will serve thee, though Satan tempt, yet I will serve thee.

My heart I bestow on thee as well as my saferies, my service I bestow on thee, as well as my hopes; thy honour I desire sincerely to intend, my love I set on thee, my fear is of thee, my greatest care shall be to obey thy will, and my only joy to bring thee glory; such a choice of Christ to be our Lord, infallibly argues that sin hath not dominion, forasmuch as this cannot be without the change of the heart and whole man, which change cannot consist with sinnes dominion.

2. If *sin and we be enemies*, then sinne is not our Lord.

Sin is an enemy two ways. Either,

Really: thus it is an enemy to him, who yet dearly loves, and faithfully serves it; though it gives unto a man the wages of unrighteousnesse (many sinful pleasures, and many sinful profits) yet in all these, sin is an enemy to the person; it works his soul off from God and happinesse, and holinesse, and exposeth it to death and hell.

Practically: thus sin is an enemy, when a man looks upon it, and deals with it as with an enemy, he judgeth of it as of a vile thing, and hates it, and abhors it as the only evill thing, and enemy to his soul. Beloved, when sin hath dominion, there is then a confederacy twixt it and the soul, the Prophet calls it a *Covenant*, and the Apostle calls it a contract, or espousal or marriage, (i.) such an agreement and conjunction, where the soul bestows its choicest love on sin. But when the dominion of sinne goes off, then the *Covenant is*

If sin and we be enemies.

Sin is an enemy really.

Practically.

As it was in another case, *Amōns love turned to the cruelest hatred*; so here, though a man did love his sins, yet now his love is changed into hatred, and this hatred infallibly argues the indominion of sin; for

Hatred includes separation.

1. *Hatred includes separation*: It is such a quality as draws off the sou; love is that which draws on the soul towards its object, and hatred is that which draws it off; *Get thee hence*, said they, in *Esay 30. 22.* and *what have I to do any more with idol*, said *Ephraim*, *Hof. 14. 8.*

Now sinnes dominion consists in the cleaving and united subjection of the affections, the soul makes sin its centre unto which it wholly inclines, it and the soul are one, when sin reignes, and therefore the separation of the affections (which is done by hatred) argues that the yoke is broken asunder.

Hatred includes perfect opposition.

2. Again, *hatred includes perfect opposition*, the greatest defiance, and contradictions and warrings arise from hatred: we oppose and crosse most, where we hate most. And this cannot be where sinne hath dominion, for there our weapons are edged, for our lusts we love them much, and defend them most, and are careful to preserve and keep them.

Hatred inclines to destruction.

Thirdly, *hatred inclines to destruction*: Ruine is the scope of hatred: we seek the death of him whom we hate, and all the evil which befalls a person hated, is the joy of him that hates. So is it where sin is hated, a man seeks the death of sin, and therefore such persons as hate sinne, are said in Scripture to *mortifie the flesh*, and to *crucifie their lusts* (i. e.) the killing, and subduing, and rooting out of sinne is that which they desire and endeavour. Now this cannot stand with sin in dominion, where a man is so far from offering any deadly violence to his reigning sins, that he reputes him as the greatest enemy, who drawes forth any crucifying weapons, and applies them to the casting downe of his strong holds.

If holinesse have our love.

3. If *holinesse or grace hath our love*, then sin hath not dominion over us.

Beloved it is granted, that

1. *The Dominion of sin may consist with the naked profession of holinesse*: An hypocrite (whose heart is in the deepest and most affectionate, and elaborate service of some one particular lust) he may yet wear the livery, and garb, and profession of greatest sanctity: Nay, he doth therefore seem good that he may (the more inobservably and fully) follow his sinne.

The dominion of sin may consist with the naked profession of holinesse.

2. *The Dominion of sin may consist with the knowledge of holinesse*; great parts and intellectual speculations of holinesse, as they may depend upon forraigne causes without grace (*viz.* upon meer study and frequent hearings, and a natural desire of knowing, and looking into all intelligible objects, and also on an humour of pride, that a man will be accounted able to say something in every thing; I say as those intellectual parts may depend upon weak and vain causes) so they may consist with an ardent love of reigning corruptions; for learning alters not the nature, nor doth more knowledge overthrow sin: a man may be a learned sinner, and by his knowledge grow more accurately and inexcusably sinfull.

And with the knowledge of holinesse.

3. *The Dominion of sin may consist with some visible actions of holinesse*; as a man may be a Traitor, when he yet doth seeme to do something of the service to a Prince: So sinne may be a mans Lord, though he doth do many things which seem good: *Herod loved Herodias*, though he heard *John Baptist*, and did many things gladly: there is scarce any man (where Christ is professed) that is so universally bad, but he may (now and then) do something which may be particularly good, at least materially considered.

And with some visible actions of holinesse.

4. But yet fourthly, *the Dominion of sin cannot consist with the love of holinesse*; for where sin is in dominion, there sinne hath the love of the soul; Now it is impossible for a man to love sin, and to love holinesse. I grant it, that many things may be the object of love, though there be a numerical variety of them, yet there may be an objective unity, they may all meet in one common reason, and natural course of love, and therefore may be loved. But then opposite and contradictory things cannot be both loved at once, the reason is, be-

But it cannot consist with the love of holinesse.

cause you cannot reconcile them into an objective unity : that which is a reason of the love in one, is a reason of hatred in the other. Now sin and holiness are opposite, they are at the greatest distance in spiritual contradictions, their natures, and courses, and effects, all are opposite, so that a man cannot (at once) possibly love them both : And therefore if holiness and grace hath thy love, verily sin hath not dominion.

I must not insist at large on this : only observe whether thou lovest holiness precisely and purely for it self ; what is it which thou esteemest most, which thou desirest most ; is the want of it thy greatest grief ? is the prosperity of it either in thy self or others, a true and singular joy unto thee ? at what paines art thou to purchase and encrease it ? what are thy thoughts of them who are holy ? and of those Ministries which edge and work on thy heart most unto holiness, these and such like things will shew whither thou lovest holiness, which if thou doest, thy sin is not thy Lord.

Whose Laws
doest thou ap-
prove and de-
light in.

4. *Whose Laws doest thou approve and delight in ; according as a mans Lord is, so are his Laws, and according as the man is, so is his minde and affections towards those Laws of that Lord ; you shall finde that when sinne hath dominion, there sin hath several Laws, several commands, the obedience of which is delightful to the sinner : And therefore such a one is said to fulfill the lusts of the flesh, and to commit sin with greediness, Ephes. 4. 19. and to yeeld himself over unto sin.*

Thus it is on the contrary, where sin is broken off from its dominion, and Christ doth rule the heart, his Lawes have a marvellous suitability with the spirit of that man : his *Law is written in the heart*, (i.) there is a powerful and answerable inclination stamped in the heart, which gives way to the command : *In the volume of thy book it is written of me, that I should do thy will, loe I come*, Psalm 40. 7. *I delight to do thy will, O my God, yea, thy Law is in my heart*, v. 8. *Thou saidest, seek ye my face, my heart said unto me, Thy face Lord will I seek*, Psal. 27. 8. *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do*, Act. 9. 6.

Obj. It is true, that sinful corruption (yet abiding in the best)

best) will make head against the holy commands of Christ, it will be backward enough, cross enough, unwilling enough, resisting and striving.

Sol. But yet three things will more habitually appear in a person, whose soule is governed by Christ and not by sinne.

1. One is *Approbation* (i.) this judgement doth highly esteeme of the commands of Christ; *Paul* counted the commandment *holy*, and *righteous*, and *good*, and tending to life, *Rom.* 7.12.

Three things
appear in a
person govern-
ed by Christ,
and not by sin.
Approbation.

2. Another is *consent* (i.) his will yeelds unto it, as to a rule most fit to be obeyed, *I consent unto the Law that it is good*, *Rom.* 7.16. and therefore would obey it.

Consent.

3. A third is *inward delight*, *Rom.* 7.22. *I delight in the Law of God after the inward man*: The Apostle from this (though he found a contrary Law in his members warring against the Law of his minde; and much evil present when he would do any good) yet concludes against sins dominion, *Rom.* 7.25. *so then with the mind I my self serve the Law of God, but with the flesh the Law of sin.*

Inward de-
light.

Why brethren? this is a great matter, and a great discovery of our hearts, to observe, what Law that is with which we take part: which we set up as our rule, whose authority we do justifie: sinne will command in him which hates it, (i.) it will be prescribing to our affection, and our actions, but then if Christ doth rule us, we war against those commands, we resist them, we defie them, we pray against them, we take not part with them. We acquit that Law of Christ which we would follow, but sometimes cannot (so fully as we should) we justifie it as a most righteous command, and strive to conform our hearts to that, and to order our lives by that.

5. A fifth tryal may be this, *what is the disposition and course of our hearts, under the passive captivities of our souls by particular sinnings.*

What is the
disposition of
our hearts un-
der the passive
captivities of
our soul by sin.

There is a twofold captivity of the soul to sin

One is *active*, wherein a man doth (as *Ahab*) sell himself to wickednesse, or as *Judas*, offer himself to betray Christ (*he went to the high-Priest, what will you give me, and I will betray him, &c.*)

A-

Another is *passive*, wherein (as *Paul* complained) he is sold under *sinne*, like a souldier over-powered, and by strength taken captive, and led away prisoner. I confesse, that this is most true, a good man may sin, nay he doth sin, sin may have many particular victories, where yet it hath not a Kingdom or Dominion: As there may be *antecedent differences* before sin is committed, and as there may be *concomitant differences*, when sin is committing (which may be as so many lively testimonies against dominion) so there are *consequent differences*: there are some things afterward which shew that yet sin hath not dominion though it did prevaile and overcome.

Three things
discover this.
Heartly grief.

Three things.

1. One is *heartly grief*: though a good man hath not alwayes sufficient strength to conquer a temptation, yet he hath sufficient grace to bewaile his sinnings: though he cannot always rejoyce that he stands, yet he can heartily grieve that he falls, either sin is his conquest, or else it is his sorrow. Though you see not *David* cast down by his pleasures, yet you shortly see him cast down himselfe by his mournings. Though you see *Peter* untrusty to his master, yet you shall presently find himselfe bitterly weeping for his miscarriage: Whereas the servants of sinne do the work and take the wages, they sin and rejoyce when they have done evil, yet the servants of righteousnesse actively afflict their hearts, for that which hath deceived them, and prevailed upon them.

Obj. It is granted that terror may gripe an evill heart for evil doing: but there is a great difference betwixt a sword which wounds, and a fountain that runs.

Sol. Conscience may be wounded in the good and in the bad: but besides this, that acted finnes are a good mans wound, they are also his great grief of soul.

Heartest desire
of recovery.

2. Another is *earnest desire of recovery*: It is a singular and observable matter, this when a man hath sinned; to whom he holds out his hand upon it: The servant of sin doth work sinne, and his hand stretcheth out it self as a servant still, as ready to advance and finish the service: sinne is his work and delight, it is the Lord and captain, after which he would yet march:

march: But an holy man (not under dominion, but surprisal; not under service but captivity) he is not himself till he hath recovered his liberty and strength: There is such an high displeasure with himselfe, and with his facts, that he will go free, he will not have his eare bored to serve such a Master as sin.

Good Lord how his heart trembles, how his heart meditates, cait about, works, strives, sometimes he cries out: ah wicked, a deccifull heart; sometimes he condemnes himself, what a beast was I thus to sin? sometimes he looks upward toward heaven, and sighs bitterly; Ah! what a God have I provoked; what mercies have I wronged? sometimes he looks in, and weeps, and saith, ah! what motions did I withstand? what a spi it have I grieved? how unlike my self is my self? sometimes he is down in prayer, O Lord forgive, blot out, heal, help, recover my heart again unto thee: One way or other is his soul working like a fountaine in which dirt is cast, till it hath purged out the filth: he is not at rest till sinne be more subdued, his heart more changed, his affections more humbled, his judgement more cleared, his conscience more preserved, his peace more confirmed, his soul not only recovered, but also bettered; yea, thus it will be with such an heart (which clears it that sin hath not dominion) that though sin prevaile to action, yet it shall not to affection; though I did the evil, yet I hate it; though it did prevail, yet I will not serve it; though it hath beat me down as a tyrant, yet I will not follow it as my Lord; nay, I am not at quiet till I can recover the sight of my Lord Christ againe, and have made my peace, and strengthened my heart for more loyal service unto him.

The third is *strong hatred and conflict*: the War is more increased; by victory, revenge is more raised, 2 Cor. 7. Strong hatred,

SECT. V.

Use. 2.
For thankfulness to such in whom the dominion is broken off.

A Second Use from *David's* prayer against the dominion of sin, shall be for thankfulness, to such in whom the dominion is broken off.

Though there be so much of sinne remaining, as may keep thee humble, and watchful, yet if dominion be gone, there is so much done as may challenge from thee to be heartily thankful: give me leave to put on this a little. Six motives.

Six motives.
It is deliverance from the greatest evil.

1. *Deliverance from the greatest evil* is reason enough of great thanks: It is more then if God delivered thee from hell, if he hath delivered thee from the dominion of sinne: No hell is like sinne reigning, for as much as torment in strength, is nothing to sin in strength: that is indeed a very miserable thing; but this a very evil thing: sinne is worse then all punishment, and reigning sinne is the worst of all sinne.

None but God could deliver thee.

2. *None but God could deliver thee*, and therefore if he hath done it, blesse him. A man may deliver his friend out of prison by paying his debt; A father may deliver his child out of captivity by sending his ransom; A Country may be delivered from the oppression of an invading tyrant by great strength of its own: But there are two hands out of which none but God can deliver, one is Satans, another is our own. As *David* spake in another case; *thou hast loosed the bands of my distresse*, and it is *the Lord who subdueth the people under me*; and it is *not my bowe nor my sword*, &c. that I say here, it is not your own arme which hath gotten you the victory; no hand but Gods high hand, which hath delivered you from the powers of darknesse, which hath kept sin from dominion, which hath cast out the strong man, which hath cast down the strong holds; thou wast not so much as sensible of thine own vassalage, or of sinnes dominion, thou hadst not power to feel, much lesse to conquer and deliver: And when thou wert sensible of sinne, thy heart did not behave it self as an enemy, but as a friend
most

most willingly bowing under the yoke, and readily embracing the lusts and motions of the law of sin: when thou hast been called upon to put off the yoke, and to come out of the house of bondage; the Hebrew servant (who loved his Master) was never more unwilling to part from his house, then thy heart was to come off from thy love and service of thy sins. And yet the almighty God (in compassion to thy soule) hath delivered thee: he hath dethroned sin, he hath drawn off thy heart to a better Lord, and would not suffer sin to rule thee: but by the mighty power of his grace, hath made thee free from the house of most heavy bondage.

Therefore not to thy good nature, nor to thy free-will, nor to thy abilities, nor to thy wit, or parts, or reason; but to the Lord be all the glory: the victory is his, therefore let the praise be his.

3. It is speciall grace and mercy: Paul styles it *rich mercy*, and *great love*, and *riches of grace* Eph. 2. It is mercy to be rid of a disease, more of a sin; to resist a temptation, much more to take off dominion, the spirit of Christ only doth it; the more singular a mercy is, the more thankfull should we be, Titus 3. 3. *We our selves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures &c.* v. 4. *But after that the kindnesse and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared:* v. 5. *According to his mercy he saved us: thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption,* said Hezekiah, *Esa.* 38. 17. O then what a mercy is it to be delivered from the power of sinfull dominion? If thou were rid of an hard Master that would seeme a mercy, if of a cruell Tyrant, that would seem a mercy, if of a desperate enemy, if of bonds, if of a sickness, what then is it to be rid of the rule of sin? which is infinitely worse then all these.

It is speciall
grace and merc-
cy.

Fourthly, *no Lord so bad, and no command so vile, as those of sin in dominion*, Therefore blesse God for your deliverance you whose soules are (through the mighty gracioufnesse of a good God) rescued from the powers of darknesse, Tell me, what are your thoughts, what your judgements, what your troubles, for the workings of your vanquished enemy? if the weakened corruptions appeare, yet so vile, what were your raign-

No Lord so
bad or com-
mandes so vile
as those of sin
in dominion.

ing corruptions: If sin be so monstrous unto you now only in temptation; what was it heretofore in dominion? if the finger be so heavy, what were the loynes? if a particular action doth (as you imagine) expose you so dangerously, what did the service of sin do? under what displeasures of wrath lay your soules, when sin had fullest affection and compleat to obedience.

Rebekah seemed weary of her life, because of the presence of the Daughters of *Heth*: If the presence created such an affliction, what might the conjunction and union have done? verily if sin be (as it is) bad and troublesome in combate, O it is infinitely worse in the throne, and absolute Empire over the soule, wherein every faculty serves it with all its strength, and madly strives how to dishonour God, breaks his law, resists his spirit, to fulfill lusts, and please the devill, and to damne the soule.

O blesse the Lord for his goodnesse to thee, that yet the dominion of sin is off: Tis true, corruption yet remaines, but yet it remaines not as a Lord, but as a Tyrant; not as a king, but as an enemy; time was that sin had thy love, but now thou hatest it; time was that sin had thy minde to devise for it, but now those imaginations are cast down: time was that thy will was espoused to sin, but now a divorce is sued out; time was that thy members were ready enough to fulfill the lusts of the flesh, but now they are made servants of righteousness; time was that thou didest sell thy selfe to wickednesse, and was never so joyfull, as when thou wast sinfull, but now it is not so, thou art a drudge, a slave, a vassall no longer, thy former wayes amaze thee, and the present Commands of sin are an affliction to thee, O blesse the Lord, &c.

If dominion of sin be off then the scepter of Christ is set up in thy soul.

5. Again, if the dominion of sin be off, then assuredly the scepter of Christ is set up in thy soul. Beloved! the soule stands not, abides not in a middle estate: it must have some one Lord or other, it is necessarily under some one dominion (either of sin or of Christ) and this know, that the dominion of sin cannot be taken off in the soul but by a contrary, by a better, by a stronger dominion, by that of Christ who dispossesseth the strong man, It is he who hath changed thy heart, who hath made thy

thy heart to change its Master, who hath drawn off thy love; thy service, &c.

Now, no dominion in the world like that of Christ.

No dominion like Christ's.
None so holy.

1. None so *holy*, hee is holy, love holinesse, and all his commands are righteous.

2. None so *Gracious*, he doth not exact beyond what he gives, and will yet mercifully pardon our true endeavors of service wherein they fall short:

So gracious.

3. None so *peaceable*: his very service is a kind of wages to the obedient: a vassal to sin is like a man labouring all day about thornes, and nettles: (the more abundance of them grasped by him, galls him with the more wounds and paines) no man can be long cheerfully sinfull, either Terrour or feare accompanies most sinnings, but the service of Christ hath warrant from the word, and peace from conscience.

Soe peaceable.

Simile,

4. None so *afflicted*: his commands are accompanied with strength and spirit: he bids us to do the worke, and gives us his owne hand thereto, imposeth duty, and Imprinteth ability, writes the law to the eare, and writes it also in the heart.

So afflicted.

5. None so *rewarded*, no man serves Christ too much or for nought: Though all our work be but duty, yet he payes us rich wages, we owe unto Christ all our strength and the use of all our graces, neither doe we bring in so much of these in full service as we should, yet our good Lord and Master will give us (if we be faithfull servants) *at night our penny*, and at the last our crowne.

Soe rewarded.

6. Lastly be thankfull, for if *dominion be off, then damnation is off*: There is no condemnation (saith Paul) to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh but after the spirit, Rom:

If dominion of sin be off, damnation is off.

8.1. A man is not damned (meerly) because he hath sin (for then no man could be saved, for who is the man that sinneth not) but because sin is his Lord, and he is the servant of sin; Not so much because he is bad, but because he will be bad, not only for the act, but for the love; Tis confessed, that guilt is as naturall to sin, as the shadow is to the body, no man can sin at any time, in any thing, and yet be Innocent; But meritorious guilt, is one thing, and redounding guilt is another

thing: If the dominion of sin be broken off (that a man loves not sin , but hates it , yeelds not up himselfe unto it , but resists it , is not in league , but in conflict with it) then the estate of guilt is taken off , so that it shall not effectually redound to the condemnation of the person , where God doth powerfully subdue the sinfull nature , there he will mercifully pardon and discharge the unwillingly sinning and offending person : if sin be not thy Lord , then Hell shall not be thy portion : He who is become an enemy to his sins ; grace rules in his heart now , and glory shall crowne his soule hereafter.

Doubts of troubled soules fearing they are still under the Dominion of sin.

Obj. But will some troubled (and therefore unably discerning soule reply) we doubt it not ; But that it is a most singular mercy. A rich grace , worthy of greatest acceptance and heartiest thanks , where the dominion of sin is broken off ; but alas , we feare it is not so with us , heavy cause have we to suspect that we are captives yet under sins dominion , so that though others who can happily observe the yoke broken off , and therefore can be chearfully thankfull , we finde it yet strong ; O very strong , and therefore more reason have we of grieffe and sorrow.

Sol.

Answered.

Beloved , it is granted , that if a man findes himselfe indeed under the dominion of any sin , assuredly he hath peculiar cause of great humblings , speediest reformings , vehement beggings at the throne of grace for mercy and for the mighty power of Jesus Christ to release and deliver his soule : But then let us carefully observe , whither this of which a man complains , be sin in dominion or not , perhaps it may be something else , and then the soule must be advised and directed in a more especiall way.

Doubts for the strong inclinations of sin.

Why I finde such *strong and manifold inclinations of sin within me* : daring forth into so many vile imaginations , and working down to draw my affections , woe's me? what is the dominion of sin but this? and who but a slave of sin is hurried with such motions of sin? it cannot be , that my heart should be good whilest inclinations are soe manifoldly bad.

Answered:
How stands
thy heart.

To this , let me shape a few answers.
1. First I demand *how the heart stands affected toward these manifold.*

manifest inclinations! doest thou approve them or disallow them: doest thou love them, or doest thou hate them: verily (saith the soule) I dislike them, and hate them, they are the burden of my soule: And why so, why? because God is dishonoured by them, and they are contrary to his holy will, and they are evill and filthy; O I had rather be in any miserable estate, then in this sinfull and vile estate.

affected to these inclinations.

Now then observe: sin hath not dominion in thee, for where sin hath dominion, sin is not formally and purely hated.

The dominion of sin doth not consist in the multiplicity of motions; a man may have many enemies to assault him, and yet love and serve none: so a man may have many sins inclining and tempting, and yet be a servant to none of them: for it is not the temptation of sin which infallibly argues dominion, but the willing resignation of the heart, the subjection of the heart to those motions and temptations of sin, this necessarily is required to make dominion: but now thy heart doth not so, it doth not resign up it selfe, it yeelds not subjection, for asmuch as it doth hate, and resist, and bewaile sin even in temptation?

Note.

Of all the signes of a good heart (of a heart that is delivered from sins dominion) this is one of the best and surest. *viz.* That it hates, and resists and bewailes sin when it is only in temptation: when a man hath committed a sin, then the conscience (being made guilty) may alone breake and afflict, and this may befall even a wicked man, there is now some other thing besides sin in the filthinesse of it to worke trouble and griefe, *viz.* The guilt and accusation of it, but when sin is resisted and bewailed in the temptation before it hath got out into actual commission, now the peculiar reason of trouble is the formal vilenesse of sin because it is so base, and so opposite to God.

Secondly, I demand, *what doest thou against these sinful inclinations:* every man hath some weapons or other, and in case of anguish he is apt to draw them, what weapons hast thou in thy hand; and to what end doest thou mannage them: Do not many and strong temptations of sin, occasion many and

What doest thou against these sinful inclinations

strong supplications, the more that sin inclines, the more doth thy heart incline to God by prayer, for more grace to resist, for more strength to subdue: doest thou not by reading, and hearing, and inquiry, labour to finde out the manifold helpes and victories of a tempted and an assaulted soule? doest thou not keep the precepts of God in thy heart, and the threatenings of God in thy heart, that thou mayest feare to offend him; and the promises of God, which yet hearten thee to withstand? What doth all this demonstrate, but that sin is not in dominion, it is, I confesse; thy troublesome enemy, but it is not thy ruling Lord: it is that which doth molest thee, it is not that which doth reign in thee; it is that which would have dominion, but it is not that which hath dominion: it is that which doth assault thy affection, but is not that which hath got thine heart; thou art but in a greater war: Neverthelesse thou art not so much as in captivity, though in a strong conflict.

Object.
Doubts because of some Speciall sinfull inclination.

Sol.
Answered.

Yea, but yet I feel one thing perhaps worse then all this, sin workes (in me) after a more peculiar manner, there is a particular sinfull inclination in me, and so hath it been all my dayes: if I were to give you the sum of my life, I could lay out that particular inclination above all the rest; like a threed which goes through the whole piece, such a sin, which I have seen long since & felt it, and (I thought) bewailed it, and resisted it a long time, and yet here it lives still, workes still; can it be that sin should not have dominion, where some one speciall corruption yet lives?

I must be warily tender to Resolve this scruple, forasmuch as,

1. Particular subjection is enough to set up dominion.
2. Hypocrites are under the reigne of speciall lust and particular sins, both which I touched heretofore: But to the scruple take me thus.
4. Things.

Conversion
doth not totally
remove any
one sinfull
inclination.

1. That when God doth convert the soul, no one sinfull inclination is totally removed, though every one be in some measure changed: The corrupt nature, doth yet remaine, and all its principles, or particular inclinations to particular sins; for grace doth not change us by a present Annihilation of sin, but by a powerfull alienation of our hearts from it.

Sin may work
in a man when
rescued out of

Secondly, note, that sin may worke (even in a man rescued out of

its dominion (is a more singular or particular way ; my meaning is this, that there may be in him yet a more particular twange, and more apt inclination, and propension to some one sin rather than to another: Sin (yet abiding) may take the advantage of the same complexion still remaining, and of the same condition and calling yet continuing, and without all doubt, most men living, whether good, or whether bad, do finde more to do with some one sinful inclination, then with another.

the dominion of sin in a more particular way.

Thirdly, consider : *usually, that particular inclination, which was in dominion before conversion, is most frequent in inclination after our calling.*

That particular inclination which was in dominion before, is usually most frequent in inclination after calling. Reasons of it.

And I will give you some probable Reasons thereof.

One, because *that was the spring of the sinne of our custome* : which sent out and fed the issue, by which the soule was so beaten in the path and way of sinning, so that the old and accustomed nature cannot easily or presently forget its ancient and wonted bents : a custome will hardly or never go off, without some after inclinations or dispositions that way.

Another, because *the new resistances of a converted heart, and its cares and studies are most against the particular sinne of its special inclinations* : there it deals most, opposeth most, humbles most : Now sin doth usually stickle and stirre most, where it is most pursued : that particular sin, whose death thou layest at most, that will strive to assaile and perplex, and intangle thee most : the more humble thou labourest to be, the more shalt thou finde proud thoughts to assault, though not to conquer thee ; and the more meek thou labours to be, the more ado shalt thou have with thy passions : for as much as no sin will be executed quietly, and every nature stirs busily in its own defence : we are weakest there, and God drawes our greatest watch and strength thither : a man sooner falls under lesser conflicts : when a sinne hath been beaten upon by much temptation and conflict, the heart grows hereby more ready, resolute : and you shall finde it, that after frequent and long exercise with a particular corruption, that it shall not easily get within the soul, but upon a pause and cessation.

There is a difference betwixt a life of motion and a life of affection.

Fourthly, observe, *that there is a difference twixt the life of motion, and the life of affection*: its true, thy special inclination lives in thee still by way of motion, but doth it live in thee still by way of affection? it did incline heretofore, and thou lovedst it, it inclines now and thou hates it: the inclination is the same for the matter, but thy heart is not the same for the disposition toward it, when the iron is hot, you may bring a figure, and put it on, and the iron will take the stamp and impression: bring the same figure and seal to it, when it is cold, now it will not receive it; the seale, and the figure of the seal is the same, but the temper and the disposition of the iron, as hot, and as cold is not the same. *Saint Ambrose* relates of the young traveller, who went out an unclean person, but returned a chaste person, and his old quean met with him after his return, and began her wanton salutes unto him, from whom, and which he angerly turned aside and neglects her, why, said she, *Ego sum ego*, yea, but, saith he, *Ego non sum ego*, I am not; so is it here in this case, the inclination is the same to the same sin; yea, but the affection is not now to that inclination as it hath been. But where sin hath dominion, affections do concur with the special inclination.

Take all that I shall say to this in a few words.

There is a difference betwixt frequent inclinations in an evill and a good man.

1. It is certain, that *in an evil man there is a frequency in a particular inclination, and so there may be in a good man, but thus they differ.*

In an evil man, the frequent inclination, is the frequent progress of a King: In a good man, it is the fervent egress or attempt of an enemy.

Though the Assault be frequent yet the Resistance is constant. Not the frequency of inclination but the Ardency of subjection shewes dominion.

In an evil man, the frequency of inclination is to maintain possession; In a good man, it is but a malicious endeavour, by force (if it were possible) to regaine an entrance.

2. This is some comfort, *that though the assault be frequent, yet the resistance is constant*, and that concludes against sinnes dominion.

3. Not the *frequency of inclination, but the ardency of subjection evidenceth sinnes dominion*: not who quarrels with me most, but who effectually commands me, he is my Lord: not he

he who makes the most motions, but on whom the woman casts her heart, that is the husband: 'tis my love and service, which infallibly concludes dominion.

Obj. 3. But yet the soul sticks, *I am sold under sinne*, and taken captive: sinne hath inclined and prevailed, what surer argument of dominion then victory.

Doubt from the prevailing of sinne.

There are three things which I would say to this scruple.

Answered.

1. One is this, that it is a very sad scruple, any particular victory of any great sin (for to that I intend the case) makes a wonderful change.

2. Another is this, comfort cannot be applied, neither will the conscience receive it till repentance be renewed.

3. Yet there is a difference twixt a particular victory, and the dominion of sin; there may be a surprisal, where yet a Kingdom is not established.

1. For the first of these, *all particular victories are sad things*: I do not now speak of victories in respect of inward motion, or of passion or distemper through dulness and melancholy, but of victory in respect of action, and that not by meer omission, not by imperfection in best services, but by grosse commissions, suppose it *Dauids* case, or *Noahs* case; the one for uncleanness, the other for drunkenness: These acted wickednesses are sore evils, very abominable to the Lord, very inglorious to religion, very wounding to conscience, extremely quenching of the spirit of grace.

Particular victories are sad things:

For as much as the more grosse any sin is, the worse is it in the commission; every acting of sin receiving some intention and aggravation, from the immediate kinde and quality of the sin.

Again, the better the man is, the worse is a lewd kinde of sinning in him, the quality of the person ever contributing more exceedingness to the sin; for he sins against more light, against more mercy, against more help and strength, against more active corrections of conscience, with more advantage to the corruption of other men, with more advantage to the

beauty and credit of holinesse : yea, besides these formal vilenesses ; O what strange effects break in upon the soul, what horror, what fear, what mis-givings, what despair oft-times, with the fruits thereof.

Comfort will not be applied to such a one till repentance be renewed.

2. *Comfort will never be applied to a person in this condition untill repentance be renewed :*

Beloved, there is a difference of persons, and a difference of actions, and a difference of times, and a difference of applications.

Do I finde an evil man brought to the sight of his finnes, to saddest humbling for them, to sincere desire to come off from them, to pantings after grace, and mercy, I now come in with the blood of Christ, with the tender and gracious promises refreshing such a soul with assurance of freest and fullest mercy : Do I finde a good man, weak in duty, strong in affection, hearty against all sin, yet troubled with the insolent motions of many corruptions ? would not do evil, and yet is not rid of it ; would do good, but then findes evil is present with him ; I labour to raise and hold up such an heart to look on God through Christ for acceptance, to lay hold on Christ, for strength, for life, for power, for victory.

Do I finde a good man weakning himselfe, bowing under the actual power of some viler lust, O beloved, comfort is not his medicine, but repentance ; comfort is not his first help, but godly sorrow ; sorrow is the work which belongs to a sinner, and comfort that which belongs to a penitent sinner : until that thou doest thoroughly humble thy soul, till thou doest bewaile mightily thy wickednesse, till thy heart be turned into extreame loathing of thy sin, and thy self for so sinning ; thou shalt not get a good look from God, a good word from Conscience, any favourable encouragement from the Ordinance. Yea, well it is, if after many years, that ever thou seest God in that way of graciousnesse, and free communion, as thou didst formerly find him ; however, be sure of it, that without repentance thou shalt not at all meet with any solid comfort.

Yet there is a difference twixt particular victories and dominion.

3. *Nevertheless there may be some differences twixt particular victories, and twixt dominion : though dominion be a victory.*

Story, yet every victory concludes not dominion, they may be thus distinguished in respect of their subjects, viz. Good men, in whom sin hath sometimes a victory; and evil men, in whom sin hath at all times a dominion.

Five differences twixt dominion and victory.

First, *particular victory depends upon inequality of actual strength, but dominion depends upon the fulness of a corrupt nature.*

Five differences betwixt them, Particular victory depends on inequality of actual strength, but dominion depends upon the fulness of corrupt nature.

There is in all holy men an *habitual strength*, which is seated in the new nature of grace or holiness, by which they are inclined to all good, and their hearts made averse to all evil, it is the natural temper of true grace thus to work: And then there is an *actual strength*, by which, when any particular good is proposed, they incline unto the obedience of it; and when any particular evil is objected, they strive against it and resist. Now it may fall out, that when a temptation presents it self and inward corruption works with that temptation; I say it may so fall out, that the strength of grace may be insufficient, it may not actually equal or exceed that vehement & actual strength of inclination and temptation, though it doth resist (as a weak man may a strong enemy) yet it may not be able to conquer, but is surpris'd and led captive: and here the fall depends, not on the disposition of the will or heart, but upon the impotency of resistance; the person doth not fall down, but is beaten down; the sinne is acted, not through choice, but through weakness; not because the person loves it, but because he is not able to conquer the temptation: But where sinne hath dominion, there the sinning comes from the heart, as a streame from the fountaine: it is natural and not violent: It is acted, not because a man is not able to make sufficient resistance, but because the heart is wholly set that way with fullest complacence.

Secondly, *particular victory is a sudden act, but dominion is a more sober work.* In the one the soul is surpris'd, it is hurried, it is precipitated, it is in a flame on a moment, a man hath not space to weigh, to judge, to consider; but sinne hath with marvellous quickness seized on the understanding, wrought upon the memory, struck into the affections, and is

Particular victory is a sudden act, but dominion is a more sober work.

driven on in a rash and passionate way: In the other the work is more sober, not only actively devised, but affectionately adhered unto: a natural strength of corrupt and living affection makes the one; and in-advertency and rashness may be sufficient to cause the other that ariseth for want of watchfulness (as a Camp may be so surpris'd by an enemy) this ariseth out of a sworn obedience, as the souldier follows his Captaine.

Where there is no dominion but victory, the person feels the yoke and would shake it off.

Thirdly, *Where the sinning owes it self, not to Dominion, but to particular victory, or tyranny, there the person, when he comes to himself, feels the yoke, and would shake it off:* It is true, that while the heat of corruption remains, and the force of temptation, yet disables the heart to recollect it self, it is most difficult for any person to distinguish; neither is he then come to scruple and question: But when things grow clearer in the judgement, and more calme in the affections, when the hurry and tempest is off; that a man beholds his own face, and wayes, and actions in a right glasse again. Now it will quickly appeare, whether it be tyranny or Dominion. If it be but a tyrannical victory, Ah! how the soul loathes it self; how it abominates the sinner, like a man captivated, and rowing as a forced slave, in the Gally, he would cut the throat of the Master; or like a man in Prison, he would make his escape with the death of him, who was too strong to keep him. But if it be Dominion, then a man will not only serve his Master, but plead for him, he desires not to escape, he loves his Master, and would dwell with him for ever.

If it be but a victory, the person is working to recover himself.

4. Therefore in the fourth place, if it be but *victory*, the person is not only troubled at his fall, not only loathing of the actions, but he is *actively working*, he is *using his victorious weapons*, to raise up himselfe, to free himself again; he is grieved at the bondage, desires liberty, and will fight hard for it: O the humblings, and prayings, and workings, and applications of the soul to the sword of the spirit, the declination of the helps of sinne, the contentions with the motions of lust, the watchings, the meditations, &c. which such an heart will use: But where it is dominion, the sinne is

com-

committed with joy, and the sinner would continue with it in peace.

It is granted that there may be (sometimes) some distemper in such a heart, both before the sinning, and after the sinning, but that before the sinning is raised only upon carnal grounds, because of subsequent shame, losse, prejudice, and that after the sinning is only judicial, just throwes of an accusing conscience, of which when the vile slave of sin hath got free, when the cry of the world is off, and when the cry of his conscience is down, he prepares his heart again for the sinne, is sad and heavy, untill he returnes to his vomit and mire: the work goes on againe as freely and as heartily as ever.

Lastly, if it be but particular victory the soul will rise again, and it will not rise without revenge; Though the enemy hath got the battel, yet he shal loose the battel: before the vanquished soul hath done, it will not only rise, but fight, a naked combat shall not suffice, but assault and pursuit; it will work with the art of holy strength to the more deadly offence of that particular corruption.

In particular victory the soul will rise again and not without revenge.

Obj. 3. Yet there is a more difficult case, then any which hath been already proposed, and that is renewed actings of the same sinne: the person falls into the same sinne againe and againe, and this repetition of sinful acting, seems to be sinne in custome, and sinne in custome is sinne in dominion; thus is it with me, or hath it been with me (doth some troubled soul) reply, and therefore my case is miserable.

Doubt from the renewed actings of sinne.

Sol. To which case divers things must be said.

Answered.

1. *Repetition or renewing of the same sinful actings*, is (without all doubt) a very fearful and abominable thing: what is it else but a further and stronger wedging in of the corruption: frequent actings of sin do ever strengthen the sinful nature: Every soul being made more apt to sin by more sinnings; what is it else but a broading and widening of sinne? the sin growes bigger in the bulk, and higher in the guilt, by a continued, then by a single commmission.

Repetition of sin is very fearful.

Now a man sins against that which his own conscience hath condemned, as well as the pure word of God: Now a man ad-

adventures into troubles against all his former trouble, he hath felt the sinne to be bitter, and knows that it must cost him either Hell (into which God may presently cast him) or great sorrow and repentance, (which God may now judicially deny him.) Now a man sinnes against all the workings of grace, so that God may bring forth all the former acts of the soule, and set them against the thus sinning person: Look thou, here are the wounds which thou didst make heretofore; and yet thou strikes into the same again. Here are the teares which thou didst shed for this sinning heretofore; and yet thou wilt provoke me againe; here are the sighs which thy heart did break out, here are the fears which did distresse and perplex thy soul, here are the prayers which thou didst make for my tender mercies, here are the Covenants wherewith thou didst binde thy soul, here are the Chapters which thou didst read, to support thee, here is the place where thou didst power forth thy anguished heart in fasting and crying, here is that goodnesse, and gracious love of mine, whereby I did accept of thee, upon thy humbling teares, into favour againe; here is that peace, which I did thereupon create, and command into thy conscience, here is that word which thou didest say, should guide and rule thee for the time to come; here is that spirit which I sent to raise thee againe. And yet after all this thou art at the same sinne againe, I might have cast thee off at the first, I might have shut up my mercies, denied thee recovery, avenged my self on thee for thy soul transgressions, yet I spared thee; though thou didst offend me, yet I recovered thee; though thou didst provoke me; when thou didst very evil, even so that thou didst admire at the wickednesse of thy self; yet I did thee good, shewed thee kindness, would not presently forsake thee, who didst so foulely forsake me; this my free and great grace did then melt thee, did then move thee, did then excite and stir thee to great sorrow, to much care and love: And now after all, thou hast returned not in inclination, but in action, into, not a little or small transgression, but into a grosse and foule iniquity, yea, when multitudes of withdrawing arguments did strive against it, when the conception of that sinne, being with

so much secret trouble and fear, could not but presage the great dishonour which would redound unto me, and the fearful terrour which would befall thee, upon the active commission thereof; So that, beloved, without all scruple, a doubling of sinne is in it self a more formal intention thereof in its corrupt nature, and a more fruitful aggravation of it in guilt and miserable consequence, &c.

Secondly, consider, *that it is such a way of sinning as may justly stagger the heart about its condition.*

This way of sinning may justly stagger a man about his condition.

First, in regard of the eminent propriety which it hath in persons who do thus sinne generally (though not absolutely and simply) three sorts of persons run on in the frequent and manifold actings of great sins, viz. Such as are *notoriously profane*, such as are *closely hypocritical*; such as are *despitefully opposing the spirit of grace*; these are they who grow from evil to worse, and adde sinne to sinne, and make and fill up the measures of their particular iniquities which must needs stagger any soul, though perhaps not yet runne on so far as they, if yet repeating steps in the same paths, which the vilest of sinners have trod in before it.

Secondly, in regard of that dark and rare exemplarity of such kindes of sinning, by any, in Scripture canonized for Saints or godly persons: it is easily admitted, that you may espy, upon some of the best, something of the worst: and perhaps thickly heaped, upon the same sudden passion and temptation, but you shall rarely finde any one of them often at the same foule transgression, I say, you shall rarely finde it.

And believe me, it will be a staggering case to any sinning heart, where its wages are such, as to see multitudes of the worst, and scarce any one of good note so pacing and walking.

Nay, thirdly, untill the soul thus sinning doth bestow infinite labour, strong care, continued humblings, incessant cries to raise it self again, in respect of any other evidence, *it shall hardly or never distinguish the yet secretly remaining, the miserably defaced frame of goodnesse within it.* A soul in this temper is not so much to dispute and question, as

Grace is hardly discerned in such a one without much labour.

to rise and work, the case of frequenting or renewing the same sinful acts, will never be answered in thy conscience, but by fullest humblings, sound judgings, speedy repentings, careful watchings and declinings, wonderful strengthnings of the contrary grace and acts, diligent feare, fervent communion with God, and more upright walking.

Yet his though
it be a rare, is a
possible case.

Yet fourthly, *though it be a rare case*, this doubling or renewing of some great sinful act (very few good men do it, and that too, very seldome, perhaps as *Job* spake, so they may do, *once have I spoken, yea, twice, but I will proceed no further*, *Job* 40.5. I say, though it be rare) *yet it is a possible case*, that sin may have more then one particular victory where yet it hath not dominion.

I speake not this to hearten any man to sin, for this would argue sinne indeed to have dominion, but to recover a man that hath sinning, whose soul is extreamely bruised with his second fall, and whose second wound bleeds with such sad and bitter dejection of spirit for his renewed folly, that this is an argument, that he is not a chearful and willing servant to sin, but only an enemy, not able enough to bear off a second shock or assault.

But it is a
Custome.

Object. Yet this satisfies not, for the most still objects this is custome, and custome cannot be without Dominion.

Answered.

If it were a cus-
tome, it is not
best to hold on.

I answer three things.

First, suppose the worst, *that it were custome and dominion*, what is the course to be taken? *wouldest thou think it best to hold on?* wouldest thou live thus still? God hath pardoned and he hath changed many a soul which hath been customary in sinne, and in whom sin hath had dominion, nay, not any before conversion, but sin had dominion in him, and some sinne or other was his customary path. Thy safest and wisest course were not thus to stick at the custome and dominion, but to come unto God, and to beseech him to shew thee mercy, and to give thee grace and Christ to subdue the dominion, and to break the custom.

A custome of
finning is a
symptome of
sin in dominion

Secondly, I think that a *custome of sinning is a direct symptome of sinne in dominion*. No man can trade in a sinne, but

but you may easily say, who is his Master? *his servants we are whom we obey.*

3. But then I would have you to remember, that as all continuing inclinations argue not dominion, so *some continued or repeated acts of sin, do not always argue custome* though custome necessarily (includes either in good or bad things) a repetition of acts, a going over of the same part or lesson again and again, it being a path often walked over. Yet every gemination of acts is not presently a custome, I think we may thus distinguish twixt sinful acts multiplied by custome (which is rooted in dominion) and those which fall out by accident, as it were, and rooted onely in tyranny.

Three differences twixt acts geminated and custome.

1. Where the *renewed acts of sinne owe themselves to custome, there the possession is both strong and quiet*: for (if I mistake not) it is not meerly how often, or how long I have been at, or have dwelt in the house, which makes custome, and see me, the Lord of that house, but what right, and what peaceable possession. One stronger then I may hold my land from me, and dwell in my house a long time, yet if I make my exceptions, and hold a suit against him, his long dwelling is but an usurping; neither is it a legal custome, though perhaps of long continuance. Though sin still dwells in a good soul, and continues there in despite of him; and the person doth oft-times (through the captivating force of it) do many sinful acts, and perhaps the same; yet it is not custome, unless the possession be quiet and peaceable: if he did like *Iffachar*, bow under the burden; and yeeld up the writings and keys, if he did quietly resign up his heart to sin, and so go on from sinne to sinne, this were custome and concluded dominion: But so long as that soul puts in exceptions, prefers a bill of tears, complaints, supplications to Christ to conquer this usurping tyrant, to give grace to recover its hold, and strength to withstand and subdue it: Though the acts be many, and to be bewailed, yet they are not come to a custome, which sets up Dominion.

Renewed acts
are acts of
custome when
the acting is
naturall and
easie.

2. Where the renewed acts are acts of custome, there the acting is natural and easie: Custome (we know) is another nature, and every nature doth easily let go its acts, how easie is it for the eye to see, and the ear to hear, or the water to moysten, or the earth to descend: Let nature alone, she hath no impediment from her self to her acts; and it is her perfection to act, and therefore her acts are easie. It is thus with sinful acts flowing out of Custome, they come from the heart as waters from a spring, and rise from it as sparks from the fire, O how nimble, and dextrous, and quick is the sinner to sin, you need not tempt him, he can tempt himself; you need not use arguments to perswade and entise him, the accustomed drunkard knows the way, alone, to the Cup-house, and the covetous heart to unlawful methods of gain; *Balaam* can quickly get on horse-back for moneys sake, to curse *Israel*; and *Judas* needs no messenger, he can go himself to the High-Priest: But when the renewed acts depend rather on tyranny than custome, there they come off more hardly with more difficulty, the sin is marred (perhaps many times before it is done, the person sees it is vile and resists it, then the pleasure and profit tempts him, to which he begins to hearken, but presently his heart misgives him it is not right, and it will end in bitterness, he prays and yet is tempted, fights and yet is tempted, resists and yet is vanquished.

Renewed acts
are acts of
custome when
a man is not
easily brought
off.

3. Where the renewed acts owe themselves to custome, there a man is not easily brought off: 'tis my custome, saith the man, I cannot help it, and I will not leave it I assure you; where sinful acts rise to custome, there is no argument, but either a present fear of hell to hold them in, or a mighty presence of grace to put them off; words will not prevaile with men accustomed to sin: But where the renewed acts owe themselves to tyranny; though many words did bring into the sin, yet a few words will serve to break off the sin: one whisper of conscience; ah, what hast thou done? one word of *Nathans* to *David*, thou art the man; one look of *Christ* on *Peter* made him remember, and to go out and weep bitterly.

SECT. VI.

NOW I proceed to a third Use, which shall be the last that I will make of this subject; and that shall be for *direction, how to get off the dominion of sin.*

Use 3.
Direction how
to get off sine
Dominion.

You remember that I distinguished heretofore of a two-fold Dominion of sin, one was natural, under which every man is held before his conversion: Another was actual which consisted in a particular prevalency, even upon a man converted and changed: According to either there must be distinct Directions;

I. Against *Natural Dominion.*

Against natu-
rall dominion.

For this we must consider two things.

First, what keeps and strengthens that Dominion.

Secondly, what may demolish and subdue it: and accordingly apply our selves.

Quest. 1. For the first let us enquire what *keeps up and strengthens the natural dominion of sin*, and accordingly work against it.

Sol. There are four things which do it.

1. One is *ignorance*: The blindnesse of the understanding is a principal guard of reigning sinne: you reade that they in *Eph. 4. 19.* *Gave themselves over unto lasciviousnesse to work all uncleannesse with greedinesse*; like a souldier, who gives himself up, and takes pay, or like a servant who passeth away himself to service; so these resigned up their hearts and lives to all uncleannesse; it was their delight, it was their work, (this shewed the dominion of sin) But what was the cause of this: See *v. 18.* *Their understandings were darkned, through the ignorance that was in them, because of the blindness of their hearts*: The ignorance of sinne kept up their earnestnesse and practice of sinning. If ignorance rules the minde, then sinne will easily rule the heart: all sinful dominion is enabled by ignorance: *The Devil is a Prince of darknesse*, and takes

What strength-
ens naturall do-
minion, worke
against that.
Ignorance.

speciall care to keep men blinde : *Antichrist* is a sonne of darkness, and therefore above all , sets up his kingdome by ignorance : So is it with sin it selfe , its dominion is maintained by blindness in the minde ; and therefore sin in unconverted men , makes the mighty opposition against the word , and the meanes of knowledge: it knows well that no man turnes from sin who doth not discern it, nor hates it , who knowes it not: The prisoner is sure enough under a locke , and in the dungeon.

Now then if ever you would get off this natural dominion of sinne, you must get knowledge , a double knowledge in the minde.

1. One *direct* , and that is a distinct and true apprehension of sin , just as the Lord reveals it to be, both for its proper nature, and genuine affects.

2. Another is *Reflexive*: that is sinfulnessse, (which God hath revealed to be so vile , so abominable , so fearfull) It is in you, and it is working in you; you are under the powers of darkness, you must come to your selves, you must fetch your souls unto your souls, if you will not get a sensibleness of sin, (and that is begun by knowledge) you will live and die in your sins.

A Second thing which keeps up the naturall dominion of sin, is a *violent love of sin*: Love is the sinew of the heart, yea it is the chaire of state, whatsoever sits in it, that is the King of the soule, whether grace or sin : For love doth bestow the heart, what our love is that our heart is, it makes all to stoop, and yield : There is no talke of parting , while love remaines ; *I will not goe free* (said the *Hebrew servant*) for I love my master Why? the soule and sin are in a sworne covenant (like *David* and *Jonathan*) if the soule doth love sin , untill you take off the love , you shall never be able to take downe the dominion.

Therefore , this shall be another direction, break downe the love of sin.

Ob. But how should that be done?

Sol. First , convince the heart , that sin is no lovely thing; There be three things which should not fall under our love.

1. That which is the object of Gods hatred, No man may love that which God hates.

2. That which is the object of Gods curse : that cannot be good which he curseth, and therefore not lovely.

3. That which is the cause of mans damnation and misery, for no man is to love the cause of his undoing: Now sin is the only thing which God hates, and which God curseth, and which will damna man.

2. Give to thy soule a solid and full object of love, finde out something which thou shouldest love ; Is there not a God, a Christ, an Holy spirit, *His* word, heaven, &c. There is no loveliness in sin, and all loveliness in these things

3. Another thing which keeps up the dominion of sin is *error and deceit*, there is a lye in every sin, and the judgement is deceived where the sin is retained, either a man thinkes he sins not, but is escaped out of the hands of lust, or that his condition is found and good ; or if it be bad, yet not so bad as others ; or if very bad, yet he can at pleasure release himselfe ; and thus through a vaine fancy, he continues under the bondage of his corruptions : And so for the actions of sin, he deceives his soul, he doth not behold them in a comparison to the rule, he doth not judge of them by the word, but in a reference to his owne corrupt desires and delights, which swallow downe infinite sins, sugared over by pleasure and profit.

Now if ever you would get free from sin, get your judgements to be cured: a sound judgement may be a good meanes to breed a sound heart; thou wilt never be perswaded to be good, untill the erroneous confidence that thou art not bad be removed: convince thy minde of these truths against all errors, that indeed thou art sinfull. And that no sin is little in its merit, and it is not, what is least wicked, but he who is really good, shall be saved: Do not judge of acceptance or disacceptance by sensible pleasures, or profits ; but beyond these, look what that is which is so coloured and disguised, it is even a snare for thy life, and that which hunts for the precious soule.

4. A fourth thing which keeps up dominion is *custome*: the heart

Customs. heart by customary sinning, grows strong in sin, and resolute and is by often committings made more naturally sinful, and more apt for further sinfull actions.

Ob. Now observe a little, Give some checks to the ordinary course of sin: why? you will say: It is impossible? nay but it is not: Though it be Impossible for a man alone, to change his sinful heart, yet it is not to check an outward sinfull act, a man may chuse whether he will go and be drunke, whither he will speake and sweare, &c.

Ob. But if it were done, this were vaine and fruitlesse, for the dominion of sin Subsists in the nature, Though manifested in the acts.

Sol. I grant it, yet first If the heart be brought to set against the sinfull acts, it may be brought to set against the sinfull nature, secondly, The abating of the acts, may virtually conduce to the abating of that sinfull nature.

What may demolish the naturall dominion of sin.

Qu. 2. What may demolish and breake down the naturall dominion of sin.

That which doth this must have a greater power then sin.

Sol. I will Tell you a few things for this, and I pray you to remember them:

1. That which doth this, *it must have a greater power then sin*, for naturall dominion goes not of but by a stronger hand: Satan is not dispossessed but by a stronger then Satan: And we are not translated from the powers of darknesse, but by an hand of omnipotency.

It must be of a contrary nature unto sin.

2. That which doth this, *it must be a contrary nature unto sin*: for no kingdome can subsist by division, let something come unto the soule which makes a division, sin will quickly lose its dominion.

It must be something may gaine the affections. It must be something that must breed a strife.

3. Againe *It must be something which may gaine the affections*; it must be able to winn the heart, to dispose of love and hatred for dominion is made or marred by one of them.

4. Againe, *it must be something which may breed a stiffe and courageous resolution*, that the heart will not serve sin, but will go free: And hereupon, against all inward and outward opposition, breakes forth into the use of victorious meanes.

Directions. Look up to God and Christ.

Now then the directions are these?

1. If ever thou wouldest get down the dominion of sin, thou must

must looke up to God and Christ, they are able to disannull the covenant with sin, and to subdue iniquities, Rom. 8. 2. *the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death*, looke as it must be a Rich mercy which pardons, so it must be a mighty power which conquers sin, why? but what is it to the Lord to command thy heart home to himselfe, to cast down the high imaginations and strong holds? As *Jehosaphat* spake against those strong armies, *we know not what to doe: yet our eyes are upon thee*; soe in the sense of thy naturall vileness and sinfull dominion, O Lord I am bound, I am in bondage, I am dead in sins, Lord I am unable to escape, but thou art able to deliver, O deliver my soule for thy mercies sake, and subdue mine iniquities, and shew forth thy power, &c: *who shall deliver me, I thanke God through Jesus Christ*, Rom. 7. 24, 25.

Secondly, because meer power doth not do it, but power in a quality, working through some quality, Therefore *beg of God, that he would give thee the grace of his spirit*, it is true, *Beg the grace of Gods spirit.* that naked power takes not off the sinfull dominion: nor doth the quality alone doe it, but both can doe it: If God gives a man grace, and mightily assists and workes by and through that grace; this now will beat downe the dominion of sinne.

The light, though it be but a little at first, yet assisted by a mighty principle of light shall conquer darknesse: pride will have dominion till humility comes in.

Now, then beg of God, for grace, for his holy spirit, for another heart, for a new heart and a new spirit.

Thirdly, *labour earnestly for faith*: if two things were done, *Labour for faith.* sin could not possibly continue in dominion. *viz.*

If Christ did rule in the soule;

If thy love were drawn off from sin.

But faith sets up the scepter of Christ, it will know no Lord, but Christ, *my Lord and my God*, said believing *Thomas*: And faith turnes the love to Christ, makes Christ the center of the heart? O it represents such goodnesse such excellency, such propriety, such bounty, such love in Christ, as inflames the heart

heart and knits it with love to Christ again: Nay to add to all this, faith bestowes the life on Christ too, *He died for me, said faith*; I judge it therefore most reasonable, that I should live to him; Now where Christ comes to rule, and hath love and life, there sinne without all doubt, looseth its dominion.

Take a courageous resolution.

4. Lastly, *take a courageous resolution*: we are held many times by our lusts, through a faintnesse of spirit: why? we shall never get down these sins, and what will people say? and we know not what to do.

Sol. Why? up and be doing: for what is past, the Lord will mercifully pardon all of it, if now the yoke be broken, and be confident of this, if thou art setting against thy sins, thou doest that which God likes very well, for he hath commanded thee it as a duty, and hath set out meanes, and promised his helpe and blessing: Therefore stand not hovering and hammering, were I best? shall I? shall I yet? O no, thy life lies upon this, or thy death.

Therefore resolve on it to set against thy sins, say this with thy selfe, if I suffer sin to rule thus I perish, for ever, if I get off the dominion I live for ever, if I continue in this sinfull estate, I must bid God farwell, and Christ farwell, and heaven; and all the comforts of my poor soul farwel: I confesse I may get a little pleasure by my sins, & a little profit by my sins but I am not sure to enjoy them one moment, and why should I venture eternity of misery for one draught of sinful water: If I could get off sins dominion, O what a God might I look on, plead with, sue unto: what a Saviour should I get? what precious joys? what heavenly consolations: what peace here? what hopes for hereafter? well, come of it what will, though I have been sinful, I will not still continue so, to God will I come, to Christ will I goe: I will beseech them to have mercy upon me a sinner, and to give me grace, and to change my heart, I will not serve my base lusts any longer, I will never leave praying, hearing, reading, studying, inquiring, working, till I be delivered from this bondage, and translated into the glorious liberty of the sonnes of God?

2. Against *Actual* dominion.

Against actual dominion. Wherein actual dominion lies.

Thus for directions, Against the natural dominion of sin: Now I proceed to some helps against actual dominion, which

is the particular prevalency of a sinne into act.

Let me premise a proposition or two, and then you shall have the special directions themselves.

1. *Actual Dominion* (I speak in respect of grosse acts) is usually in respect of some particular lusts: which works with more strength in the soul then any other lusts; Though it be most true, that in every man there is an universal root of sinning, yet you finde it in experience that the multitudes of sinful inclinations, and thoughts and temptations, run ordinarily in some peculiar way, with most frequency and violence.

Secondly, *actual Dominion* is ordinarily by such a sin which hath the advantage of a natural complexion, and outward condition, and occasions, and affections, upon these doth sinne set the temptation, as an Engineer doth place his battery upon such a piece of ground, which doth best advantage and further his shot against a City.

Simile.

A mans natural temper and complexion doth mightily facilitate his acts, and a mans calling or condition of life may (accidentally) be a forcible perswasion to him to much infidelity, and impatience, and indirectness: And occasions in conversing actively or passively, have infinite baits in them, and when our affections may run in some lawful measure and manner, there sin takes occasion to tempt and prevaile with ease; if we look not to it, he may quickly be cast down by a sinful temptation, who is already prepared thereunto by a sinful faction.

Therefore if ever you would keep off the prevalency of a particular sin, observe distinctly, and work wisely, against all the things which may advantage it in its temptations.

Thirdly, consider that many things may keep back (for a while) the explicite actings of a particular sinne, which yet are not able to weaken the natural power of the sinful inclination.

There are two sorts of principles (as it were) which have an influence upon a man: some are *violent* and *forcible*, which work by a strong hand thus farre (sometimes) prevailing, to hold back that a man dares not do such an evil (as shame, love of a mans credit, quiet, profit and safety) and some are powerful too; but yet inwardly weakning the very nature and disposition, as all sorts of graces: Now then if ever you

would be thoroughly kept from the actual dominion of sinne in gross, do not content your selves with meerly forcible restraints, for as much as these may oft-times fail you, and then your hearts will deceive you; you will venture to foul iniquities, having nothing now within you of a contrary vertue: But above all be striving for grace, which is contrary not only to the sinful acts, but to the sinful nature, which is the fountaine inclining the soul unto them; get chastity into the heart, and meeknesse into the heart, and humbleness into the heart, and soberness into the heart, and heavenliness, and faith, &c.

Fourthly, improve that strength which God hath given unto thee every way.

Though this be true, that a man by his natural strength can never change his sinful nature, yet assuredly he may do much against sinful acts; if that he would bestir himself, why? is not a man able to deny his eye a look, or his tongue a word, and his feet a walk? you know this, that sin is set on fire by occasions, and by many things which lie directly under our power? and it may be much staid by the doing of many things which we are able to do. If a man will let his eyes still roule upon vaine objects, whereas (if he would) he might check their motion, no marvel if his heart be still set on fire by lust, and if he will associate himself with persons provoking him to filthinesse and drunkenness, (whereas if he would, he might decline that society) who can think it strange that such sins should have actual dominion over him. If thou wilt thou mayest read, and hear, and apply thy self to all the means by which grace may be wrought, and sin subdued, and if thou didst so, what canst thou tell what God may do for thy soul.

Nay, let me tell you more, that a man who hath received grace, (and therefore more power then a natural man) if he will not improve his strength, he shall hardly keep off the actual dominion of some one sin or other; if he will not decline that which he should and may, and if he will not do that which he should and can, it is not his naked praying that will keep him up: Prayer (without all question, as you shall hear by and by) is of singular force and use against the prevalency

lency of all corruptions, but we must not rest only upon the prayer, but pray and work, pray and forbear, pray and deny our selves, pray and shunne occasions, pray and follow our help, &c.

Now I come unto some *speciall directions* against the actual dominion of a particular lust. Speciall directions.

Foure special Directions.

First, *preserve in thy soul a constant and humble feare*, and that will keep off the actual dominion of thy sinne. Remember *Solemons* advice, *Blessed is the man that feareth alwayes*, and *humble* Prov. 28. 14. And *Gods* promise, *I will put my feare within them, and they shall not depart from me*, Jerem. 41. 9. d. without this you are gone, you will quickly loote your standing, if you loose your feare. Preserve in the soul a constant and humble feare.

There be some graces which are as it were the guard of other graces: look as *faith* is a grace which feeds all the rest: So *feare* is a grace which keepes all the rest. This holy and humble feare hath these properties (all which strengthen the soule against actual dominion of sinne) It hath *God still in eye*; it sets a man and his ways, and acts in the presence of an holy and glorious God: Now *saith Joseph*, *how can I do this great evil and sin against God*, Gen. 39.

Again, it *prefers Gods pleasure and Gods frown above all discouraging or discouraging temptations*; yea, but I must do this, for God requires it, and delights in it; yea, but I may not do this, for God hates it, and will be provoked by it; I prefer his favour above all false honour and pleasure, and I account his frownes worse then death it self. Now if I should thus sin; why? I provoke his wrath, and provoke the Lord to jealousy, I cause him to rise in displeasure against me, *i. e.* why? how would the Lord take it, if I should thus sinne.

2. *Get a sound and uncorrupt judgement*: there be three Get a sound judgement. cases in which a man is apt to fall under the actual dominion of sinne, and corruption of judgement is a maine cause of them.

One is, when he thinks or sayes *that the sin is little*.

Another is, when he saith, *that his own strength is great*.

A third is, when he assures himself of *easie pardon and recovery*: sinne usually is a cloud, and then a shower, a corruption in the judgement before a victory in the affections: a man will quickly tremble under the guilt of some great commission, who hath dallied with little finnes, or with the opinion that they are so: And he who ventures farre unto any occasions, upon his own strength, that man bids faire for some foule fact, under which he shortly falls, if God shew him not the vanity of his self-confidence: And so is he ready, very ready for a grosse transgression, who hath secured his soul already for his pardon: what sin will he stick at, who hath perswaded himself, that the pardon is already granted, although he presume to sin.

Now cleanse the judgement of these corrupt principles and believe it.

Believe that no
sin is little.

1. *That no sinne is little*: That must needs be great which provokes a great God, and endangereth a precious soule; he who is brought to such an holy tenderesse, that he sees greatnesse of guilt in littleness of sinning, shall by Gods grace be kept from the dominion of any sinne: Every sinne (even the least) is a foul spot: And is the object of divine hatred and curse, it may prove like a little spark to consume an house, or like a little leake sufficient to drown a ship; or like a little thrust into the heart, enough to lose a man his life.

And that your
own strength
is not sufficient

2. *That your own strength is not sufficient*: even the strongest ship left to it self cannot venture far, but it is upon rocks or sands: Any thing may prove too strong for him, who conceives himself too strong for any thing.

He that will venture upon sinful provocations, and occasions, disarms his soul, and lays his very heart naked to a conquest: A Christian may do very much in good wayes, which have Gods warrant to lead him, and Gods promise to keep him, but if he alone will be presuming, as the *Israelites*, who would go up, to fight upon their own humour, fell and lost, so shall a man presently learne his owne weaknesse by the strength of finnes surprisal; many a man hath been spiritually wounded, not because he had no grace, but because

cause he would adventure upon the strength of it without any security from God.

3. *That pardon is not so easily obtained*; Nor the soul so quick'y recovered after particular dominions. And that pardon is not easily obtained.

It is an easie thing to slip into sinne, it is difficult to get out of it: a little thing will serve to distemper our health, and yet much Physick is required to set the humours streight again: All entrances to sinne are with the greater facility; for then temptations and carnal affections blinde our judgements, but the recoveries are the harder; for now the vilenesse and hainousnesse of the sinning appears more distinctly, and the conscience works more sharply and vehemently, and our very graces are the more disabled.

Assuredly, if you will venture to sinne, you lose a friend of God, and encouragement in conscience, and strength in your souldes; this very conceit that thou shouldest easily make thy peace with God and finde mercy (though thou didst sin) I say this very conceit will mightily afflict thy soul, and aggravate thy transgression, when thou beholds thy soul in blood for sinnings; mercy is the most singular ground of repentance; and nothing stings us more for sinning then this, that we abused mercies to invite us: Therefore when sin tempts thee, resist it, yeeld not to it, say thus who would adventure the sweet mercies of a gracious God, to satisfie the lusts of a damnable sin, and why should I be so mad? having health to make my self sick, to break the bones which yet are whole; to unsettle the peace of my conscience, to weaken my graces, to dis-joynt my estate: If as now I am, I have much to do; ah, what folly is it to make more woful work for my soul? How justly may God leave me, who will forsake him for that which I know will displease him? and what if he should righteously deny me grace to repent, who proudly will abuse his grace to sinne? Beloved! let the judgement at all times be thus effectually convinced, and it may prove a singular means and help against particular temptations of sinne by which dominion is attained.

3. *Be not in the ways of Dominion*: great sinnings do not alway prevaile at first sight, but they have a traine and method Be not in the ways of dominion.

thod to prepare the soul, and then on a sudden they violently surprife it.

There are these methods.

First, perhaps *naked motions*, the vile heart gives up only a shew of a particular sin, in an imagination our thought presents the kinds of sinning, and so falls in again.

Then perhaps a *careless use of our senses*, which wandring (without regard) light upon some object which fits the former sinful motions, and strongly inlivens them.

After this *active contemplation* of these sinful motions, not to detest and bewaile them, but to look upon them in an idle way.

After this a *meditation of them*, which is a more deliberate entertainment of them, which now riseth to a kind of treaty in the minde, where the sinful motion craves entertainment, by arguments of profit, or pleasure on credit, then a darting *down to the affections* to hearken and delight.

Then upon the next occasion, an *acting of all this sinful imagination* and plot.

Brethren if you love your souls take off sinnes in their entrances, before they gather head; if a man could keep sinne from pleading, he might, keep himself from acting. Break the egg, and you need not feare the flying of the bird: Crush sinne in motion, and it is a clear way to prevent sin in dominion: The match will never be made, if all trearies be rejected: little motions are the principles of great sinnes, as springs of rivers, and sparks of flames. Therefore, let us this do, resist motions to sin as a man should resist the actings of sin: do not say, it is but a thought, *Jehues* army came after the scouts: Great sinning may attend little and flattered imaginations, he who slights inward thoughts, and is careless of his outward senses, is in a faire way to become a great sinner.

Fourthly, *sue out your standing by prayer and faith*: I will tell you two things.

1. That the strongest grace cannot free us from the fiercest assaults: even the best heart, and most eminent Christian is exposed to the foulest and most violent temptations of sin and Satan.

2. That

Simile:

Sue out your standing by prayer and faith.

2. That this resisting strength which keeps sin from dominion, is in God, and not in himself: As that we become good, is from the goodnesse of Gods grace; so that we prove not bad, is from the greatnesse of Gods power: no man is able to change his own heart, nor is his heart his own guard.

Therefore under all temptations, be at prayer and faith: These are the two wings of the soul, &c. Some victories are best had by standing up, but that against sin is surest by kneeling down: O when the heart is much in prayer, it is then most in strength; prayer engageth all heaven against a corruption: And God hath promised to *subdue iniquities*, and that *sin shall not have dominion*, Rom. 6. 14. Now what he hath promised, that he is able to perform, and will if we can pray and believe. We give sinne the great advantage, when we slack our prayers and lay aside our faith.

It is the wisest art of a tempted soul to decline all occasions, to be under prevailing Ordinances, and to use prayer, and exercise faith according to the nature, kind and measure of sinful motions and inclinations.

PSALM



P S A L. 19. 13.

*Then shall I be upright, and I shall be innocent
from that great transgression.*



You may remember that heretofore we have handled *Dauids* petitions against sinne, 1. In secrecy. 2. In presumption. 3. In dominion. Now we proceed to speak something of the conclusion or inference, which that holy and sweet Psalmist draws from all this [*Then shall I be upright and innocent from that great transgression.*]

To me it seemeth that *Dauids* special aime, that white or mark which he had in his eye, was this, to be upright, he knew well, that that was it which God looked for, which God most of all prized, and which (for his soul) would prove most necessary and comfortable; and withall he well knew that the allowance of secret finnes, or the wallowing in great transgressions, were quite contrary thereto; And therefore he prays earnestly against them, that he might secure and maintain this.

2. D. O Lord, above all things in the world I desire to be upright, and this I shall never be, unlesse my heart be cleansed of secret finnes, and my life of presumptuous and reigning sins, for thy mercies sake cleanse my heart, let me

not love and work wickednesse there, and for thy goodness sake keep my life, let me not act transgressions there, O that thou wouldest do this for me then, then should I be that which (above all) I desire to be, then should I be upright.

I will stand no longer about the words, only they afford unto us this proposition.



CHAP. V.



That it should be the great bent, aime, desire and endeavour of a man to be upright. Gen. 17. 1.

I am the Almighty God, walk before me and be thou upright. q. d. this all in all which concerns thee, which I esteeme, and which thou must study, Deut. 10. 12. And now

Israel, what doth thy Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, to walk in all his wayes, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul. Q. D. I have done you much good, thought on you in your afflictions, brought you out of Egypt, preserved you through the sea, and in the wildernesse vanquished all your enemies for you, presented you into a land flowing with milk and honey; Now all that I require, and that you are to look too, is that your hearts be upright, that you bestow your love on none but me, your service on none but me, that I have all your heart, and all your soule, Josh. 24. 14. Now therefore fear the Lord, and serve him in sincerity and truth, q. d. this is the thing that doth concern you nearly, this is the end of all your mercies, and the utmost of all your returns, if you will be any thing, or returne any thing to God (who hath done all for you) then be sincere

Doct.

It should be the desire and endeavour of a man to be upright.

and true, be upright, 1 Sam. 12. 23. *I will teach you the good and the right way*, ver. 24. *Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart.* Q. D. You have shewed false hearts towards your God, in that you would put off his government, and you may perceive by the thunder and raine, how he takes this at your hands, but repent, and forsake him no more, but get you upright hearts to walk with him, and cleave unto him, Phil. 1. 9. *This I pray, &c.* ver. 10. *That you may approve things that are excellent, that you may be sincere.*

I need not quote more places from the Scripture, which abundantly delivers this truth unto us: onely for the farther Explication of it, I shall enquire these particulars.

Four things.

1. What it is to be upright.
2. Why we should so studiously aime at, and labour for uprightnesse.
3. What useful applications in all kindes of this to our selves.
4. Then the resolutions of some Cases of Conscience for the stay of those who suspect their own uprightnesse:

SECT. I.

What it is to be upright.

The several phrases that import uprightnesse opened.

Uprightnesse applied.

To Gods

Quest. I. **VV** *What it is to be upright?*

The Logicians observe a double *quid*, 1. *Quid nominis.* 2. *Quid Rei*, I will briefly therefore open the several words and phrases which are used in the Scriptures to import uprightnesse, and then I shall with more ease, and better satisfaction, Couch out unto you the lively nature of it.

For the first of these, know that uprightnesse is sometimes applied,

1. To Gods; Psalme 25. 8. *Good and upright is the Lord,* Psalme

Pſalm. 93. 15. *to ſhew that the Lord is upright*, Eſay 26. 7. *Thou moſt upright doeſt weigh the path of the juſt.*

In this reſpect, it notes that juſt and equal nature of God, which is (as) an anſwering rule, Righteouſly diſpoſing of all his acts and dealings.

2. *To man*; And thus it may be applied both to *good men* To Man and *bad men*; for uprightneſs may be conſidered, either as ariſing out of a renewed diſpoſition, or as appearing in the courſe of a renewed converſation (in which reſpects it is proper to good men only) or as manifeſting it ſelf, in a particular fact, and ſo *Abimelech* might ſay, *in the uprightneſſe of mine heart I have done this*, Gen. 20. 5. Now uprightneſſe, or to be upright, as applied to good men, is delivered unto us, both in the Old and in the New Teſtament by ſundry words and phraſes. Sometimes it is called *ſincerity*, as *Joſh. 24. 14. ſerve the Lord in ſincerity*: that is ſaid to be ſincere, which is without mixture, a metaphor from honey which is then reputed pure and right when it hath none of the wax commixed with it. The heart is upright, when it is ſincere, and then it is ſincere when it is unmingled: Beloved there's a difference 'twixt

*Adherence and
Commixture.*

To the pureſt *lana* there may adhere ſome thred or ſpot uncomely, but in commixture the qualities or ſubſtances are in a ſort mutually confounded; ſin adheres or cleaves to the nature of the moſt upright perſon, but yet it mingles not, it is a thing which the renewed heart is thruſting off; it would be rid of it, the new nature like a ſpring is working it off, ſo that a man may be ſaid to be upright, whoſe heart will not ſuffer any ſinne to incorporate or ſettle it ſelf: *Search me*, ſaid *David*, *ſee whether there be any way of wickedneſs in me*, Pſalme 139.

23, 24.

If a man hath an heart, upon which ſinful wayes do not only fall, but with which they cloſe, if his heart knows it, and allows it, and will walk in it, that mans heart is not upright in him; Sometime it is called *one-neſs*, or *ſingleneſs*, ſo *Jer. 32. 39. I will give them one heart and one way, that they may*

fear me for ever, Act. 2. 46. They did eat their bread with gladness, and singlenesse of heart.

There are two sorts of persons, hypocrites and upright persons, and the Scripture opens them by their hearts.

Hypocrites are said to have *an heart and an heart*, Psal. 12. 2. *with a double heart do they speak*, in the original it is, with an heart and an heart, So *Hos. 10. 2. their heart is divided, now shall they be found faulty*: and therefore, *James 1. 8. they are called men of two mindes, double-minded men*; they are in some things for God, and in most things for themselves; now for his service and anon for their lusts; look as hypocrisie mingles sinne and the affection together, so it mingles God, and sin, and the world together, it doth not look on God for Gods sake, but for profits sake, or pleasures sake, or honours sake; On the contrary, *upright persons are persons of one heart*, or of a single heart: as the *Zebulonites* are said, *not to be of a double heart*, 1 Chron. 12. 33. which is expounded, v. 38. *by a perfect heart*: A mans heart is upright when God alone, and his ways alone, and his truth alone, satisfie, and order, and bound it; when a man can say in truth, as they in the matter of Choice, *Nay, but the Lord is our God, him will we serve*. I have chosen the Lord to be my God, and his truths to be my guide, and his precepts to be my paths, and his glory to be my end, and hereto only will I stick, when the soul doth not halt between two, or divides it self in a service of any side or way, but keeps only to God.

Sometimes it is called *perfection*: and the upright are called perfect: as *Gen. 17. 1. Walk before me and be thou perfect*, Deut. 18. 13. *Thou shalt be perfect with the Lord thy God*, Psalme 37. 37. *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright*.

There is a double perfection:

One *Absolute*, in respect of degrees (which no man can now attain unto in this life, no not the most upright: for in many things we offend all.

The other *Evangelical*, which consists in the evennesse of desire and endeavour: when a man sets up and exalts the word of God, and strives to square his heart and his life in all thing thereby.

As Paul, exercising himself to have a conscience void of *Note*, offence, and willing to live honestly in all things; when a man doth (as it were) measure his paths as by a line, he doth set them by the compasse of a divine rule or warrant, not willingly stragling on the right hand, or bending toward the left: not willingly omit the least duty, and commit the least sin; he is an upright person when the heart is as large as the precept, and the whole will of God is complied with, in will, and desire, and endeavour.

Sometimes it is called a *spirit without guile*, so, *Psal* 32. 2. *Blessed is the man in whose spirit there is no guile*, and *Christ* of *Nathaniel*, *Joh.* 1. 47. *Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile.* An hypocritical heart is a cunning heart, it hath many devices, shufflings, windings, and turnings, this heart is not plain and sound: Therefore the hypocrites are said to have *corrupt thoughts*, and to *flatter with their tongues*, and to have *crooked wayes*: They do not indeed hate the sin which they pretend, nor love that holinesse which oft-times they praise, and sometimes act: some ends they have of Religion for their belly, and for their own advantage, but they do not heartily hate sinne, nor truly love holinesse. Now on the contrary, an upright heart is without guile, it is even plain and down-right, therefore is it in the parable called an *honest heart*, and saith *Paul*, *we speak the truth in Christ*; and upright walking is stiled a walking *in truth*, and serving of God in truth and in spirit; The meaning is this, that the upright man is indeed that which he professeth: his life and profession is not a painting which owes it self to an Artificer, but a natural colour which owes it self to the soundnesse of temper: he is one who hath *truth in the inward parts* (as *David* speaks, *Psal.* 51. 6.) He doth without base ends directly love God, and from his very heart hate sinne. Though he cannot expresse himself in that flourish of formality, yet for *Christ*, he can plainly say as *Peter*, *Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee*; And touching sinnes, as *David* of Gods enemies, *I hate them with a perfect hatred*: this he is in good earnest.

Sometimes it is called the *allnesse*, or *whollinesse* of heart, so *Deut.* 4. 29. *If thou seek him with all thine heart*, *Deut.* 26. 16. *Thou shalt keep and do them with all thine heart, and with*

all

all thy soul, Psal. 119. 10. with my whole heart have I sought thee, &c. when the heart is upright, the whole man comes in unto God, all the soul, and all the body: none shall dispose of them but God; And God shall dispose of him in every precept: the very bent of a man is to please God in all things; and the whole soul, in the understanding, will, memory, affections, bears a respect to all his Commandments. There be other phrases to set out this businesse of uprightness, but I must passe them over, and pitch upon the description.

The description of uprightness.

2. Now to the second *quid Rei*, I conjecture that uprightness may be thus described.

Uprightnes is a sound and heavenly frame or temper of a gracious heart or spirit given by God, by which graces are acted, finnes are opposed, duties are performed affectionately, directly and plainly, In reference to God, and not for by-reflects.

I will briefly open this description in its particulars.

The seat of it is their heart.

First, it is the temper or frame of the heart: The seat of uprightness is the heart or spirit: hence is it stiled *uprightness of heart*, 1 King. 3. 6. *Thou hast shewed unto thy servant David my father great mercies, according as he walked before thee in truth, in righteousness, and in uprightness of heart: So 'tis stiled singleness of heart*, Act. 2. 46. and *Truth in the inward parts*, Psal. 51. 6. and *a service in spirit*, Rom. 1. 9. *God is my witness whom I serve with my spirit in the Gospel of his Sonne.* *Hypocrisie* is a colour but skin deep; A painting which lies only upon the superficies or surface of the wall, upon the visibles or outwards of profession or action: but *uprightness*, like health, it is an inward *crisis* or temperature; as the conversation renders it self to the eye of man, so the inward disposition strives to render it self to the eye of Gods approbation; if a man be upright, it is with him as with *Solomons Temple*, though the outward parts were comely, and uniform; yet the inside was covered with the most precious gold, and had the sweetest incense.

All counterfeit things are best in their shew, and worst in their

their substance and vertue : But uprightnesse is best there where least can be seen: The actions are nothing to the Inward affections and desires.

We do but as the *Queen of Sheba*, here, no not halfe of the goodnesse of an upright man by what he doth, if you would but look into his heart and converse with him there a while, you should find, the heart, the disposition, the desire of his soul, infinitely to exceed all that he doth, *Psal. 119. O how I love thy law, O that my ways were so direct?*

The heart oftimes mournes, when the eyes can shed no teares, and the heart believes, when the tongue cannot speake much faith, and the inward man (the heart) would doe that and much more, then what is done or performed.

Secondly, it is a temper or frame of the heart, a composition: as it were in which methinks, two things may be observed.

1. One that *uprightnesse is not a single, or transient act or motion*: I thinke that even an Hypocrite, whose heart is rotten, corrupt, false, abominable, may yet, as step out into actions materially good, so feel motions within him both against what is evill, and unto what is good, he may (either through the force and power of evidence and conviction in his judgement, or through the unresistable actions, of his enlightened and stirred conscience, or through the great desire, of a glorious blessednesse, have many fits and inward humours of being good and doing good.

But all this is passion and not temper: the Philosopher In his Rhetoricks accurately distinguish twixt the readinesse, which springes out of a naturall complexion, and that which ariseth out of a violent Anger and passion which soone fades off, being not rooted in nature, but in distemper: so is it with the Hypocrite. But uprightnesse is a temper and frame, like an instrument well tuned, or if that hit not full, like a complexion, which is a uniform (if not principle yet) instrument of actions. It is like that *leaven*, of which Christ spake, which invades the whole lump, it sweetly seasons and disposes the whole man for God, as the bent of the stone is to the center, and of the fire to ascend.

†
It is the temper
and frame of
the heart.

It is not a single
or transient
act or motion.

It is rather a general influence in the graces, then any distinct grace.

Another, that *uprightness* is rather a generall Influence in the graces, then any distinct grace: I will not make this point a controversy, only so far as I yet apprehend, uprightness is rather the temper of a grace; then the grace it selfe; It is not feare, but feare rightly tempered and ordered, it is not love, but love rightly set; it is not desire, but this orderly carried.

The qualities of it.

Sound.

3. It is a *sound and incorrupt and heavenly frame of heart.*

1. A thing may be termed, *sound* or solid, either when it is *reall*, not light, slight, superficiall, or when it can abide triall: as true gold is Really so and not in colour only, and if you reduce it to the touchstone you shall finde it so: if you cast it into the fire, &c. Thus it is with the heart that is upright, and it hath not a so me of *Godlinesse*, but the *power*; and not a name that it lives, but the life it selfe: it is (indeed) holy, humble, meeke, believing, loving of God and his servants, desirous to walke with God, Psal. 116. 16. *O Lord truly I am thy servant, &c. q. d.* I am so indeed: this is not a complement, a garb, a pretence but a reality, soe is it with the man indeed: *an Israelite indeed*, said Christ of Nathaniell, Job. 1. 47. Yea, so reall, that if you bring the heart either to the examination of the word (which being truth can finde out all truth) or to God himself who can search the heart and reines, or to conscience that beareth witness, 2 Cor. 1. 12. or to afflictions, yet even there can uprightness finde approbation and testimony, that the person doth love, and serve, and feare him, Job. 1. 8. *the Lord said unto Satan, hast thou not considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil.*

Incorrupt.

2. Again, it is an *Incorrupt* frame: though the extreme parts may sometimes be faulty, yet if the vitalls be sound, if the heart, if the lungs, if the liver be so, we say that man is a sound man; In morals it holds soe, that if the heart be void of all obliquity the person is upright; Many infirmities in action may consist with uprightness, but not in affection, the very bent of the heart is set against sin, without distinction of great or lesse, advantageous or incommodious, honourable or dishonorable

honorable; if it be not ſo, then the heart is corrupt; it mingles, it is not ſincere and upright, but of this more anon.

4. *Given by God*; ſo the Prophet Jerem. 32. 39. *I will give them one heart and one way?* Every man naturally is an Hypocrite, would ſeem to be that which he is not, and ſo likewise miſdirects all his actions to a wrong end: God hath ſet a certaine beauty in goodneſſe, and left a notion of viciouſneſſe upon ſin, ſo that moſt men though they hate goodneſſe, yet would be thought good (they think it a more Creditable title) and though they love and act ſinne, yet would not be thought or reputed evill.

Given by God

Befides this, if we did but ſeriously obſerve and confeſſe how it is in our own ſpirits, we ſhould finde in all our pious pretences (take us in our naturalls) we are all of us moſt formall and Artificiall hypocrites: *Draw neare to God with our lips, but our hearts are far from him*, and come to Church when we minde neither prayer nor Sermon, and liſten oftimes, and (God knows) not to obey but to cenſure, or but to get matter to talk of and the like: and when we have got ability to ſpeake of any good, the Lord be mercifull unto us, we do it not minding Gods glory, but our owne vaine applauſe and eſtimation; Soe then the hypocricall heart is from our ſelves, but the upright heart is from God; *Every good and perfect gift is from above*, James 1. 18. The perfect heart is from the perfect God, the true heart from the God of truth; It is he who teacheth truth, and makes upright, and writes his law in the inward parts.

5. The fifth thing which I would obſerve in uprightneſſe, is its office of adminiſtration, it is ſuch a thing as deales, 1. *about graces.* 2. *about ſins.* 3. *duties.*

Its office and adminiſtration.

1. *For our graces*] uprightneſſe lookes to them that they be rightly aſted: Beloved, uprightneſſe doth not give grace: but orders and directs the acts and operations thereof.

It deals about graces.

Two things I grant! that *all the habits of grace* (are in themſelves intrinſecally conſidered) *really true*; and though imperfection may be in them, yet no morall falſity or counterfeitneſſe: and *that the actions of thoſe holy habits*, conſidered intirely as ſtreaming from them (only as ſo) are likewise *truly holy, and good.*

But then, these acts or actions of gracious habits as working in a subject which hath some falsnesse and bynesse yet remaining, may by reason of that corruption be misdirected & misguided.

3. For hypocrisie doth not only consist in the putting of a good shape upon an evill action (as a faire colour upon a rotten thred) but also in the ill intention or application even of an act (in it selfe) truly good. Charity (without all doubt) is a gracious quality, yet if uprightnesse attends not some of it acts, they may be referred to a private and vaine glorious end, the like may be said of some other graces, as of the love of God, and the feare of God, &c.

For our sins.

2 For sins here also uprightnesse comes into act it selfe: honestnesse (which is nothing else but the newnesse of Nature) that makes opposition to sin, But uprightnesse, that now is an evennesse or impartiality of opposition.

To oppose a little sin, and yet to close with a great sin, to oppose many sins, and yet to hold a knowne and a willing confederacy with any one, to oppose sin in others, and yet to act it our selves, to oppose sin as open to the eye of man, and yet to fall to it in secret, where it is naked to the eye of God; To oppose a sin to which constitution and age deny concurrence of delight or strength, and yet to wallow in others agreeable to our complexions, conditions, and yeares; to oppose the unprofitable sin, which brings nothing in but paine, and yet to admit of gainfull sins, which come with rewards of divination in their hands, to oppose any sin, only because it is painful, and not because it is sinfull; To oppose sin in our straits, and not in our liberties, in sicknesse, and not in health, when only we feare death and not at all under life and strength; I say all these are but hypocrisies, there is an unevennesse of the heart as was in *Saul*, who spared the choicest, and mortified the coursest of the cattle, or as in *Balaam*, who would have been happy in his death, though a Curser of Gods people (in respect of his own intention) in this life.

I Confesse this to be true, that uprightnesse is not the utter Annihilation of sin, No, that effect appertaines to glory, and perfection above; but it is the even and Impartiall opposition of sin: of secret sins, and of presumptuous sins, (as *David* here

here in this *Psalm*) of great and small; in a word it is a conjunctive opposition of sin, that is it carries the heart against all sin, *Psal.* 119. 1. *Blessed are the undefiled in the way,* v. 3. *They do no iniquity* (i) their hearts are for no sin: and the prime reason of all this opposition, I say the prime and immediate reason, is direct and not reflexive; It is because sin is so opposite to God and not primarily, because it is so painfull in the event to the person.

3. *For duties*: here uprightnesse expresseth it selfe, both for matter, wherein, it doth not shuffle and cut, pick and chuse, take the lighter (like the hypocriticall Pharisees) and leave the heaviest to others, but it makes a man to have (with *David*, *Psal.* 119. 6.) a respect to all Gods commands.

For the manner, Any performance will not serve, where the heart is upright, *David danceth before the Lord withal his might; and Paul serveth God in his spirit*, That which came next to hand will serve *Cain*, but *Abel* must present the best of the Cattle, not the lame and the blind, the best, God, shall have the best manner of service, If I heare, that sufficeth not, unlesse it be with reverence and faith; If, I pray, that sufficeth not, unlesse with brokenness of heart, humblenesse of spirit, fervent affections, and faith in Christ: A meet tale of bricke will serve for *Pharaoh*, though the *Israelites* reputed the service a bondage, but when we bring offerings to the Temple, they must be willing, and of the best too.

6. The last thing which I would observe in uprightnesse is its end and scope.

Beloved I pray you to remember that uprightnesse causeth a threefold reference of our services: one is to Gods precept: that's the square and Rule and compasse of upright motions.

Another is to Gods glory, that's the spring which turnes the wheels, the winde which blowes the sayles: it is for Christ sake, said Paul: and whatsever yee do, do all to the glory of God, said he againe.

A third is to Gods acceptance and approbation, so that God will accept, and commend, and approve, 2. Cor. 5. 9. *we labour that whither present or absent, we may be accepted of him*, 2. Cor.

10. 18. *Not he that commendeth himselfe is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.*

More plaine and punctual is that of the same Apostle, in Rom. 2. 29. *He is a Jew which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart in the spirit, and not in the letter, whose praise is not of men but of God.*

The schoolmens observation is sound and true that a particular deficiency is sufficient to marre a good, morally considered, but an univerrall concurrence of circumstances, is required to make the action good. Look, as in reading of Hebrew, leave out but one tittle, one point, you mar the sense, or as in a dosis of Physick, leave out one ingredient you spoyle all. Soe our actions if one circumstance be left out, if the Right and genuine end, be not eyed, it is enough to blanch them with hypocrisie, though for substance they may be commanded to pray, and to give alms, no man will question that these duties substantially considered, are good, and such which the upright person doth performe. But then if a man prayes, or gives almes to be seen of men, Christ tells him that he playes the Hypocrite; If in the performance of any piously externall duty we set our selves as the end, if all these things be done, and with very much fervency and Assiduity, yet only to play the Merchants for our selves, to make a bridge over to our own estimation to blow up our names; This is but Hypocrisie, and I fear a kind of Idolatry, we fall down and worship our selves, like the men of *Shechem* who would admit of circumcision, *shall not their cattle, and all that they have be ours*; The like indifferentnesse may be found in men forward for outward duties, shall not profit be ours, preachers good opinion ours, The Glory and Credite ours, this is a gross Hypocrisie?

Now uprightnesse consists in this, to devolve all the honor of holy services on God, like the faithfull servant, who workes painefully, and speakes consideratly and all this for his Master; or like the shadow which in the dyall moves from point to point, and all this points upward to the sunne in it motions; The humble heart knowes no fountaine but Gods grace. and the upright heart knowes no end, but Gods glory.

They distinguish of a double end.

One is *finis operis*, the end of the work, and that shall be our glory hereafter, as the Apostle spake of faith, *the end of your faith the salvation of your souls*, 1 Pet. 1.9.

Another is *finis operantis*, the end of the workman, and that (if the heart be upright) is Gods glory, *for of him, and through him, and to him, are all things, to him be glory for ever*, Rom. 11.

Yet by your favour this I must suggest by the way, (and perhaps shall handle it more copiously shortly) that in a way of subordination; an upright heart may do God good service: and his glory no wrong, if with all in its fit place, and order, and measure, it cast an eye also on its own reward, *Moses had an eye to it*, Heb. 11.

SECT. II.

Qu. 2. **N**OW I proceed to a second question why we should strive and aim at (as *David* here did) and endeavour to be upright.

Why we should endeavour to be upright.

There are abundant reasons thereof, I will deliver a few unto you.

First, *this uprightnesse is the great thing which God looks for*; *Joh. 4.23. The true worshippers shall worship the Father in Spirit and in truth, for the father seeketh such to worship him.* Gods seeking, notes either his grace which prevents us, or his pleasure which enjoyns us: The father seeketh such to worship him (i.) the Lord by all means would have men in his services to come with spirit and truth, to be upright, *Prov. 23.26. My son give me thy heart, q. d. though the body be made by me; and every part thereof, and though that whole frame be made for me, as well as by me, and thou art to glorifie me in thy body, yet that which I principally enjoyn thee in thy services, is to bring them with thy heart, with affections, intirely and not pretensively.*

Uprightnes is the great thing that God looks for.

Nay, secondly, *this is it which the Lord looks at*: See *Jerem.* This is it the
5. 3. Lord looks at.

5. 3. *Are not thine eyes upon the truth: q. d.* Why? it is not your words which God doth so much regard, nor is it your looks, nor your tears, nor your cries; that which the Lord sets his eye on, is the truth of the heart, in and under all these; uprightnesse there; Excellent is that place in *1 Chr. 29. 17. I know also my God* (said David) *that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightnesse: As for me, in the uprightnesse of my heart I have willingly offered all these things.* In that place you finde David contributing toward the building of the Temple, and stirring up others to that work; and David for his part gave like a King thereto, even three thousand talents of gold, of gold of *Ophir* (ver. 4.) And seven thousand talents of refined silver: and the chief of the Fathers, and the Princes gave also five thousand talents of gold, and ten thousand ammes, and of silver ten thousand talents, and of bras eighteen thousand talents, and one hundred thousand talents of iron, besides precious stones, *v. 6, 7, 8.* Now what a goodly gift was all this, but David presently subjoynes, *I know my God that thou triest the heart, and hast pleasure in uprightnesse, q. d.* O Lord all this is nothing, thou wilt not accept of it, thou wilt not look upon it, if uprightnesse be wanting, O that is it which thou regardest, the heart, the heart thou triest, and if uprightnesse be found there, that is it which thou regardest: You read of the *Jews*, that they made many prayers but God would not hear them, brought many oblations but they were vaine, (*i.*) is of no account, *Esay 1. 11, 12.* and *15.* They remember the solemne feasts, but prevailed not with God, he did shut his eyes: nay, they were at their solemne feasts too; but God took no knowledge, *Esay 58. 3.* He gives the reason in both places, in *Esay 1. 15. your hands are full of blood,* ver. *16. wash ye, &c.* and *Esay 58. 4. Behold ye fast for strife and debate, to smite with the fist of wickedness,* ver. *6. Is not this the fast which I have chosen, to loose the bands of wickednesse. q. d.* away ye hypocrites, do you commit and allow cruelties, and villanies, and oppressions, and whoredomes, and then bring multitudes of sacrifices and oblations, and cryings, and think that I am taken with these; go and cleanse your hearts, mend your lives, leave your sins,

be plain & upright with me, that is it which I look at more then any thing, that is it which pleaseth me; Hence it is that oftimes in Scripture, that the Hebrew word [*Jasbar*] which signifies Right, is many times translated *apēsōv*, pleasing, as *Numb.* 23. 27. perhaps it will seem right in the eyes of the Lord, we translate it, peradventure *it will please God*: so true is that of *Solomon*, *Prov.* 11. 20. *Such as are upright in their way, are his delight*, yea, and so that phrase of walking with God (which is nothing else but the path of the just or upright) is rendred by the Septuagint pleasing of God; as *Gen.* 5. 22. 24. *holy Enoch walking with God*: The seventy renders it, he pleased God.

Thirdly, *this seemes to be the only thing that God expects*, *1 Sam.* 12. 24. *onely fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart*, *Deut.* 10. 12. *And now Israel what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, but to fear the Lord thy God, and to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul*. When the Lord did enter into the Covenant with *Abraham*, *Gen.* 17. and promised to be an *All-sufficient God* unto him: what doth he require of *Abraham* but only this, *be thou upright*: when he advanced *Solomon* to the Kingdome, and enricht him with honour, and wealth, and wisdom, above all that ever sat on the Throne, what did he require of him, *1 Kings* 3. 14. *walk in my wayes, keep my Statutes as thy father David did*; How was that? see back to *vers.* 6. *David my father walked before thee in truth and righteousness, and in uprightnesse of heart*. When *Paul* had commended many singular things of knowledge and duty to the *Corinthians*, he closeth up all with, *finally, my brethren, be perfect*, *2 Cor.* 13. 11. *q. d.* Will you have me to give you all in one word, why then be perfect, be upright.

4. *Uprightnesse doth bring the whole man unto God*; It is that which commands all, and carries all with it: *the thoughts*, doth bring the these inward and sweet breathings of the minde, *Let the meditations of my heart be alwayes acceptable in thy sight*, O Lord God, *my strength and my Redeemer*, saith upright *David* in *Psalme*

19.14. The words, *Let the words of my mouth be acceptable; so he there, the mouth of the righteous speaketh wisdom, and his talk is of judgement*, Psalm 37. 30. *The heart, the Law of his God is in his heart*, Psalm 37. 31. *my heart is fixed*, saith David; again, *the conversation*, that is ordered aright, Psalm 50. hath a man any gifts, many gifts, why uprightnesse brings in their use and strength to God, hath he any graces, why? uprightnesse brings in their service to God: it keeps us in with God, and are one with God, and will not suffer us to deal falsely with God.

God judgeth of
a man by his
uprightnesse.

5. *God judgeth of a man by his uprightnesse*; thou art in his judgement good or bad, according to the presence or absence of uprightnesse; this is that which distinguisheth twixt the precious and the vile, twixt the faithful and the unsound. In outward appearances, and in the colour of visible services, the good and the bad may go hand in hand, both may hear, both may read, both may pray, both may preach, both may receive the Sacrament, both may give almes, but *God judgeth not as man judgeth by outward appearance*, he is a spirit, and truth it self, and therefore judgeth of actions by the spirit and as done in truth; *he searcheth the heart and reins*, and notwithstanding all the outward appearances of the strict and pompous Pharisees, yet he reputerh them as hypocrites, and so condemns them, *Matth. 23. 28.* mettals (you know) are not judged and valued to be gold by the gilt put upon them, but by that power and excellent substance which is in them. And the natural gold, though it look (sometimes pale) if yet it hath the true nature of gold is judged and reckoned above all counterfeit and gilded pieces; so even pompous services, which seem faire and glorious to the eyes of men, may be rejected of God; and the pretenders severely censured, because their hearts under these, are false and rotten, like a dead man cloathed with a faire robe, or a Sepulchre garnished outwardly, yet within filled with dead and loathsome carcases; And the upright Christian, whose works are not so precious to the sight, whose prayers may be sparing in words, yet filled up with sighs and groanes, and whose services may be interrupted with many distractions (by

(by him resisted and bewailed) may be graciously accepted and rewarded, because his sincerity is observed by Gods eye. The poore *widow could-cast in butt a mite*, a very small doir, yet of great account was it, it was more in Christs exposition, then the treasure cast in by others, why? because she did it in uprightnesse, her heart laid down the mite, and only their hands put in their gifts; her gift was to succour the poor; the end of their bounty was to flame their own praise. The *Church of Philadelphia* hath more praise then all the other Churches, and yet we read she *had but a little strength*, Rev. 3. 8. A little strength, yea, but it was upright for she *held fast* the truth, and God judged of her by that.

Thus for the explication of the proposition; now I proceed to the Application of it to our selves, which I shall reduce to these heads.

1. Of Trial and Examination.
2. Of Consolation.
3. Of Caution.
4. Of Exhortation.

SECT. III.

THe first Use shall be to *reflect upon upon our own hearts*, ^{Use I.} and to feel their temper: Beloved, this is it which God looks on, and which gives unto us our denomination; It is not naked action which make us or marres us, our affections are (in a sort) all in all; God complains many times of the *Israelites*, that they *brought him no incense, no sacrifice, no service*, why? was there none of these at all! perhaps sometimes many of these, yet God accounts them none; It is not what we do, but with what heart, which makes God to reckon of our services. They are but as ciphers (which makes no number) without uprightnesse: God you know is truly good, and infinitely wise and searching, and spiritually holy; that must be brought to

To reflect upon our own hearts.

C c

him

him which is like to him, or else it is not approved: Would you be paid with counterfeit gold? doth the shew please you without the substance? will the complements of men satisfie you without a real friendship? will a gaudy rotten hoase content you, which hath no solidity and goodnesse? would you take the words of your servants, and their legs as sufficient? while their hearts are false in their callings. Nay, would you be content that God should make a shew only, a pretence that he would pardon you, and help, and comfort, and save you; and yet deny you real love, real mercy, real comfort, real help and salvation, then think how God should take shews from you without uprightnesse of heart.

Therefore I pray you take some paines with your hearts, bring them to the ballance of the Sanctuary, weigh them there, reduce them to the rule, try them there, whether they be upright or no.

To quicken
you to this tri-
al. Consider,

Let me premise a few particulars which may prepare and quicken you to this tryal for uprightnesse of heart.

Eight things.

There is no
deceit of so
dangerous con-
sequence.

First, *There is no deceit or erreur in the world, of more dangerous consequence, then for a man to deceive himself, and to erre about the right temper of his soule.* A man may mistake himself in the depth of his riches, or the altitude of worldly friendship, or latitude of his intellectual qualifications and abilities, he may think himself rich, and favoured, and learned, when perhaps he is not so; but these mistakes are about *nostra*, not about *nos*, ours, but not our selves, and the danger may be only a tempest, but not a shipwrack: But for a man to deceive himself about his heart, about his soule; why? what hath he more? what hath he like them? they are fundamental errors; if a man lays a rotten foundation instead of a sound, all his building at length sinks to the ground: If a man sets forth in a fair ship, whose bottom is unsound and leaking, he loseth himselfe in the voyage. Why? upon the right and solid frame of the soule depends the eternity of our happiness; and therefore the error here is great and irrecoverable: when a man hath past over many years in a form of godlinesse, in an ingenuity of a civil carriage, in a courting

of God by some external and naked performances, and comes to die, and then his conscience riseth up and opens the secrets of his heart and life, and makes him to know and feel, that notwithstanding all his pretences and conceits that his heart hath continually harboured many known lusts, and he did not minde God, but himself basely in all that he did; what a fearful day will this be? how will it make the soul to tremble, when it hath no more time now but to see, and eternally bewaile its own errours and deceits: O Lord, saith that oppressed man, I have deceived my own soul, I thought my self thus and thus; but my heart hath deceived and beguiled me.

2. Yet secondly consider that *Hypocrisie*, which is apt to beguile and deceive us, is a very naturall and common thing. Hypocrisie is a very common thing.

There are three sorts of persons in the world.

Openly profane: who faile in the matter and in the manner; they are neither really good, nor seeme so to be: they are really wicked, and declare themselves so to be; the plague of their heart beakes out into Carbuncles and Botches.

Closely hypocritical, who faile not so much in the matter as in the manner; who are wicked but seeme good, who act some good, but love more wickednesse.

Truly upright, who are so in the matter and manner of Gods worship.

Now I say that hypocrisie is very naturall, it hath been and is a very common sinne, *Job 15. 34.* Speaks of a *Congregation of hypocrites*; as if there were whole Assemblies of them, or at least some of them in every Congregation. *Esay 9. 17.* Complains in his time, that *every one is an hypocrite*, scarce a man but did dissemble with God; So *Esay 29. 13.* with their lips they do honour me, &c. David tells us often of the *Israelites*, that they did flatter God himself with their mouths: gave him (in their distresse) as mournful, and yeelding, and promising language (O what would they be, and what would they do, if God would deliver them) and yet their heart was not right in them: *Jeremiah* accuseth those of his time for

this very thing too; many of them, nay, most of them, *Cried, the Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord,* and yet committed adultery and lies, &c. when Christ was in the world his greatest contestation was with Scribes, Pharisees, Hypocrites; *Paul* bitterly dealeth against those, who took on them the *forme of godlinesse*, but denied the power therof: and in the *2 Tim. 4. 12.* He foretels of much lying hypocrisie which should befall in the latter times, and verily we need not go farre from the proof of it; how many amongst us, with the foolish Virgins carry *Lamps without oyle*; or with the *fig-tree*, bear leaves without *fruit*. Like the Crow which took the feathers, but kept his own nature; or like the Assle, which took the lions skin, but not his body. It was *Machivels* rule, that the shew of vertue was easie and profitable, and therefore he adviseth men to put that on, but the study and habit of vertue was difficult, and therefore he adviseth to let that alone; how abundantly doth this satisfie many, if they can look like good men, though they will not take paines to be so, if they can speak like good Chistians though they will not live so: A trades-man many times when he gets a Minister to Supper, will speak of heaven, and such things as if he were upon his death bed, and yet that man doth nothing in the world, but scrape for the world, and tiers out his own soul and body, and his servants in a drudgery for earth, yea, rather then he will not be rich, he will cast himself upon most indirekt means. How ordinary is it for us to frequent the Church, perhaps to listen a while (if we cannot sleep quietly) and then to bestow a little holy water upon the Minister, a word or two, that he spake well and home, and yet we strive not to put any one holy counsel into the love of our hearts, or obedience of our lives.

Nay, to let these things passe, take us in the general Tenour of our best ways: The good God be merciful to us, what a distance is there many times (when we pretend to serve God) twixt our tongues and our hearts, twixt our eyes and our hearts, twixt our ears and our hearts, twixt our bodies and our hearts. Our tongues are praying, and our mouths singing, and our eyes looking on the Minister, and our cares

as if hearing, and at the same moments our hearts are plotting, projecting, ordering our own domestical affaires, or which is worse basely contemplating, and acting of some abominable lust within us. Now call you this uprightnesse, if this be not hypocrisie, I know not what is: Nay yet, a little more take us in our most compleat performances, when we bring our thoughts and intentions, and some affections, some workings to our work, yet tell me seriously whether in it you are not looking besides God; when you many times pray long, and with many affections in company (though when you be alone, a little shall serve the turn) do not you, like the *Camelion* live upon the aire, is not *Jehu's* pang in you, *Come and see my zeal*: is not the *Pharisees* humour of vain-glory highly acting, *to be seen of men*, and is not this hypocrisie, directly and intentionally to juttle God aside, to serve our own praise in a pretence of serving him, that others may admire us, and speak well of us.

Nay, I could adde one thing more (which perhaps may make some of our hearts to tremble) are there not, who explicite-ly and deliberately with much studious art, snatch unto themselves a robe, a look, a discourse, a garb of holinesse, for no other end in the world, but to provoke to sin, and to blind their secret actings of sinning from the eyes of the world. As the souldiers in the field cast up a transverse line to cover their digging enterprises from the enemies observation. This is a most execrable kinde and method of hypocrisie, yet as *Gebazi* used his Masters name to gratifie his covetous desire, so divers abuse the name of Religion, only to satisfie their beastly and damnable lust.

Thirdly, *an Hypocrite may go very farre*, and therefore the more reason have we to see that our hearts be upright. An hypocrite
may go very far

In the generall I conceive that there is not any one external part of religion or duty, into which the hypocrite may not only step, but perhaps (for shew) exceed the sincerest and most upright Christian: what *Paul* spake in another case of himself: *Are they Hebrews? so am I; are they Israelites? so am I; are they the seed of Abraham? so am I,* 2 Cor. 11. 22.

That

That may the hypocrite say for his part in this case, about the actions and parts of duty, &c. Doth the true Christian hear? so do I; doth he pray? so do I; doth he shed tears? so do I; doth he fast? so do I; doth he give almes? so do I; doth he shew respect to the Minister by sautes and invites? so do I; is he forward? I am zealous; doth he reprove? I do thunder; doth he speak some words in prayer? I speak many; doth he any good? I do more, in hearings more, in fastings more, in discourfings more, in outward actions, every way more: Cast and order duties every way for object, for place, for time, still the hypocrite keeps up for *duties to God* (I mean the external parts of his worship) in praying privately, publickly, hearing, reading, preaching, yea, and all these with some transient affections of joy, all this may be in him: *For duties to man*: why? an hypocrite may be as civil, as just, as faire, ingenuous, affable, bountiful, compassionate as any one that I know: The Pharisees (whom yet Christ did condemn for very hypocrites, yea, even those self-same *Pharisees*) were yet the punctilioes of the times, no person living were more exact, they did tythe the very mint and cummin, as if the would have observed the whole Law to an haire.

Yea, and for *privative piety*, which consists in exceptions from grosse finnes, heare one of them for all the rest, blessing and commending himselfe, *I am no extortioner, no adulterer, nor like this Publican, &c. I fast twice in the week, I give almes of all that I possess.*

4. *His heart is rotten, and his grounds are rotten, notwithstanding all this.*

The hypocrite
his heart is rotten
notwithstanding
all his
shews.

Though man cannot discern him, yet God can, and hath limmed him out for unsoundnesse in his word; there is some secret lust which consists, and stands, notwithstanding all this, either *Herods sin*, or *Demas's sin*, filthinesse, or worldlinesse; the *Pharisees* were wondrously covetous.

And his ends are base: the Pyrate may riage, and trim, and steer, and order his ship as artificially and exquisitely as any Pilot, who is the Kings most faithful servant: only their hearts and their ends are different, one is disloyal, and
the

the other is true; one goes out to catch a prey and a bootie, a prize for himself; and the other sailes for his Masters honour and service; The upright heart falls upon dutie with fear, yet with affections, he cannot do so much, yet it is in truth, and what he doth, as it is by his Masters strength, so it is faithfullie intended for his Masters glory. But selfe-love, and pride, and vaine glorie, fill the sailes of the hypocrite; If you could paire of those accidental and by-causes, he were no more able to hold on in duties thus, then the bird to flie without her wings, or the ship to run, when the wind drives and fills out the saile.

Will the Hypocrite pray at all times, said he, in *Job*, so that all which the Hypocrite doth is with a base heart, like a slave, and for base ends, like a flatterer.

5. *It is a vain and foolish thing to be hypocritical in our services.*

It is vain and foolish to be hypocritical in our services.

This is certain that a man cannot be an hypocrite, but he must take some pains, he must be very officious in pretences and duties, it must cost him some money to give almes, and much time to pray, &c. And when all is done, nothing comes of it.

In respect of God, he hath no reward with him; there is no reason to give him wages, who bestows not his service on us: the hypocrite did serve himself and not God, his owne praise and not Gods glory, and therefore he can expect no reward from him: he cannot say, I prayed for grace, that I might honour thee, and for abilities that I might glorifie thee.

In respect of man: for if a man be known to be an hypocrite, then he loseth himself on all hands; evil men hate him, for the very shew of goodnesse; and good men scorn him, for his base dissimulation and rottenness.

But suppose he can conceal his hypocrisie, then all the reward that he hath from men is but an ayrie applause, *Marth. 6. 5. When thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are, for they love to pray standing in the Synagogues, and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men, verily I say unto you, they have their reward, (i.) They have what they*

they look for, the applause of men, and that's all; let them not expect any other reward: And brethren, this is a sad thing, when a mans reward is only from man: when all his reward is in this life, and no rewards reserved for him hereafter.

Nay, and the hypocrite is not so sure of this reward from man neither, he may misse of it, either for the kinde or measure of it, and that will vex his heart: like fiddlers (that regard care service) whose whole streine is to please the humours of men; they somerimes get but little, and with that many reproachful words and blowes; so it may fare with an hypocrite, whose actions are set only to the itch of applause and commendation, &c.

Hypocrisie is a most per'ous sinne.

6. Nay, hypocrisie is a most perillous sinne, *you shall receive the greater damnation*, said Christ, *Damnation!* O that is the eternall grave of the soul, it speaks misery enough, everlasting separation from God, and everlasting flames of wrath in hell, yet that is the portion of the hypocrite, *Esay 33. 14. The sinners in Zion are afraid, fearfulness hath surpris'd the hypocrites, who among us shall dwell with the devouring fire? who among us shall dwell with everlasting burnings?*

Greater Damnation: An ordinary hell is not all for an hypocrite: As if the furnace were heated seven times more hot: the lowest and deepest punishment shall fall on him, who presumes to put on the fairest shew with the foulest heart: And do not think this strange, for what is hypocrisie but a mocking of God: The hypocrite doth (as it were,) put tricks upon him, and thinks to couzen omniscience, and basely esteeme of him, as if meere shews would satisfie him; nay, he doth justle God out of his prime place, by referring all his services to himself, and not to God, and so doth adore his own name above the Name of God. Verily my brethren, these are sad things, and if our hearts be not made of rock and stone, they may awaken and startle them, to take heed least we be guilty of this hypocrisie, which is so diametrically opposite to uprightnesse.

7. Againe consider, that it is a very difficult thing to be upright: though it be that acceptable frame of spirit so pleasing to God and so comfortable (as we may hear) to us, yet it is not so easie to be upright, whither you consider-

It is a difficult thing to be upright.

If we consider.

1. That *deceitfulness which is in mans heart: the heart* (Jerem. 17. 9.) is *deceitful above all things*, q. d. there is not such a cunning thing as it, not a thing in all the world which can delude us so easily, so often as our owne hearts: O what ado have we with our selves many times to speake a little duty, what disputes oftentimes against it, many reasonings must be answered and silenced, before we will yield to do the very worke, so much as to heare, as to pray by our selves, and with others, and to give almes &c: And then if the worke be extorted from us, yet what pumping before any water comes, what collision, and striking before few sparkes of fire will fly out? my meaning is, much ado to bring our hearts to our tongues, our affections to our services, without which they cannot be upright. And when this is done, then to set up the right end and scope, and their to settle our intention fast and plaine: O how difficult! many by aimes and indirect ends do often present themselves, that it is with us, as with boys in writing, we draw many crooked lines, or as with them in archery, we shoot by-hither or beyond, or beside the mark; it is not easie to do good because God commands it, or only because he may be glorified.

The deceitfulness of the heart.

2. That *spiritualness which is required in upright motions*; I tell you that the very soule must act it selfe, if the heart or way be upright: not only his lips but his spirit must pray; not only his eare, but his heart must hear; he must not only profess against sin, but his soule must hate and abhor it, And there is no revealed and known duty to which his very heart doth not strive to obey: yea, and the ground of all this must be spirituall and not carnal, from God and for God.

The spiritualness required in upright motions.

Assuredly, these things are impossible to an evill man, and he who is most good, shall confesse it to be most hard, to be plaine with God, and to walke evenly before him.

8. Lastly to be upright is a possible thing, a man may attaine unto it, Nay every good man doth attaine unto it? Noah was upright and walked with God, Abraham was upright before him,

to be upright is a possible thing

David kept him from his sin, and he did serve the Lord in uprightness of heart, *Hezekiah* did so likewise, *Remember Lord that I have walked before thee in truth, and with an upright heart: Paul served God in all good conscience, willing to live honestly in all things?* Though no man can say that he doth all that Gods commands require, yet he may say he hath respect unto them all; and though none can say he hath nothing in him, or nothing is done by him, which the law of God doth forbid, yet he may say, I hate every false way, and search me, O Lord, if there be any way of wickednesse within me: and this is uprightnesse:

Ob. But you will say if the case be so; how may one know that he is indeed upright?

Discourses of
uprightnesse

Sol. There are many discoveries of it, I pray you to observe them, and try your selves by them, let your consciences testify for you before the lord this day.

1. If a man be upright, *he will mostly strive for an inward reformation of his heart.*

The upright
man most
strives for the
inward
reformation.

There are two things which the upright person doth most look at, his God, and his heart. The Hypocrites (as our saviour testifies) they are for the outside, they wash the platters and the cups, and beautifie the tombes, like an adulteresse whose care is to paint, and to set a faire face upon the matter; all their care is to the eye of man: how to be seen and hard, how to be well thought on? Now uprightnesse is mostly for the heart and spirit: not that an upright person should or doth neglect the well-ordering his life, O no! as to neglect our hearts, argues hypocrisie; so to neglect our lives argues profanesse.

But the principle care of uprightnesse is the reformation of the heart; though it lookes to the cleansing of the hand, yet principally of the heart, according to that of the Apostle, *Jam. 4.8.* Why brethren, it well knowes that the heart is it which God looks for and lookes at, the heart is it which God delights in, if that be right and true he is pleased, *thou lovest truth in the inward parts, Psal. 51. the upright in heart: are his delight.* David is full in this concerning his heart, *Psal. 119. 10. with my whole heart have I sought thee, v. 11. Thy word have I hid within my heart, that I might not sinne against thee, incline my heart unto thy testi-*

monies, and not unto covetousness Rom. 1.9. God is my witness whom I serve with my spirit; the heart of man, is the fountaine of life or death, and every thing is strongest in the heart, and most dangerous: sinne in the heart is worse then in the life: (i.) when a mans heart is set upon his sin; now Try your selves, in this particular: what care have you of your hearts? what paines do you take with them? you many times have humble looks, yea but have you not still proud hearts? you have many times contented words, yea but have you not still impatient and discontented hearts? you have many times heavenly discourse? yea but have you not still earthly and worldly hearts? what doe you wish them? doe you not let your hearts still loose? do you not give them way to be filled with wicked contemplations, vaine imaginations, filthy inclinations, with envy, malice, unbelieve; or do you mourne under these, do you strive to cleanse within: is it not sufficient that your outward actions look well, unlesse your hearts be made better; O if this heart were holy! If this heart were humble! If this heart were heavenly! If the heart were believing! The hypocrite cares not though the thread be rotten, if the colour or glosse be faire: but the upright person he is more at substance then shew, and hath more to doe with his heart, then any thing: he would have the law written not upon his tongue, but upon his heart cleansed, as well as his life beautified.

2. *If a man be upright, then a little holiness will not serve his turne;* he is not contented with some measures, but strives after perfection, see this clearly delivered by the Apostle, in Phil. 3. 12. *Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect, but I follow after, if that I may apprehend, that for which also I am apprehended, of Jesus Christ, v. 13. I count not my self to have apprehended, but this one thing I doe, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, v. 14. I press then toward the mark, for the price of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus: v. 15. Let us therefore as many as be perfect be thus minded, q. d. If you be upright, thus will it be with you, you will not be satisfied with small beginnings, with received measures, but you will reach*

If a man be upright then a little holiness will not serve his turne.

on for farther conformity to Christ.

There is a difference twixt desires of holiness, for it selfe and God, and for our selves and ends: An hypocrite could be content to have as much holinesse, as would serve his turne, his owne turne, his owne ends; as a tradesmen is willing to be at cost that his apprentice learne to write and cipher, so much, and so long, as he may be enabled to keep the accounts; but he will not be at cost to teach him the excellency of writing or ciphering. But now the upright person desires grace, and holiness for God; that glory may be brought unto him, and out of an intrinsecall love of the beauties of holinesse, and for the farther rooting out of sin, And for the better Inabling to holy services: his ends are publike and therefore a little serves not.

an upright man
walks by an up-
right rule.

3. If a man be upright, then a man will walke by a right rule; he orders his conversation and wayes according to the word of God. A right ordering of all our actions, by a right rule, in a right way, by right persons, out of right principles, for right ends, this is uprightnesse.

An upright
person hath a
conformable
disposition of
heart about all
sins.

3. A person may know whither he be upright or no? by the conscionable disposition of his heart about all sinnes? David speaking of such, who were undefiled, Psal. 119. 1. And sought the Lord with their whole heart, v. 2. he addeth, v. 3. They alsoe do no iniquity, q. d. this is not their worke, this is not the thing which they do approve, or allow, in which they live and walke; sinne is not the upright mans worke, it is a strang work, and a stranger work: and David being to manifest his own uprightnesse, saith Psal. 118. 23. I was also upright before him, and I kept my self from iniquity: yea Psal. 119. 101. I have refrained my feet from every evill way: Job was an upright man one that feared God, and eschewed evill, Job 1. 1. There was never any hypocrite living but his heart was false; it did never condemn all sin in him: peruse the scriptures, and you shall read of none of them but they had some one way of wickednesse or other. Jehu had his calves, notwithstanding all his zeale for God: Herod kept his Herodias, notwithstanding all his forwardnesse and gladnesse, and reverence to Iohn Baptist: The Pharisees kept their covetousnesse notwithstanding all their formal

small strictnesse and rigour: *The young man* would not see all, notwithstanding all his profession of former obedience and Questionings, *what yet lack I*; Soe on the contrary, there was never any person upright, but his heart made conscience of all sin: what is that? that is, he would be rid of all, he would not allow himselfe in any one, he would not keep up the covenant with sinne, by being dispensed with in any one particular.

Ob. But you will say, this may be hard, for who can say my heart is cleane, even the just man doth sinne seaven times a day.

Sol. Beloved you mistake me; I do not say that this is a sign of uprightnesse, that a man hath not sin in him, or that he doth never act sin, Indeed this were hard, No man living should be upright by this! But I say that the upright person makes conscience of all sin, he sets against all sin, he opposeth, he condemneth, he disalloweth all sin, he will not be in covenant with any sinne.

Ob. Yet you may object, but how may I know that I make conscience of all sin?

Sol. I will not insist on all which may be spoken, onely take three things, which will shew your uprightnesse in a conscience of all sin.

1. if you be upright, *you will make conscience of secret as well as open sins.* Why the feare of man? the regard of our own credit, the love of our own advantages, may prevaile with an evill man, with an hypocrite, to keep in, to worke craftily? Not to sin at noon-day, to hold off in publike, and yet the love of sin prevailes upon him with ease, to work wickednesse in the dark, in private, in secret, for he saith none doth see me; an hypocrite is a secret sinner, (9.) restraints are then taken off. But the upright person, he hates sin because it is open, and therefore he doth not act it because it is secret, or decline it because it is open, but he shuns both the one and the other, because they are both sinful, *Job's heart was not secretly intised* Job. 31. 26, 27. Is *David* in his family? there will he walke with an upright heart, Psal. 101. 2. Is *Joseph* alone; yet he dares not to do so great a wickedness and sin against God, Gen. 9.

He that makes conscience of all sin.

You will make conscience of secret as well as open sins.

Nay, David hates all vain thoughts Psal. 119. And Solomon saith that the thoughts of the righteous are right, Prov. 12. 5. the upright person strives against secret inclinations, and would have even the imaginations cast downe which are seen only by God.

of the least sins.

2. You will make conscience of the least sins, sin, we do usually divide into gross, and foule; and into little, and small; not that any sin is small in a relation to the rule; but that one is not so great and hainous in comparison of one sin with another. Now where sins are reputed gross, and foule, and palpable, even the civil man, and the formal hypocrite may be very precise, very conscionable, very tender, but for lesser oaths, for usual omissions, for trifles, for sinful atires, for sinful associating with lewd and vile persons, &c: alas these are poor thins, small things! why should we stand upon them? Nay be not deceived, God is not mocked, the mote must be plucked out, as well as the beam; Davids heart *sa. oie him for cutting of the lap of Sauls garment*, as well as it rose against the vile counsell to cut of Sauls life? he that is not faithful in the least, wil not be faithfull in the greatest: And that man who will dispense with himselfe in small sins, if occasion serve, will like wise give himselfe a commission for great transgressions: uprightnesse knows no such distinction (in respect of approbation and allowance) twixt great and small; it is probable that *Ananias* layd down a great part of his estate, yet herein was the falsenesse of his heart, that he kept back some of the estate; Hypocrisie doth not consist in this, that a man doth wallow in all sins, but in this, that a man will allow himselfe in some sins: Now try your selves in this, conscionableness about small sins, even lesser sins, (to upright persons) are objects of great hatred, and causes of great trouble.

of sins which are in a sort more connatural.

3. you will make conscience, of sins which are in a sort more connatural. Though every sin in respect of the original principle of sin be naturall to man in his corrupt estate, yet their are special sins, which have in respect of their actings and course, more immediate favour and countenance from a sinner: v. g.

Those of particular inclination: and those of custome: and frequent practise, and those of a mans particular condition and cal-

calling, and those of present profit and pleasure.

I doe conjecture that there is scarce any one man living, unlesse he hath intirely given up himselfe to Satan, who doth cast away himselfe upon the service of every sin whatsoever; and that their is scarce a person; who is not more haunted with some particular sinful inclination more then another.

Now where the heart is Hypocriticall? though it will proclaim defiance against many kindes of sinning, yet as *Naaman* spake in another case; so doth the hypocrite concerning some particular lusts, *onely be rein the Lord be mercifull unto me*, In this I must be spared: therefore *Zophar* speaking of the wicked and the hypocrite, *Iob. 20. 5.* he saith) *that wickednesse is sweet in his mouth, he hides it under his tongue, v. 12. and v. 13.* that he spares it, and forsakes it not, but keeps it still with in his mouth; he is besotted and intangled, and sets himselfe unto the power of some pleasant and profitable lust or other, and no word of command or threatning, no passage of affliction and trouble, no experience or sense, no inward accusation and rebukes of conscience, will ever be able to draw of his heart from it, though the Hypocrite may contend against many sinnings, yet he never stands against the sin of his profit or pleasure: like a Fisher he may throw away many of the small fishes, but he keeps those which will make a sale and merchandise. But now if the heart be upright, then a marvellous tenderesse, and conscience will be found in thee, even against those sins which formally thou didst love as dearly as thine one life. Thou wilt set against that profitable sin, of which *De verrius* said, *that by this craft I get my wealth*: And thou wilt set against that sin, of which *Herod* spake, *that she pleased him greatly*, that sin which formerly was to thy affections, as the oyle to the lampe, and as *Ioseph* to *Jacob*; Now thou wilt strive against it, as thy only choice enemy and betrayer of thy soule: and salvation, *David* (if I mistake not, and Interpreters deceive me not) made this a testimony of his uprightnesse, in *Psal. 18. 23*: *I was upright before him, and kept my selfe from mine iniquity*; Iniquity may be called mine, either in respect of *approbation and covenant* (as a man may say this wife is mine, this Master is mine) or in respect of *special inclination*, so a man may say, this is mine iniquity. (i)
that

that sin to which about all other, I finde my self most apt and ready and prone: So *David* here, I kept my self from mine iniquity (*i.*) from the iniquity into which I am naturally so apt and prone to fall into: And this he makes as an argument of his uprightnesse, *viz.* that as he did not hunt after other sins, so when his speciall corruption did incline and tempt, when those did work upon him, unto which (if he spake but the least word, and gave the least leave) his naturall inclination would have throughly and easily kindled and thrust out it self, yet he would not harken, but did oppose, he did more narrowly and punctually watch, and besige his heart in these.

Let me adde, uprightnesse appeares thus about sins?

1. It will endure tryall. *Psa. 139. Try me O Lord, and see if their be any wickedness in me.*

2. It will often try it selfe, and examine it selfe, least any sin should settle.

3. It scares it self, and is suspicious, *Master it is I, said the Disciple? and Iob offered Sacrifice, least his Sons have sinned.*

4. It will blesse God for being kept from sin, as *David* did for *Abigails* counsels.

5. It is most severe against our own sins, an hypocrite is a severe judge of others, as the *Pharisees* against *Christ*; but an upright person throwes the first stone at himself.

6. It condemnes sin in all, in parents, as *Jonathan* did *Sauls* prejudice against *David*, and as *Jacob* did severely judge & condemn sin in *Simeon* and *Levy*, and in *Rachel*; and *John the Baptist* did in *Herod*, and *Christ* in the *Pharisees* at their own table.

7. It grieves for its own sins, yea and for the sins of others, *David* doth not only water his couch with his teares for his owne sins, but also *Rivers of teares ran down his eyes, because men kept not Gods Law.*

8. It is more moved for sins against God, then injuries done un'o our selves. *David* cannot bear *Goliaths* blasphemies and reproaches yet can beare, *Shimeis Railings.*

9. Abstinence sufficeth not without hatred, hatred sufficeth not without mortification.

4. Tryall of a mans uprightnesse, may be his disposition and temper

temper about holy duties and services? Looke as a mans heart is false when it pretends a respect to God, and yet will allow it selfe in any sin which offends God, so is it false when notwithstanding all semblances of pious observances, it will not be wrought upon to be truly and intirely obedient to God

Uprightnesse is known by a mans disposition about holy duties.

But I will not digresse: I conceive there are five things about our duties and services which may manifest the uprightnes of our hearts, viz.

In five things. Universally.

1. *Universality?* David did take this for a speciall testimony of his uprightnes; *that he had respect unto all Gods commands*, Psal. 119. 6. and Paul thought it so, who did *exercise himselfe to have alwaies a conscience voyd of offence towards God and man*, Act. 24. 16. so Heb. 13. 18. *we must trust that we have a good conscience in all things, willing to live honestly*: true obedience doth neither dispute nor divide, it is given unto God, upon a bare command, and it doth not crave a dispensation in part, where Gods commands are more easy, there the upright persons goes on with chearfulnesse, and when they seem strang and more hard, there also he goes on with readinesse: Abraham is resolved to obey God in all things, though it be to part with his country, yea with his sonne. The rule is good and true, *Quicquid propter deum fit, equaliter fit*: he who doth serve and obey God, for Gods sake, will equally obey all that God commands him: No one command is unjust or unreasonable to him whose heart is upright in obedience. I Question not, but that the hypocrite may goe very far, in the visible parts of duties and services, you may finde him forward and stirring and not a little boasting with *Jehu, come and see my zeale*, and yet if *Jehosaphat*, had gone a little farther, he might have seen his calves too, contrary to Gods commands.

An Hypocrites obedience cannot be universall, forasmuch as his ground, and motives are particular: this is a truth, that no motion exceeds its motive: according to the strength and amplitude or restrictivenesse of it, and a man set to worke.

Now the reasons and Inducements of the hypocrites obedience are partial, and not conjunctive & common, he may come to heare the word, and he may receive it with singular joy, he

may finde his affections marvellously raised, only the question now is, how far, and upon what grounds? verily, only because, and only so far as the word is a pleasing word, so far as it is cloathed and apparelled with a spruce elegancy of phrase, or with some unusual notions, or some delicate elocution, &c. all which do fit his humour, and claw the itch off his minde. But now he is not equally delighted, this acceptance of the word is not universal: let the same word be delivered as a searching, and dividin., and condemning word, then it is otherwise. Now you shall see, that the shaking of the tree will make the rotten fruit: at the core (which yet looked red and ripe to the eye) to fall to the ground: let the word come close, and lay hold, and search him to the quick; Now you shall see the hypocrite like the wounded or crazy part, though cloathed as fair as the sound parts, yet if strictly handled, the party cannot endure, he cannot abide it, he grows impatient and unquiet. Touch an hypocrite upon the maine duty; *Go*, saith *Christ*, to the young covetous person, *sell all and follow me*; what doth he now, who pretended he had done all before? the text saith, *he went away very sorrowful*. *Herod* hears *John Baptist* gladly, and did many things, yea, but it is not lawful for thee to have thy brothers wife, said *John* unto him, how doth this doctrine, this duty go downe with him, *John* lost his liberty, and then his head for his labour.

Constancy of
obedience.
Simile.

2. *Constancy of obedience*: The Physicians do observe a difference twixt the natural and preternatural heate in mens bodies; the preternatural heat which ariseth from distemper, may be more for the present, but as it exceeds for measure, so it abates for time, because the natural heat is a more equal, and moderate, and durable heat, every part hath an equal share; and it is not extreame, and yet it continues: Thus it is with hypocrites and upright persons in the matter of obedience. The hypocrite may (in a kinde of preternatural heat) he may in a fit, in a present heat fall violently upon duty, upon resolution; O what a man will he become, how shall his family be reformed; and now he will read, and hear, and pray, and he will leave his sinne; but anon he hath lost

his heat, the cold fit takes him, he restraines prayer, he layes aside his resolutions; *will the hypocrite pray always?*

There are three times wherein an hypocrite may expresse great forwardnesse in duties, in services to God.

1. One, when straits of conscience are on him, and the fear of death are ready to lay hold on him: *In their affliction they poured out a prayer unto me*, Esay 26. 16. Pharaoh and Ahab were much wrought upon in their exigences, *Psal. 78. when he slew them, then they sought him.*

2. Another, when obedience and duty are not dangerous, but calme and commodious: As the *Samaritans*, when the *Jews* prospered, &c. Therefore Christ sets out an *Hypocrite* by that ground which was stony, and had not much earth, upon which the seed fell, and forthwith sprang up (without any more ado) *Matth 13. 5. but when the Sunne was up, it was scorched and withered away*, ver. 6. He applies it to hypocrites, who *hear the word, and receive it with joy*, verse 20. *And yet this endureth but for a while, for when tribulation, or persecution ariseth because of the Word, by and by he is offended*, ver. 21. If Gods service be so hot, so dangerous, if it must cost him his liberty, his estate, his friends, his ease, his life, then farwel it: *The house built on the sands, when the wind arose, it fell*, Mat. 7. 27.

3. When he hath some props, or in the presence of others. Many do duties while *Moses* is present, or *Jehoiadah* lives, or the good *Judges* continue; but if *Moses* be absent, then the *Israelites* turn *Idolaters*, and if *Jehoiadah* dies, then *Joash* is naught, and if the *Judges* die, then the *Israelites* do what is right in their own eyes.

But where the person is upright, there the obedience is constant, *he doth righteousness at all times*; *Paul* serves Christ in fasting and prayer, in bonds and affliction, and many temptations: and *Job* who was an upright person, by Gods own testimony, *chap. 1. 1. he followed God continually*, v. 5. and though that Satan thought that hard exigences would have turned him off from his obediencial course, yet he did still cleave to God, after the losse of catrel, and estate, and children, yet you may read his constancy, *chap. 2. 3. The Lord*

said unto Satan, hast thou considered my servant Job, that there is none like him in the earth; a perfect and upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil; and still he holds fast his integrity, although thou movest me against him? Yet mistake not the right compasse of constancy in obedience, as if there were no act of disobedience, as if a man were not upright, unlesse there were an inviolable succession of disobedience in every thing, which he doth at every moment; O no! I know no such kinde of constant obedience which is exempted from all interruption, but the constancy of his obedience lives in an opposition to fits, and starts, and imports the course and bent of his life, which is always to walk with, and to obey God.

Simplicity of
obedience.

3. *Simplicity of obedience*: as Saint *Aufine* distinguisheth of a love of God, that one may love God for God, and a man may love God for himself; the same doth hold in service and obedience, a man may serve God for God, and serve God for himself. Doth Job serve God for naught? Job 1. that I confesse may be truly a friend of an hypocrite, who hath an eye only to the wages, like the *Germans* in their warres, do nothing without pay: The unsound heart will square out his work according to the pay, his eye is much upon this, how will this make for my profit? how will it advance my pleasure, my credit? these things fire and inflame an unsound heart; come to such an heart, and say, such or such a thing is to be done: For it is Gods expresse will, and it will make for his glory: these (alone) are cold motives, and weak inducements to a false-hearted person. But come and say, God will have you to do it, and if you do it, you shall be highly thought on, you will be esteemed for it, you shall have much applause, you may hap to get well by it, why? now the unsound heart stirs as the ship, which hath got a right winde to drive it, and carry it on. But the upright person is simple in his obedience; a naked command is reason enough for him to obey, and Gods glory is a sufficient motive: If a servant be faithful in his factoridge: why? it is enough to him in the managing of businesse, if he can set forward his matters stock, his prosperity is all that he looks on: And thus is uprightnesse de-

Simile.

cried

cried in our obedience, when we minde God above our selves, when God alone is cause enough of our obedience unto God.

Quest. How may one know that he looks not at himself, but at Gods commands.

Answer. Thus, 1. By his cordial blessings and rejoycings at the good done by others, whereby God hath glory, though he be not the instrument, as *Paul*, Phil. 1. 18. 2. By his acting for God under disgraces and discouragements, as *David*, and the three *children*.

Though our services may want encouragement from worldly motives, nay, though they meet with many discouragements and prejudices to us, yet so that by them God may receive glory, and I may expresse my obediential respect to him; here is winde enough to fill my sailes; I dare not do it, because God forbids; I will do it, because God commands; I will not cease to do it, though I receive frowns and losse, but will hold on to do it, because Gods receives glory, this is simplicity of obedience, and this argues the person to be upright: *Paul* speaketh of this simplicity of obedience, for his own part in the exercise of his Ministerial function which he well joynes with *Godly sincerity*, 2 Cor. 1. 12. and verily so it was with him, that the *love of Christ was sufficient to constrain him*, 2 Cor. 5. 14. And he went *through good and through bad report*: yea, and he was not discouraged by *all the bonds which did attend him*, nor counted *his life deare for Christ*; it was all one to him so that Christ might be magnified, *whether by life, or whether by death*.

4. *Spirituality of obedience*: there is a twofold acting of duty. Spirituality of obedience.

One is *carnal*, when we do them as ordinary works, as works of course, the meere material acting of them sufficeth us: so that we say some words it makes a prayer, so that we give some money, it makes up our charity; so that we be at Church it makes up our hearing, so that we go over a chapter it makes up our reading; so that we study and speak a Sermon, it makes up our preaching; so that we eat no meat, this makes up fasting. It matters not what melody and harmony, so that Simile.
we touch the strings. Another

Another is *spiritual*, when duties are performed in an obedience to God, because he commands them, and also the very heart and soul, the spirit and the affections act themselves, they co-operate with our services: *the desires of our souls* is to the remembrance of thee, or as *David*, *with my whole heart have I sought thee*. When a man can say as *Paul*, *whom I serve with my spirit*, Rom. 1.9. or as *David*, *my soul praise thou the Lord, and all that is within me praise his holy name*, Psal. 103. or with *Mary*, *my soul doth magnifie the Lord, and my spirit doth reioyce in God my Saviour*, Luke 2. or as the *Apostle* saith, 1 Cor. 14. 15. *I will pray with the spirit, and with the understanding also, I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also, or as Christ* saith, *thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might*.

An hypocrite, he may do so much about duties as may manifest the excellency of his gifts, but he doth not that about duties which argues the efficacy of grace, he may be high and admirable in the visible parts, in the very works he may hit upon as ample and pertinent phrases in preaching, and sweet expressions in praying as another: his lips may draw neare, but yet his heart is far off, it can suffice him to do service to the eye of man.

But an upright person, there is fire and incense in his sacrifices: he must present living and reasonable services: why? if he hears, and not with attention, not with reverence, not with fear, not with faith, he is greatly troubled: he knows that God must be served with godly reverence, and feare: for preaching, *let him speak as the Oracles of God*, 1 Pet. 4. 11. *If I do this willingly, I have a reward*, 1 Cor. 9. 17. see, 1 Thes. 2. 4. If he prays, and his minde be drawn aside by distractions, and his affections work not with sorrow, hope, with earnest desire, and some confidence, he accounts that the work is not done, he hath said somethings, but he thinks he hath not prayed. 'Tis true (and he confesseth so much) that the cause of acceptance of all services is in Christ, yea, but he must serve. and strives to serve the Lord with all his heart; he looks to the manner of service on his part: *In singleness of heart,*

heart, as unto Christ, not with eye-service, &c. Eph. 6. 5, 6. see Rom. 12. 8. 3 John 5. Thou doest faithfully whatsoever thou doest.

5. *Humility of obedience*: why? this doth argue the uprightness of a person. There is no person more proud of his work then an hypocrite: Christ tells us, that he cannot give an almes, but the trumpet is presently at his mouth. Humility of obedience.

There are two things which may befall a man upon the performance of any holy duties.

One is *rejoycing*, and this is lawful, when God hath enlarged my heart in prayer; when he hath quickned me in his service, raised my affections, animated my faith, assisted me more then ordinary against my dulnesse, distractions, unbelief, temptations, I may rejoyce, my heart should be raised to blesse the Lord, and (in some cases to speak) of this his goodness to his glory.

Another is *boasting*, when a man (like the cock) claps the wing upon his own body: when he sets out himself the more, deales with others more to admire him, to extoll him, when he blesseth himself, and bestows the honour of all his performances upon himself. Now this is base, and argues that the heart is not upright, but the upright heart doth all the holy performances by its masters strength, and for its masters glory; when it is to do duty, it begges for Gods grace; when it hath done duty, it gives God the glory: 1 Chron. 29. 13. *Now therefore O Lord our God, we thank thee, and praise thy glorious name, ver. 14. But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort, for all things come of thee, and of thine own have we given thee?* Like a faithful servant who craves direction how to sell and trade; And when that is done, the money which he takes, he puts into his Masters coffer: Nay, more then all this, the upright heart doth much feare it selfe, least by any meanes it should finger any part of Gods glory by well-doing, let any praise from man come near: O faith the upright person, what have I which I have not received? *Not I, but the grace of God in me*; it is but duty, and that not done so much, or so well as is required: so that God will pardon my failings, and accept of me in Christ, it is enough. Obj.

Obj. It is true, that upon some extraordinary actions, even an upright heart may feel some secret thoughts of self applause and ostentation.

Sol. But these are felt as temptations, as snares, and resisted, yea, and such secret flies cause many tears to be cast after singular performance; but the hypocrite he doth seek praise and accept of it, he loves the praise of men, and knows how to cry up himself: *Epaminondas* went weeping because of the vain-glory of yesterdays victory and triumph: the hypocrite is proud even of his humility.

An upright person the bent and purpose of his heart is unto God.

5. A fifth trial, whether a man be upright or no, is, if the bent and purpose of his heart be unto God: Meer particular actions do not conclude (either way) the estate of the soule: An hypocrite may do some good act, and an upright person may do some sinful act; But that which even in such Cases, may testify unto a man his uprightness, is the true bent and purpose of the heart: Look which way the heart is set, and purposed in the habitual temper of it, that doth convince either of hypocrisy or of uprightness.

By the heart of man I mean the soul in its principle faculties: as the mind or understanding, and the will with the affections: If God hath these, then assuredly the man is upright; when a man can say, in respect of his minde, with *Paul*, *Rom. 7. 12. The Law is holy, and the Commandment holy, just and good, ver. 16. I consent unto the Law that it is good:* or with *David*, *Psal. 119. 128. I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be upright;* when he can say in respect of his will and affections, with *Paul*, *willing to live honestly in all things,* *Heb. 13. with him again, Rom. 7. 18. to will is present with me, ver. 19. the good that I would do, v. 22. I delight in the Law of the Lord after the inward man:* or with *David*, *I desire to do thy will, O my God, yea, thy Law is within my heart,* *Psal. 40. 8. And thou art my God; I have determined to keep thy word,* *Psal. 119.* This in Scripture is sometimes styled a preparing of the heart to seek God, as *Jehoshaphat*, *1 Chron. 19. 31. and a cleaving to God with purpose of heart,* *Act. 11. 23.* all which intimated uprightness.

But

But you may reply, if uprightnesse may be truly discovered by the bent of the heart, then the vilest person may be upright, for they confidently affirm that they meane no hurt, their desires are good, they would know more, they would believe and repent, and leave their sins, yea, they do strive to enter in at the strait gate.

To this I answer.

First, if any man who hath been wicked, doth now finde the purpose and bent of his heart set for God, that the desires of his soul are unfeignedly to please God, I should not doubt but God had changed this man, and his heart were now made upright.

But secondly, I conjecture that no wicked man doth, or can have this bent and purpose of heart to please God, to obey God in all things; for it imports these things;

1. An inward desire joyned with love, *Psal. 119. O that my wayes were so directed, that I might keep thy statutes.* But then afterward, *thy Law is my delight.*

2. An habitual inclination, not a pang of the soul, not a mood, not a fit of an ague, not a flash of lightning, not as the morning dew: But *my soule breaketh for the longing that it hath unto thy judgements at all times*, Psalm 119. 20.

Thirdly, an active purpose; *Herein I do exercise or endeavour my self* (said Paul) Acts 24. 16. though the purpose in an upright man doth exceed his actions, yet there is some active and working ability with his purpose, he will be doing service to all, to God. It is with evil men in their purposes, as with *Pilate*, he was purposed to let Christ go, but yet he gave sentence: so they pretend a purpose to please God, but still live in their sinnes, and do not stirre up themselves at all, to all the means by which they may get grace and strength.

6. There are many other tryals which I shall but mention unto you, v. g.

1. The upright person will not baulk the greatest duty, nor the least sins.

2. He will serve God, though alone, *Josh. 24. 15.*
3. His care is to order his conversation by the word, that's his rule.
4. His motives which sets him to work, are direct: not the breath of the people, praise of man, love of himselfe: It is a great matter to observe what sets the soule on work.
5. His dearest communions are secret.

SECT. IV.

A Second Use of this point shall be for *comfort to such as are upright*: There are many sweet comforts which may greatly revive and chear up such as are upright; I will touch some of them at this time.

For comfort to such as are upright.

There is a gracious acceptance of their weak services.

1. One comfort is this, that there is a gracious acceptance of their weak services: The King of *Persia* did lovingly accept the poor mans handful of water, and put it into a golden vessel, and gave him that vessel of gold. To set this on, Consider,

First, that all our holy services, *they are the tithes* (as it were) of our graces, the rents of our helps, a certain homage, which we bring in to God: they are such expressions or actions by which we strive to bring God glory, and to please him.

Secondly, that the *best services are imperfect*: as no man doth so much as he should, so the best Christian doth not so well as he should: Look, as the highest grace is still in defect, so the most solemn duties are still in default. It is with the best man in duty, as with the Moon, though it be at the full, and shineth most clearly, yet even then it hath its spots; so when the heart is most enlarged with intentions and heavenly affections, there is yet some contrary twange, or some shortnesse, some blemishableness notwithstanding.

There-

Therefore *Aaron* was not only to bear the iniquities of the people, but he was also to bear the iniquity of the *holy offerings*, Exod. 28. 38.

For as it was with *Jacob* after his earnest struggling with the *Angel*, he arose with a lame and halting thigh, so is it with all of us, both in and after our most affectionate performances, we are weak in our feet: that is not good which is done by a good man; and though he doth much which God doth reward, yet he doth nothing so compleatly, but God needs in something or other of it to pardon and cover. Not only our finnes can accuse us, but some sinfulness in our best actions: no man prays, or heates, or reades, or acts any service of piety or charity, in that full and ample eminency or integrity of degrees, but that he may with the Elders in the *Revelations*, cast these Crowns down to the ground.

Thirdly, that by reason of *these imperfections in duties*, there is more reason (in a strict way of Justice) that God should reject all, than that he should accept of any thing.

Beloved, it is granted, that God doth not reject the services of his servants; nay, as he doth require them, so he will accept of them, and reward them; but this is not for the dignity of the servant, but from the graciousness of the Master. For if God should answer any imperfect service (yea, that which hath but a very little, and particular imperfection, suppose them to be some contrary transient thoughts, or some thinner indispositions hanging about us in our duties) I say if God should answer them from the court of pure Justice, you should finde that the mixture of a little sin would easily cry down the acceptance of much good: The most good which I bring in my services it is but duty, and the least evil which I bring is besides the duty, and the evil in duty, be not able to make that part which is good to be bad, yet it is able to shut out the service from acceptance, because, by reason of that evil, the service is not so good as God may and doth require, if he should stand with us upon terms of strict Justice.

But then fourthly, *though there be many imperfections cleav-*

ving to the services of men, yet if they be upright, God will (for all them) graciously accept of their services. Though I pray (and with many distractions) and though I heare (and within my interpretations) yet if I be upright in the performances of these (i.) if my heart be for God (indeed) under these that I bring in the truth, and present strength of my spirit, with all humble respect to Gods commands, and unfeigned integrity of aiming at Gods glory, the services are graciously accepted with God.

Yea, though I cannot alwayes use so many words in prayer, though expressions are not so many at this time as at another; nay, though I finde not that livelihood and chearfulness now as heretofore, yet if the heart be upright, the service is done and accepted. There are two things which may assure a good man that his services are accepted.

One is *faith*, when he presents his services in the name of Christ: look, as every sinner needs a Mediatour of redemption, so every good man still needs the same Christ as a Mediatour of intercession for his services: And though services (as done by us) can finde no favour, yet as presented by Christ, they are alwayes a sweet favour before the Lord, he is that *Angel*, who hath a *golden Censer*, and hath much incense, which he offers with the prayers of all Saints before the Throne, Rev. 8. 3. though our services be but weak testimonies, yet Christs intercession is a strong and mighty ingratiating both of our persons and actions.

Another is *uprightnesse*; when the heart is true and plain in what it doth: Beloved, remember this, that as God doth not respect the strongest parts, which are passivue, as I may say, and are idle, so he doth not reject the meanest abilities, if uprightly employed. No, not the day of small things is despised by him; if the flax be smoaking, though it flame not, he will not quench it, that is, he will not only, not slight it, but cherish and accept of it, 2 Cor. 8. 12. The widows mite, the cup of cold water was accepted.

If a man can truly say, Lord, I would believe more stedfastly if I could, and I strive to believe, and I would pray better, if I could, yet as well as I can, I now present my supplications

cations before thee, I would serve thee more fully, more intirely, that is the desire of my soul, and my endeavour, if I had wherewithal, thou shouldst have a better heart, more lively affections, more ample and chearful duties, all should be better, if I had a better power: I say that notwithstanding the many imperfections, yet this uprightnesse, this holy frame of a compleat and active will (wherein all the powers of the soul are bent to services according to the present power of the measure of grace received) is a most sweet smelling sacrifice, and mounts into the most gracious acceptance of God in Christ. I pray you remember that of *David*, like as a father pities his childe, so the Lord pitieth them that feare him, *Plal.* 103. 13. And that of the Prophet, *I will spare them as a man spareth his own sonne that serveth him*, *Mal.* 3. 17. The father commands his childe to lift up the weight, and the childe readily addresseth to the obedience, he lifts, and assays; and still he gives another ha at it, but perhaps he cannot get it quite up; why? the father likes his childe for this, and though perhaps the weight be where it was, yet he calls this act of his child true obedience, why? because, though that be not done which the father imposed, yet it had been done if the child had more strength, and he endeavoured with all his strength for to do it. Or thus, the father wills the childe to shoot an Arrow, the child draws the Arrow, perhaps but half way, and though his eye were upon the mark, yet his arrow falls short many Bowes length; why? the father will yet commend all this, for though he sees that the Arrow is short, yet he observes that the Bowe was drawn, and although the mark be not hit with the Arrow, yet it was aimed at with the eye of the childe: so is it with God our father, who commands such and such duties, to which, if we address our selves with uprightnes, he will wink and passe by the weakness in action, whiles he both observes and accepts the integrity of intencion and affection.

Obi. O saith an upright person, I finde such infinite heaps of other thoughts, such dulnesse and deadnesse of spirit, such untowardinesse, so many weaknesse; every way, all which are the grief of my soul, and it troubles me much, that I cannot

cannot do the good that I would) how will the Lord take such broken services from me.

Sol. I answer if thy heart be upright in these interrupted services, God hath mercy to pardon the weaknesse, and he hath wisdom to finde out the uprightnesse, and he hath graciousness to accept of the dutifulnesse.

A Goldsmith will not cast away those lesser raies of gold, though mingled, and (to an inexpert person) confounded with various heaps of drosse and dust: now, he hath an art to find out the little gold, and put aside the drosse. Though with all our holy actions there be much corruption and weaknesse commixt, yet there is such a wise art in Gods gracious mercy, as to finde out uprightnesse, and holinesse of desire and endeavour in a service commanded with many infirmities, 2 *Chr.* 30, 18. *the Lord pardon every one, v. 19. That prepareth his heart to seek the Lord God of his fathers, though he be not cleansed according to the purification of the Sanctuary, verse 20. And the Lord hearkened to Hezekiah, and healed the people.*

If a man be upright he shall not only finde acceptance for service but indulgence for offence.

2. A second comfort is this; that *if a man be upright, he shall not only finde acceptance for services, but also indulgence for offences.*

You must ever distinguish twixt the cause and the subject; the cause of all pardoning indulgence, is the free grace of God in the blood of Christ, but the subject of indulgence, is the person to whom God is pleased to give his pardon and release.

None comes in under the wings of the mercy-seat so as the upright persons: Uprightnesse in Scripture hath (in a well understood sense) seemed to cover all: you read of King *Asa*, and of many passages which did greatly blur him both as a King, and as a good man, he did not break down the high-places, he sought to the Physicians, he joyned to the King of *Syria*, he cast the Prophet into prison, who reproved him for it, yet (2 *Chron.* 15, 17.) *the heart of Asa* is said to be *perfect all his dayes*: How? all his dayes: and yet such finings sometimes; yes, all his dayes, for sinnes stand upon the account, and seeme to be reckoned, not so much when

when they are done, as when they are done with a sinful heart.

And they lose upon the account, they are struck off, God passeth over them, when the bent of their heart is against them: see that place and passage of *David*, *Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, and whose sin is covered*, ver. 2. *Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth no iniquity*: verily brethren, that mans estate is blessed, whose sins are pardoned; O if the Lord be reconciled to a man, if the Lord covers his sinne, (i.) will not look upon them in a judicial way; so as to account and reckon with the sinner for them; if the Lord will not impute iniquity to him (i.) though he hath iniquity, yet the Lord will forgive it, it shall not redound unto him in punishment: but it shall be blotted out, and be as if it had never been: tell me seriously, is not this a blessed thing; tell me now you whose hearts are ready to break asunder with the sense of guilt, whether pardoning mercy be not a most blessed and desirable thing. You will freely confesse it is, but then the question is, who is that man that is so blessed, what is his temper, how is he qualified.

See on (in that ver. 2.) *he is one in whose spirit is no guile*, what's that? that is, he is the upright person, whose spirit is really and plainly for God, who in truth desires to please him, who in truth hates all sin. This is that blessed man, and in this is a great part of his blessednesse, that the Lord will not impute his iniquities unto him, but will forgive and cover them (i.) so forgive them that they shall not rise upon the account any more: *Paul* did upon this conclude by way of testimony to himself, and for others, that there was *no condemnation unto them*, Rom. 8. 1. why? what was *Paul*? what was his temper? verily it was upright.

Obj. Upright, why? he complains of sin, that he was sold under it, he complains of the *Law of his members warring against the Law of his mind*, he complains that *he was brought into captivity*; he complains that when he would do good, yet evill was present with him. How then can he say, that there was no condemnation for him? how was he upright?

Sol. Thus, his being upright did not consist in this, that he had no sin in him; nor in this, that he did no sin; nor in this, that he did all the good which he saw should be done: But in this, that he hated the sin which dwelt in him, that he resisted the evil working in him; that his inward man approved the good, and condemned the evil; that his inward man hated the evil, and was delighted in the Law of God. This was his uprightnes, and upon this he concludes, that there was no condemnation, (*i.*) his sinne should not sink his soul to hell, they should not separate him from the love of God in Christ, they should not be imputed to him, but Christ would take them off.

3. A third comfort to an upright person is this, that the Lord is his God in Covenant.

An upright
person the
Lord is his
God in cove-
nant.

You are not Ignorant of the Covenant which God did stipulate with *Abraham*, *Gen. 17.1.* *I am the Almighty* (all-sufficient) *walk before me and be thou perfect*, what is the meaning of that? In a Covenant you know there are two parties, and they mutually undertake and agree: so, here is God on the one part, and here is *Abraham* on the other part, and God promiseth, and *Abraham* promiseth; God promiseth to be All-sufficient unto him, and engageth himself in an everlasting Covenant to be his God, *ver.7.* now *Abraham* promiseth to walk uprightly before the Lord: and this is all that the Lord agrees with him for (*walke before me and be upright*) and then I am thy God, and I will be thy All-sufficiency.

Obj. Why? you will say, this is granted, it is cleare, that God Covenants to be a God to an upright person, But what, so great comfort in that?

Sol. Nay then, I have done, if yet you understand not, if yet you think it so poore, so meane a thing for God to be your God in Covenant. I tell you brethren, when God becomes your God in Covenant, when he saith to a person, I will be a God unto thee; it is infinitely more then if the Lord should say to a man, I will give unto thee all the world: O for God to be my God, what is it but this, I am thine, and all that I am, or have, or can do shall be thine and for thee. I am an
holy

holy God and that shall be to make thee holy, I am a mercifull God and that shall be to pardon thy sins, I am a powerfull God and that shall be to help thee, to deliver thee, to conquer for thee; I am a faithfull God and that shall be to make every promise good which I have made unto thee, I am a wise God, and that shall be to bring in thy comforts, thy deliverances, thy helps in the most desirable season.

When sins trouble thee I will pardon them; when they are too strong for thee, I will subdue them; when thy heart is sorrowful, I will comfort it; when thy graces are weak, I will strengthen them; when men disgrace thee I will honour thee, when dangers arise I will preserve thee, what thou needest, that I will give thee; what thou hast, that I will blesse to thee; all this, and far more then this, it is for God to be our God in covenant! Nay, and all this is ours by covenant, that is? it is not a faire and empty pretext, it is not a glorious and vaine complement, but really so, and firmly so; the Lord if he be our God in covenant; doth bind himselfe to be all this unto us, by the fidelity of his nature, by the truth of all his promises, by the seale of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now what think you? do you now not think that the people happy, *who are in such a case: whose God is the Lord*, Psal. 144. 15. I tell you we are not able to Imagine the height and depth: and breadth of this one comfort, that God is my God in covenant, and yet whatsoever you apprehend of it, whatsoever you feel of it; whatsoever it is; it is the portion of the upright persons, thou art my portion O Lord for ever said upright David Psal. 119.

4. *Uprightnesse intitles the person to all blessings of heaven and of earth*, as David spake of Jerusalem, that I may say of the upright person, *all my springs are in thee*; or what Iacob said of Ioseph, that he was *A fruitful branch or bough*; uprightnesse is like *Arons Rod* full of blosomes, you know that place, Psal. 84. *The Lord God is a sun and shield; the Lord will give grace and glory, no good thing will he withhold from them that walke uprightly*, what is the *sun*? but the great and inexhausted fountaine of Light, of life, of heate, of influence, of comfort, that will God be to them that walke uprightly; what is a *shield*? but the

Uprightnesse
intitles to all
the blessings
of heaven and
earth.

defence and safegard of a person against shots and blowes, that also is God to them, that walke uprightly.

Will grace do their hearts good? will glory do their souls good? is there any good which respects the militant condition? is their any good which respects the triumphant condition? neither grace nor glory, nor any good shall be with-held from them that walke uprightly: *Noah* was upright, and had an *Ark*, *Ebedmelech* had his life given him for a prey, *Jerem.* 39. 18. *Ammunitions of Rockes* for the upright, *Esay.* 33. 15, 16.

What shall I say brethren? (all the promises which you know) are the treasures of heaven, the cabinets of our comfort, the store-house of our wants, the hand which holds and delivers out all our supplies, why? all of them do (as it were) beset and incompasse the upright person, art thou an upright person, and looks upon thy family? *Prov.* 14. 11. *The tabernacle of the upright shall flourish*, art thou an upright person, and castest an eye up to thy posterity? why? *Psal.* 112. 2. *The generation of the upright shall be blessed*, Art thou an upright person, and desirest such or such a necessary outward comfort? why? *Psal.* 37. 4. *Delight thy self in the Lord, and he shall give thee the desires of thy heart*: Art thou an upright person, and suspectest the continuation of thy outward estate? why? *Psal.* 37. 18. *The days of the upright and their inheritance shall be for ever*? Art thou an upright person? and thy comforts seem a while to be clouded, Neither cannest thou espy, any one hopefull crevise or future joy? why? *Psa.* 112. 4. *Unto the upright their ariseth light in the darknesse*; and *Psal.* 97. 11. *Light is sown for the righteous: and Joy for the upright in heart*? Art thou an upright person, and knowest not how to breake through the manifold fortifications, and strengthen of envy or power? why? *The Lord will bring forth thy righteousness as the light*, *Psal.* 37. 6. what can keep downe the rising of the sun? And the eyes of the Lord run to and fro through all the whole earth to shew himselfe strong in the behalfe of them whose heart is perfect towards him, *2 Chron.* 16. 9.

Uprightnesse
will comfortably
season all
our conditions

Fifthly it will comfortably season all our conditions, you know
this

this life of ours is capable of many changes, (the weather doth not alter so often, as our temporary conditions do) calmes and tempest, light and darknesse, comforts and discomforts, friendship, and then malicious opposition; health, and then a painefull fit of sicknesse; Riches; and then a sinking poverty, liberty, and then some hard restraint or exile; one day gaine comes in, another day it is dashed out by the greatness of loss, this day full of joy, the next day all his forgotten by the abundance of sad teares, for the death of a parent, of a yoke-fellow, of a child, of a friend, &c: Nay, and the soule hath its changes too: sad conflicts, bitter assaults, strong accusations from Satan and the like: What now? is a choicer Arke to beare us up in all these waves; what harbour like to this of uprightnesse? why? saith *David Psal. 73.1. Yet, or (however) God is good to Israel even to the upright in heart,* and *Paul 2. Cor. 1.12. Our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, we have had our conversation in the world.*

O Brethren! a false and base heart, nothing sets on affliction, a losse, a scandal, an accusation, so close as it: when a mans heart can smite him for an hypocrite, for a lover of sin: hypocrisy sinkes the conscience under these burdens: But uprightnesse can looke an accusation in the face, and beare up the spirit in a storme, and though uprightnesse may be exposed to many crosses, yet it can comfort a man in the saddest day, for it hath alwayes a good friend abroad, of God, and within of conscience.

6. Here is another comfort, *uprightnesse will be a good friend in death, Psal. 37.37. mark the upright man, and behold the perfect, for the end of that man is peace:* The upright person hath most conflicts (ordinarily) in life; and most quiet (ordinarily) in death.

O When death shall approach the dwellings of the prophane and hypocriticall, and shall say I have a message unto thee from God, he hath commanded me to arrest thy soule, and to present it before his judgement seat: How doth the heart of a profane wretch gather into feare and horror, yea, and how doth fearefulnesse and confusions fly up in th breast and coun-

tenance of the hypocrite! his conscience delivers up his morselfs from which he would not part, and shames and strikes him for his abominable collusions and Glosings in the service of God: reports unto him that he must presently stand before a God, who is spirit and truth, and never could abide unsoundnesse, but will be avenged of hypocrisie, good Lord! how the heart of this man trembles and sighs, he would thrust out the thoughts of dying, but cannot, he would stay a while longer here below, but may not; O! now he is gasping, trembling, fighting dying, and gives out life and all with heart-breaking despaire: But now if the person be upright, even the message of death may be welcome. If the Lord calls for me, I may answer, here am I, O Lord, look upon me and accept of me in Christ: and *Remember now, O Lord, I beseech thee, how I have walked before thee, in truth and with a perfect heart; and have done that which is good in thy sight, I have fought a good fight, I have kept the faith, I have finished my Course, &c.* 2. Tim. 4. 6, 7.

More particulars might be added, as,

7. uprightnesse begets conscience towards God, the upright hath boldnesse, he may freely make his prayer, and be sure to be heard, 1. *John.* 3. 21, 22.

8. It will hold out in evill times, *Luk.* 8. 15. the fourth ground held out, even in times of persecution, because the word was received into an honest heart.

9. The upright person is sure of salvation, *Psal.* 15. 1. *Lord who shall dwell in thy holy Hill? v. 2. he that walkes uprightly, Mat.* 5. 8. *Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.*

Ob, ect. But all this will not strike into some hearts: whiles we suspect our estate, we alwayes deny our comfort: O saith a person, I feare I am not upright, therefore all this goodly portion of sweet comfort appertaines not to me.

I Answer to this a word or too in the generall.

Answered.

1. A man may be upright or hypocriticall in a double respect, either first *Really*, or secondly *in opinion* and fancy: If a man be *Really an hypocrite*, though in his *proud opinion and fancy he will think himselfe to be upright*, I say, to such a man that

that no one portion of that comfort before delivered, belongs unto him : sound comfort was never (by God) layd up for a false heart.

Again a man may be *really upright and yet have a false opinion of himselfe that he is an hypocrite*. It is thus with the best, that they oftentimes both suspect and falsely charge the true estate of their souls : a child in a distemper may question the inheritance which is intailed on him : yet if the heart be truly upright, all comfort is thy portion : as our distrustful feares do not prejudice the reality of the estate of grace, so our frequent suspicions, do not cut us off from the title and right of promised comforts.

2. *All prevalent disputes about our personall uprightnes, they do hold off the application and taste of comforts, though they do not disannull the title and right* : even the good man will walke uncomfortable, so long as he concludes and strongly feares that his estate is sinful ; for sensible comfort riseth or falleth, commeth on or goeth off, according to the strength of our judgement and present apprehensions: It is not what indeed our estate is, but what we judge of it, which breeds in us sensible comfort ; or discomfort: a false heart may (even) break with a timpany of foolish joy, upon an erring persuasion of his estate; and so may a sound heart be very heavy and disconsolate, upon an unsound misconstruction and judgeing of its true condition.

3. *there are sometimes, which are very unapt, for an upright person to sit upon his estate and to pass sentence* : the best soul hath divers changes and streits, sometimes it is cleare and free, and able to see things as they are: other times it may be boystrous and perplexed, and then it is apt to Judge of it selfe by feelings, and new representations, not according to secret truth and substance; remember one thing, times of conflict and afflictions and temptation, are best for praying, and worst for judging : If a man wil (at such times) passe sentence on himselfe or estate as a judge, he will judge unrighteous judgement, for then the soul is not it selfe, and is apt to take Satans workes for its owne proper accounts? yea, and then usually it will see nothing, but what makes against it selfe.

In passions and temptations we neither see God aright nor our selves.

Simile.

Fourthly, we must *never stand to that judgement which we pass upon our inward frame; which is Irrational or without sufficient ground?* Look as we may appeale from all the sentence of our judgement, which acts its selfe in time of passion, as he did from *Alexander to, Alexander, &c.* so neither must we vainly vex our hearts, and dash out our uprightnesse, when this sentence is rather of imagination then of reason: when a man thinkes, and thinkes that he is not upright, though all the evidences of uprightnesse appeare in him, and when he cannot produca any one inherently distinguishing ground of an hypocrite in himselfe; why? this is but an imaginary judgement, and utterly unreasonable, this is to condemne the innocent without cause.

That soule will never be settled with comfort which gives way to its one imaginations: and hath a conceit, that every finfull thought, or violent temptation, or more durable conflict with an inward corruption, or frequent distractions in holy duties, cannot stand with uprightnesse: where a man hath either no grounds at all, or those that he hath are false, he should never settle so on them, and yield and entertaine them, as to question his estate for them, or for them to shut off himselfe from comfort.

5. If ever we would decide our uprightnesse, and so take our parts in promised comforts, *we must follow the voyce of the word, and subscribe to the sentence of conscience following that word.*

Be sure of this, that if the word will allow and warrant thy inward frame; If it approves of it as sound, assuredly it is so; for that Rule cannot erre, nor is divine judgement (which is contained in the word) capable of falsehood or deceit, actively or passively: If God saith thy heart is right with him, maintaine it against all disputes whatsoever.

Yea, and if thy conscience inlightned, rectified and quickned by the word, doth acquit thee for upright, that now standing before the presence of the eternal God and all knowing judge, it can say thus much for thee, that though heretofore thou didst

didst love and allow thy selfe in sinis, yet now thou hates all sin, and there is no known way of wickednesse; and that though heretofore thou didst shuffle and cut, dealt falsly in covenant, wouldest not obey in all things, but now thou hast respect to all Gods commands, and all out of a respect to Gods glory: I say thou art an upright person, though thy mis-giving fancy or judgement may give up to the contrary.

But may some troubled and mis-giving heart reply, nay, it is not thus and thus with us; sure we are, that we are not upright, and the grounds which make us thus to conclude, are not imaginary, but real; true it is we do labour to abstaine from sin, but this is out of a feare to God judgements, and we confesse that we performe some or many duties, but these are done out of a feare of Hell: now none of this can consist with uprightnesse, for asmuch as uprightnesse shuts out all dutie, out of a pure love to God, and not out of a base feare, which may befall the vilest person, what think you? can the man be upright whose services depend on feare.

This is a notable case, and craves a solemne resolution, towards which observe two things.

1. Some things that must be granted, *v. g.*

1. That all *abstinence from sin is not an infallible testimony of uprightnesse*, forasmuch as there may be many arguments which may be sufficient to hold us in from the acting of sin, yet which are not effectually to strike of the love of sin: shame of men, love of estimation, feare of death, the accusation of a stinging conscience, defect of occasions, denial of opportunities; may be cords to binde the hand, and yet not be plaisters to heale the heart: a man may deeply love that which he doth seldom act: if his abstinence from sin be grounded only on private respects, and not on a divine command, and new nature, I say that such an abstinence may befall a man whose heart is so far from uprightnesse, that it may be either grossly profane, or basely hypocriticall: Not so much the naked absence as the grounds and immediate causes thereof, demonstrate uprightnesse or hypocrisie.

2. This also must be granted, that *all doing of duty is not a convincing or immediate argument of uprightnesse*. Uprightnesse

Diverse cases about uprightnesse.

1. Case. Our abstinence from sin is out of feare of judgements, and therefore I am not upright.

Answered. Somethings granted.

All abstinence from sin is not an infallible testimony of uprightnesse.

All doing of duty is not a convincing argument of uprightnesse.

is not so punctually decided by matter as by manner: as he spake of gifts which should be reputed virtuously liberall, *Non qua manu, sed qua mente*. The quality of the mind consigned them much rather, then the bounty of the hand: That may be safely affirmed of all duties, not so much what is done, as how it is done, argues our uprightnesse: Let never so much be done, out of base and sordid motives and ends, for by and vaine glorious respects, or meerly servile reasons, without a voluntary and dutifull affection, all the worke, though much, though great, though frequent, yet it doth not infallibly assure and conclude uprightnesse

Some things we must be informed of.

Some things though we must be informed of, *v. g.*

3. things.

I. That all *abstainings from sin, out of feare, or performing of duties from it, do not necessarily conclude that a man is not upright*? Nay, a man who is upright, may abstaine from the one, and performe the other without any checke or prejudice to his uprightnesse.

All abstaining from sin out of feare and doing duties from it, concludes not against uprightnesse. Proved. Note.

Which I shall clear by these arguments.

I. If a man may be *upright who in duties hath an eye to the reward*; then by the same argument he may be upright, who in them hath an eye to the punishment: forasmuch as both these are extrinsecall motives, and alike conclude for a respect to a mans selfe? But a man may be upright who yet in his duties hath an eye to the reward, *v. g. Moses who was faithfull in all the house of God, Heb. 3. 2. (1.) very upright, had yet in his obedience a respect to the recompense of reward, Heb.*

II. 26.

If persons, reputed in Scripture to be upright, have yet abstained from sin, and performe duty out of feare: (and these acts of theirs have been approved) then services done out of feare, may consist with uprightnesse. I confesse that all which hath been done by upright persons, doth not presently testify uprightnesse, but that which hath been done by them, and is rewarded by way of approbation, that I say doth not prejudice uprightnesse.

But the upright person in Scripture have abstained from sin and have performed obedience out of feare, and this hath been approved of, *Ergo.*

Job was an upright person by Gods owne Testimony, cha. 1.1. The man was perfect and upright: yet the feare of Gods wrath kept Job from sinne, see Job. 31. 1. I made a covenant with mine eyes, why then should I think upon a maide; he durst not give way to wanton looks, nor uncleane thoughts: why? what with held him! see v. 3 Is not destruction to the wicked? and a strange punishment to the workers of iniquity: q. d. this were the way to wrath and plagues, to judgement and to Hell: So v. 21. He durst not lift up his hand against the fatherlesse, (i.) wrong, oppresse or defraud them, why? v. 23. For destruction from God was a terror to me, and by reason of his highnesse I could not endure, Paul you will think that he was an upright person who did exercise himself to have a conscience voyd of offence towards God and man; who had the Testimony of his conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, he had his conversation, yet was he the more diligent and the more conscionable in his ministeriall discharges out of feare, see 2. Cor. 4. 11. knowing therefore the terror of the Lord, we perswaded men; (i.) we know that we must all appeare before the judgement seate of Christ, and every one must receive according to that he hath done, whether good or bad? and it will be a terrible day to us: if we be found carelesse and negligent, and we knowing this terror therefore we perswade men.

3. Nay, a man cannot be upright in duties or services if he doth them not out of feare: The feare of God is the inward principle of them: It is that which God requires, with uprightnesse: *What doth thy Lord thy God require of thee, but to feare him and to serve him with all thy heart and with all thy soul? Deut. 10. 12.* Why? what is that feare of God, but an awefull regard to God, as when *Joseph* forbore to sin against God out of a regard to his greatnesse, *Gen. 39. 9.*

4. Yea, Lastly let me adde one thing more, viz. *Jesus Christ* requires nothing of us which will prejudice uprightnesse, but he hath willed us to feare him, who hath power to cast into hell, *Luk. 12. 5. yea, I say unto you feare him.*

1. For my part, I know no more reason, why service done through feare, should prejudice uprightnesse, then the services which are done through love; for asmuch as the motive of my

service in both is God immediately, but then in the second place, observe

There is a double abstaining from sin, and doing duty out of feare.

2. That there is a *double abstaining from sin, and doing of duty out of feare.*

One is *single and absolute*, when feare is all the reason or motive, as were there not wrath, were there not punishment, were there not an hell, I would not abstaine from sin, I would not do any one duty, or act of obedience unto God? Like an unwilling slave, who would break away, or would not put forth himself in acts of service, were it not the mere feare of the lash of the whip did force and awe him.

Simile.

Another is *mixt and compounded*: when though a man doth abstaine and act out of feare, yet not onely principally out of feare; but also out of love commixt with that feare: as a childe who though he doth forbear many things out of a respect to his fathers power, and displeasure, yet withall he doth cease them out of a love to his fathers goodnesse, and kinde affection; thus may it be with a person who is upright, he may forbear sin, out of a feare of Gods power, and justice, and displeasure: and yet withall out of a love to an holy and gracious God and a father, for both of these may have their work in him without a prejudice one to another, or either to the temper of uprightnesse, Hosea. 3. 5. *they shall feare the Lord and his goodnesse.* The love of an upright man is so pitched on Gods goodnesse, that withall it gives way to feare, to apprehend his greatnesse, and yet the feare of his God is not so awed by greatnesse, but withall love may come in to inflame the soule to make it either abstaine, or act out of a respect to Gods goodness. Therefore Paul, though he did perswade men because he knew the terror of the Lord, yet was also exceedingly industrious, because the *love of Christ did constrain him*, 2. Cor. 5. 11 14. Both had an influence upon the Apostle, Terror and love, judgement and mercy, as we read of the woman who departed from the sepulchre, that it was *with feare and joy*, with the one and with the other: so may our services come out, and our sins be held of both, out of love, and out of feare. For these two are not opposite one to another, as grace and sin, but may mingle

Simile.

Simile.

mingle together, as severall ingredients in the same Physicke.

Yet one word more must be added by way of distinction: that there is a *twofold feare* :

A twofold feare.
Servile.

One is *servile*, which depends intirely on compelling arguments; without any naturall inclination or disposition of the person; The acts here are drawn out, not from any aptnesse of the will or private approbation of the judgement, nay these absolutely considered, sway and incline a man a quite contrary way, contrary to the acts of abstaining or acting: if a man (who workes onely with servil feare) might do what he liked, and might chose his owne way and service, he had rather A thousand times be at his sins, and lay aside his worke of duty.

Now I said, if a man doth abstaine from sinne, or act duty, meerly out of a servile feare, he is not upright, why? because in uprightnesse, the heart is carried against sin, and the will is inclined to duty, both which are wanting, where feare is only servile.

Filiall.

Another is *ingenious & filial*, which is an enlarging feare, such a feare as is not only not against the holy bent and inclination of the heart, but it is likewise a furtherance an adiuvent, it is as it were a farther strength imprinted into the Bowl which is rightly framed to runne and draw with a true byas? This feare doth consist, with uprightnesse, and is necessary to every good Christian, who ought to set up all the arguments which God is pleased to propound to the soul, either to keep it off from sin, or to draw it out to duty, yet so as love acts its part too.

Ob. But now there will fall in one scruple with all this, how may I know *whither my abstainings from sin, or acting of duty, springs out of naked feare, or else out of a feare commixt with love*; And rather out of love, then feare.

How shall I know my abstainings from sin, and acting duty springs out of naked feare, or a feare commixt with love.

Sol. To resolve you in this (and let me tell you) this conduceth much to the discovery of uprightnesse; consider

Where they proceed out of meer feare,

1. That where they proceed out of naked and meer feare.

Two Things.

There is a contrary regret of the heart against them.

Acts depending upon feare cease when the motives of the feare ceaseth.

1. There is a contrary and full regretting of the heart against them: the bent of the heart is otherwise set for all acts of meer feare, (I speake of morall acts) are reputed, violent and involuntary: they arise from a constraint, and all constraints urge out acts, which the nature, (if it were it selfe) would not incline to; nay, the nature draws against, what it doth, if it doth do any thing out of meer feare.

2. Acts depending upon naked and meer feare doe cease, when the motives or causes of that feare do cease and are still? As the fable hath it of the frogs, that though naturally they are inclined to croke, yet when Jupiter threw downe the tree amongst them, they were all hushd, and silent, yet at length seeing no harme to ensue; they set up their ugly note againe; so evill men, whose hearts are bent to sin may yet in the time of feare, draw in, hold off from sinning, the beastly drunkard will not call for a cup to carouse, nor the filthy wanton for his Queane to embrace, on his death-bed he feares the flames of hell instantly to claspe him; But let the motives of feare cease, why? he is as averse to that reformation which he professed, and he is as facill and forward to that evill which he seemed to desie, as the water is to fly out and run in its course, which hath been for a while violently barred up and stoped, As the *Israelites* who came off from sinning, and into obedience, upon the meer call of the stroke either of the sword, or of the plague they did start aside Like a broken bowe, *Psal. 78. 57.* they served under the rod, but when that was off; they returned to the accustomed bent of sinning presently.

Where they proceed out of feare mixt with love.

A man hath an eye to divine glory more then to his own safety.

2. That where they proceed out of feare mixt with love, and rather out of love.

Four things.

1. If love is mixt with feare in the obedience; there a man hath an eye to divine glory, as much if not more, then to his owne safety? Where meer feare prevailes to the worke, there it satisfies the man, if he may after all, sleep in a whole skin if he may be preserved, and be secure, what glory God may have he cares not, nor mindes it directly: But now, if service spring out of love to God, heremy safety, satisfies me not, I do aime at Gods glory, for I love him, and love his praise,

as on the contrary, where a man abstaines from sin out of meer feare, he doth it not, because else God shall have dishonor, dishonor to God is not it, which prevailes, but his own quiet and personall exemption from paine, and wrath, and infamy, these only sway with him, and.

2. where love and feare concures to set out the obedient acts, *there acceptance is propounded by the soule as well as recompence*; it will not suffice me that I shall have my pay, but it more affects me that God will be pleased to accept of me. This is a truth that nothing but love will satisfie love: the love of acceptance, exceedingly answers all the acts which come from the love of obedience: that I shall decline vengeance by such duties, alas, that is not all, Nay, but I bend and strive to finde acceptance with my God and Father.

Acceptance is propounded by him as well as recompence.

3. Love is not only commixt with feare: *but is a more predominant cause* in abstaining from sins, where the contrariety of the act to God swayes, and workes more upon the soule, then the contrariety of the punishment to the man: what's that! that is the offence, by the vilenesse of sinning is far more grievous to my soule then the sense of punishment for sinning, nay, when the soule (in a free and able estate to judge) can utter from a sound conscience, that were it to make its choices it had rather a thousand times submit to the punishment of sin then to the acting of sin, verily, if such a person abstaine from sin, the abstaining is not out of meer feare, but out of love joyned with feare, nay, rather out of love then feare.

Love is the most predominant cause.

4. Lastly, much may be guessed by the *strong and habitual actings of the soule*, in times of security and in times of perplexity; when a man dares not yet to breake out to sinne, when all his quiet, and full of peace, but desires to keep ever lasting friendship with his God, and communion with his God when a man will not fail in duty, though God failes in courtesie (*i.*) seem to deale hardy and harshly with him, yet he will serve him, this argues a predominancy of love in our obedience that case, in *Psal. 44. 18, 19.*

Much may be guessed by the actings of soule in times of security and of perplexity.

A Second case, in which a man may feare, *that he is not upright*, may be this, *viz. his particular sinnings*, the case goes

I feare I am not upright because of my particular sinnings.

thus, uprightnesse is an even carriage of the heart and life, and every sin is an unevennesse in motion (it is a wrinesse a crookednesse, a derivation from the right rule and path,) yet this is my condition saith a person, and therefore just cause have I to question whither I be upright or no; for the *upright do no iniquity*: *Psal. 119. 2.* he walkes according to the rule; he departs from sinne; though the line may be strait, which hath many blurs, yet it cannot be so, which hath many, or any windings and turnings.

How far any
finnings may
consist with or
contradict
the frame of
uprightnesse.
Particular sin-
nings may
consist with a
gracious frame
but nor with a
gracious condi-
tion.

I will speake something to this case; And it is worth the while, to open unto you; whither and in what respects, any finnings may consist with, or else contradict the frame of uprightnesse? for the assoyling of which observe the propositions, *viz.*

1. That *particular finnings are compatible with a gracious frame*, though none are with a *glorious condition*, Though no darkness, no cloudes can be mixt with the sunne in heaven, yet both may be in the ayre which is inlightned below; our best estate on earth is mixt, and not absolute: glory annihilates all sinfull principles, but grace only weakens them, an upright man, is an imperfect good man, and hath reason daily to bewail his failings, as well as cause to bless God for his performances. You never read of any upright person in Scripture, but you finde some scarres on his ways, Like *Jacob* halting one time or other: *David*, very good, yet not upright in the matter of *Uriah*, *Noah*, one that walked with God, yet overtaken with excess of wine &c. Such twinklings do, and will accompany the highest and fairest starres, as he who footes it best, may be found sometimes all along, so the most even Christian may be surpris'd with many unevennesse.

Some kindes of
finning do
contradict up-
rightnesse.
There is a
double up-
rightnesse.

2. There are *some kindes of sinning which do contradict uprightnesse*: give me leave briefly to distinguish.

There is a double uprightnesse.

One is *habituell*, which is the constant frame of the heart, and the general course of the life, bent, and inclination to God in duty, and for God against all sin.

Another is *actuell*, which is the even carriage of the heart or life, in respect of this or that particular act or motion.

There

There are two sorts of sinning.

Some are *particular*, and by way of fact, when this or that fact is inconsonant to the rule, and by it condemned.

There are two sorts of sinning

Others are *Generall*, and by way of course, when the frame and tenor of the life, is either notoriously vile or in some private path of wickednesse constantly drawn out and followed.

Out of these distinctions, observe these particular conclusions, *viz.*

1. That *particular sinnings*, or *sinnings in respect of particular fact*, though they cannot stand with actual uprightnesse, yet they may consist with habituell uprightnesse: Look as tripping or falling, though they be opposite to standing or moving on, in the particular, yet they are not so opposite to the course of motion in a journey, that a man by reason of them, should be said not to be going on in his journey. Or Looke as every particular staine, doth not blemish the universall finenesse of the cloth, so neither doth this or that particular fact disprove and deny the generall bent of the heart: particulars may not decide the estate either way: tis true a man by a particular sinning is denominated guilty, but by no one particular, can a mans estate be challenged either for good and bad; *Asa* in some particulars, was very faulty (as you heard heretofore) yet the scripture saith, *he was perfect all his days: and David?* though some grievous sins fell from him which did not stand with actuall uprightnesse (hence that clause, *except the matter of Uriah*) yet his epitaph is written by God himselve from the general bent of his heart and course, that *he walked before him with an upright heart.*

The distinctions applied.

2. That *Courses of sin*, known and allowed courses, do directly contradict uprightnesse, you must distinguish twixt frequently temptations, and dayly inclinations, and twixt courses of sin: even the most upright heart may be frequently assaulted by Satan, and daily molested with inward corruption tempting and enticing, but all this may be with resistance, detestation, sorrow and griefe, so that the heart may be very upright, notwithstanding all these disquietments;

But if the heart hath a way of wickednesse; if it hath a path of

sin-

finning, in which it will walke assuredly, such kindes insensibly testifie, that the heart is false and not upright.

He who knowes sin, and yet will sin, he that doth sin and allows himselfe in finning, whither the kinde of finning be single, or multiplied, one or many, as the Prophet spake of the proud man, *Hab. 2.* that I say of this man, *his heart is not upright in him.*

There be two things which shew great rottennesse of heart.

One when any sin hath our warrant sealed with secret allowance.

Another when we drive on the sin with a customary trade and continuances. It may befall the most upright heart, as it doth the best mettall blade, it may be made to bow and bend, yet there it stands not, but returnes to its straitnesse againe, so even an upright person may step into an uneven path, but there he walkes not, he quickly returnes to the Kings high-way, into the wayes of obedience and righteousnesse, but it is with a base heart, as it is with base mettall, it will easily bow, and stedfastly keep its crooked figure; the bias drawes that way, the heart is set on sin and regardes it, doth sin, and allowes it, will sin and loves it. Now this is an infallible signe of a false and hypocritical heart, that it *regards any known iniquity*; as *David* spake *Psal. 66.28.* or that it hath a *wickednesse*, as he spake *Psal. 139.24.*

Doubts from
inequalities in
holy service.

A third case in which a man may feare his uprightnesse may be *some inequalities about holy services*, it goes thus, sometimes a man findes his heart much enlarged in duties, yet other times, much contracted and straitned: sometimes he is full of life and quick affections, yet other times, he feesles no active or lively disposition, he can finde no minde or heart almost, insomuch that either he can do little or nothing, and what is done by him, is but done; all cheerfulness and quicknesse seems to fall off, like the green leaves from the tree: so that nothing, but a meer naked carcase of duty is acted by him.

Now the case is, whither a man may be reputed upright who many times finds himselfe thus in his services.

This is A case which ordinarily doth perplex many a good heart,

heart, how cunning is Satan still to vex the soule if he can pre-vaile with us to omitt duty, why? then thou art plainly wick- ed, if the soule be lesse free and compliant in the duty, why? then it is secretly hypocriticall, thus he insnares us, but to the resolution of the case thus,

First, *all inequalities in holy services, do not conclude, that a man is not upright.* Looke as the naturall life hath many spaces, and as it were degrees of latitude, a man may be able to run, & yet sometimes be scarce able to go, these motions (you wil say) are unequall, nevertheless the man lives, both under the one and under the other, so may it be with the spiritual life, for it hath also its different and unequall spaces, sometimes a man may do his services all in Joy, other times all in tearès, some- times his will is great and performances answerable, other times his will is disposed, but he cannot act in any proportion, yet his heart lives uprightly in either.

Neverthelesse we must distinguish of inequalities in holy ser- vices, there are two sorts of them.

Some arise from *weaknesse of strength.*

Others arise from *falsenesse of heart.*

You see a man sometimes able to move a weight of an hundred pounds, at another time he is scarce able to lift a walk- ingstaffe, why? because his strength is failed, and then no marvell that his actions vary: so it may be with an upright man, God is pleased sometimes to afford unto him a strong degree of heavenly assistance, he clears his judg- ment, inables his faith to apprehend and discern, quickens his affections, restrains Satan, puts downe the force of the inward contrarieties, why? at such a time the soule is mightily active in the power of received and conferred strength. At another time the winde slackes, and then no marvell the ship doth not poss so fast, the spirit bloweth when, and where, & how he lifts, there is not always such a communication of actual strength, and then our desires may be great, but our perfor- mances will be unequall: And this observe by the way, that if the inequality depend only on weaknesse of strength, there the heart still keeps its bent, nay, is most inwardly stirring in desires

Answered.

All inequality in holy service concludes not against up- rightness.

Distinguish of inequalities.

From weaknesse of strength,

and propensions, though it be not able to do the good that it would.

From falseness of heart:

But there are also *inequalities which arise from falseness of heart*; As when a man hath an *Ague*, which infects his humour or spirits, or both, he hath one good day, and another bad day; or as it is with a land-flood, this hour posting in with such an high speed, as if it would domineer over all the County, and yet by and by it spends away it self, there is no more of it to be seen: so it may be with a man whose heart is false to God: it may be with him thus, he may have his moods, his starts, one while like those, accompanying Christ, and magnifying him with an *Hosanna in the highest*; another while quite turned, and crying out, *Crucifie, Crucifie him*: So here one day, or week, who but God, and what but duty, not a Sermon missed, not a prayer neglected; yet on a sudden *slow to hear, careless to pray*, indifferent to any holy performance.

When inequalities arise from falseness of heart.

Now if the inequality arise from the falseness of heart (and I pray you to observe this) that it is ordinarily in three cases.

1. When the performance was attempted meerly to compass some outward good; a very Hypocrite may take much pains for his own ends of honour, profit, pleasure, &c.

2. When the performance was attempted meerly to remove some inward or outward evil, as pangs of conscience within, or shame and censure without.

3. When the old lust is returned to new strength, the bitterness of death is off, or the like; and now the heart returns to its former haunt and natural bent, to the love and practise of such, or such a sin, which will easily beget and declare an inequality in duties: for love and practise of sin, will either make all duty to cease, or any method of duty to stagger and change.

There are two sorts of inequalities about holy duties.

2. *Observe that there are two sorts of inequalities about holy services.*

Some respect the *Will*, and *Aetum elicatum*, as the Schoolmen speak, the first springings of it, its secret inclinings and motions.

Others;

Others respect the *Exercise* or *Fact*, and *Actum imperatum*, as they call it; from these I infer two conclusions, *viz.*

1. *That inequalities of holy services, in respect of the exercise or fact, may consist with uprightnes, v.g.* A man one day may be able to find words more readily and abundantly in prayer, and lively-hood in his affections, then at another time, and yet be truly upright: Look as a Preacher may be able to study, and to preach one day better then another; and a Tradesman to follow his particular Calling; yet both the one and the other, be truly upright in their particular Calling; so I say of the expressed and external acts which respect the course of our general Callings, &c

The inequalities of holy services in respect of the exercise, may consist with uprightnes.

2. *That intrinsecal inequalities, those in the will and purposes thereof, argues defect of uprightnes;* When a mans will is one while strongly purposed for duty, and by and by it is totally bent and set for sin, here the inequality doth depend upon the division of the heart, which is Hypocrisie and false-nes.

Inequalities in the Will and purposes thereof, argue defect of uprightnes.

3. *Cheerfulness or uncheerfulness in the performance of duties, are not infallible symptoms either way.* By Cheerfulness I mean the liberty or freedom of the spirits; and by uncheerfulness the sadness, heaviness or dulness of them. As it may be a day, though the sun shine not; nay, as the sun doth keep on its natural course and motion under the Ecliptick line still, whether you see the cheerfull body of it or no: so a person may pass on from duty to duty with all affectionate uprightnes, though there be an habitual cloud of sad spirits still seemingly wrapping up all his performances.

Cheerfulness or uncheerfulness in duties, are not infallible symptoms either way.

I think, that we do not distinguish always aright, and therefore perplex our hearts, there is a difference twixt *Affections in Duties*, and *Cheerfulness in Duties*; as much difference as twixt life and lively-hood, twixt burning and flaming. A brand may be red hot, and burn to purpose, and yet not flame at all: so a man may bring living affections to his services, he may present them, and offer them out of the dearest love to God, and truest respect to his honour, who yet may not feel any such sparkling and flaming enlargements of his spirits in the times of disgrace of such services. De-

fect of affections is one thing; of lively-hood and cheerfulness, that is another thing: If I serve God without any degree of affection, then I am not upright; but I may, and do oft-times serve him without cheerfulness, with much dulness and heaviness resting upon my spirits, and yet may be upright. For uncheerfulness doth not necessarily, and absolutely, and only arise from want of grace; It may intirely depend upon natural causes: A mans natural temper may be sad and melancholike, his body may be sickly, and faint, and crasse. Now as a Musitian may play over his Ditty singularly well, though he doth make every note to reel and tremble with infinite quavers, so the Christian may do his services with truest uprightnes, though not with that lively cheerfulness, as another perhaps may do.

Note.

Though cheerfulness doth not always accompany our duties, yet uprightnes may be evinced by other things.

4. *Though cheerfulness doth not always accompany our Duties, yet uprightnes may be evinced by these things.*

By being humbled that we cannot serve with that lively-hood, as we do desire.

By maintaining the services even out of a respect to God, I will yet serve him; though I find reasons to humble me, yet I will not, to keep me off from Duties: though I do want spirit yet I do find an heart to pray, and to read, &c. If I cannot serve God with smiles, yet I will with tears: If my body will not carry my soul to duty, yet my soul shall hale my body unto it.

By bringing in the present measure of strength: so much as I can do, Lord, I do now unto thee; if I were able to utter more, or better, or longer, why, thou shouldst have it.

When I am humbled that I can do no better, and when I strive to exceed my self, when I will serve God for Gods-sake, and do not willingly with-hold my strength, and yet present all in the name of Christ for acceptance, this is uprightnes, though the looks and spirits may be heavy and clouded, &c.

Case 4.
Doubts of uprightnes from self-love.

4. *Whether all self-love doth contradict uprightnes; As suppose a person doth act his duties out of a regard to himself, whereas uprightnes seems rather to set up all work with a single respect to Gods Glory.*

Sol.

Sol. I will not insist much on this ; only observe a few particulars, viz.

Ans. 1. *Self-love* (naturally considered) is an inbred quality by which a man affects his own good and benefit, this God hath implanted in every man, to desire and work for his own safety ; the first care and respect should be for God, the next for our selves, and the rest for others.

2. *Self-love*, as it is natural, (so absolutely considered) it is very lawfull. He that said, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart*, said also, *Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thy self*: if as our selves, then is it lawfull to love our selves ; yea, and the Apostle saith, *no man ever yet hated his own flesh, and adviseth every man to love his wife even as himself*, Ephe. 5. 29, 33.

Duties may lawfully be discharged out of a self-love. A man may (in their discharge) have a lawful respect unto himself, (i.) he may regard his own comfort, and peace, and mercy, and happiness : as thus, now I may lawfully apply myself to the hearing of the word, to reading, to praying, to a very carefull walking with God, because I would preserve the peace of my conscience, because I would keep up my comfortable interviews of Gods loving kindness, because I would be saved and eternally blessed : A man may lawfully aim at comfort and salvation in his duties, this doth no way contradict or disanul uprightnes. Forasmuch as God propounds these things in his Word (which is our rule of doing and working) as motives to set us on to our labour, *Be abounding in the work of the Lord* (saith the Apostle) *forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord*, 1 Cor. 15. *Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God* ; Mat 5. 8. *Blessed are you when men speak all manner of evil of you*, ver. 11. *For great is your reward in heaven.* Verse 12. *He that continues to the end, shall be saved.* *Repent that your sins may be blotted out*, Act. 3. 19. *And will render to every man according to his works, to them who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and honour, and immortality, eternal life*, Rom. 2. 6, 7. Whatsoever God propounds as a motive to Duty, and whatsoever God promiseth as an encouragement or reward, on that

Answered.
God hath im-
planted self-
love in every
man.

*Self-love abso-
lutely consider-
ed, is very law-
full,*

*Duties may
lawfully be
discharged out
of self-love.*

the

the soul may most lawfully fix the eye. What doth the Apostle press the *Philippians* to mutual love and accord, by the consolations of Christ, by the comfort of the spirit, *Phil. 2.* Why doth he press the *Romans* to the service of righteousness, by the assurance of eternal life? *Rom. 6.* If that to cast an eye on these were unlawfull, or that a man could not be upright who did so.

Nay, Verily not only that which God hath propounded, and that which God hath promised, but that which *I may pray* for, on that I may cast an eye. Now may not the upright person pray for peace and quiet of conscience? May he not pray for the joy and comfort of Gods Spirit? May he nor pray for the salvation of his soul? Nay, that which another good man may pray for me, may I not pray for that my self? Now saith *Paul*, *My hearts desire to God for Israel, is that they may be saved.*

Why? It is granted by us all, and it is practised by us all, that we desire heaven; and what is it to desire heaven, but to desire salvation? and what is it to desire salvation, but to desire a real, and glorious, and blessed, and eternal union with God? and what greater good can a man desire to, or for himself, then this?

There is a two-fold self-love of subordination-

4. But then in the last place, there is a two-fold self-love.

One *Subordination*, wherein my aim is first and most to Gods Glory: to my self indeed there is a respect, but not first of all: not most of all, not only to my self such a self-love in the discharge of Duties, is very lawfull, and the upright have it.

Of competition.

Another of *Competition*, wherein I regard not the glory of God; I mind it not, or else I respect my self more then it: so that all may be hushed up, so that I might have joy, and heaven, and escape Hell; I care not for the glory of God, I would not do duty, but to preserve my self: Such a self love as this, is opposite to uprightness; for though God gives us leave to mind and respect our selves, yet he commands us first, and most to respect and aim at his glory.

Doubts of uprightness from self-applause or vaine-glory.

Whether all *self-applause, and vaine glory, be incompatible with uprightness?*

Sol. I shall briefly assoyle this Inquiry.

1. *Selfe-applause is the magnifying of our selves for duties happily performed*; It is a kind of adoration and admiration of our selves by higher opinions of our selves, or thoughts also, that no others will highly imagine of us, and admire the eminency of our parts, and gifts, and quick abilities, and enlarged affections. Self-applause
what it is.

Now this I say, that though a man may be lawfully enlarged with joy and thankfulness to God, who hath graciously assisted and enlarged him in the performance of duties, and his spirit thereupon may be the more cleared. Yet self-applause is naught, and opposite to uprightnes; it is nothing else but a forgetfulness of our God, and of his strength, & of his grace, by which we did his service; It doth not spring from humble uprightnes, but from a proud conceitedness; and is the After-clap of Satan, and our sinfull hearts, which kick down, and undo that work which otherwise had been very well done.

2. Again, *Vain glory is the setting forth of our selves in duty*, it is the using of our Masters coin for the servants benefit: When a man doth hear, or preach, or pray, or give alms, onely or principally to be seen, to be esteemed, to be spoken of, his own credit is the end of his work. This is a manifest fruit of Hypocrisie, Christ hath delivered it fully in *Mat. 6.* Look as he playes the Hypocrite, who doth some good, but yet will will not do all duty, and who doth much duty, but loves some sin; so likewise he playes the Hypocrite, that doth all duty, meerly to advance and trumpet out his own name, and estimation, and glory. Self-applause is a subsequent Hypocrisie which follows the work; *Vain-glory* is an Antecedent Hypocrisie which moves us to the work. Vain glory
what it is.

3. Nevertheless, *you must distinguish of self-applause and vain-glory*, that they are either, Distinguish of
self-applause
and vain glo-
ry.

1. *Naked Acts or Motions.*

2. *Habitual qualities or Dispositions.*

Even the most upright person may find them in respect of motion, but the Hypocrite hath them in respect of disposition. In the one they arise up as temptation, for it is a most difficult thing, totally to be rid of our selves, either before,

or in, or after Duties. In the other they rise up as natural affections; the one feeds on them as on meat; the other is troubled with them as with poyson: they break the heart of the one with pride, of the other, with sorrow and humbling: In the one, they are approbations; in the the other, they are vexations: In an Hypocrite they are like the wind which fills the sails; In an upright person they are like the wind which troubles the stomach. The Duties done by an Hypocrite, are like glasses made and blown up, only by breath: the Applause of men breaths strongly upon his affections to set out his services. But it is with an uptight person in this case, as with a leaf on a tree, a little breathing of the air makes it to tremble: An upright person is afraid of his own high opinion, or the commendation of others; He can be highly glad when the honour is cast on God; and if any after-rings begin to grow for former Duties, he is not well, till he hath cast them down, by after-humbings. The upright person is much with God before duty, and all for God after it: He takes all the strength of Action out of Gods hand, and therefore would not finger the least scruple of praise: He looks on inward applause as a cross, and on publique as a danger: In the one I hate my self, in the other I fear my self.

Object. It is lawful (I confess) to know what God hath given us, and to acknowledge the good which he hath done in us, or by us, how else can we be thankfull?

Sol. But then, it is necessary to make him the end, whom we acknowledge to be the cause; to give unto God the glory who hath given to us the strength.

No more to this case, but this, beg for much grace to do duty, and when you have done it, beg for much strength to give God the glory of it: An Hypocrite is made up of himself and men; but the upright person is made only by God, and for him.

SECT. V.

A Third use of the Doctrine shall be to stir us up to get *Uprightness*, and to keep it, there are two things which here offer themselves, *viz.*

Use 3.
Labour to get
uprightness, and
keep it.

1. Motives to persuade us.
2. Means to direct and help us.

1. For the first of these, what shall I say? how shall I persuade! If all the Arguments of heaven, or earth, might be available, I have them at hand to present them unto you, to excite your hearts to this labour: If there be any regard of a God, of a Christ, of your souls, of your comforts here, of your happiness hereafter, then think of Uprightness, content not your selves till you have it, Why?

Motives.

1. *God regards you not, if you be not upright: his eyes are upon the truth*, and he will be worshipped in spirit and truth; thousands of Rams and rivers of oil, daily oblations, solemn humblings, cryings and callings, he cannot away with them, he hides his face from them, if the heart under these be false and doubting.

God regards
you not, if not
upright.

The Word of God condemns you; if you be not upright, it will not acquit you; if you have Lamps without oyl, a form of godliness without the power thereof, though you make many prayers, though long prayers, though you give much alms, yet if your hearts be not upright in these, the Word will condemn you for Hypocrites, and will give you your portion, with them who shall have the greater damnation.

Your conscience will secretly reproach and vex you in the day of your calamity; when any judgement hangs over thy head, or any affliction comes near unto thee, then will thy conscience rise up, and gall and wound thee for thy close unevennesses and hypocritical practises of sin against thy better profession of holy walking. What the Prophet spake of the unjust gainer, *He getteth riches, and not by right, he shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at the end he shall be a fool*: That say I of the Hypocrite, he heaps up duty upon duty, works upon works, but the day of tryal comes, and then he shall appear to be a fool.

Ah, vain man ! to think there is not a day for the discovery of secrets, or that there is not a God who searcheth the hearts and reins, who greedily hunts after the applause and credit of men, and declines the approbation of the great Judge. O when thy accounts are to be presented and given up before the tribunal seat of the holy, and true, and terrible God ; and thou shalt then say, O Lord, all the outward good I did, I did it only to get my self a name ; all the services of Religion, I laboured in them only that men might think well of me : some of thy precepts I did like, but others I did not care for, because they thwarted my ends ; much good I did, but it was only to cloak and cover the much secret evil which I did love, and in which I did walk : so many years I lived, and kept company with Christians, against whose powerfull practise of holiness my heart did rise ; many a time did their heavenly discourses find out and condemn my private lust, yet I bleared their eyes, I yet wrested with my conscience, I would not yet leave all my sins, and now wo is me ! thou dost love truth in the inward parts, this I knew, yet I played the hypocrite. Nay, if more may be added, then take this, the Lord God after death will shut the door against such foolish persons who content themselves with lamps without oyl, and do cry, Lord, Lord, have we not preached, &c. and heard thee in our streets, and yet were workers of iniquity. Look as the Lord takes notice of a mans Hypocrisy now, (*so this people draws near unto me with their lips, but their hearts are far from me*) so he will take notice of the Hypocrite hereafter, not only to shut heaven against him, but to cast him into everlasting burnings, *Isa. 33. 14.* so then, methinks, here were motives enough to stir us up to be upright, because else the Lord regards us not, neither persons, nor works ; yea, his Word condemns us, and our consciences do condemn us ; we walk under a sentence, and shall die under a curse, and God will be against us too in Judgement, he will not know us, but abominate us from his presence.

Uprightnes is
very accepta-
ble unto God.

2. But then if you consider on the other side, *How acceptable a thing uprightness is to God*, what delight he takes in such persons, how his Covenant is with them, and what infinite

nite promises are their Treasuries, how God will hear their prayers, accept of their person, pass over their weakneses, increase their blessings, establish their comforts; what defences, and secret, and strong, and comfortable acquittances Uprightness breeds in the conscience! what confidence it gives in our accesses to God, what solace under all our crosses! what peace, and quietness, and strength, notwithstanding all contrary suggestions! what boldness in death, what grounds to Implead with God! what a certainty of acceptance now, and truest Glory hereafter! O how might these things work upon our hearts, to labour to be upright, &c.

Object. But you will say now, why, what may we do to get uprightness, and to maintain it?

Sol. Now we come to the *means of uprightness*, for which *Means*: take these particulars into your consideration;

1. Directions for the getting of it.
2. Directions for the preserving of it.
3. Some other considerations and meditations: for the first, I commend these things unto you.

1. If ever you would have *upright hearts*, you must then go to *God for them*. Hypocrisy is a natural weed, we need not go beyond our selves to find a cause of it: even a Child is able to frame actions to the eye of others: but uprightness is a flower of heaven: only that God who can make new, is able to make the heart upright. I pray you to consider that all the holy qualities and tempers of the new Covenant, come from no other spring then Gods grace; none can bestow them but God, and he can do it. Now the upright heart is a spring of the Covenant, *Jer. 31.39. I will give them one heart, and one way, that they may fear me for ever.* Is there here a person this day who is sensible of the guile of his spirit, of the hypocrisie in his heart, that he cannot be so for God as he should, that he is uneven, and oft-times crooked in his walkings? why? go to God! pray with *David*, *Psalms 51.10 O create in me a clean heart, O Lord, and renew a right spirit within me.*

But you will say, may an hypocrite come to God, will God regard him though he calls upon him, will he not shut out his prayers; will he heare the prayer of him who regards sin in his heart.

Directions to
get uprightness
of heart.
Go to God
for it.

I Answer.

Sol. It matters not how much hypocrisie hath been hatched within thee . and acted by thee heretofore , If now thou comest to be sensible of thy hypocrisie and to condemn it, & to bewail it, & to abhor it, if former hypocrisie be now come to hearty conflict, though it be giving out into many thoughts of selfe and base ends, yet be not dismayed, go to God, he can subdue it, and he can take out that guile of thy spirit , and he can fashion a fit raitnesse and rightnesse of heavenly frame within thee ; he is able to make good whatsoever he hath promised.

Get a predominat love of God and his wayes.

Secondly if you would finde uprightnesse in you, then *get an exceeding and predominate love of God, and his wayes* : Love is of great force and influence to a mans ways and actions, it is like the Rudder which doth master the ship in the motion, it can turne and winde i any way ; so doth love prevaile with the soule: it hath a command over it, about a mans ways and actions ; if a man had a strong love of God, if he did heartily , and with great affections, incline and strive for God, for his glory , for his truth, this would prevaile with him to be upright, *Deut. 10. 12.* the love of God is put in. as a meanes to walke in all his wayes, and to serve him with all our hearts.

The want of uprightnesse ; comes from the want of love ; as the falsnesse of a woman to her husband , growes upon want of conjugall love : it is the love of the world which draws a man so often aside , which makes him off and on , and it is the love of sin , which makes a man so hypocriticall.

If a man could love God above all, he would delight to walk with him, he would be careful to please him, fearful to offend him, ready to obey him, would be kept in for God, he would not make so many strayings, he would minde Gods glory more.

Get to hate sin.

Thirdly *get to hate sin* ; A secret love of sin (after all restraints and pauses) will draw the soule aside , It will (like a covered disease) break out againe.

There are three things in hatred which contribute to uprightnesse.

1. It is an *inward averfation*: the very heart is drawn off from an object, and the heart is filled with a loathing and a detestation.

on of the evill: not the tongue and looks onely, but the very inclination of the will is turned aside.

2. It is *universall*, for hatred is of the kinde: the will in the whole latitude of it, is the object of hatred, *I hate every false way*, said David, *Psal. 119.*

3. It is *permanent* and *durable*: passion is a storme which will quickly off, but hatred is a settled quality, arguments alay it not, nor doth time remove it: *what have I to do any more with Idols*, said Ephraim, *Hosea. 14. 8. They shall defile their coverings, and say unto them get thee hence*, *Esa. 30. 22.* So that if a man could get the hatred of sin, he should quickly finde an even uprightnesse.

The cause why a man is not even in his walking, is either because,

1. *His heart is not bent against sinne*, but gives a delightful way unto it, it doth not resist and loath it, but harbours and favours it.

2. *Some one particular lust winnes and gaines upon the soule*; though some are unacted, yet one speciall lust is retained which hath power to command and rule the life.

3. *He is carried against sin upon mutable, and decaying grounds*, which being removed, the heart then returnes to its proper and naturall bent.

But now if spiritual hatred of sinne were implanted, then the combat twixt sin, and the person would be inward, the very heart would loath the nature and inclinations of it, and it would be universall and constant, so that here would arise a generall evenesse in a mans conversation. Unevenness though it appear without, yet it begins within the heart, is the maine wheele of a mans course, and therefore if love gets the heart for God, and hatred rules the heart against sin, you may very well believe that these two will yeeld out a very upright endeavour and course of holinesse. In spirituals, that which keeps the fountaine, doth keep the streame, and that which betters the heart, doth likewise well order the life.

2. For the second which respect the *preserving meanes*, take these directions.

Directions for preserving it.

1. First if you would preserve uprightnesse, you must *preserve an holy feare of God*; you know the promise, *I will put my feare* Preserving a holy feare of God.

feare into their hearts , and they shall not depart from me, Jere.
32.

Sinning is the only departing from God , He never leaves us but for sin , our departing is our unevenness , and we never leave him but by sinne , and our unupright walkings ; but that now which keeps us from departing , is feare ? *The feare of the Lord is a fountaine of life , to depart from the snares of death*, Prov. 24.27. If a man could alwayes keep an awful and powerfull regard to God : that he stood in awe of his attributes , and of his word , he would keep plaine with God , he would not transgresse for a morsel , nor thinke that it may be safe for him to sin.

An Holy feare of God hath these two Properties.

1. It puts the soule and actions, in Gods presence , one saith that God is all eye to see every thing , and all eare to heare every thing , so doth holy feare represent God , as one who is now beholding all that I do , and as one who understands my thoughts afar off , from whom no not the whisperings of the minde ; nor the imaginations of my heart , nor the closest , and most secret actings can be concealed. Its stands in awe of this all discovering God , *how can I do this great wickednesse and sinne against God* , saide Joseph , when there were none but he and his mistresse and his God together, Gen. 39.9. I feare his justice , that it will breake out upon me , if I should dare to sin ; and I feare his mercy , that it will draw off, if I presume to offend , Psal. 4.4. *Stand in awe and sinne not*, Psal. 119.161. *Princes also have persecuted me without a cause* , Why ? this might stirre up strange qualities in David , O no) but *my heart standeth in awe of thy word* , q. d. I durst not breake out to sin for all that ; thy word which I feared kept me in.

Faith preserves
uprightnesse.

2. Faith breeds and preserves uprightnesse and evennesse , I remember the Apostles caution, Heb. 3.12. *Take heed, brethren, lest their be in any of you an evill heart of unbelieve in departing from the living God* : unbelieve it is the root of all hypocrisie and apostacy that men are but halfe in duties , it is because they do not (indeed) believe the extent of obedience to God ; and that they keep some private lust , it is because they do

not

not (indeed) believe the truth of Gods justice, & power, & wrath.

But faith causeth evennesse, forasmuch

1. *As it sets up prevailing arguments*, the soul never doubteth in the way, but by the strength of false arguments, either false pleasures, or false profits is forcible with the heart, & insnares it; we step aside alwaies by the cunning of error. But faith not only discovers false inducements, but also bringes better and stronger motives, it knowes and teacheth where the soule will be at a losse, and holds it off by the goodnesse, and kindnesse, and loving favour of God: who would venture his comfortable aspect of God, and sweet communion with Christ, for a morsel of stollen bread, or for one draught of unlawful pleasure?

2. *It constrains the heart to singular love of God and Christ*: the more faith the more love: all true faith is inflaming, for it sees and feels much love, and therefore kindles much; now much love raiseth much evennesse in walking, whiles the love is kept up close to God, the heart and life ordinarily are kept in an upright motion: for all true love is tender and careful, and pleasing.

3. *It purifies the heart*: Faith is like fire, which hath one quality to ascend and another to burne: so faith it negotiates for us at heaven, and likewise it breeds more intrinsecall renovation of the heart by holinesse: faith is the best friend to our graces, the surest helpe to our affections, the strongest prop to our duties, and the forest enemy to our sinnes: No grace doth so much for the heart as faith, our assistance for good and our resistance of evil depends most on it, we finde experimentally, that many sinnes then breake out when we loose the sight of God: as long as we can eye God, the soule is safe; see God in his promises, see God in his precepts, and see him in his Threatnings, and then we hold up and go on: but if once we lose him in the sight of his promises, then impatience and murmuring, and discontents, and unlawfull projects, and wayes appeare in the heart and life, so also if we lose him in the sight of his precepts, which guide and binde, Now loosnesse, and carelesnesse, and indifferency appears: and lose him in the sight of his threatnings, now pride and presumption and other bold adventurings appeare. But if we could by faith see him who is invisible, if we could see the goodnesse

nesse and fidelity and immutability of his promises for all kinde of good supplies and if we could see the power, and authority, and equity of all his precepts, respecting our actions and ways, and if one could behold the justice and terror of the Lord by faith in all his threatnings: O how might the soule be bounded and kept! like a river twixt its banks in a constant and sweet course of even and upright walking.

Get and preserve humblenesse of heart.

3. If you would preserve uprightnesse, then you must get and preserve humblenesse of spirit, Remember this, that the humble Christian receive smost good, and lives best. The slow hands writes the fairest copy; and the low valley, of all the parts of the earth is most yearly fruitfull: Highnesse of spirit and much unevennesse, ordinarily keep company.

Simile.

There are three properties in humblenesse, which shew that it much conduceth to uprightnesse.

One that *it is much with God*: hence we read of the cries of the humble, and the desires of the heart; the humble soule is like the weake Ivie which clings about the strong oake, so it is much with a mighty God; you shall seldome finde the humble person without a teare in his eye, a complaint in his tongue, a prayer in his heart, either you finde him upon his feet standing, to hear what God will say, or upon his knee, craving what God will give.

2. Another, *that it hath much from God*: There be high mountaines which be above all cloudes; the proud heart is most empty, because most lofty, but *God gives grace unto the humble*, Jam. 4. the poor beggar gets the almes, and the low valley gets the showers; and the humble heart the grace of God; and that both preventing grace which makes good an assisting grace wich holds on in good, *thou hast hard the desire of the humble*.

3. A third, that it doth *all for God*: there are two things which the humble person doth most eye.

One is *Gods rule*, another is *Gods glory*, as a good servant who takes commandes from his masters mouth, and layes out himselfe for his masters advantage: All is from him, and by him, and therefore all must be to him, saith the humble heart.

Now all these conduce directly to uprightnesse, he is best in walking with God, who is most in calling upon God; pray-

er being like the firm and solid ground which enables the feet to stand best. And God is near to the humble: the weak child is preserved from most falls, which is held by the hand of the mother, or carried in the bosom of the Nurse: Where divine strength is most communicated, there the life is most uniformly ordered: and then humbleness refers all to Gods glory, it puts the cause of gift upon him, and the honor of their use, which is directly opposite to Hypocrisie; therefore labour to be humble, get to be sensible of your selves, both for naturals, and also spirituals; in the one, see your vileness; in the other, your emptiness, &c.

Fourthly, If you would get and preserve uprightness, *then get your hearts to be crucified to the world.* Hypocrisie and worldliness are seldom far asunder; It is rare to find an Hypocrite, but he is one, who is either strongly ambitious of honor, or greedily desirous of Riches: search the Scriptures, and you shall find it so, and very cleerly in the *Pharisees*. Now when the heart is set upon the world, it is easily drawn aside; it will ever & anon be uneven: the bow which hath a bias cannot run longe in a strait line. *They that will be rich fall into temptation and a snare, into many foolish & hurtfull lusts, &c. For the love of money is the root of all evil,* 2 Tim. 6. 9, 10. A thing of naught turns aside the heart which is worldly: the look of a man, the hope of a nod, a change of garments, a morsel of bread, a meals meat, a few pieces of silver, all of these are to a worldly heart, like the winde to the ship which turned the sails round about. Therefore take heed of the world; most of our uneven carriage arise from want of faith to exalt God, and from the enthraling of our hearts to the world, we are under either the discouragements of the world, and the fear of them make us to step awry, or else the encouragements of it, and the hope, and love of them makes us to omit duties, or put out our hearts to wickedness. The fear of man, and the too high account of carnal power, and too much love of our selves, and the world are sore enemies to uprightnes of heart or life: he who will know no Lord but Christ, and no safety like that of God, and no good like that which is heavenly, his spirit is sound, and his life will be upright.

Get your hearts
to be crucified
to the world.

3. Now to all that hath been ſaid, let me add a few daily meditations, which may be of great force to keep us in upright walking.

Conſiderations to keep us upright.

God ſearcheth the heart, and beholds our wayes.

Four conſiderations more.

1. One, that *God ſearcheth my heart, and ſtill looks upon my wayes.* Whether ſhall I go from thy preſence, ſaid David, *Pſalm. 139.* *And all things are naked, and open to him, with whom we have to deal,* ſaid the Apoſtle, *Heb. 4.* There can be no action hid from an all-ſeeing eye. Nor can the ground, and motives, and ends of our actions be ſecret to him who ſearcheth the heart and reins, and underſtands our thoughts a far off: we may blind the eyes of men, but we cannot delude the eye of God. The Lord ſeeth me in the dark, and my private courſes are as obvious to him, as the mountain to the ſun at noon-day; what way I take he well obſerves, and which way my heart runs, what it favours, and what it diſlikes; what I do, and what end I have in all my doings, and what principles and rules ſway within the chambers of my breaſt: This daily meditation may be of force to look both to the matter of our doings, and to the manner; and ſo incline us to upright walking.

I muſt one day appear before God, and then all my ſecrets will be diſcloſed.

2. Another, *That I muſt one day appear before God, and then all ſecrets ſhall be diſcloſed.* The upright man may be ſhadowed out by an heart in a clear glaſs, through which any one may ſee the pulſe and motion of it.

But this is ſure, that however in this life, our actions and wayes may be wrapt up with many devices and hidden conceits of Hypocriſie. Yet at the day of Judgement every man ſhall be throughly opened, anatomized, as it were, and orderly cut up. What his heart did love or hate, what publick or private wickedneſs it did act, and would not forſake, what pretences to cover ſecret ſinnings, what bawlings and declinings of known duties, what ingenuous or ſordid ends in all, and every performance; all theſe, and more then theſe muſt be ſpread open at the day of Judgement, before the eyes of men and Angels.

Of which did we believingly conſider, probable it is that we would attend to uprightneſs of heart and life, to preſent a fair copy of our ſelves to the eye of God.

3. *A little unevenness will mar the comfort of a great deal of uprightness.* A little unevenness will marre the comfort of our uprightness.

There are two sorts of unevenness in walking. One, is *Habitual* and allowed, which marres the just hopes and expectations of glory. Forasmuch as that is either gross profaneness, or cunning Hypocrisy, both which are excluding sins.

Another, is *Actual*, which is a trip, a stumble, an out-stripping in the course of a pious walking. I confess it may befall the best, yet it will imbitter our soules: All the good course which a man hath led, and actions which he hath sincerely done, cannot so much comfort him, as many particular obliquities and unevennesses may sad and perplex him. As in a wrinch of the foot, the present pain shuts out the sense of all former strength; or as in the sickness of the stomach, the present disease closeth up the sense of all health; so the particular miscarriages in a Christian course they may fold up, or at least suspend the tast of all the sensible comfort which uprightness formerly yielded and shot forth. They may break the *bones of David*, Psalm 51, and melt the soul of *Peter*, and cast us both to darkness of trouble and sorrow, and the labour of many active endeavours, before we can see God to be our God again, and be perswaded that our estate is really right and sound. Simile,

4. *That God is to be set up above all.* It is an hard (yet it is an usefull) thing to ascribe unto God the Original of excellencies, that he is God, and that Power, Might, and Glory, and obedience, belongs unto him, that he made us, and not we our selves, and that our beings as they are depending upon his power, so our wayes, upon his Rule; and he is Lord of Lords, all are under him, and being the universal efficient, he ought also to be our universal end. That God is to be set up above all.

God is set up above all other. 1. When his Rule and Word swayes us against all other. 2. When his Glory is singly or supremely aimed at above all other things, and both these com-
pleat uprightness

FINIS.

CHAPTER
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THE HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES
FROM THE BEGINNING TO THE PRESENT

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THE
THRONE
OF
MERCY,
AND THE
TRIBUNAL OF JUSTICE,

ERECTED
In the Remissibleness of All Sin, and in the
Irremissibleness of the SIN against the
HOLY GHOST.

In two SERMONS on *Mat. 12. 31.*
Preached before an Honourable Auditory.

By *Obadiab Sedgwick*, B. D.

LONDON,

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THE
 THRONE of MERCY,
 AND
 TRIBUNAL of JUSTICE.

MAT. 12. 31.

wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost shall not be forgiven unto men.



THE best of actions are oft-times subject to misconstructions; and a busie malice will either find or fasten spots upon the purest innocency. This Chapter is the Map wherein you may read these truths. Christ cannot speak or do, but an envious *Pharisee* will pry, and censure, and slander. Nothing is more offensive to an ill eye, then the light; and that which much afflicts an ill heart, is the beauty of that good which it sees in, or done by others.

Let *Christ's Disciples* pluck, but some ears of corn, only to make
 make

make necessary satisfaction to natural hunger, *verse 1.* the Pharisee will presently pluck at Christ himself, and murmur him not to be a pattern of obedience, but a pattern of licentiousness, *Behold thy Disciples do that which is not lawful on the Sabbath day.* *verse 2.*

If Christ doth step from the field into the *Synagogue*, *verse 9.* there also shall he have the catching attendance of the Pharisee. Malicious hatred is like the shadow which will pursue the body of pious actions. Here he no sooner finds a fit object for his mercy, but the Pharisees endeavoured to divert the execution by an ensnaring scruple, *Is it lawful to heal on the sabbathdaies,* *verse 10.* as though the duties of piety jussled out all offices of charity, and that God, who commanded sacrifice, had not also preferred mercy. They themselves would reach forth the courtesie of relief to a distressed beast, *v. 11.* and therefore Christ might justly lend his hand of mercifull Charity to a diseased person, *verse 12.*

In the *22. ver.* *He heals one possessed of a devil:* a miracle that begat amazement amongst the people, and some kind of credence concerning his Divinity; but in the *Pharisees* it vented plain Blasphemy. *This fellow casts out devils by the prince of devils,* *verse 24.* A bitter and high reproach, and such as was for the truth, neither *probable* nor *possible*; For, First, *Will Satan cast out Satan?* He that seeks the constant support, will he willingly overthrow his own Kingdom? Secondly, *Can Satan cast out Satan?* he that is cast out, must be of lesser power; and he that doth cast out, must be of greater power: but can Satan be greater and lesser then himself? These Arguments could not but convince their judgements, yet they did not extinguish their malice; they could not deny these to be truths, yet will they pertinaciously deny their affections to them; what they could not answer, they would resist; and though they saw sufficient reason and evidence, yet they are resolved not to believe, but to contemn Christ; *Wherefore I say unto you, all manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men, but the blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, &c.* Which words are like the two mountains of *Moses Mount Etal*, and *Mount Gorazim*, of blessing and of curses: here

is the sweetest mercy, and the purest Justice, or the *Throne of Pares* of the *Mercy*, and the *Tribunal of Justice*; or here is set out two *Text.* glorious Attributes of God, Mercy and Justice.

I. You have the *Throne of Mercy* erected in these words, *The Throne All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven*; wherein you of Mercy. have,

First, *The universality of the object*; not *quoddam*, but *The universality of the Object.* *quodvis peccatum, n̄m̄ d̄uaḡna*, every sin, or all manner of sin; which yet must not be taken simply, but restrictively; not all manner of sin *in comparison* of sin to the rule that forbids it, for then the sin against the Holy Ghost should be remitted; but all manner of sin *in opposition* to the sin against the Holy Ghost, *i.e.* any sin that is pardonable, all manner of sin,

First, Whether you respect the *several species of sin* may be remitted, *Noah's* drunkenness, *Abraham's* lying, *David's* Adultery, *Manasse's* Idolatry, *Peters* denial of Christ were remissible.

Secondly, Whether you respect the *many degrees and intentions of sin*, either in the multiplied iterations of sinful acts, or in the accessory aggravations of them from the force of circumstances in time, place, person, object, end, &c.

And that we may not doubt hereof, a special instance is given in a sin of deepest dye and desert, *viz. Blasphemy*, this also may be remitted. The schools tells us, it is such a sin as either detracts from God that which belongs unto him of right, or fastens on God reproachfully and disgracefully that which is not convenient to so pure and sublime Essence and Majesty. *Blasphemy what it is.*

And the Scripture tells us, that it wounds or *strikes through the name of God*, *Lev. 24. 16.* nothing so dear to us as our name and reputation, and therefore we are sensible of the least indignities which touch there; God doth himself profess how tender and jealous he is of his name and glory; it goes very near to the quick; yet such is the Miracle of his gracious disposition, that he hath mercy even for Blasphemy. *I was a Blasphemer*, (saith Paul, *1 Tim. 1. 13.*) *but I obtained mercy.* Only know, that Blasphemy here pardonable, is not that which springs from malice and hatred after conviction, but that of ignorance, as *Paul's*, or of infirmities, as *Peter's*.

The quality of
the Act.

Secondly, *The quality of the act* [shall be forgiven;] No such word as that for a sinner, his life and joy lies in it. Some by these words understand,

1. *Certainty of pardon*: Thus *Theophylact*, who holds the event so sure, that there needs no repentance to obtain pardon for sins not committed against the Holy Ghost. This erroneous opinion need the kindness of a large pardon.

2. *Desert of pardon*: Thus *Origen*, l. 1. *sed apud*, c. 3. *Qui peccat in filium hominis venia dignus est, quia videtur in ignorantiam decidisse*; there is some ground of Apology in this: this opinion is not very unsound, but not genuine.

3. *Facility of pardon*, thus *Jansenius* in Concord. *Evangel. Remittetur, non quasi cunctis hominibus remittetur, sed quod facile remittetur*; there is not so much difficulty to get these, as the other to be pardoned.

4. *Not-Eventum infallibilem sed possibilem*, shall be forgiven, i.e. they are such as are not excluded from hope and offer of pardon, not that they are certainly remitted to all in the event, or that they deserve pardon, or that they are easily pardoned; they do not contract a peremptory incapacity of Mercy, but that they may, and if repentance follow, shall certainly be forgiven.

The indefi-
niteness of the
subject.

Thirdly, *The indefiniteness of the subject* (unto men) not a man guilty of any manner of sin, except that against the Holy Ghost; but such is the rich grace of the great Court of Mercy, that he may take out his pardon. Christ doth not say, not one sin, but *All sin*; not all sin of one kind, but all *manner of sin*; all sin of any kind shall be forgiven, not to one man, but to any one; unto *men*, unto anyone of the sons of men; whence we may conclude this comfortable truth.

DOCTRINE.

29.

There is a possibility of pardon to any sinner for any sin, except the sin against the holy Ghost.

That there is a possibility of pardon for any Sinner whatsoever, and for any sin whatsoever, to all men for all manner of sin, except the sin against the holy Ghost. Hence the infiniteness of Divine Mercy is in *Mica* 7. 19. compared to the depths of the sea: The Ocean is of that vast capacity, that

it can swallow up the highest mountains, as well as cover the lowest Mole-hill. And *Isa. 44. 22.* it is compared to the strength of the sun, which can scatter the darkest clouds, as well as consume the thinnest vapours. There is in man a continual fountain of sin, in God a continual fountain of Mercy, *Zac. 13. 1.* still running; yea, there is in man multitude of sins which stream from that corrupt fountain; and there is in God *Multitudes of Mercies* to heal and stop those various currents; *Psalms 51. 1.* According to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out mine offences.

In the prosecution of this Truth, I shall speak to three things;
 1. The Explication of the terms. 2. The demonstration of the Truth. 3. The Application.

1. The Explication of the terms.

1. *Forgiveness of sin is a gracious act of God in and through Christ, discharging the believing and repenting sinner from the guilt and punishment of sin.*

The explication of the terms. Forgiveness described. It is an Act of God.

It is an Act of God. The *Donatists* hold that man could forgive the sins of men: and *St. Austin* challengeth them for so bold an Assertion, that in this they are worse then the *Pharisees* who maintained this truth; *Who can forgive sins, but God?*

Object. It is true, Christ committed to his Apostles a Ministerial Absolution; in his Name, and *virtute officii*, to bind and loose sinnes.

Sol. But if we speak of an Authoritative Right and immediate Power, thus only God forgives. Life and death are only in the absolute power of the Supreme Lord, and because our sins are directly committed against his Justice, therefore it belongs only to his Mercy to forgive.

2. *It is a gracious Act.* No way deserved by the sinner: *A gracious Gratia indebita liberata*, said *St. Austin*. Hence in Scripture you find our forgiveness like a stream issuing out of rich Mercy, Great love, and the riches of Grace: and the Prophet speaking of forgiveness, usually adjoynes, *For thy Mercy sake, for thine own sake*, intimating that forgiveness is a free Act, not purchased, but given, not merited, but granted. There is I acknowledge, *A double graciousness* in the discharge of an offender.

One without any satisfaction at all. I am much mistaken if Socinus and his Atheistical Complices run not this way.

“Another is, *When the satisfaction of a surety is accepted for the principal debt.* In this respect is our forgiveness gracious; not that Justice is not at all satisfied, but that the offender himself never satisfied it; he is discharged by the price which a blessed Mediator laid down.

Discharging the sinner of guilt and punishment.

3. *Discharging the sinner of guilt and punishment.*] There are two things in sin.

“One is the *stain*, pollution, or defiling quality of it, and this is the Object of *Sanctification*, which is to it as a medicine to a disease, or as water to spots, or as health to sickness, gradually altering, healing, cleansing.

“Another is the *Guilt*, which binds over the sinner to punishment, wrath and damnation; this is the object of forgiveness; in it sin is not healed, but pardoned: the disposition of the sinner is not altered, but his condition. When the King pardons a thief, his theft now shall not prejudice him, so in Gods mercifull forgiveness, sinfull guilt is so effectually removed, that finally and redundantly it shall never prejudice the eternal life and salvation of the person: much more might be said of this subject, but I am unwilling to insist on any more then serves to inlighen the point in hand.

Of this forgiveness there is a possibility.

2. Of this *Forgiveness* there is a *Possibility*; you must distinguish twixt the

“*Infallibility of forgiveness*, which is not to every sin whatsoever, or to any sin whatsoever, without some condition: A grant of actual pardon issues not out of the Court of Mercy, unless persons believe and repent. It is true, there is an infiniteness of Divine mercy considered in it self: but in the dispensation and exercise of it, it is pleased to bound and confine it self to some sinners only, namely to such as forsake their sins.

“*Possibility of forgiveness.* Though perhaps the sinner never comes actually to partake of mercy, but perhaps refuseth his pardon, yet is there a possibility, and that in a twofold respect:

One, *In respect of God*, who doth not in his Word shut the door

door of Mercy against him, nor exclude him; nay, so far is he from that, as that he offers freely the *blood of Christ, which was shed for the Remission of sins.*

Another, *In resp. Et of the sinner*, there is (except he sin the sin against the Holy Ghost) a Receptivity; he is not utterly uncapable, he hath not such absolute contradictions to the Tenor of Divine Mercy, but that God may without violation of his Glory, confirm mercy on him; my meaning is, his condition is not peremptorily sealed up for wrath, but there is a space and a way for mercy, and some pleas may be made for it.

3. Though the sins of a person may be for their nature great, for their kind, gross, vile, abominable, for their circumstances, high and crying, dyed over with many intensive aggravations, not only surreptitious, but flagitious enormities as well as infirmities, iterated as well as acted: Before Conversion, and after Conversion, all these are capable of pardon.

For what sine?

2. The *Demonstration of the truth.* The Extent of Mercy, whereupon ariseth the possible pardon of all manner of sin, is most evident to any considerable apprehension, which can or will seriously weigh.

The truth demonstrated from the Records of heaven in

1. *The volumns and records of heaven*, I mean the sacred Word revealing and testifying this.

1. *In the commands of the vilest sinners to repent*; They in *Esa. 1.* who for the foulness of their wickedness are stiled *Rulers of Sodom*, and people of *Gomorrhah*, verse 10. and their sins are called *scarlet and crimson sins*, verse 18. yet, verse 16. are called upon to repent, *Wash you, make you clean, put away the evil of you doings from before mine eyes; Cease to do evil, learn to do well.* So in *Jer. 3. 1.* Though their sin was *spiritual Adultery*, they had forsaken the true God, yet are they called upon to *Return*: Now this is a truth, that though the Precepts of Repentance do not imply an infallibility of the practise of Repentance, yet they do imply a possibility of it, and consequently of Mercy.

I. Commands.

2. *In the vastness of pardoning promises*: the promise of pardoning pardon is equal to Repentance. *Isa. 55. 7. Let the wicked for-*

2:

sake:

take his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy on him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon. Here he speaks to the wicked and to the unrighteous person, and indefinitely to any, and every one of them: and assures them if they do repent, God will have mercy on them.

Object. And whereas they might object, yea, but our sins are many and great.

Sol. He replies, that God will abundantly pardon, he will multiply pardon, as if he had said, do but repent, and fear not Mercy, whatever your former sins have been. So in *Ezek.* 18. 21. *If the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes* — verse 22. *All his transgressions which he hath committed they shall not be mentioned unto him*: Mark that phrase, *All the sins which he hath committed.*

The actual grants of pardon.

2. The actual grants of mercy and pardon to the greatest sinners; to instance only in a few.

Adam was one of the greatest sinners that ever lived, though not in this respect that he continued long in the practise of sin, yet in a causal sence, he not only committed a most high sin himself, but was also the cause and occasion of all the horrible sins and dishonours against God that ever was, or all the sons of men have done, or will commit, yet God pardoned him, when he made a *Covenant with him in Christ*, *Gen.* 3.

Manasseh seems to be a volumn bound up with all kinds of notorious sins, and with every kind of sinfull aggravation: view his description in *2 Chron.* 33. 3.

3. He reared up *Altars for Baalim, and made groves, and worshipped all the host of heaven, and served them.*

4. Yea, *In the house of God he built Altars.*

5. *For all the host of heaven did he build Altars in the courts of the house of God* [A most audacious Idolater who durst provoke God to his very face, in bringing of the Ark and Dagon together.]

6. *And he caused his Children to pass through the fire in the valley of the son of Hinnom.*

7. *He offered his own Children in sacrifice to the devil.*

8. *Also he observed times, and used enchantments, and witchcrafts, and dealt with a familiar spirit, and with Wizards, and wrought*

Multiplied Idolatry.
Audacious Idolatry,
Unnatural Idolatry.

Sorcery.

wrought much evil in the sight of the Lord to provoke to Anger.

9. He made Judah and Jerusalem to err, and to do worse than the Heathens.

10. And the Lord spake unto Manasseh, but he would not hearken.

One would scarcely imagine that the heart of man could be the womb of such hideous villanies, or that Mercy would ever respect such a sinner, yet *verse 12. He humbled himself greatly before the Lord. verse 13. And prayed unto him, and God was intreated of him, and heard his supplication.*

Who would have risen so high in sin, but a *Manasseh*? and what mercy would have so exceedingly condescended to forgive, but that of God?

Paul, before his Conversion, his sins were very high, so high, that as *Theophilact*, and others well observe; they had but one ingredient to stave them off from being the sin against the Holy Ghost, *viz. Ignorance*, *1 Tim. 1. 13.* he presents a brief survey of his great transgressions.

He was a *Blasphemer*, (i.) one who did cast contumely and reproach on God and Christ, whose nature was Divine, and therefore every way venerable, but he scoffed and mocked at Christ and his Truths.

He was a *Persecutor too*, he did not only deride Christ, but endeavoured to exile and banish him out of the world, to thrust him away from the society of sinners, who in so great mercy came to save sinners. Whereupon *St. Austin* judged well, *Nemo acrior Paulo inter Persecutores, nemo ergo peior inter peccatores*; *Paul* was the quickest persecutor, and therefore the vilest sinner.

Nay, and he was *injurious*; he did not only exercise his thoughts and heart, his tongue and investives against Christ, but his hand and strength; he did consent to the death of persons for Christ. To have a hand in blood is a crying sin, but how heinous is it to have a hand in the blood of Christ! to crucify him afresh in his members, yet saith he, *I obtained mercy*, A blasphemer, yet I obtained mercy; A Persecutor, yet I obtained mercy; Injurious, yet I obtained mercy; I will give

you

Deliberate and intentional provocation.

Diffusive Idolatry.

Intensive Idolatry.

Convicted, and yet obstinate.

you but one instance more, out of 1 Cor. 6.9. *Neither fornicators, nor Idolaters, nor Adulterers, not effeminate, nor Abusers of themselves with mankind.*

verse 10. *Nor thieves, nor covetous, nor Drunkards, nor Revilers, nor Extortioners shall inherit the kingdom of God.*

Here are some sinners which have destroyed a whole world, and others which have started up hell on earth to devour sinners, and all of them such as meritoriously shut the gate of happiness, yet mercy hath stretched out the Scepter to some persons guilty of them.

Verse 11. *And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.*

The Essential
and natural
disposition of
God.

3. *The essential and natural disposition of God.*

“Mercy is not a quality extrinsically imposed or acquired, but *intrinsic* and most *natural*, and therefore exercisable with freest facility, and readiest contancy. The eye is not weary with seeing, nor God with pardoning, because that is natural to the eye, and this is to God: This you know, the power of any thing is answerable to the nature. The nature of God is infinite, and so is his power: *Onnipotente Medico nullus insanabilis occurrit languor*, saith *Isidore Pelusiota*. And *St. Austin*, *Grave est quod habeo sed ad Omnipotentem fugio*. In *Psal.* 51. Therefore is it that his Mercies are stiled, *Riches of mercies*, and *multitudes of mercies*, and *great mercies*, and compared to the depths of the sea,, *Mic. 7.* and to the strength of the sun, *Isa. 44.* and to the vastness of the heavens in comparison of the earth, *Isa 55.*

“As *Mercifulness* is natural in him, so is it *gracious*; The Lord *mercifull and gracious*, *Exod. 34.* If mercy were to be bought, there were no hope for any sinner, but being free, now there is a possibility for any. A sinner may plead for mercy even out of the goodness of mercy.

“As it is dispensed *graciously* without desert on our part: so likewise *delightfully* without repining on Gods part. *He delighteth in Mercy*, saith the Prophet, *Mic. 7. 18.* It is a work that God would do. Two things God delights in, Our Conversion, and our Remission.

4. *The vertue and sufficiency of the blood of Christ which was shed for the remission of sins, Mat. 26. 28.* that was one end to procure our pardon: but for what sins, that is not expressed, because no sin is excluded: you cannot say that Christ dyed only for small sins, or only for great sins; nay, the offer of Christ to all sinners doth confirm it; How can this offer be indefinite? How can it be said, *Whosoever believes shall be saved*, unless you grant a possibility of mercy.

The vertue and sufficiency of the blood of Christ.

5. *The effects of mercy in the Creature*, which point to an infinite fulness in the Creator. The vertue in the cause ever exceeds that in the effect; and according to the generality in the cause, is the intention of the vertue in that cause. If I discern any light in the beams, I apprehend much more in the Sun: If I feel any moisture in smaller drops, I know there is much more in the large ocean. All the mercy in the Creature is derivative, and as so many beams and drops lead us to the infinite fulness of mercy in God, the universal and prime fountain of all compassion. God himself reasons from the compassion of a mother to her own; and Christ tells us, *If we forgive those that trespass against us, our heavenly Father will also forgive us our trespasses.* Surely if we must forgive seventy times, God doth much more multiply forgivenesses.

The effects of Mercy in the Creature.

6. *It is all one to the Lord to forgive great sins as well as small.* Luke 7. 41. There was a Creditor which had two Debtors, the one ought him 500. pence, and the other 50. pence, and when they had nothing to pay, he frankly forgave them both. There was a difference of the debt 50. and 500. one of them many hundred times exceeding the other; the debts were different, but the forgiveness was equal, and the manner of forgiveness, the easiness was alike, both of them was frankly, (i) freely, readily forgiven.

It is all one to God to forgive great as well as small sins.

Now I proceed to the application of all this. Is there a possibility for the pardon of any sin.

Use Information.

1. *An impenitent sinner is utterly inexcusable*, who will continue in sin where so much grace doth abound. I do confess, that many turn the grace of God into wantonness, and because of the richness & readiness of divine mercy, therefore presume to add drunkenness to thirst, giving the reins to all licentiousness

An impenitent sinner is utterly inexcusable

and obduration of Spirit, and why? because God is mercifull. But hear what the Apostle saith: *Rom. 2. Knowest thou not, O man, that the mercies of God should lead thee to Repentance; but thou through the hardness and impenitency of thy heart, treasurest unto thy self wrath against the day of wrath.* I pray you to remember,

1. That the end of mercy, is not *confirmation* in sin, but a *Reformation* of sin. *There is mercy with thee, therefore shalt thou be feared,* said David.

2. That *Mercy* is the sweetest cord to draw us off from *sin*. When God might justly doom a sinner, yet he graciously presents his mercy to pardon him. Loe, yet there is mercy; *I beseech thee by the mercies of God, to leave thy sins; this is a melting argument.*

3. That *Mercy* is the strongest argument to draw men off from *Sin*. The torments of hell cannot work so much as the mercies of heaven. Nothing in the world will prevail upon a sinner, if mercy doth not.

4. If mercy doth not prevail, a mans *Damnation* befalls him without all *Apology*. Ah, what a sad appearing will it be for us, when we must die, and stand before God, and the Lord shall in that day object to us before men and Angels. This is the person unto whom I freely offered the pardon of all the sins that ever he committed; and offered him in the word of God, that if he would leave his sins, I would forgive them, but he preferred his sins before my mercy; *For lying vanities he forsook his mercies.* And thy own conscience shall then testify that thus it was, I had mercy offered again and again, and yet I would continue in my sins. Judge what blackness of darkness, and degrees of eternal confusion thou shall contract, when so great a door of mercy is opened, but for a lust sake, thou wilt not enter in, thou wilt not accept of it.

2. *Then no sinner hath cause sufficient to despair.* I know full well that before God makes us sensible of sin, we are apt to presume, but being once made sensible, we are very apt to despair. It is the great art of the devil, either to make us die in a senceless calm, or else to perish in an unquiet storm; either to make us undervalew our sins, and so to slay us with security,

No sinner hath
cause sufficient
to despair.

or else to undervalew mercy, and so to sink us with despair : Oh, saith the awakened conscience, my sins are so many, and so great, I have continued long in them, gone on in them after knowledge, after the invitations of mercy, after the strokes of afflictions, after many a secret check, and bitter words from my conscience ; now there remains no hope, no, no ; others whose sins are fewer in number, lightet in weight, not edged and raised by such circumstances ; they may hope, but I can have no confidence ; mercy will never look upon such a one as I am ; Nay, but readest thou not the Text, and they are the words of a Saviour, *That all manner of sin may find forgiveness* ; though there be cause enough to despair of thy own strength, yet there is no cause to despair of Gods mercy.

Two things only remember here.

1. *Despair is no remedy to any sinner.* It may bind on his sins the faster, but never heals the soul, nor easeth the conscience, nor pleaseth God.

2. *Whatsoever thy sins have been, if at length thou canst find an heart to repent, God can find mercy to pardon.* I affirm it, no sinner ever perished because God wanted skill to help, but because he wanted a heart to make use of his help.

3. But the main use I would make of this point, is *To persuade men to make out for this pardon* : you see here the extent of Mercy, the possibility of pardon. *Why do you look one upon another ?* (said Jacob to his sons) *Behold, I have heard there is corn in Egypt, get you down thither, that we may live, and not die.* Why stand you amazed and backward, you that are so full of spiritual wants ; why come you not to mercy that you may live and not die ? here is a store-house of mercy, *Behold,* said the servants of Benhadab, *We have heard that the King of Israel is a mercifull King, let us go to him, peradventure he will save thy life,* 1 King 20.31. We hear that the King of heaven is mercifull, and yet we address not our selves unto him ; we hear that there is *Balm in Gilead,* yet we sue not to be healed ; we hear that the Arms of Christ are yet open, and we run not to be embraced ; Ah ! our folly and madnes, that being so greatly diseased, we fly our Physick, that being so in deep rebellions, we lay not down our weapons, and submit not upon the

To persuade men to make out for pardon.

tender of the freest pardon. *As I live, saith the Lord, I delight not in the death of a sinner; Why will you die, O house of Israel? Why do we by lying vanities forsake our Mercies? how my soul bleeds at the wretched hardness of our hearts. God is mercifull, and we are sinfull; yea, we are the more bold in sin, because God is the more abundant in mercy, Continue in sin, because Grace doth abound, Rom 6.1. Thus do we abuse the grace God to wantonness, and bane our souls by the sweet Remedy of sin. There is mercy with thee, that thou mayest be feared, said David: and he who confesseth and forsaketh his sins, shall have mercy, saith Solomon: and knowest thou not that the mercies of God should lead thee to Repentance, saith Paul: consider,*

1. *The presence of Mercy saves not, but the acceptance: the offer of a pardon delivers not the Malefactor, but the receiving of it: only the embracing makes us happy: mercy proves not mercy, but by acceptance; the contempt of it strangely alters it into Justice.*

2. *The despising of mercy leaves without all excuse; what hast thou to urge against God, who could not urge and fasten his mercy on thy soul? yes, thou wouldst have a licence but not a pardon. I know thou warmest thy soul with the sound of mercy, not to abate, but to encourage thy sinfull appetite: Why dost thou not break thy arm, because there is a skilfull Chirurgion, or fall into the strongest diseases, because there is a skilfull Physitian?*

3. *Continuance in sin, and efficacy of Mercy are inconsistent: thou through thy impenitent heart, in stead of mercy, treasurest up unto thy self wrath against the day of wrath, Rom.2.5.*

Get your sins
to be forgiven.

Now that which I would perswade you too, is to be wise for your souls, and to get your sins to be forgiven and pardoned. If a company of sick men did hear of an able Physitian that could and would heal them, who would not be carried to him? or what Malefactor is there so out-ragiously mad but that would make out to the King, if he were assured that the King would pardon him.

Two things only I will propound, *Motives and Means.*

Motives.

1. *The Motives to stir us up to get our sins forgiven, are these;*

1. We

1. *We are in such a case that we need pardon*: yea, that pardon should be multiplied unto us. Indeed were we not sinners, then we should need no forgiveness, or could we of our selves make or exact satisfaction to divine Justice, then might we stand off from mercy: but alas! we are sinners by nature and by life; all our dayes are days of sin; the hairs are not more on our heads, then the number of our sins are on our consciences: they are so many that who can tell how often he offendeth; therefore we need mercy to forgive: yea, and we are without strength: we can find strength to sin, but who can discharge for those sins: the price and ransom could never yet be found in any sinners hand.

We need pardon.

2. *How wofull is the unpardoned condition*: men go on in sin, and make a work of it, but speak slightly of it, but the truth is,

An unprepared condition is wofull.

1. *Sin makes God our enemy*, therefore it is called *enmity* in *Ephe. 2.* and a provocation, because it stirs up the wrath of God against us, which wrath if it should seize on thy soul, Ah, miserable man then, thou canst neither suffer it, nor decline it. Jesus Christ standing in our stead, felt some of it, and it made him sweat drops of blood, and to cry out, *My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?* How then shall a poor weak guilty sinner stand under the fierceness of his indignation?

Sin makes God our enemy.

2. *Sin unpardoned makes conscience our enemy*. As long as the Lord hath a quarrel with us for sin, conscience may not speak any peace unto us. Now the Lord be mercifull unto us, if the Lord should awaken thy conscience, and set thy sins in order, who knows what would become of thee? Knowest thou the power of conscience when it is opened to behold a God angry, and sin unpardoned. Read the vigor of it in *Cain*, and the terror of it in *Judas*, how it crached their spirits, and brought the one to the utmost desperation, and the other to the grave and hell in desire of all former advantages.

Conscience our enemy.

3. *And who can tell how soon he may die*. Go and listen sometimes at a dying bed, the person quakes, and the bed trembles, and the heart sighs! what is it that the man speaks so to himself? Ah, Lord, saith he, I would not die! and then tears trickle down his cheeks, and his heart is ready to fly

Who can tell how soon he may die.

flie in pieces. But why wouldst thou not die ; O no, my sins are many, I now see them, and feel the bitter wrath of God for them ; Oh ! my sins they are not pardonable, and who can dwell with everlasting burnings, or stand before the holy and just God.

It is unspeakable comfort to have sin pardoned.

3. *What unspeakable comfort is it to have our sins forgiven.* Son said *Christ*, Mat. 9. 4. *Be of good comfort, thy sins are forgiven thee.* When the *Israelites* got through the red sea, and looked back, and saw their enemies all drowned, what reviving was this ; if the drowning of corporal enemies be such a cause of joy, who could but kill our bodies ; what cause of exultation for the drowning of spiritual enemies, of sins in the depths of mercy, which else would have destroyed our souls. How shall I express the comfort of it ? *David* saith all in one word, *The man is blessed whose iniquities are forgiven.* Now blessedness is the center of all joy and comfort. Tell me brethren what think you ?

1. *Of freedom from hell*, that you shall never see the place of the damned ; Is that a matter of comfort ? why ? If sin be pardoned, hell is discharged. There is no condemnation, if Remission.

2. *Of Gods loving kindness.* *David* said, it was life, nay, better then life : Oh, what is this ? God is reconciled unto me in *Christ* : he looks on me not as a Judge, but as a father with ardent affections and compassions ; why ? if sin be pardoned, God is reconciled, enmity slain, all differences twixt you and God are taken off.

3. *Of the blood of Christ.* Is it worth the having, or of interest in *Christ*, it is worth the enjoying ; why ? if pardoned, then doubtless united to *Christ* ; and how many and great are the benefits that result and follow upon union.

4. *Of Peace of conscience.* It is a mercy that Conscience can and may speak peace, cheer us up, assure us, stand for us against men and devils : Why ? when sin is pardoned, conscience may not accuse ; it hath nothing to do, but direct us in good ways, and to comfort us with the testimonies of our pardon and Reconciliation with God.

5. *Of all outward mercies* : Oh ! what a life doth a pardon-
ed

ed sinner live. If he looks up to heaven, all is peace; if he looks down to earth, all is comfort: he hath lands, and sins pardoned too, wife, children, honours, friends, yea, and his sins are pardoned too.

6. Lastly, *what think you of confidence in death.* When you are leaving the earth, then to be assured, your next journey is to heaven. After grace to find glory: would you ever be willing to die; be confident in death, live in death, live after death, O then get your sins, whatsoever they are to be pardoned.

II. The *Means*: if you ask what may we do to get our sins forgiven, I shall answer briefly. The means.

1. *Find out your sins*, and know them: and that is done by the study of the Law which gives us the knowledge of sin.

2. *Beg of God for a contrite heart*, so as to be sensible of sin, and weary of it, and broken for it. The weeping woman was forgiven, *Luke 7.44,47.*

3. And also for a penitential heart. *Repent*, saith Peter, *that your sins may be blotted out*, *Act.3 19.* See *Isa. 55.7.*

4. And for a *Believing heart* in the Lord Jesus. In whose blood, and for whose sake we obtain Remission of our sins, *2 Cor. 5.20.* *God was in Christ reconciling the world*, ——— not imputing our sins.

5. *And for a forgiving heart*: see *Mat. 6. 14,15.*

6. *Make it a daily and vehement petition for Repentance and forgiveness*, as did David, Psalm 51. and sue all out in the name of Christ.

Object. But these things are hard and laborious.

Sol. But they are for mercy. O Mercy, I perish without thee, and therefore I will not live without thee, sleep without thee, die without thee. I will pray for mercy, I will go to Christ for mercy; and shall it seem so grievous to me, to leave a sin which will damn me, to get mercy which will save me.

III. The Tribunal of Justice created in these words, *But the Blasphemy against the holy Ghost shall not be forgiven.*

These words are the saddest expressions of purest Justice that

that ever were uttered. Oh, what is the height, what the depth of this, for a sinner to rise to such a peculiar degree and form of sinning, as for ever to distinguish himself from all hope of mercy, never, never, never to be pardoned.

In this there are two things to be inquired into,

1. What this Blasphemy against the holy Ghost is.
2. The irremissibleness of this Blasphemy.

Touching the first of these, there are several opinions, and no marvel; for to find the right nature of this sin, is a work not of the least difficulty; *In Scripturis sanctis nulla major questio, nulla difficilior invenitur*, saith *Austin*.

1. The *Novations* thought every sin after *Baptism*, especially denial of *Christ* in time of persecution, to be the sin against the Holy Ghost. I deny not, but each sin that a Christian commits, may in some sence be called a sin, but strictly it is not the sin against the holy Ghost. This error is abundantly refuted by *Cyprian*, *Hiero*, *Austin*, &c. and is repugnant to all religious reason; because,

First, Thus there should be no opposition twixt all manner of sin, and the sin against the Holy Ghost in the Text.

Secondly, Thus no man should ever be saved, or have sin pardoned. And for the *Denial of Christ* in time of persecution, though indeed it be a very great sin, yet because it may arise not out of the strength of hatred against *Christ*, but out of the strength of fear, and from humane weakness, it is without doubt an act, though sinfull, yet pardonable, yet it hath been pardoned, as we read in *Peter*.

2. *Origen* thinks, that the *Defection from participation of the Holy Ghost*, is this Blasphemy, and so he placeth the nature of it in *Apostacy*. *Qui dignus habitus est spiritus sancti participatione, & retro conversus fuerit, hic re ipsa & opere blasphemasse dicitur in Spiritum sanctum*. This is in part true; for *Apostacy* is a necessary concomitant of this Blasphemy: but yet it expresseth not the full, and compleat, and certain nature of this sin, because,

First, *Every defection* from the truth, or defection alone, is not sin. One may be an *Apostate*, and yet not sin the sin against the Holy Ghost; he may *recedere a fide*, and yet not *in fidem*

irruere

What this sin is,

Quid est, quod Novato succenseamus tolerantiam dicentium, nullam eos veniam obtinere, qui post lavacrum peccant. Athan. Tom. 1. in hoc subject. p. 776.

L. 1. c. 3. p. 776

irruere, and therefore St. Hierom upon this very agreement to *Marcella*, saith well, *Aliud est Christianum se negare, aliud Christum Diabolum dicere*: and to that purpose likewise St. Cyprian, Epist. 53. Tom. 4.
Fol. 26.

Secondly much more is required to the constitution of this sin than a defection; yet we deny not, but that an universal apostacy is necessary hereunto.

Thirdly, *Austin* delivers his opinion by divers phrases in divers places, but most fairly in Epist. 50, which is *ad Bonifacium comitem*, It is *Duritia cordis usque ad finem hujus vite, qua homo recusat accipere remissionem peccatorum*: where you may apprehend, according to his Judgement, three acts in this sin; First, *Hardness of heart*. Secondly, *Perseverance in this hardness*. Thirdly, *Refusal of remission*, which is through malicious obstinacy. This opinion, though it be true in part, yet it is not compleat and punctual, because,

First, All this may be without blasphemy.

Secondly, All this cannot be till the last gasp, and yet so may the sin against the holy Ghost be.

Fourthly, The Schoolmen generally run one after another, and place the nature of it in *obstinacy* or *malice*: so that to sin against the Holy Ghost, is with them to sin out of a resolved or determined malice: this you may see more fully deliveted by *Aquinas* and *Alexander Ales*; which sinning of malice, is not barely a vitious and habitual inclination, but further it hath the access of contemptuous rejecting of those things, which might remove this malicious sinning. Hence it is, that they break this general into many particulars, as First, Of *Desperation*, whereby the malicious offendor casts away the anchor of hope, wilfully perishing in the gulf of sin. Secondly, Of *Presumption*, whereby he wilfully rejects all fear of God. Thirdly, Of *Impenitency*. Fourthly, Of *Obstinacy*. Fifthly, Of *Inzugning known truth*. Sixthly, And envying and maligning of Grace in our brethren.

But to omit diversity of opinions in this argument, I shall as fully as I can touch the nature of this blasphemy against the holy Ghost in this brief description.

It is an extraordinary sin wherein the apostatizing Blasphemer

This sin described. mer despitefully rejects, and maliciously persecutes the Gospel and Truth of Christ after a manifest conviction by the holy Ghost, let us take this description assunder, and consider these parts.

An extraordinary sin. First, It is an *extraordinary sin* both for subject, and for degree. For *Subject* because it is a sin (in comparison with other sins) nothing so frequent, it is not so common in practise. And also for *Degree*, it is a sin made of the very cream and spirits, as it were of the vilest and most condemning forms of transgressing; but to let that go as being only general.

The subject of it. Secondly, *The subject of this sin*, An Apostatizing Blasphemer.

An apostate. 1. An *Apostate*, and therefore in *Heb. 6.6.* where this sin is described, the persons guilty of it are said to *fall away*: not only to fall (for so may the faithfullest servant of truth do, he may fall in the way) but to fall away, to turn the heart, and to turn the back upon truth, to renounce our colours, it is an universal Apostacy. The School-men well observe two things in a Apostacy! One is *Recessio a fine*: the other is, *Accessio ad sectam*, and I think there was never any branded with the sin against the Holy Ghost, but proved guilty of both; as *Julian* forsook the truth, and turned *Pagan*: Hence that conclusion ariseth amongst them, *Omnis Apostata est Hæreticus.*

A Blasphemer. 2. *A Blasphemer.* What a Blasphemer is, you may collect from the description already given of Blasphemy, he is one who is contumelious or opprobrious to God and Christ, either in Nature, Name or Doctrine; such as the *Pharisees* here, who fastened on Christ the most reproachfull obloquies, of a *Samaritan*, *Devil*, *companion and friend to Publicans*; or as *Julian* styling Christ in derision, the *Galilean* and the *Carpenters son*. To understand this more clearly, know that Blasphemy is sometime taken,

Blasphemy how taken. First, *Most generally*, and so it may be terminated in man as the Object. *Tit. 3.2.* *Blasphemus no man, μηδὲνα βλασφημῆν*; Thus he is a Blasphemer, who assumes any disgracefull terme, which may blemish the credit of a man.

Secondly, *Less generally*, and so it is applicable to any word uttered

uttered in the reproach of God, or Christ, or the Gospel of Christ, whether deliberately or unadvisedly: in which respect it may be verified in some cases of the best Saints, who affix that unto God in their hast of spiritual trouble, which unbecometh his purity and truth.

Thirdly, *Strictly*, and so it is a malicious reproachfull word against the known Doctrine of Christ: so that the Blasphemer, who is the true subject of this sin, is not he that speaks evil of other men, nor he, who through inconsideration, or violence, or vehement distemper of passion, or any extrinsecal pressure, lets fall some unbecoming speeches of God, or Christ, or his Gospel, but he that doth this out of a resolvedness and wilfulness.

A man may blaspheme two wayes, either *Enunciative*, as A man may to affirm that Christ is a Devil, or God is unjust, or the Scriptures are a lye; or *Imperative* or *Optative*, by wishing any unglorious thing on God, or Christ and his Truths; both of which may be *in actu signato*, when the person doth express out in words all this: or *in actu exercitio*, when all this is in *conceptu mentis & proposito*. Though perhaps he doth speak what is true, and honourable of God and Christ, yet it is *modo irrisorio & contemptivo*, (as *Cajetan* observes) after a disgracing and despicable manner. Now then the subject of the sin against the holy Ghost is such a Blasphemy, who doth most unworthily think of Christ, and this is *verbum mentis*, inward Blasphemy *in conceptu*, and who doth basely deride and scoffe at him and his Truths, jearing at his holiness, and the excellency, and purity of his wayes, and this is *verbum vocis* outward Blasphemy. The which is not occasioned by coercion of Tyranny, as some through torment may speak with their lips that which their heart abhors; nor by the phrensy of the disease, when a person not *mentis compos*, talks idly he knows not what, but it is a set Blasphemy and deliberate; formal Blasphemy arising from a direct intention to eclipse, and despise, and diminish and disgrace the glory of Christ in himself, truths, wayes, servants: and it may be that even in this sense those that thus sin, are said to put Christ to an open shame, Heb. 6. 6.

3. The object of this, the Gospel of Christ.

The common

The Object of
the Gospel.

Object

Object of Blasphemy is God considered in Essence and Revelation, and man : The *Object* of Blasphemy less generally taken, goes not lower then God and his Truths ; but the *special Object* of Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost, is the *saving part of the Word, It is the Gospel of Christ* : Heb, 10. 29. The Son of God, and the blood of the Covenant, are the *Objects* of this impiety. O how this raises this reproachful sin : It is a high sin to reproach any Attribute of God, to reproach any part of the Truth of God ; but to fasten disgrace on the mercy of God, to pour contempt on the Gospel of God, there where his compassions yearn to sinners, there where his freest grace calls upon sinners, there where the Sun of Righteousness and salvation shines to sinners, this is the highest Injury ; yet on this most amiable countenance and tenderest affections of Heaven, doth this blasphemer cast his most impure, and foulest indignities, which appears in the *Acts* incident to this Subject.

Thirdly, The *Acts*, they are two.

The *Acts* of it.

A malicious
rejecting of the
Gospel.

1. *A malicious rejecting of the Gospel*, both in the *Truth* and in the *Goodness* of it. The Gospel may be not hearkened to where it is represented, and yet the person not guilty of this sin ; It may be refused, though it be hearkened to, and yet we guiltless of the same : All Refusal, all Disobedience unto it, doth not necessarily infer this sin, but there must be a malicious Rejecting which notes two things.

A compleat
and free dis-
position of the
Will.

First *A compleat and free disposition of the Will*: he sins *ex voluntate, non per ignorantiam, non per violentiam, sed motu spontaneo* ; for there be some actions which arise partly from the will, and partly from externally impulsive Causes. Secondly, Which arise immediately and totally from the Will : such is this rejection, it is not caused through the darkness or mistake of the understanding, nor through the powerfull impression of persecution, nor through any violent distemper or sudden motion of the affections, nor through the importunity of temptation, nor through any phrenetical disease, but through the natural and internal inclination of perverseness in the Will, when the person is set in the fairest of Circumstances and conditions, not blinded, not agitated, but voluntarily and

and wilfully rejects the Gospel of Christ.

II. *Access of deepest malice, and constant hatred in the Will*; Therefore *Alexander Ales* saith well, that the *Motus huius peccati habet originem a certa malitia, i.e. ex malignitate animi cum conscientia peccati, & ex quadam mentis perversitate*, when the person doth it of set purpose, and with a secter complacence, he is gladdened that he can despise and injure Christ and his Gospel. This despitefull rejecting is expressed in *Heb. 10.29.* By, First, *Treading under foot the Son of God*, the most base esteem of Christ, respecting him no more then the impurest dirt in the streets, or the most vile thing, as *Ambrose* expounds it. It were fault sufficient not to accept of Christ, it is a deeper treason to scorn and reject Christ and Mercy; but how infinitely vile is it to do this with a disdain, and with a despitefull humour, with a purpose to vex and dishonour Christ and the Gospel. Secondly, *Counting the blood of the Covenant an unholy thing*: The blood of Christ is the blood of the new Covenant; it is it wherein Promises of life are made, it is it whereby reconciliation with God is effectually made, it is it by which we obtain salvation, and this blood it is called *Precious* in Scripture: but he that sins against the Holy Ghost, vilipends this blood, he doth no more account of it, then the blood of a most common thief and unhallowed person.

2ly, *A despitefull persecuting of the Gospel*] as it is evident here in the *Pharisees*, who hated the light, and bitterly persecuted the light: and thus was it with *Julian, Lucianus, Porphirius*, and other odious Apostates, who were so hellishly incensed against the Gospel of Christ, that if it had been possible, they would have plucked this Sun out of the Firmament, they would have rooted out the very Name and naming of Christ; the reasons whereof I conceive may be these.

A delightful
persecuting of
the Gospel.

First, *The strong possession of their hearts by Satan*, who communicates unto them this eternal malevolence and hatred of Christ.

Secondly, *The inward persuasion in their own consciences, that they shall never have part in Christ*, whereupon in the
fury,

fury of despair. For themselves they are maliciously bent against the possible benefit that any other may draw from Christ.

The formal aggravation of these acts.

The *Formal Aggravation of these Acts*, after manifest conviction by the holy Ghost. A man may reject the Gospel, a man may persecute the Gospel, and do it with his very soul and heart as *Paul*, who breathed out persecutions, and destroyed them that called upon the name of Jesus, and compelled many to blaspheme, and waxed mad against the Saints, yet not sin against the Holy Ghost; for all this may be through ignorance, the Understanding not knowing, the Conscience being not yet convinced, nay, it being perswaded of the contrary as fit and lawfull, *Acts 26.9*. The thing therefore that formerly contains the nature of this sin, is the doing of all this after and against *Conviction by the Holy Ghost*. Hence doth this sin borrow its denomination against the Holy Ghost. Now here I shall briefly open,

How this after conviction by the Holy Ghost.

First, How the Holy Ghost is taken.

Secondly, What the Conviction by the Holy Ghost is.

How the Holy Ghost is taken.

1. The Holy Ghost is sometime taken; First, *Essentially*, for that one infinite, indivisible, independent Deity. Secondly, *Personally*, as the third person in Trinity proceeding from the Father and the Son. Thirdly, *Virtually*, In respect of Energy or operation, and this *Origen* calls, *Proprietatem gratie*, & *Aquinas bonum spirito appropriatum*: for though external operations be common to the Trinity, yet the immediate manner of working is more common to one person than another, as the work of *Creation* to the *Father*, *Redemption* to the *Son*, *Illumination* and *Sanctification* to the *Holy Ghost*. Thus is the holy Ghost here considered in his proper operation, *viz. Conviction*.

Loc.cit.

What this conviction is. Objective. Satisfaction.

Secondly, The operation or conviction of this person by the Holy Ghost, consists in these particulars.

First, The clear *Revelation of Jesus Christ in the Gospel*, both in respect of *Truth* and *Goodness*; of *Truth*, that he is the true and only Son of God; of *Goodness*, that he is the

Re-

Redeemer of the world, and assured Saviour to Believers.

Secondly, *There is by the Holy Ghost wrought in them an Apprehension of all this by a supernatural illumination, as in Heb. 6. 4. They were once inlightned, not naturali lumine, for by that of conscience every one is inlightned, but lumine superraturali, by that of the Spirit.*

Thirdly, *Not a slighter apprehension, but a more determinate Conviction; so that they cannot deny the truth; the light whereof shines with such clear beams upon the understanding. The testimony of the conscience determinately assents with the testimony of the Spirit, that this Revealed Gospel, is indeed the Gospel of Christ and of salvation. You know who I am, and whence I come, saith Christ to the Pharisees; yea, themselves professed so much, because ye say we see, therefore your sins remain, John 9.*

Fourthly, *Nay, yet undeniable Conviction is not all, there is also some kind of approbation of those truths, which the Apostle calls A tasting of the heavenly gift, and a tasting of the good word of God, and of the powers of the world to come. A man may have a little taste of Honey, so that he can say, I know it is sweet; and of wine, that he can say, it is comfortable: In-like manner, they who sin this sin against the Holy Ghost may feel his operation, not only in an objective revelation, not only in a subjective apprehension, not only in an undeniable conviction, but also in some degree of approbation. There may drop some effects from the truth imprinted upon the affections that the Conscience may be persuaded, and give testimonie assuredly that these are the very truths of Christ. All which is very evident in some of the Pharisees, who had Christ revealed to them, who did know, and were convinced in their own hearts who Christ was, and what his Doctrine was, yet did they with inward malice break out against him, and his Doctrine, and in words poured the basest contumelies and blasphemies*

mies upon him; and in their pertinacious workings did constantly persecute him, even to the most reproachfull death of the Cross, and all this against the clearest Convictions of the Holy Ghost in their own Consciences.

The irremissibleness of this sin.

Thus for the nature of the Sin. Consider the *Irremissibleness of it*.

It shall not be forgiven unto men.

Object.

Vide Aug. Ep. 50. ad Bonifacium.

Comitem.

Vide Athan.

Tom. 1. in Ep.

ad Serapionem, p. 344.

of this very Argument.

The *Arrians, Eunomians, Macedonians*, and other *Hereticks* said, the *Holy Ghost* was a *Creature*, and the *Photinians* denied to him a real substance, *i. e.* a *Personality*, as *Erasmus* interprets it; yet many of these repented, (if we believe *Saint Austin*) and obtained pardon.

The same Father fitly removes this scruple, by distinguishing between erroneous opinions concerning the *Holy Ghost*, and this unpardonable blasphemy against the *Holy Ghost*. It is one thing to mis-apprehend the *Essence*, or personal subsistence, and hereupon to pronounce according to the dark misconceits of the *holy Ghost*. It is another thing to blaspheme *Christ* and his *Gospel* after clear conviction by the *Holy Ghost*; this is the sin which shall not be forgiven.

Hence it is, that this sin is called, *1 John 5. 16.* A *sin unto death*. And *H. b. 6. 4, 6.* A sin that casts a man into an *impossibility of renewing*. And *Heb. 10. 26.* *All sacrifice for this sin is taken away*. Which places strongly re-fell the errors of *Jansenius*; and *Bellarmino*, and other *Papists*, who interpret this of the difficulty and the rarity only of this remission, not of the impossibility.

Quest. Why is it that this sin shall never be forgiven?

Why is it pardonable.

Ans. 1. It is not because the *Holy Ghost* is greater than the *Son*; for there is not *Major* and *Minor*, where ever

every one is equal in Nature and Dignity.

2. Nor is it because this sin is so intensively great, that exceeds the absolute power of God to forgive it, or the infinite Merits of Christ. *Omnipotentis Medico nullus insanabilis occurrit languor*; Isidore.

But the Reasons given are these.

First, Because it is *Repugnant to the immutable Statute and Decree of the Divine Will*. It is Gods absolute pleasure, who of himself sets the extent of his Mercy, and the bounds of his Justice. Though he will be pleased to allow a possibility of Mercy to other sinners; yet as a King for some facts will not allow an Offender his book; so God is pleased here to deny Mercy. This Reason is true, but because it is of common equity to some other sins, therefore further satisfaction may be sought.

Secondly, *It directly resists, and repudiats the matter of pardon and remission, viz. The blood of Christ*. If a Patient could be healed only by one Medicine, and he did wilfully reject that, it is impossible he should recover, not that the medicine is not of vertue, but that he wilfully rejects this virtual Medicine: so here, there is *no other name under heaven by which we can be saved, but only the name of Jesus Christ*; no plaister but the blood of Christ, which yet this sinner despitefully rejects, &c.

Thirdly, *It contemptuously, and with a wilfull obstinacy resists that Spirit which should apply this pardon and Remission*. Pardon cannot be obtained, unless the Spirit apply it, but here the sinner fights against the Spirit of God, and despites the Spirit of Grace, and will not permit any operation, any saving operation of the Spirit to fasten on the soul, all fitness and disposition for pardon is from the Spirit, who is here rejected.

Fourthly, *The constant order of operation in the Trinity suggests unto us the reason of the irremissibleness of this sin*; which order is alwaies by descent, and not by regressi-

It is Gods absolute pleasure not to pardon it.

Contrariatur per te gratia remissionis, Alex: Alex: Tom. 2. q. 155. m. 6. It rejects the pardon.

He willingly resists the Spirit who should apply the pardon.

He sins against the order of Operation of the Trinity.

on. If a man sin against the Father, the Son hath an operation for the sinner; if a man sin against the Son, the Spirit hath an operation for the sinner in working upon his conscience, and offering of Christ; but if a man sin against this Spirit, whether should he go? or who is to present pardon? To the Father he cannot go without the Spirit, to the Son he cannot go without the Spirit, but the Spirit is by him rejected and despirefully scorned. He that sins against the Holy Ghost, sins against the whole Trinity, the Fathers love, the Sons death, and the Spirits operation. I know that *Hierome* saith, this sin shall not be forgiven *Propter blasphemiam, & Augustine, propter perseverantissimam cordis duritiem*; and the Schols, *Propter defectum excusabilitatis & indignitatem*; and others, *quod qui sic peccant traduntur in reprobum sensum*, thus *Hilary, Athanasium*, and some of our modern Writers.

Epist. ad Marcellum. Epist. ad Bonifacium

Use I.

Information.

The greatest illuminations are not able of themselves to save a man.

THE Uses from the explication of this high sin shall serve us both for, first, Information: And secondly, Caution: Thirdly, Direction.

First That the *greatest illuminations in the understanding, and determinate convictions in the Conscience, are not able of themselves to save a man*: A person may have a deep insight in the Misteries of Heaven, an ample apprehension of supernatural truths, a large acquaintance with the Rules of Grace and life, a yielding in his conscience to the revealed testimonies of the spirit concerning Christ and his Doctrine, yet be so far from the assurance and possession of glory; that he may be reprobated to the lowest gulf of misery and damnation, for the damned Devils are invested with a most general extent of objective knowledge; and these here who sin against the Holy Ghost do participate of divine illumination, even to the measure of approbation in the conscience touching the truth, yet you see that their condition is utterly incompatible with the just hopes or expectation of happiness, it is not capable

capable of remission, and therefore eternally desperate of salvation: all which must be so understood by you, not that spiritual illumination is not necessary, but that it is not alone sufficient to save. The strongest abilities of knowledge may only serve to purchase us a more learned and full damnation.

Secondly, *That greatest knowledge may be in a subject both deprived of the inexistence of sanctifying grace, and also filled with bitterest enmity and malice against the truth of Grace.* I justly question, whether any persons incapable of Glory are convinced with more supernatural light than these who sin against the Holy Ghost; yet sure I am, none are more enraged Lyons against the innocency and simplicity of Holiness, and true Grace than these.

A person may put on *κόρησιν ευσβείας*, as the Apostle speaks, and yet his heart be void of the inward power of Godliness. A dead man may be clothed with beautiful Garments; and a heart utterly void of the life and quicknings of Holiness, may yet be adorned with the fair robes and endowments of knowledge.

Nay, Do but consult with the Records of the spirit in the Scripture, and the examples of persons, and attempts in all Ecclesiastical History, you shall not only find knowledge divided from grace, but oft-times making strongest oppositions against it. None withstood Christ more than the learned *Scribes* and *Pharisees*; none withstood *Paul* more, than the learned *Athenians*: Whom have we in our age more eager against the Doctrine of faith, than the subtle *Jesuite*? and against the independency and immobility of grace, than the *Arminian*. Dull and blind apprehensions are not so serviceable Engines for the execution of Diabolical malice: the most advantageous servant that ever Satan had, was a learned head and a graceless heart: Abstract knowledge will easily blow up pride, and pride will easily fire our malice, and contempt, and these will suddenly break out into our tongues with

The greatest knowledge may be in a subject void of Grace, and an enemy to it.

2 Tim. 3. 5.

1. Privation.

2. Opposition.

Great know-
ledge without
grace adds to
misery.

derision and persecution of Grace.

Thirdly, That our greater *knowledge (without sanctifying Grace)* adds to our greater ruine and judgement. This illation is most conspicuous in the subjects of this sin, whose Judgement becomes the more heinous and inevitable, because of the greatness of their illumination and conviction.

I know the schools deliver unto us several circumstances whereby a sin common with another in identity of nature, is yet by the access of them variously altered: but amongst all the intensive perfections of sinfull guilt, this addition of knowledge is one excessively aggravating. *If ye were blind, (saith Christ, John 9. 41.) ye should have no sin (comparatively for measure) but now you say, we see, therefore your sin remaineth.* An ignorant Offendor may have some plea and excuse, but a willfull sinner is without all Pretext. None shall find greater stripes then he who knows and doth not, or he who sees to do, but will not. As the most practical Christian shall rise to the highest seat and Throne of happiness in heaven, so the most illuminated sinner shall sink into the deepest dungeon of misery in hell.

Use II.

Caution.

NOW I come to *Caution*: you have heard what this sin is, and you have heard the sad condition of this sinner, that he may for ever despair to see the face of God! I dare not fasten the compleat guilt of this sin on any who hears me this day: Only remember that of the Apostle, *Heb. 3. 12. Take heed brethren lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief in departing from the living God.*

Take heed of,

Yet because this sin is possibly incident unto us, who take upon us the profession of the Gospel: it shall not prove I trust an unseasonable endeavour, if I describe unto you some few steps by which the soul gradually descends unto the bottom of this damned impiety.

First,

First, *Regardless receiving of the Gospel of Christ*, which is done three ways.

Regardless receiving of the Gospel of Christ.

1. *When the Judgement hath no reverent estimations of God in Christ*, and of the Promises made in the blood of Christ, or of the necessary conditions of the Covenant of Grace to be performed by us.

Secondly, *When the heart either in hearing or reading is without life and affections*, so that the Gospel draws not our love, and joy, and delight, or any adhesion of the mind. Paul tells us, *2 Thej. 2. 12.* of some to be damned. And verse 10. *They were such who received not the truth in the love of it.*

Thirdly, *When there is no conformity to the Gospel-rules of life.* Now what shall I say of our selves? what accounts have we of this pearl? what affections have we to this Doctrine of Grace? Have we any impressions of Reverence, any impressions of love unto the Ministry of the Spirit? Alas! our stomachs begin to loath the hony comb, and we are almost as weary of this Gospel, as the *Israelites* were of their Manna. Why else those many neglects of this word of grace, why else our slight entertainment of it? why else our very scorn and contempt of it? Shall I speak the truth? the heavenly strains of the Holy Ghost in the Gospel fall too low, and sound too flat in our curious ears. The sharp inventions of some Poet, or the brain-Raptures of a Comedian, shall relish our Palats with more pleasure then the sweetest principles and lessons that ever the wisdom of Heaven hath dedicated. The plain tune of Scripture striks us not, unless there be also smart descantings of humane wit. Mistake me not, I speak not this to banish the convenient use of fitting expressions in our delivery of the Gospel of Christ, by condemning our inaffectionate attentions to the simplicity of Christ. I do not hereby apologize for the language of rudeness; (no, I would not have the highness of the word to be made offensive by my Barbarisms) only let me tell you, that where the Word of life, coming in the

Act 7. 5.
Ye resist the Holy Ghost.

the strength and beauty of its own elegant plainness, findeth not only coldness of respect and love, but the lashes also of ignorant censure and scorn, we are mounted upon an high step of prophaneness, and are descending to that unpardonable sin against the Holy Ghost.

Secondly, *Private or publick scorning of holiness.* Holiness it is the Glory of God, and in a sort the reëtitude of all his attributes. God delights to reveal himself in this holiness, and tells us, that without holiness none shall see his face. It is the most distinguishing effect of the Spirit of God, and that which is both an assurance of divine Election, as also the secular zeal of our salvation. Yet may not I confidently affirm to you, that nothing is more fallen into the base derisions of witless sinners than this glorious image of heaven. Strip me a person of the well-spoken complements of dignity, wealth, conceited projects, and deportments for the itch of the times, and suppose him only clothed with the endowments of true grace and holiness; who is there that is set forth with more disdain, and derision, and jeering, than such a person; this is the only reason of our scornings that he is a person of purity, one of the Spirit; A religious *David* is the song of *Drunkards*, and the Innocent, Objects of mockings, reproaches, scorns and jestings: *Bonus vir*, perhaps, but *Christianus*, so now *bonus vir sed Religiosus*; Lord, What think we of God, or his Spirit, or Heaven! is holiness beautifull in God, admirable in the Spirit of God, lovely in the Word of God? and yet contemptible effectively considered in the servants of God. As sure as the Lord liveth, if the bounds of publick Authority did not awe, and the secret suspicions of publick shame did not bank these enemies of Grace, their private Sarcasms, and blemishes of Grace would break forth into publick fury against all real power and practise of Grace.

Who but an *Ishmael* will scoff at an *Isaac*? and who but a *Cain* will hate his brother, because his works are good? and

Scorning of
Holiness.
Heb. 12. 14.

Bonus vir Ca-
jus Scijs, sed
malus tantum
quod Christianus,
Tertul. Apolog. p. 810.
Christianus, si
nullius criminis,
nomine reus est: valde
infectum si solius
nominis crimen est. lbi-
p. 809.

and who but an ignorant wretch agitated by the Spirit of darkness and perverseness, will flie out with hellish invectives against holiness in heart, and practise, which is the Glory of God, the perfection of Angels; the sacred work of the Spirit, and the pledge of our immortal inheritance in the heavens.

My brethren, be cautioned to sorrow for this, and reform in offering violence to holiness in man, thou fastest indignity upon the very image of God, and despite upon the Holy Ghost, who is the immediate efficient of Holiness in the Creature.

Thirdly, *Sleighting the checks of conscience.* Conscience especially enlightened, it is our Angel-Guardian, the private Register of our courses, and the faithful Monitor within our own breasts: it is the eye of the soul to oversee the whole occasions of heart and life, and it is the tongue, that reports to us the rectitude or aberration of our wayes. The Law testifies *de jure*, and this *de facto*.

Sleighting the checks of conscience.

There is not I believe a sinner partaking of any illumination general or particular under the powerfull presence of a sound Ministry, but his Conscience sometimes in the hearing of threatnings from the Pulpit, sometimes in his retired secessions or withdrawals from company, doth lay unto him the guilt of his sins, and perhaps stings him with unquestionable convictions and horrors, it tells him that his heart is yet desperately foul, and that his wayes are not the wayes of life and comfort. But now for this person to stop his ears at this faithful voice of conscience, for him to deal with this, as *Felix* did with *Paul* discoursing of Judgement to come, *go thy way for this time, when I have convenient season I will call for thee*, or else to quench and drown their private clamors by the untimeliness of other discourses and fouler actions; O what direct injury do we hereby offer to the workings of Gods Spirit, and what stronger power do we add hereby to the workings of our heart.

Zach. 7. 11.

Ag. 24. 25.

A tender conscience is like a tender eye or stomach: but neglect of motions in the conscience prepares for hardnets of heart. It will be with us in sinning, as it is with the iron, which becomes the more hardened after the fire, and the sinner more sinfull, after the slighting of the checks of conscience; or as with a disease which growes incurable by neglect, yet might have been cured and healed by observance; or as a tree which after many shakings takes deeper root, and hold in the earth. It is a fearfull Judgement to sin against Conscience, this will breed custome and delight, and defence, and at length hatred of that Truth, which shall present light for Reformation. Hereby we grieve the Holy Spirit, and quench him, and cauterize, or sear our consciences with senselessness, whence ariseth a greediness to sin, *Ephesians* 4. 18.

Be not peremptory for worldly ends.

Fourthly, *Be not peremptory for worldly ends*: he who sets up his resolution, that he will be some body in the world, he will have his covetous ends, or ambitious projects, no marvel, if such a person sleights the checks of Conscience, and derides the beauty of holiness, and looks on the Word of Grace without all esteem or affection. Let God say what he will, he will do what he please.

The *Pharisees* guilty of this great sin would not, could not believe Christ; what was the reason? See *John* 5.44. *How can ye believe, which receive honour one of another? Balam* for gain will ride to curse the Israel of God, and *Judas* betray his Master; and ambitious *Haman*, rather then his proud humour shall be neglected, he will endeavour the ruine of all the Jews. What was the reason of *Demas's* Apostacy? *The embracing of this present world*, *2 Tim.* 4.10. O! when the heart is resolved for carnal courses, it will easily part with, nay, rather then it will be crossed or disappointed, it will fall foul upon the very Truths of God. The greatest enemies and opposers of Truth have been a covetous *Demetrius*, *Acts* 19. or a proud

proud *Diotrephes*, 3 John, *verse* 9. Be therefore submissive in your worldly resolutions; and to bend the mind hereunto, weigh Christ, and the whole world in the same ballance: see whether Christ be not more advantageous every way; weigh you souls, and the world in the same ballance: see whether the saving of the soul, be not better then the winning of the world.

Caution.

Use III.

THE last use shall be to exhort us, to use all the means we can to prevent it, and to this end I will commend these Advises.

Exhortation.

1. *Let divine Truths reform as well as inform*: a naked sword may do much hurt, and a bare knowledge may prove dangerous: but where knowledge hath heat as well as light, it is *Medicum utile*: he is right whose knowledge doth not make him more cunning to sin, but more careful to avoid it, and forsake it.

Let Truth reform as well as Inform.

2. *Strive to love the truth and holiness*. Pauls temper was excellent, *We can do nothing against the truth, but for the Truth*; Why? What was the reason? surely his great love to Christ and his Truth. Love, intire love to Christ will disarm us of all malice, and opposition against him. Yea, and get love to the Gospel, wherein lies our life, our hope, our stay, our comfort, our all.

Love the truth and holiness.

3. *Get faith*, beg it of God, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ to give thee faith: Faith would not only see a Christ, but prize him too. Two vertues there are in a true faith, *Singular estimations*, and *Inseparable affections*. Faith subjects the heart to Christ, and gives it unto him, having none in heaven or earth in comparison of him. Should I oppose him or his Truths, who is the best of all good, and my Saviour, he came to save me.

Get faith.

4. *Repent in time*: often sinning, weakens truth in the mind, and raiseth ill dispositions in the will. By much sinning

Repent in time

The unpardonable Sin.

finning a man becomes a very slave to sin, and a strong adversary to truth. But speedy Repentance draws off the heart, and being often renewed, keeps it tender and fearfull to offend. Divine Truths make easie and ruling impressions upon an heart graciously turned and mollified.

To close up all, Let the Word of God really affect us, let holiness in the power and beauty of it affect us, let the fair and living checks of Conscience seasonably affect us; let the blood of Christ, the eternal salvation of our souls affect us, so shall we not be guilty of that blasphemy against the Holy Ghost which shall never be forgiven.



Of the Sin against the Holy Ghost, see these Authors.

1. Fathers, viz. *Origen* in *Mat.* and in *l. 1. Σε ἀρκῶν, c. 3.* *Hierome* in *Epist. ad Marcel.* *Augustine* especially in *Epist. 50. ad Bonifacium.* *Athanasius* *Tom. 1.*
2. Schoolmen. See *Aquinas* *2a. 2a. q. 14. art. 1. & c.* *Alexander Ales,* *Tom. 2. q. 155. m. 4. & c.*
3. Papists, *Bellarmino* *l. 2. de Penit. c. 16.* *Jansenius* in *Concord. Evan.*
4. Protestants, *Calvin* in *Concord. Evan.* *Zanchius,* *Tom. 4. l. 1. c. 9.* *Scharpius* in *cursu Theolog.* *Pareus* in *Heb. 6. & 10.* *Ursinus* in *Catech.* *Piscator* in *Mat.* *Beza fufius* in *John 5. 16.* *Byfield* on the *Creed,* *Gouge* on this Argument. *Perkins* in the beginning of his cases of conscience, & c.

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