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T H E
Christian's Companion,
I N T H E
P R I N C I P L E S O F R E L I G I O N,
A N D T H E
C o n c e r n s o f H u m a n L i f e.

I N F O U R P A R T S.

C O N T A I N I N G,

- I. O F G O D, H i s B E I N G a n d A T T R I B U T E S.
- II. T H E S U M o f o u r D U T Y t o G O D.
- III. O u r D U T Y t o O U R S E L V E S.
- IV. O u r D U T Y t o o u r N E I G H B O U R.

W H E R E I N I S S H E W N,

What are those Things necessary to be KNOWN,
BELIEVED, and PRACTISED, for the Attainment of
ETERNAL SALVATION.

To which are annexed,

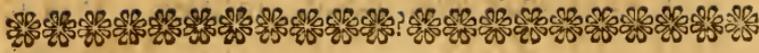
The T E R M S o f o u r S A L V A T I O N, &c.

By the Revd. JOHN READING, D. D.

*How sweet are thy Words unto my Taste! Yea, sweeter than
Honey to my Mouth. Psalm 119. 103.*

L O N D O N :

Printed for Mess. ROBINSON and ROBERTS,
Pater-noster-Row, M,DCC,LXX.



T H E

Christian's Companion,

I N T H E

PRINCIPLES of RELIGION,

A N D T H E

Concerns of Human Life.

O R T H E

SUM of the Christian Religion.



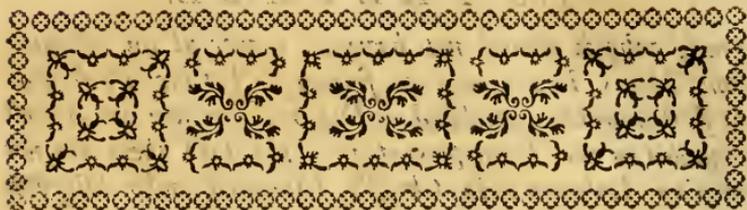
As many Persons have expressed a very earnest Desire to know the AUTHOR of that scarce and most excellent Book, intituled, THE CHRISTIAN'S COMPANION, &c. we can assure them from good Authority, that it was wrote by the Reverend Doctor *John Reading*, a Man eminently distinguished by Piety and Learning; and in whose Favour King *Charles* the First wrote the following Letter to the Arch-Bishop of *Canterbury*.

His Majesty's Letter to the Arch-Bishop of Canterbury, concerning the Parsonage of Chartham.

CHARLES REX.

MOST Reverend Father in God, and right-trusty and right well-beloved, We greet you well. We are informed that *Isaac Bargave*, Dean of Our Cathedral Church of *Canterbury*, is very lately deceased, and by his Death the Parsonage of *Chartham*, near *Canterbury*, become void. Many good Motives and Reasons have graciously inclined us to favour therewith *John Reading*, Clerk, now beneficed at *Dover* in our County of *Kent*, but deprived (as we understand) of the small Livelihood he had thence accruing, by the perverse Disposition of some of his turbulent Parishioners. Wherefore we earnestly desire you to bestow the said Parsonage upon the said *John Reading*, or at the least, that if you shall be restrained from so doing, by either or both Houses of Parliament, you then forbear to present any other to the same, that so the said Parsonage lapsing into our Gift, we may as we intend confer it on him. This we are confident of from you, both in Regard to the Parson's Worthiness and Sufferings, and that we shall therein receive very good Content and Satisfaction.

Given at our Court at *Oxford*,
Jan. 27, 1642.



THE
P R E F A C E.

I is a just Cause both of Grief and Wonder, that in an Age, wherein Men so much study to excel in all ingenious Arts and Sciences, there should be so little Appearance of the bright Ornaments of the Christian Spirit. It is a known Saying of PLATO, That if Virtue could be made visible to the Eyes of Men, the Loveliness of it would soon gain it a World of Admirers: *With how much more Reason may we affirm this of the Doctrine of our Blessed LORD, that Wisdom which is truly Divine, and full of Grace and Love? This it was which at its first Appearance in the World, caused it to be embraced and espoused, when it had no other Portion but the bitterest Sufferings and Persecutions to recommend it. Whence now comes it to pass, that in Countries where it is Established and openly Professed, it is so strangely slighted and undervalued? Is it because it is less lovely in itself now, than it was in its tender Years? No, surely; it hath, and ever will have the same immortal Beauty and Perfections. But it rarely appears in its proper Habit and Figure: It is, to speak plainly, but seldom represented to Advantage in the Life and Manners of its Professors, which is the only Way to make it visible.* And no other Reason can be as-

signed, why it should not have as powerful an Influence upon Men's Lives now as formerly, but because they do not so thoroughly apprehend its Design; they are not so well grounded in the Principles of it. Yet sure there are not wanting Labourers in Christ's Vineyard, who diligently cultivate and dress it, and study to make Men fruitful in the Work of their Lord. But alas! Preaching is applauded with us to no better Purpose, than it was in the Time of the Prophet EZEKIEL, whose Discourses to his People were as a very lovely Song of one that had a pleasant Voice (a): They were Admirers of his Rhetorick and Oratory, but no diligent Learners of the Things he taught them.

As to what is here offered, I have endeavoured to give you a compendious System of all the momentous Doctrines of Christianity, not only shewing their Foundation in Holy Scripture, but likewise studying to express that plain and perspicuous Phrase, in which they were first delivered, whereby the most sublime Things are brought down to our Understandings, in the most easy and condescending Terms.

And though there is great Variety of religious Books amongst us, yet that doth not render farther Attempts in this Kind unnecessary; since several Men writing upon the same Subject, treat it in a different Way, and so have every one their particular and necessary Uses. However, I presume, the Reader will find most of the Subjects here treated of, so distinct, as not to interfere with former Treatises of the like Design.

Whoever hopes for Salvation upon rational Grounds, must one Time or other, become a Christian in good Earnest; that is, must study both to know his LORD'S Will, and to do it. For by this Rule he hath assured us, He

(a) Ezek. xxxiii. 32.

THE PREFACE.

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will proceed, when he comes to be our Judge. The Word that I have spoken unto you, the same shall judge you at the last Day (a). What a deplorable Condition then will those be in, who do not so much as once set themselves seriously to enquire into the State of their Souls? Will their affected Ignorance be allowed as a sufficient Plea for their Neglects? Will the Affairs and Business of this Life, excuse them for not having minded the Concerns of a better? So far from that, that a condemnatory Sentence is already passed upon them, in the Case of the foolish Virgins, who being to seek Oil for their Lamps, when they should have met their Lord, were thereupon rejected, and for ever shut out of his Presence.

Every wise Man therefore will be daily improving that Talent of Knowledge, which his LORD hath committed to him, by making the best Use of good Books, and all other Opportunities afforded him for that Purpose. For these will be put upon his Account, whether he uses them or not. And therefore the Holy Scripture justly characterizes him for a Fool (b), who hath a Price in his Hand to get Wisdom, but hath no Heart to it.

And he will not only make the best Use of such Helps himself, but he will take Care that others may do so too. Goodness (especially that which is truly Christian) is always Communicative. It is a Piece of Cruelty to suffer the Blind to mistake his Way; it is inhuman to permit any Calamity to befall your Neighbour, when it is in your Power to prevent it. But it is Diabolical, the Sport and Pleasure of Devils, to let a Man perish for Want of Knowledge, and precipitate himself into the Pit of Destruction. On the other Hand, it is di-

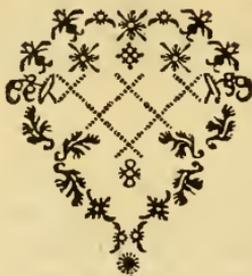
(a) John xii. 48.

(b) Prov. xvii. 16.

vinely Good, I had almost said Meritorious, to be the Soul's Benefactor, and Guide to eternal Glory. Great are the Rewards which are promised to such. Brethren, says St. James (a), If any of you do err from the Truth, and one convert him; let him know, that he which converteth a Sinner from the Error of his Way, shall save a Soul from Death, and shall hide a Multitude of Sins. And they, says Daniel, (b) that turn many to Righteousness, shall shine as the Stars in the Firmament for ever and ever. That I may be found in the Number of such, is the Sum of my Wishes, and the End of my Labours.

(a) James v. ult.

(b) Dan. xii. 13.



C O N-



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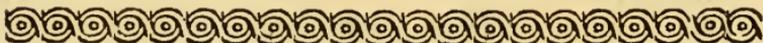
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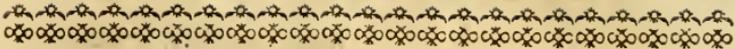
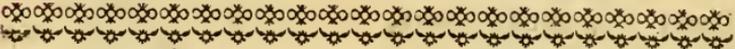
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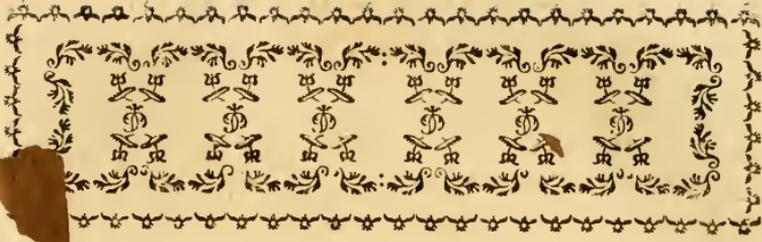
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 knowledgments to his generous Sub-
 uragement; and flatters himself, from
 has met with, it will give the pious
 He assures them he will use his con-
 their future Favour and Protection.



INTRODUCTION.

THE whole Sum of Man's Duty being comprehended in these two Things, the *Knowledge* and the *Practice* of it, it is indispensably necessary, in order to attain to that Holiness, without which no Man shall see God, to be endued with such a competent Knowledge of our Duty, as to be holy in all Manner of Conversation. For then are we truly religious, when, understanding the Things which are requisite to be believed in order to Salvation, we act according to that Understanding. If either of these be wanting, it is impossible to serve God in an acceptable Manner. For the Want of being thoroughly instructed in the Grounds and Principles of Religion, is the main Cause that the Generality of Mankind lead such ill Lives. Many good Sermons are preached, and Books published to promote Piety in the World. But as a Lecture (however learned and rational) in any Art or Science, is not to be understood by a Man who is not first made acquainted with the general System of such Science, so Sermons and other excellent Discourses are but lost to abundance of Men, for want of being before-hand carefully grounded in those fundamental Principles which all Christians ought to know, and do generally agree in.

B

Our

Our Religion is styled by the Apostle, (*a*) *our reasonable Service*. But how can it deserve that Appellation, if the Understanding, which is the Ground-work of Reason, be not duly informed? What Value, think we, will God put upon that Action, tho' it be ever so good and pious for the Matter of it, which is done ignorantly, and without the Direction of a sound Understanding? The Holy Scripture tells us, (*b*) *He that walketh in Darknefs, knoweth not whither he goeth*; and consequently must needs stray into every By-path, and be ready to embrace any wild Opinion that shall be infused into him.

The Want of divine Knowledge, hinders Men from a due Sense of the Things of God, the Excellency of Grace, and the Beauty of Holiness. 'Tis an old and true Maxim, That what is not known, cannot be desired and loved; and therefore it is necessary in order to the desiring and loving of any Thing, that it be sufficiently known first. Did Men know what real Worth there is in Virtue, and how base and vile every Sin is, they would greatly prize the former, and as much abhor the latter. Did they but clearly discern the Lustre of Heavenly Things, how would they admire them! Indeed there is nothing wanting to make us heartily in Love with our Holy Religion, but a full Insight into all the Excellencies of it: For this is most certain, that none ever yet condemned it, who well understood it; but on the contrary, the more any Man has known of it, the more firmly he has embraced it.

St. *Austin* says very well, *Men must needs live ill, if their Belief concerning God be not right*. Their Morals cannot but be corrupt, when their Principles are unsound. A religious and holy Conversation is the genuine Result and Product of right Apprehensions of God, and his Laws. He that knows not God,

(*a*) *Rom.* 12. 1. (*b*) *John* 12. 35.

nor what he requires Men to do, is prepared to commit all Manner of Impiety. Of such St. Paul speaks, (a) *The Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels in flaming Fire, taking Vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ; who shall be punished with everlasting Destruction from the Presence of the Lord, and from the Glory of his Power.* Here we see, that knowing not God, as well as not obeying him when known, incurs the Pains of everlasting Damnation. If we know not God in this Life, we must not expect to be known and owned of him when he comes to judge the World; but to hear those Words from him: *Depart from me, I know you not.*

It is a Doctrine clearly taught and established in the Holy Scriptures, that gross and wilful Ignorance is a damning Sin. The *Israelites* offered Sacrifices for Sins of Ignorance. (b) *Their Ancestors in the Wilderness, God calls, a People that erred in their Heart, and had not known his Ways: Unto whom he swore in his Wrath, that they should not enter into his Rest.* St. Paul admonishes the *Ephesians*, (c) *Not to walk as other Gentiles, having the Understanding darkened, being alienated from the Life of God, through the Ignorance that is in them, because of the Blindness (or Hardness) of their Hearts.*

And it is an undoubted Truth, that the Knowledge of spiritual and divine Matters far excels all other Knowledge, according to that certain Rule, That the more excellent the Object is, the more excellent is the Knowledge of it. Therefore, says *Solomon* (d) of this Kind of Knowledge: *Happy is the Man that findeth Wisdom, and the Man that getteth Understanding. For the Merchandise of it is better than Silver, and the Gain thereof than fine Gold. This is Life eternal,* says

(a) 2 *Thef.* 1. 7, 8. (b) *Numb.* 15. 24, 25. (c) *Ch.* 4. v. 17.
 (d) *Prov.* 3. 13, 14.

our Lord, (a) *to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent. I determined to know nothing among you,* says St. Paul, (b) *save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.*

There may indeed be a Zeal for God without Knowledge, but it commonly does a great deal of Mischief; there may be good Qualities found in an unregenerate Man, but they cannot proceed from a good Principle; they are either the Result of natural Temper and Complexion, or are taken up with a Design to impose upon the World for the Sake of Interest or Advancement, and are altered or laid aside when there is no such Occasion for them.

But the Scriptures are able to make us wise unto Salvation; in them our Lord commands us to search for eternal Life; they are called, *A Light unto our Feet, and a Lamp unto our Paths.* *To the Law, and to the Testimony,* says Isaiah, (c) *if they speak not according to this Rule, it is because there is no Light in them.* Reading and hearing the Word of God, or such pious Discourses as are well grounded upon it, will instruct all States and Conditions of Men, not only how to worship God, but how to behave themselves in the World one towards another, how to conduct themselves amidst the various Temptations of the World, and guard against the subtle Insinuations of such as lie in wait to deceive.

One may observe in a fine Garden (where due Skill and Care are used) the great Improvements in Plants and Flowers, beyond what otherwise would have been; which leads us into a Reflection upon the Advantages of a Religious Education: How many good Ornaments and Improvements of the Mind are lost for want of the like due Care in nursing and skilfully managing it! how many Virtues are choaked by the vicious Weeds which are suffered to grow

(a) *John 17. 3.* (b) *1 Cor. 2. 2.* (c) *Chap. 8. v. 20.*

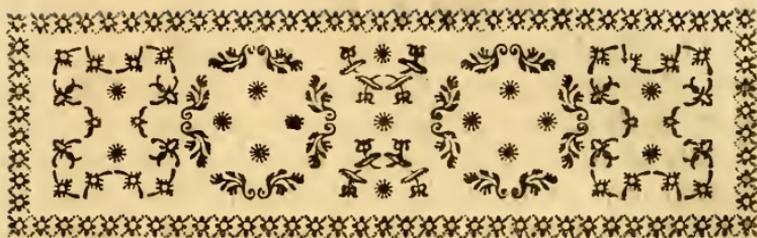
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among them! and how very seldom the good Seed produces such excellent Fruit as might be expected from it, through a Neglect of proper manuring, necessary pruning, and a skilful Management of our tender Inclinations, and first Notions of Things! As soon may Gardens produce the well pleasing Seeds, Fruits, or Plants, without Culture or Dressing; as Youth without Education be creditable or advantageous to Church or State. The Mind of Man, is at first like Wax, which while it is soft, is capable of any Impression, till Time has hardened it.

This improveable Faculty, looks like a vegetable Principle in the Mind of Man. While he is an Infant, the Seeds lie buried and undiscovered, till after some Years they sprout forth in a Kind of rational Leaves, which are Words; and in due Season, the Flowers begin to appear in Variety of beautiful Colours, and all the gay Pictures of youthful Fancy and Imagination: At last the Fruit knits and is formed, which when green, is perhaps sour and unpleasant to the Taste; till ripened by due Care and Application, it discovers itself in all the noble Productions of Wisdom, good Elocution, close Reasoning, and a thousand Graces and Virtues. And these Fruits, when they arrive at a just Maturity, and are of a good Kind, afford the most vigorous Nourishment to the Minds of Men, and will cause them to lead a wise and virtuous Course of Life, to pursue those Things that are praise-worthy, and to understand the World so well, as to avoid many of the cross Accidents and Misfortunes of it.

*Just Notions will into good Actions grow,
And to our Reason we our Virtues owe.
False Judgments are th' unhappy Source of Ill,
And blinded Error draws the passive Will.
To know our God, and know ourselves, is all
We can true Happiness or Wisdom call.*

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O F
G O D;
H I S
Being *and* Attributes.

PART I. CHAP. I.

THE first Point of RELIGION that we are taught in the Holy Scriptures, is, That there is a GOD. This is made the first Thing to be known, because the Scripture saith, (a) *He that cometh to God, must believe that He is.* And that there is a God, we have, besides the infinite Testimonies of the Scriptures, the common Consent of all Nations, approving of this Truth; who rather worship any God or Gods, than none at all.

(a) *Heb. 11. 6.*

The Evidence of an Almighty God is so clear and plain to our own Conceptions, that our Reason alone is abundantly sufficient to convince us of the Truth of his Being, though God had not made it further known to us by Revelation. For what is more evident to our natural Reason, than that there must be some first Principle of Being, from whence all other Beings proceed? What should be the Cause, or who should be the Maker of Man? We find nothing in Nature able to undertake such a Piece of Workmanship. It has never been heard that Men have been produced in any other than the ordinary Way and Course of Nature; and the same may be said of Beasts. There is no Historian above four thousand Years old, (*Moses's* sacred History excepted, as being the most ancient in the World); there are scarce any of the Arts and Sciences, scarce a Kingdom or City, the Original of which we do not know. Our own Reason informs us, That the World was made and framed by an omnipotent God, because we see so much Order, Beauty, and Usefulness in the Whole and every Part of it, produced from one confused Chaos of Earth and Water, covered over with universal Darkeness, void and without Form; which is not only recorded in Holy Writ to be the Original of this World, but is likewise attested by divers ancient Heathen Philosophers. And indeed, nothing can be more absurd than to imagine that the World could be made by the Creatures that are in it, or that it could make itself, or that Chance should be the Cause of all Things. As little Reason have we to ascribe the Preservation and Government of it to any other Power but that of God. Our constant Experience teaches us, that without his wise and merciful Ordering of the Seasons and Elements, the Earth would not be in a Condition to yield its Increase. At his Word the Rain cometh down, and the Snow from Heaven, and returneth not thither, but

but watereth the Earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give Seed to the Sower, and Bread to the Eater. Thus *Elijah* prayed to God that it might not rain, and it rained not for the Space of three Years and six Months: And he prayed again, and the Heavens gave Rain, and the Earth brought forth its Fruit. What a plain Demonstration is this alone, that there is a God in Heaven that sends down the Rain and Dew to water the Earth, that it may bring forth its Fruits for the Nourishment of our Bodies? So that we are sensible we cannot enjoy a Moment's Breath without his good Pleasure.

A farther Evidence of the Being of God, is what we find within us. Our Consciences, upon the Commission of any great Sin, perplex us with Fears that we shall sometime be called to an Account by an all-powerful and impartial Judge, who knows the Hearts of all Men, and will render to every Man according to his Works. This makes the stoutest Sinner often tremble at the Remembrance of his heinous Offences, however secure he is that they are concealed from the Knowledge of the World, and that no human Laws can punish him for them. His outward Security can never deliver him from the clamorous Accusations of his Conscience, which testifies against him wherever he goes. This is a strong Argument that there is a God of infinite Justice, before whose Tribunal he must one Day appear, and answer for whatever he hath done amiss.

Moreover, all Things round the World, evidently shew the Finger of God, and declare to us that Beauty and Order wherein they were created. Thus we may observe the glorious Splendor and uniform Motion of the Heavens above, where our Eyes behold those bright celestial Bodies, the Sun to rule the Day, and the Moon and Stars by Night to give Light to the Earth. The pleasant Fertility of the Earth, in supporting and feeding such great Variety and infinite
Numbers

Numbers of Plants and Animals; where we may view the curious Figure and fragrant Smell of the one, and the exquisite Structure of the other. The Waters gathered together in their proper Channels, nourishing innumerable Multitudes of various Kinds of Fishes. The ambient Air for every winged Fowl to fly in; and all other amazing Miracles of Nature, wherein the glorious Attributes and infinite Goodness of God, are most conspicuously displayed.

Another Argument for the Divine Being, is from the Holy Scriptures, which do more immediately ascribe unto God the Father, the first Person in the blessed Trinity, the Work of creating the World, and the Governing and Ordering of it by his good Providence. (a) *Before the Mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the Earth, even from everlasting to everlasting, thou art God.* (b) *Thou, even thou art Lord alone, thou hast made the Heaven of Heavens with all their Host, the Earth and all Things that are therein, the Seas and all that is therein.* (c) *Thus saith the Lord of Hosts, I have made the Earth, the Man and the Beasts that are upon the Ground, by my great Power, and by my stretched-out Arm, and have given it to whom it seemed meet unto me.* (d) *Blessed be the Name of God for ever and ever; for Wisdom and Might are his, and he changeth the Times and Seasons; he removeth Kings and setteth up Kings.* (e) *By me Kings rule, and Princes decree Justice. By me Princes rule, and Nobles, yea, all the Judges of the Earth.*

St. Paul teaches us (f) to contemplate the Divine Majesty in the Works of Creation. *For the invisible Things of him from the Creation of the World, are clearly seen, being understood by the Things that are made.* God worketh by Angels, by the Sun, by the

(a) *Psal.* 90. 2. (b) *Neb.* 9. 2. (c) *Jer.* 27. 5. (d) *Dan.* 2. 20. (e) *Prov.* 8. 15, 16. (f) *Rom.* 1. 20.

Stars, by Nature and by Man, all these being the second Causes, which are as it were the Conduits and Pipes, which carry and dispose what they have received from the Head and Fountain of all Things. God gives Power to the Sun to draw up Vapours, he turns the Vapours into Clouds, he scatters the Clouds abroad with the Wind, and makes them fall in Drops of Rain. He makes the Air we breathe, and the Food we eat, wholesome and nourishing to us, and all our Herbs and Medicines for Distempers and Wounds, derive their healing Virtue from him.

This good Use should we make of those Things which are before us, to acknowledge the great Creator in them, and to glorify him for them. By these visible Things, we are brought to perceive so much of the invisible Majesty of God, as may convince us of our Duty to confess, honour and worship him. But we must not attempt, by any Observations we can make in Heaven or Earth, to pry into God's secret Counsels, and examine his hidden Decrees, which are as far above our Reach, as Heaven is above this Earth. This Part of Wisdom we may learn from the brute Creatures: We observe they have an Instinct sufficient to guide them to chuse their Food, and do those Things which are necessary to preserve them, and render them serviceable to Mankind; and farther than this they aspire not. Making of Laws, governing Kingdoms, managing Commerce and Trade, practising and improving Arts and Sciences, is what they have no Notion of, nor any Faculties suited to attain; and therefore they are not concerned about them. By the same Rule should we conclude, that there are many Things the proper Objects of divine Wisdom, which are far above, out of our Sight, which we are no more capable of knowing, than the Beasts can know our Affairs; since God excels us far more than we do the meanest Creature upon Earth.

And

And he has given us Warning not to presume too far, in prying into Things above us which don't concern us. He smote the Men of *Bethshemesb* with a very great Slaughter, for looking into the Ark. (a) He reproved *Job* for taking upon him too freely to censure the Divine Conduct; and his Holy Word affords several Admonitions to this Purpose: (b) *What Man knoweth the Things of Man, save the Spirit of a Man which is within him? Even so, how can one know the Things of God, unless the Spirit of God reveal them?* (c) *His Way is in the Sea, and his Path in the deep Waters, and his Footsteps are not known.* (d) *Secret Things belong unto the Lord our God; but those Things which are revealed, belong unto us and to our Children.* (e) *O the Depth of the Riches both of the Wisdom and Knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his Judgments, and his Ways past finding out!*

The Being of this God whom we worship, is so little to be doubted, that it is almost the only Truth we are sure of; it is a Truth that we meet with in almost every Object and Occurrence of Life. Therefore we may with Astonishment wonder, that it's possible there should be such a Monster in Being as an Atheist or Deist; when if he would but consider (as he must needs know) that it is impossible for Man, or any other Creature to give Life to another; this would naturally lead him at last to the Confession of a God. Let him but reflect on God's wonderful Dealings with Mankind in Ages past, such as the Destruction of *Sodom* and *Gomorrab* by Fire and Brimstone from Heaven, and that of the whole World by a Deluge of Waters; the dividing of the *Red Sea* for the *Israelites* to pass through on dry Land; the Sun's standing still at the Prayer of *Joshua*, and going backward at the Recovery of *Hezekiab*; the Preservation of the three

(a) 1 Sam. 6. 19. (b) 1 Cor. 2. 11. (c) Pf. 77. 19.
 (d) Deut. 29. 29. (e) Rom. 11. 33.

Men in the fiery Furnace; the Transformation of *Nebuchadnezzar* for his impious Pride; the Dispersion of their Posterity who crucified the Son of God, who have now for above 1600 Years been banished from their own Country, having no particular Place belonging to them as a Nation; but are scattered over all the Earth, have been often murdered in great Multitudes, and yet are not quite extinct, nor yet so mixed and blended with other Nations, but that they are still kept up a distinct People; as if they were intended for a lasting Monument to all the World of their grievous Sin in crucifying the *Lord of Life*, and the Vengeance of God which still pursues them for the same: Let, I say, the most atheistical Person reflect on these Things with that Regard which he would pay to any credible History, and he cannot but see the Finger of God in them manifest beyond all Dispute or Contradiction.

The Attributes of *GOD* are, either such as peculiarly belong to his own Essence, as, *Infiniteness*, *Immensity*, *Eternity*, *Omnipotence*; or such as are Communicable, whereof there are some Shadows and Traces in Angels and Men; as, *Wisdom*, *Holiness*, *Justice*, *Mercy*, *Goodness*.

By his *Infiniteness*, God's Essence is signified to be without Measure or Quantity; and consequently his Substance, Power, Wisdom, and whatever is in the Divine Nature, is incomprehensible. By his *Immensity*, he containeth all Things, is present every where, filling all Places, and at all Times with his Presence. By his *Eternity*, he is exempted from all Measure of Time, and therefore is the First and the Last, without Beginning or End of Days. By his *Omnipotence*, he is Creator and Disposer of all Things; by him they exist and are governed: *He doth whatsoever pleaseth him in the Armies of Heaven and the Kingdoms of Men; and none can stay his Hand, or say unto him, What dost thou?*

Those

Those which we call *Communicable Attributes*, are so in Kind, but not in Degree, for in God they are all infinite. His *Wisdom* and *Understanding* is so great, that he knows all Things, past, present, and to come, with all their Causes and Circumstances; even those Things which to us seem to be casual, and to fall out by Chance. It extends to the most secret and dark Corners of the World, to the very Thoughts and Intentions of the Heart. His *Holiness* is absolute Purity, not sullied with the least Appearance of Evil: *For God is Light*, saith St. John, *and in him is no Darkness at all*. He hateth all Iniquity with a perfect Hatred: *He cannot be tempted with Evil*, saith St. James, *neither tempteth he any Man*. His *Justice* is most exact, not capable of being bribed by any Offerings or Presents. He is a Rewarder of Good in whomsoever he finds it; but his Face is against them that do Evil. He will by no Means clear the Guilty, but punishes Sin wherever he finds it; an unjust Sentence cannot proceed from him; he cannot err in Judgment. But above all, the *Mercy* of God is most conspicuous to us, exceeding the rest of the divine Attributes in the manifold Acts and Instances of it. *The Lord is good to all*, says David, *and his tender Mercies are over all his Works*. In him we live and move, and have our Being. From him we derive all the Supports and Comforts of Life, which are the Effects, not of our Worthiness, but of his Compassion: For he delighteth to exercise loving Kindness, whereas Judgment is his strange Work, and he doth not willingly afflict the Sons of Men. God's Mercies are the great Subject of our Devotion; for these we make our Prayers when we are in Want; for these we render our Praises when we have received them. *Hosannas* and *Hallelujahs*, as one well observes, make up the whole Book of *Psalms*.

The Knowledge of God is necessary for us on several Accounts. We cannot contemplate the Excellency

cy of his Perfections, and the infinite Greatness of his Majesty, but we must acknowledge him most worthy to be adored and glorified. And when we conceive how this excellent Majesty fills all Places with his Presence, it must strike us with a profound and awful Regard for him. We cannot own his sovereign Dominion over us, his almighty Power, his exact and impartial Justice, but we must at the same Time, acknowledge ourselves bound to observe all his Laws with most resigned, obedient, and willing Minds. How confirmed will our Hopes be in his infinite *Mercies*, how inflamed our Love through his *Goodness*, how secure our Trust in the unchangeable Truth of his *Promises*! Do we derive from him all the Faculties of our Souls and Bodies, and shall we not readily employ them in his Service, and yield our Members Instruments of Righteousness? Is he our Fountain of Comfort, the Author and Giver of all good Things, and can we refuse to make our Supplications to him for whatever we stand in Need of, and to render him unfeigned Thanks and Praise for all the Blessings we receive at his Hands?

The Holy *Psalmist* calls upon the Sun, Moon and Stars, Fire and Hail, Snow and Vapours; and upon all the animate and inanimate Parts of the Creation, to set forth the Praises of the Lord. (a) Let not Man then, who has a Heart to conceive, and a Tongue to confess, be dumb to the Praises of his high Benefactor. Indeed this is properly and strictly the Province of rational Creatures alone. For though all other Beings constantly obey the Laws of their Creation, and tend regularly to the Ends for which they were appointed; yet they know not the Hand which formed them, nor the Power which preserves and directs them; they are void of Understanding, and consequently have no Notion of Religion nor Sense of Gra-

(a) *Psal.* 148.

itude. Man is the only Creature upon Earth, that is wise enough to know and obey his God in religious and moral Actions. This is finely represented in the 28th Chapter of the Book of *Job*; where that holy Man, in his Search after Wisdom declares, *The Depth saith, It is not in me; and the Sea saith, It is not with me. Destruction and Death say; We have heard the Fame thereof with our Ears. God understandeth the Way thereof, and he knoweth the Place thereof. When he made a Decree for the Rain, and a Way for the Lightning of the Thunder; then did he see it and declare it; he prepared it, yea, and searched it out. And unto Man he said; Behold, the Fear of the Lord, that is Wisdom, and to depart from Evil, is Understanding.*

C H A P. II.

OF J E S U S C H R I S T.

His Eternal Godhead, Incarnation, &c.

THE promised *Messias* or *Christ*, whom the *Fathers* expected, and the *Prophets* foretold, whose *Life*, *Death*, *Resurrection* and *Ascension*, the *Evangelists* relate, is that *Jesus* whom we worship; *begotten of the Substance of his Father before all Worlds, God of God, Light of Light, very God of very God; begotten, not made; being Coessential, Coeternal and Coequal with the Father and the Holy Ghost.*

This *Jesus* whom God sent to be our *Saviour* and *Deliverer*, took to himself a true *Body*, being conceived by the incomprehensible Power of the *Holy Ghost*, in the *Womb of Mary*, a pure *Virgin*, of whom, in due *Time*, he was born into the *World*. Thus he became a real *Man*, and was made like unto us in all *Things*, even in the natural *Infirmities* of
Hunger,

Hunger, Thirst, Weariness, Grief, Pain, and the like; yet without Sin. In which Respect he is called the *Son of Man*, because he was Flesh of our Flesh, he took our Nature upon him; and the *Son of David*, because in his human Capacity he descended of the Stock and Lineage of *David*.

It was requisite that our Blessed Saviour should be *Man*, because he was to perform perfect Obedience to the whole Law of God, and because he was to suffer and die for our Sins; which in his Divine Nature he could not have done. He must be of the same Nature with the Party offending, that he might satisfy the Justice of God in the same Nature wherein it was offended. For so the Righteousness of God did require, that the same Nature which had committed the Sin, should also pay and make Satisfaction for it; and consequently, that human Nature, which offended in the *First Adam*, should be punished in the *Second*.

Thus then the two Natures in *Christ* are accounted for. He was *Man*, that he might be capable of suffering for Sin: He was *God*, that he might be able to bear the Punishment, and overcome the Suffering. Human Nature can suffer Death, but cannot overcome it; the Divine Nature cannot suffer, but can overcome all Things. Our Mediator therefore, being Partaker of both Natures, was by the one made subject to Suffering, and by the other enabled to overcome all the Sufferings that could be laid upon him. Herein was his Fitness to become a Mediator, and to be the Author of Reconciliation between God and Man, because he was himself both *God* and *Man*.

He is called *Jesus*, that is, a *Saviour*, because he came to save his People from their Sins: He is called *Christ*, that is, *Anointed*, because he was anointed of God to be a *Prophet*, *Priest*, and *King* over all his People. Anointed he was, not with material Oil, but

with all the Gifts and Graces of the Holy Ghost, and that in the highest Plenitude and Perfection.

The first Part of our *Lord's* Mediation was discharged in the Execution of his *Prophetick Office*, which may be considered two Ways; either as he was a Teacher sent from God to instruct Men in the right Knowledge and Worship of the Divine Majesty; or as he was a Foreteller of Things to come. The first he performed by his Sermons and holy Expositions of the Law of God; and by sending forth his Disciples to preach the same Doctrines. For he testified that he came from the Bosom of the Father, to declare his Nature and whole Will to the World; and that he alone had the Power and Prerogative to do this. *For, says he, no Man knoweth the Father, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him (a).*

In his Predictions our Lord shewed himself a true *Prophet*, as appears by two signal Instances. One was, The Destruction of the City and Temple of *Jerusalem*, which he foretold with all the particular Circumstances both as to the Time and Manner of it; all which was punctually fulfilled, even according to the Accounts which the *Jewish* Historians give us of that Matter. And when afterwards the Emperor *Julian*, desiring to blast the Credit of our Saviour's Prophecy, resolved to rebuild the Temple, and set Men to work about it, he was soon forced to desist from his Enterprize, by Earthquakes and Balls of Fire issuing from the Foundation, which burnt down what was erected, and destroyed those that were employed in the Work. And this we have attested both by Christian and Pagan Writers of that Time.

The other Instance I proposed is, Our Saviour's Prophecy of the Rejection of the *Jews*, and that they should be carried captive into all Nations, till the Times of the *Gentiles* should be fulfilled. Now this

(a) *Mat. 11. 27.*

we see hath been accomplished for many Ages, and still continues to be so in our Days.

The *Priesthood* of the *Messiah* was revealed of old by the *Psalmist* in these Words: (a) *The Lord hath sworn, and will not repent; Thou art a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchizedeck.* The Priest's Office consisted in offering Sacrifice for the Sins of the People, in interceding for them, and blessing them. *It is therefore necessary, says the Apostle, (b) That this Man Jesus have somewhat also to offer.* And what that was he tells us in another Place; (c) *He hath given himself an Offering and a Sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling Savour. He is our Passover sacrificed for us; by the offering of his Body are we sanctified.* (d) When he had thus given himself a propitiatory Sacrifice for our Sins, he ascended up on high, and entered into the Holy of Holies, not made with Hands, where he sitteth at the *Right Hand of God to make Intercession for us*: (e) And this not in a precarious, but efficacious and glorious Manner, as having all Power in Heaven and Earth committed to him. And for the third Part of the sacerdotal Office, which consists in Benediction, we find it in the Preaching of our Lord, which begins with the Beatitudes; and in the Conclusion of his Ministry on Earth, when *he lifted up his Hands upon his Disciples, and blessed them* (f). However, this Part of his Function is most eminently performed after his Resurrection, as it is intimated in that encouraging Sermon of St. Peter to that Generation who crucified our Lord: (g) *Unto you first God having raised up his Son Jesus, sent him to bless you, in turning every one of you from his Iniquities.* So that it clearly appears, that *Jesus Christ* who offered up himself a full, perfect, and sufficient Sacrifice for Sin, who is continually making Intercession for us, and

(a) *Psal.* 110. 4. (b) *Heb.* 8. 3. (c) *Ephes.* 5. 2. (d) *Heb.* 10. 10. (e) *Heb.* 7. 25. (f) *Luke* 24. 50. (g) *Acts* 3. 26.

blesse us with all spiritual Blessings, is our most glorious *High-Priest*.

The *Kingly Office* of *Christ* consisteth in the Exercise of that Power given him by God over all, for the spiritual Government and Salvation of his Elect, and for the Destruction of his and their Enemies: And that he might appoint Laws and Statutes which should direct his People and bind their Consciences to the Obedience of the same: That he might settle a Government; and appoint *Officers* in his Church for the good ordering of it: That he might defend his Flock from the Violence and Outrage of all their Enemies, both Corporal and Spiritual: And that he might bestow many notable Privileges and Rewards upon them.

Our blessed Lord was pleased to declare before *Pontius Pilate*, That his Kingdom was not of this World, *i. e.* that he laid no Claim to temporal Dominion, in Opposition to *Cesar*, as his Accusers insinuated. Yet we may venture to assert his Regal Title even to an earthly *Jerusalem*, he being the last of the direct Line of *David*, which was the Royal Family of the *Jewish* Kingdom; but his Spiritual Kingdom is what we are chiefly to understand, which tho' not of this World, yet is in this World in part, so far as his Church and People subsist in it. And herein he has shewn himself a King, by that Power which he manifested as well in triumphing over Death and Hell, as in enabling all his People to triumph over them, in ascending up into Heaven, sitting on the right Hand of God the Father, and thence showering down Spiritual Gifts and Graces upon his Church.

This *Kingly Government* of *Christ* was foretold by several Prophecies; particularly by that of *Isaiab*, (a) *For unto us a Child is born, unto us a Son is given; and the Government is upon his Shoulder, and he shall*

(a) Chap. 9. 6, 7.

call his Name, *Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.* Of the Increase of his Government and Peace there shall be no End, upon the Throne of David, and upon his Kingdom, to order it and to establish it with Judgment and with Justice, from henceforth even for ever. The Substance of which Prophecy, is repeated by the Angel in his Salutation of the Blessed Virgin. (a) And the Accomplishment of it publickly affirmed by St. Peter (b) in his first Sermon to the Jews: *Let all the House of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus whom ye crucified, both Lord and Christ.* And St. Paul asserts the same, (c) *God hath highly exalted him, and given him a Name which is above every Name: That at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow, of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth, and Things under the Earth: And that every Tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.* And again (d) unto the Son he saith, *Thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever: A Scepter of Righteousness is the Scepter of thy Kingdom. Thou hast loved Righteousness and hated Iniquity, therefore God, even thy God, hath anointed thee with the Oil of Gladness above thy Fellows.* Finally, St. John in his Vision, (e) saw Heaven opened, and behold a white Horse, and he that sat upon him was called Faithful and True, and in Righteousness he doth judge and make War. His Eyes were as a Flame of Fire, and on his Head were many Crowns, and he had a Name written that no Man knew but he himself. And he was clothed with a Vesture dipped in Blood; and his Name is called, *The Word of GOD.* And the Armies which were in Heaven, followed him upon white Horses, clothed in fine Linen, white and clean. And out of his Mouth goeth a sharp Sword, that with it he should smite the

(a) Luke 1. 32, 33. (b) Acts 2. 36. (c) Phil. 2. 9, 10, 11.
 (d) Heb. 1. 8, 9. (e) Rev. 19. 11. &c.

Nations; and he shall rule them with a Rod of Iron, and he treadeth the Winepress of the Fierceness and Wrath of Almighty God. And he hath on his Vesture and on his Thigh a Name written, KING OF KINGS, AND LORD OF LORDS. And thus much for the two Natures, and three Offices of Christ. I shall now proceed to such Arguments as are proper to strengthen our Faith, and confirm our Hope and Affiance in him.

What can we have clearer Proof and Demonstration of, than of the Truth and Sanctity of our Christian Religion? When we consider how miraculously the Author of it was born of a pure Virgin; how a glorious Star appeared and pointed out the Place of his Nativity; how a Choir of Angels celebrated it as Tydings of Joy to the whole World; how the wise Men of the *East*, directed by the heavenly Light, came and worshipped him, giving him Divine Offerings and Royal Presents; when we consider his sinless Perfection, his great Endowments which manifested themselves in his Childhood; the many Miracles he did, as raising *Lazarus* and others from the Dead; his healing all Manner of Diseases, only with a Word of his Mouth, or a Touch of his Hand; his fasting forty Days and Nights, so far beyond the Power of any meer Man, who can hardly abstain from eating and drinking four Days and Nights together; his walking upon the Sea, commanding the Winds and Waves to be still; feeding five Thousand with five Loaves and two small Fishes; with innumerable more Instances of the like Nature; to say nothing here of his own Resurrection out of the Grave on the third Day, and ascending into Heaven in the Presence of many Spectators: What further Demonstration, I say, can we require for fixing and establishing our Faith in *Christ*? These are undoubtedly more than sufficient for this Purpose, if they do but come well attested to us: And they are attested by such a Cloud of unexceptionable

ceptionable Witnesses brought home to us, that we must believe nothing, if we will not believe them. That great Master-Builder St. Paul, lays the Foundation of Faith in such Testimonies, (a) *Say not in thine Heart, Who shall ascend into Heaven?* That is, to bring Christ from above: Or, *Who shall descend into the Deep?* That is, to bring up Christ again from the Dead. *But what it saith? The Word is nigh thee, even in thy Mouth, and in thy Heart; that is, the Word of Faith which we preach.* This Word is what we are entirely to rely upon; tho' we thankfully receive such corroborating Evidences as are given us by pious and learned Men; among whom a worthy Divine of our own Country has done good Service, in the Account of his Journey from *Aleppo* to *Jerusalem*: Whose Observations to our present Purpose, I shall here set down.

“ At *Bethlehem*, says he, is to be seen the Place
 “ where our Saviour was born, and the Manger
 “ wherein he was laid. Near to *Bethlehem*, is the
 “ Place where stood the House of *Simeon* that venerate old Prophet, who taking our Blessed Saviour
 “ in his Arms, sung his *Nunc dimittis* in the Temple.
 “ Near this Place is to be seen the famous Turpentine Tree, in the Shade of which, the blessed Virgin is said to have reposed, when she was carrying
 “ Christ in her Arms to present him to the Lord in
 “ *Jerusalem*.

“ At *Bethany*, a little without *Jerusalem*, is to be
 “ seen the Sepulchre of *Lazarus*, out of which he
 “ arose at that enlivening Voice of Christ, *Lazarus, come forth*. There is to be seen near it, a Mansion-House, where this Favourite of our Lord dwelt.
 “ In *Jerusalem*, the *Armenians* have a Church,
 “ wherein are laid up three large rough Stones; two

(a) *Rom.* 10. 6, &c.

“ of which are said to be brought from the Place of
 “ our Lord’s Baptism. Here are likewise to be seen,
 “ The Place where our Saviour fed the Multitude
 “ with the Loaves and Fishes. The Place where he
 “ was nailed to the Cross; where the Soldier pierced
 “ his Side; where his Body was anointed in order to
 “ his Burial; where it was deposited in the Sepulchre;
 “ where the Angels appeared to his Disciples
 “ after his Resurrection, and where *Christ* himself ap-
 “ peared to *Mary Magdalen*.

“ The Stone that was laid to secure the Door of
 “ our Saviour’s Sepulchre. The Place where St.
 “ *Peter* was frightened to a Denial of his Master.
 “ Where our Lord instituted his last Supper. The
 “ Place of his Ascension, where he set his last Foot-
 “ steps here on Earth.

“ The Place they call St. *Peter*’s Prison, from
 “ which he was delivered by the Angel: Near it is
 “ the Iron Gate which opened to *Peter* of its own
 “ accord.

“ The Place where a Jew arrested the Corps of the
 “ Blessed Virgin, as it was going to be interred; for
 “ which impious Presumption the Hand with which
 “ he seized the Bier was withered.

“ The Place where are Twelve arched Vaults,
 “ built in Memory of the Twelve Apostles, who are
 “ said to have compiled their Creed in this Place,
 “ and the Place where the Apostles divided to go to
 “ their several Charges.”

. But notwithstanding these Things, *the Word*, says
 St. *Paul*, is nigh thee; that *sure Word* which we are
 commanded to attend to, and stedfastly regard, as a
 Light shining in a dark Place; by which we may see
 most clearly and fully all that our Lord did and suf-
 fered for us. By this Light is shown the Innocence,
 Sanctity, and Divinity of the Son of God, in a most
 conspicuous and eminent Manner, with such an un-
 affected

affected Plainness and Strength of Reason, as cannot be resisted.

When *Pontius Pilate* the Roman Governor sat in Judgment upon him, and had examined him, he called the chief Priests and Rulers of the *Jews* together, and said to them, (a) *Ye have brought this Man unto me, as one that perverteth the People; and behold I have examined him before you, and have found no Fault in him: No, nor yet Herod, for I sent you to him; and lo, nothing worthy of Death is done to him: I will therefore chastise him, and let him go. (b) And when he was sat down on the Judgment-Seat, his Wife sent unto him, saying, Have thou nothing to do with that just Man; for I have suffered many Things in a Dream this Day because of him.* After all, when *Pilate* saw that he could not prevail with the *Jews* to release him, but that they cried out in a tumultuous Manner, to have him crucified; He took Water, and washed his Hands before the Multitude, saying, *I am innocent of the Blood of this just Person: See Ye to it.* Likewise *Judas*, though he had betrayed his Master, yet he could not forbear to speak in his Vindication, and plead for him at last; openly acknowledging to the chief Priests and Elders, That he had *betrayed innocent Blood.* Lastly, The Roman Centurion, who kept the Guard upon this Occasion, and they that were with him watching *Jesus*, when they saw the Earthquake, and those Things that were done, feared greatly, saying, *Truly, this was the Son of GOD.* Now these Testimonies are highly honourable and advantageous to the Cause of *Christ.* He had affirmed himself to be the Son of God; He was accused for it, and brought to his Trial about it; and those who sat in Judgment upon him, pronounced him Not Guilty: Surely, great was his Meekness, clear his Innocence, strong the Evidences of his *Divinity*, which

(a) *Luke* 23. 14, &c. (b) *Matt.* 27. 19, &c.

extorted such Declarations from Persons not otherwise disposed to make them!

But how shall we be able to estimate the Greatness, the Immensity of *Christ's* Love towards us? and with what Comparison shall we compare it? Can there hardly be found a Man upon Earth, who will lay down his Life to save his *best Friend*? If such a one might be found, yet the Love of *Christ* is incomparably greater, who was content to die for his *Enemies*. To die, not an honourable, easy, speedy Kind of Death; but the shameful, painful, lingering Death of the Cross. To pass through the Hands of the rude Multitude, and sustain a Load of Scorn and Reproach from them, more intolerable than any common Sort of Death: And after a cruel Trial of Mocking and Scourging, and a tiresome March under the Burthen of a heavy Cross, when natural Strength was spent, and the Spirits grown faint, to be pierced through the Hands and Feet, and thereby fastened to the Cross, and so left to expire by slow Degrees, between no better Company than two infamous Malefactors: I say, For *Christ* willingly to submit, and offer up himself such a bloody Sacrifice as this, for our *Redemption*, who were then at Enmity with him, is a Degree of *Love* far surpassing our Understanding to estimate or comprehend it. And therefore *St. Paul* thought it enough to know *Jesus Christ, and him Crucified*: More than this he professes he desired not to know: (a) *How to comprehend the Breadth and Length, and Depth and Height of this, and to know the Love of Christ, which passeth Knowledge*, was his ardent Prayer for himself and his People. *This* he calls, (b) *A Mystery, which hath been hid from Ages and from Generations, but now is made manifest to the Saints*. (c) *God forbid, says he, that I should glory, save in the Cross of Christ, by which the World is crucified unto me, and I unto the*

(a) *Ephes.* 3. 18. (b) *Col.* 1. 26. (c) *Gal.* 6. 14.

World. And, (a) We preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a Stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks Foolishness: But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the Power of God, and the Wisdom of God.

C H A P. III.

Of the H O L Y G H O S T.

His Divine Inspiration and Operations.

THE H O L Y G H O S T is likewise GOD, Co-essential, Co-eternal, and Co-equal with the Father and the Son. He proceedeth from the Father and the Son; which is proved from Christ's own Words, who tells his Disciples, in his Discourses with them a little before his Ascension, (b) *These Things have I spoken unto you, being yet present with you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my Name, he shall teach you all Things, and bring all Things to your Remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.* Here he says, The Father shall send the Holy Ghost. But in the next Chapter, he says, (c) *When the Comforter, i. e. the Holy Ghost, is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of Truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall testify of me.* In his last Charge to his Disciples to go and preach the Gospel, (d) *He breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost.* In the Writings of the Apostles, he is called, *The Spirit of the Father and of the Son.* These are Proofs, That the Holy Spirit proceeds both from the first and second Person in the Godhead.

(a) 1 Cor. 1. 23, 24. (b) John 14. 25, 26. (c) Verse 26.
(d) John 20. 22.

But

But he so proceeds, not as a Quality or Influence, but as a real Person, distinct from the Father and the Son. *John the Baptist*, speaking of Christ's Manifestation to the World, says, *I saw the Spirit descending from Heaven like a Dove, and it abode upon him*: Which, he says, was the Sign given him, whereby to know Christ. *I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with Water, the same said unto me; Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost: And I saw, and bear Record, That this is the Son of God.* (a) Now *John* baptized our Lord, and this happened at his Baptism: (b) *Jesus*, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the Water: and, lo! the Heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a Dove, and lighting upon him. And, lo! a Voice from Heaven, saying, *This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*

In Conformity to this Revelation of the Godhead in three Persons, the Form of *Baptism* to be used all over the Christian World, was conceived and appointed by Christ himself, to be *In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost*. In the Name of these three Persons, *St. Paul* has taught the *Ministers* of Christ to bless their Congregations. To these three the Church gives Glory and Praises in her *Doxologies*, confesses them in her *Creeds*, invokes them in her *Prayers*, teaches them in her *Homilies*, and *Systems of Christian Doctrine*. From all which it is apparently manifest, That the *Holy Ghost* is GOD, as well as the *Father* and the *Son*.

But if it be demanded, Whether the *Holy Ghost* is any where in the Scriptures expressly called GOD? the Answer is obvious in *Acts* 5. 3, 4. where *Peter* reproving *Ananias* for keeping back from the Church, Part of the Money for which he sold his Estate, con-

(a) *John* 1. 32, &c. (b) *Matt.* 3. 16, 17.

trary to what he pretended, speaks thus; Ananias, *why hath Satan filled thine Heart to lie to the Holy Ghost? Thou hast not lied unto Men, but unto GOD.* These Words are plain enough for every one to make the Application. And thus much for the *Personality* of the *Holy Ghost*. Let us next consider his *Operations* and *Offices*.

When Christ was ascended into Heaven, he did, according as he had promised, send down the *Holy Ghost* upon his Disciples, which enabled them to speak with divers Tongues, so as to be understood of all Nations, and inspired them with great Courage and Eloquence, to preach the Gospel; and endued them with a Power to work Miracles for the Confirmation of what they preached.

All *Scripture* is said to be given by Inspiration of this *Spirit*. *Prophecy*, says St. Peter, *came not in old Time by the Will of Man; but holy Men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost.* (a) This is what gives it such a high Authority, and makes it so infinitely preferable to any other Writings. All the Graces of Illumination, Faith, Wisdom, Courage, Eloquence, are the Gifts of this Divine Spirit. Our Lord forewarns his Disciples what Treatment they should meet with in the World on the Account of their Religion, (b) *They shall deliver you up to Councils, and in the Synagogues ye shall be beaten, and ye shall be brought before Rulers and Kings for my Sake. But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no Thought before-hand, what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that Hour; that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost.* In the parallel Place, it is thus: (c) *Settle it in your Hearts, not to meditate before, what ye shall answer: for I will give you a Mouth and Wisdom which all your Adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist.*

(a) 2 Pet. 1. 21. (b) Mark 13. 9. 11. (c) Luke 21. 14, 15.
Accord-

Accordingly, St. *Stephen*, the first Martyr of Christ, after the Apostles had prayed, and laid their Hands on him, was filled with the Holy Ghost, and did great Wonders and Miracles, and the Spirit and Wisdom by which he spake, was so powerful, that the Philosophers and learned Doctors were not able to withstand him. (a)

To the same *Spirit* are ascribed all the Graces of *Sanctification*: Love, Joy, Peace, and all Christian Virtues, are called, The *Fruits of the Spirit*. And as in the Work of Creation, *the Spirit of God moved upon the Face of the Waters*, so in the Work of Regeneration, the same quickening *Spirit* moves in us, enlightens our Understandings, opens, softens, and renews our Hearts; makes us spiritually and heavenly Minded, sanctifies our Thoughts, regulates our disorderly Passions, strengthens us against Temptations, and conveys secret Streams of Joy and Comfort into our Souls.

Wherefore it is both our Duty and Interest constantly to implore the Assistance and Fellowship of this *blessed Spirit*, that by his holy Inspiration we may think those Things that are good, and by his merciful Guidance may perform the same. (b) *If ye being Evil, know how to give good Gifts unto your Children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the holy Spirit to them that ask him?* (c) *Likewise the Spirit helpeth our Infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for, as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh Intercession for us, with Groanings which cannot be uttered.* (d) *The Love of God is shed abroad in our Hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.* (e) *Know ye not that your Body is the Temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you; and ye are not your own? Therefore glorify God in your Body and in your Spirit, which are God's.*

(a) Acts 6. 8, &c. (b) Luke 11. 13. (c) Rom. 8. 26.
 (d) Rom. 5. 5. (e) 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20.

C H A P. IV.

Of the Ever-Blessed *T R I N I T Y*.

ALTHOUGH the Word *T R I N I T Y* be no where to be found in *Holy Scripture*, yet the Interpretation of it is, *viz.* That there are three distinct Persons in the *Godhead*, *Father*, *Son*, and *Holy Ghost*. And though there had been no single Text wherein this Doctrine was fully expressed, (as there are several) yet would it be a true Doctrine notwithstanding; being interwoven throughout the Body of the *Old* and *New Testament*, as has in Part been proved already, while we were shewing every *Person* by himself to be *God* and *Lord*; and will be abundantly evident to such as are well read in the sacred Writings. The Manner how this *Trinity* in *Unity* manifests itself to us, is thus: The Work of *Creation*, wherein is specially seen the mighty *Power* of *God*, is appropriated to the *Father*; the Work of *Redemption*, wherein is specially seen the *Wisdom* of *God*, to the *Son*; and the Works of *Sanctification*, and *Infusion of Habitual Graces*, whereby the *good Things* of *God* are communicated unto us, are appropriated to the *Holy Ghost*.

The Word *Trinity* was soon received by the *Latin Church*, as a proper, comprehensive Term, to signify the three Persons in the *Godhead*. It is found in *Tertullian adversus Praxeam*, (*a*) who flourished in the Beginning of the *third Century*: At which Time, the *Greek Church* used the Word *TRIAS*, which signifies the same Thing.

That there are three Persons in the *Godhead*; that every Person by *himself* is *God* and *Lord*, and yet

(a) Cap. 10.

that there is but *one God*, is an Article of Faith which we are bound to believe, though we cannot fully understand it. We believe a great many other Things which we don't understand, only because we are *well assured* of the Truth and Reality of them. And to we are of this great Mystery: We find it contained in the Word of God: To that, therefore, we must submit and yield our Assent; and say with the pious Father, *While others Dispute, I Believe*: which is all that is required of us; for it was only intended for the Object of our Faith, and not of our Understanding in this Life. How many Mysteries are there which God hath placed out of our Sight, and which are only to be reached by Faith and Contemplation? As long as we are here in the Body, (a) *We see such Things as these but as through a Glass, darkly; but when we shall be advanced to the perfect State of the Blessed in Heaven, then we shall see Face to Face, and know even as also we are known.*

C H A P. V.

Of the *H O L Y A N G E L S.*

Their NATURE and MINISTRY.

BEFORE the *Creation* of this visible *World*, God made an innumerable Company of *Spirits*, which we call *ANGELS*. Some of these continue in their first holy and happy State, obeying, loving, praising, and enjoying *GOD*, and performing such Services as he is pleased to employ them in, for his own Glory, and the Good of Mankind. Some of the *Angels* rebelled, and were, with their Prince or Lea-

(a) 1 Cor. 13. 12.

der, called, *The Prince of Devils*, *The old Serpent*, and *Satan*, cast out of *Heaven*, banished from the Society of holy and blessed Spirits, and are reserved in everlasting Chains under Darkness, unto the Judgment of the *Great Day*.

The *Devil* seduced our *first Parents*, and persuaded them to transgress the Command of God; and by that Means brought *Sin* and *Death* into the World. And he still continues his Hostility against the whole Race of Mankind, using his utmost Endeavours, both by Force and Fraud, to fill all Places with Sin and Misery. For which End he sometimes acts the Part of a *roaring Lion*, going about, seeking whom he may devour; and sometimes he transforms himself into the Shape of an *Angel of Light*, that he may the more easily deceive.

But, on the contrary, *good Angels* are appointed for the Defence and Benefit of God's chosen People. Their general Commission is, To be Guardians and Keepers of the Heirs of Salvation. This the Psalmist teaches us: (a) *He shall give his Angels Charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy Ways*. And again, (b) *The Angel of the Lord incampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them*. And St. Paul (c) affirms, That they are all *ministring Spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be Heirs of Salvation*.

This Doctrine is confirmed by the Historical Accounts of the *Old* and *New Testament*. The *Angels* attended upon the *Patriarchs* in their Travels, as *Abraham* and the rest thankfully acknowledge. They delivered *Lot* and his Family out of *Sodom*, conducted the Children of *Israel* from *Ægypt*, to the Land of *Canaan*, brought Messages and Instructions to them afterwards: And we read, How an Angel was sent to *Manoah*, to direct what Course the Mother should take whilst she went with Child of *Sampson*: (d) And

(a) Psalm 91. 11. (b) Psalm 34. 7. (c) Heb. 1. ult. (d) Judges 13. 13, 14.

David makes a special Remark on such a Providence of God, (a) *By which he was covered in his Mother's Womb*; that is, was graciously kept from what might destroy him while he lay there. And as *David* praised God for this, so should all Mothers remember to do it too; as well as all that are born of them. *Thou art he, that took me out of my Mother's Womb.* And, in Cases of Extremity, *Angels* had frequent Communication with their Prophets and holy Persons.

Angels are *Spirits*, says the *Scripture*; but God, when he thinks fit, causes them to assume *Bodies*; for it is certain, that the *Angels* that appeared to *Abraham* and *Lot*, were embodied; for they are said to *Eat and Drink*, and mention is made of *washing their Feet*: And they took *Lot* and his Wife and Daughters by the *Hand*. But, alas! how should we hope to comprehend the Essence and Dignity of *Angels*, so far above us, when we feel ourselves unable to find out the Nature and Perfection of this very *Soul* within us? What Sort of *Being* must this be, which inspires a *Lump* of otherwise *Dead Flesh* with *Life* and *Activity*, and yet, when most desirous so to do, cannot confine its Thoughts to holy Exercises?

We find, That the blessed *Angels* inhabit Heaven, in such an innumerable Company as Mankind do the Earth: For there are, say the *Scriptures*, Thousands of Thousands, Myriads, an innumerable Host of holy *Angels*, continually waiting in the Presence of God. These are the happy *Spirits* who offer a Sacrifice of pure Praise before the Throne of God continually; who are ever ravished with the Contemplations of his Perfections, and see them, not like us, *through a Glass*, *darkly*; but near at Hand, and *Face to Face*. What Tongue can express, what Thoughts conceive, the admirable Beauty, the exact Order, the numberless Multitude of this heavenly Host! The inexhaustible

(a) *Psalms* 71. 16.

Source of Joy springing from the beatifick Vision!
The Blessedness derived to them from the Fountain
of all Blifs!

O Praise the Lord, all ye Works of his! in all Places of his Dominion: Praise the Lord, O my Soul! Let us magnify that Great God, whom Angels praise, whom Dominions adore, before whom Powers fall down and tremble; whose excellent Glory Cherubim and Seraphim proclaim with loud incessant Voices!

In the *New Testament*, at the Beginning of the *Gospels*, we find the *Angels* coming before our Lord, as his Heralds to prepare his Way for him; first, giving Notice of his *Conception*, then celebrating his *Nativity*, and proclaiming his *Birth* to the World. Afterwards, upon several Occasions; as, In his Deliverance from *Herod*, in his Temptation, in his Agony, at his Resurrection and Ascension, the Angels attended on him, and ministred unto him.

The like Attendance they gave to his Apostles, especially to those three eminent Ones, *St. Peter, Paul, and John*, revealing the Mind of God to them, warning them how to avoid impending Dangers, and delivering them out of Prison in a miraculous Manner, when they were fast bound with Chains, and kept under a strong Guard.

From whence we may learn, That the *Holy Angels* are very much employed about Men, and that by Means of this Ministration, they know much of human Affairs in general, but more of the State and Condition of those particular Persons whom they have in Charge.

We learn likewise, from the invariable Goodness of their Nature, that they are mightily pleased with the Welfare of Mankind; but with that most of all, wherein the Glory of God, and the Happiness of Man most eminently meet together: I mean, The Conversion and Repentance of a Sinner. Which though they

cannot know fully of themselves, as to the Sincerity of it, because they cannot search the Heart; yet they can make better Observations than we, whereby to infer it: And for the rest, I doubt not but the *Father of Spirits*, and *Searcher of Hearts*, communicates it to them, and they with Gladness spread abroad the good News among all the Inhabitants of Heaven: And so a Joy goes round among the Angels of God, as often as they hear of any one penitent Soul who is to be added to their blest Abodes. This our Lord, who perfectly understood the *Court of Heaven*, assures us, (a) *That there is Joy in the Presence of the Angels of God, over one Sinner that repenteth.*

The Thanks that we owe for the good Offices of *Angels*, are due to GOD; the Prayers that we make for their Assistance, must be made to GOD. This we are taught from one End of *Holy Scripture*, to the other. *Abraham* encouraged his Servant to fetch a Wife for his Son *Isaac* from a remote Place, by telling him, (b) *The Lord God of Heaven shall send his Angel before thee.* *Daniel* in the Den of Lions, calls out to the King, and tells him, (c) *My God hath sent his Angel, and hath shut the Lions Mouths, that they have not hurt me.* And when *St. John* fell down to worship, at the Feet of the *Angel*, which shewed him his heavenly Visions, he charges him, (d) *See thou do it not: for I am thy Fellow-Servant:—Worship GOD.*

In Conformity to what has been said, the *Church* has taught us to pray, That as the *Angels* always do God Service in *Heaven*; so they may, by his Appointment, succour and defend us on *Earth*.

(a) *Luke* 15. 10. (b) *Gen.* 24. 7. (c) *Dan.* 6. 22. (d) *Rev.* 22. 9.

C H A P. VI.

Of the Sacred *SCRIPTURES*.*Their* TRUTH and EXCELLENCY.

THE *HOLY SCRIPTURES* have received the constant Attestation of all Ages, and have, by a wonderful Providence, been preserved and transmitted down to our Days. And very remarkable it is, That notwithstanding the Variety of their Matter, the Diversity of Persons by whom, Places where, and Times when they were written; yet there is such a sweet Harmony between these Writings, and such an Uniformity of the Matters contained in them, that one don't clash with, and overthrow another, as it often happens in the Writings of Men.

Moreover, The *Holy Scriptures* bear Witness to themselves, in the Accomplishment of the many Promises therein contained, and Predictions of Things to come, with the Circumstances of the Things, and Names of the Persons foretold. Thus the Land of *Canaan* was promised to the Posterity of *Abraham*, when he had no Inheritance in it; nay, when, in all human Probability, he could have no Child to succeed him. The *Prophecy* concerning *Josias* was 321 Years, and that concerning *Cyrus* 100 Years, before either of them were born: And yet the Names they should bear, and the Works they should do, were expressly mentioned so long before. The Rejection of the *Jews*, and Calling of the *Gentiles*, is spoken of from *Moses*, to the last of the *Prophets*, at such Times as the *Jews* were in a flourishing Condition, and made no Question but they should always be the peculiar People of God. Lastly, The Prophecies of the *Messiah*

fiab are continued all along from the *Patriarchs*, to the *Incarnation of Christ*, and are very particular about the *Circumstances of his Birth, Life, and Sufferings*. Infomuch that our *Lord* appeals not only to his *Miracles*, but likewise to *Moses* and the *Prophets*, for Proof of his being the true *Messiah*. (a) *Search the Scriptures*, says he to the unbelieving *Jews*, for they are they that testify of me. And, (b) *Had ye believed Moses, ye would have believed me; for he wrote of me*. And after he had suffered, and was risen from the *Dead*, while his *Disciples* were in some *Suspense* what to think of him, he appeared to them, and upbraided them with their *Hardness of Heart*, and *Unbelief*: (c) *O Fools, and slow of Heart to believe all that the Prophets have spoken! Ought not Christ to have suffered these Things, and to enter into his Glory? And beginning at Moses and all the Prophets, he expounded unto them in all the Scriptures, the Things concerning himself*.

Again, *The Holy Scriptures* prove themselves to be the *Word of God*, by that great *Efficacy and Power* which is in them. *The Word of God*, says *St. Paul*, (d) *is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged Sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of Soul and Spirit, and of the Joints and Marrow, and is a Discerner of the Thoughts and Intents of the Heart*. When these *Sacred Writings* were translated into our *Language*, which was carefully performed by the best *Scholars and gravest Men* of our *Nation*, the *People* universally admired them, and with great *Satisfaction* heard the *Clergy* read them in the *Churches*. And the reading of the *Scriptures*, gave the greatest *Blow* of any *Thing*, to the former *Superstitions of Popery*, as *Image-worship, Pilgrimages, Invocation of Saints, &c.* Such of the *Heathen Writers* as have perused

(a) *John* 5. 39. (b) *Ver.* 46. (c) *Luke* 24, 25, 26, 27.
 (d) *Heb.* 4. 12.

them, have willingly preferred them, for *Sublimity* and *Majesty* of *Style*, before their own celebrated Writings. And, indeed, none of theirs come near them, even with all the Disadvantages of our *Translation*, which being obliged to be *Literal*, must needs lose many Beauties of the *Original*. But still we see and admire the Plainness and Succinctness of the *Historical Parts*, the Melody of the *Psalms*, the wise and comprehensive Instructions of the *Proverbs*, the exalted Thoughts of the *Prophets*: And, above all, that easy Sweetness in the *New Testament*, where the Glory of Heaven is set forth in grave and becoming Language, not like the Flights of *Rhetoricians*, who set out small Matters in great Words. (a) *All Scripture*, says St. Paul, is given by *Inspiration of God*, and is profitable for *Doctrines*, for *Reproof*, for *Correction*, for *Instruction in Righteousness*; That the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good Works.

To know how to value the *Holy Scriptures*, to have a true Relish of their divine Spirit, and to render them truly beneficial and comfortable to our Souls, we must study them well, read them often, hear them with Reverence and Attention. For a frequent Perusal will bring us to a right Understanding, and a right Understanding will make us find great Pleasure in the *Word of God*. What can be a greater Honour, than to hear *God* speaking to us? What can be of greater Importance, than the Instructions of everlasting Salvation? Here are the *Rules* by which we must govern all our *Thoughts*, *Words*, and *Actions*; and by these we shall be tryed and examined by our great Judge: For so he himself has forewarned us: (b) *The Word that I have spoken, the same shall judge you at the last Day*. Therefore we must not study these Sacred Books only that we may readily quote them, and be able to dispute out of them;

(a) 2 Tim. 3. 16, 17. (b) John 12. 48.

but we must so read, as to practise, and so hear, as to obey. Men should not be so solicitous as they are to fill their Heads with controversial Points, which serve more for Strife and Debate, than for establishing the Truth; but they ought much rather to warm their Hearts with pious and useful Doctrines, to encourage themselves in all Adversities with the Assurances and Manifestations of the infinite Love of God, to strengthen their Hopes with his Promises, to fly from Sin through a Fear of his Threatenings, and to quicken their Zeal for all good Works, by having much at Heart the serious Persuasions and Exhortations of the *holy Penmen*. This Method of studying the *holy Scriptures*, would not fail to attain the happy End for which they were written, and *make Men wise unto Salvation*.

C H A P. VII.

OF RELIGION from its Beginning.

THE PATRIARCHAL DISPENSATION.

THAT Men in all Times and Ages of the World, have been under the Direction of a LAW, to which they were bound to conform their Actions, is what we must needs grant, if we believe any Thing of the *final Doom* and *Judgment* of all *Mankind*: For how can Men be accountable to the *Judge* for what they were not obliged by any *known Law*, to avoid, or do? It being an infallible Maxim, That where there is no *Law*, there can be neither *Obedience* nor *Transgression*.

But now this LAW (of *Nature* or *Reason*, call it which you please) though it be more obscure and imperfect, yet is it no way contradictory to that clearer
Light

Light which God was pleased afterwards to reveal. For if so, then we must either say, That Men had not a *right Rule* before, and, consequently, were not bound to observe the Directions of it; or else, That the Nature of *moral Good* and *Evil* is variable: Neither of which can be supposed with any Justice to our wise and holy *Lawgiver* and *Judge*, who notwithstanding the subsequent Revelations of his Will, hath still left us in many Things to the Guidance of this *first Light*. And if any one has presumed to maintain this extravagant Doctrine, That the *Gospel* supercedes the *Law of Nature* and *right Reason*, and that *divine Grace* exempts Men from the Obligation to *good Works*, he has run into very gross and dangerous Absurdities, and effectually confuted himself.

It was a *Tradition* current among the *Jews*, That the World should last six thousand Years, which they divided into three remarkable and equal *Periods*; reckoning the *First* from the Creation to the giving of the *Law* by *Moses*; the *Second* for the Continuance of that *Law*; and the *Third*, for the Days of the *Messiah*. Whence arose a threefold Distinction of Church-Oeconomy, *Patriarchal*, *Mosaical*, and *Evangelical*.

The P A T R I A R C H S lived under a *Theocracy*; that is, the immediate Direction of GOD himself, especially in extraordinary and difficult Cases. The first Men being very long-lived, were not only wise by abundance of Experience, but had likewise an Opportunity of communicating their Wisdom to many Thousands of the younger Sort, by personal Conversation. And so we may very justly suppose, That the frequent Appearances of Angels to them, the Visions and Revelations which God gave them, the miraculous Deliverances which he wrought for the Pious, and Judgments executed on the Wicked, were all preserved with great Truth and Exactness, for the first

first two thousand Years of the World, even supposing (what some *Histories* will not allow us to suppose) that no such Thing as *Letters* were yet invented, or applied to any Use.

Of the *positive Laws* given in these Times, there are Two upon Record very remarkable: The One, *A Prohibition against eating of Blood*, given to *Noah* after the *Deluge*, in these Words: (*a*) *Flesh with the Life thereof, which is the Blood thereof, shall you not eat.* Which was reinforced under the *Mosaick Institution.* (*b*) Concerning the Sense of which Words, there are various Opinions. The modern *Jews* understand it to be, the cutting off a Limb or Piece of any Creature, and eating it while the Creature is yet alive, as some *Americans* are known to have done. But their more ancient Interpreters will have it, That hereby the Eating of Blood is universally forbidden, as that wherein the Life consisteth. And indeed, the parallel Place will not suffer us to interpret otherwise. So the *Apostles* (*c*) understood it; and so did (*d*) *Tertullian*, and (*e*) *Sulpitius Severus.* And commonly the best Writers use *Blood* and *Life* indifferently for one and the same Thing. The Reason of this Precept is partly *Physical*, Blood being too gross to afford proper Nutriment; but chiefly *Moral*, intimating to us, How carefully we should abstain from all Acts of *Revenge* and *Cruelty.*

The other *positive Law* was *Circumcision*, enjoined by *Moses* with sundry severe Sanctions; but first given to *Abraham*, as a Seal of the Covenant which God made with him in these Words: (*f*) *This is my Covenant, which ye shall keep between me and you, and thy Seed after thee: Every Man Child among you shall be Circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the Flesh of*

(*a*) *Gen.* 9. 4. (*b*) *Lev.* 17. 11, 14. (*c*) *Acts* 15. 29. (*d*) *Tertullian. Apolog. & de Monogamia.* (*e*) *De Jejunio.* (*f*) *Gen.* 17. 10, 11.

your Foreskin; and it shall be a Token of the Covenant betwixt me and you. This was the Ratification of the Covenant which God made with *Abraham*, to accept of his Posterity for his own Inheritance and peculiar People, and that out of them should arise the promised *Messiah*. However, *Circumcision* was not so confined to the Holy Line of *Isaac* and *Jacob*, but that other Branches of *Abraham's* Family, *Ismael*, and the Sons of *Keturah*, transmitted it to the great Nations sprung from them; whence the *Saracens* and *Æthiopians* of Old, and the *Mahometans* at this Day are Circumcised. And though none of the Nations in (a) *Palestine*, except only the *Jews*, used *Circumcision*, so that the *Uncircumcised* was a Term comprehending all their Neighbours round about; yet the *Ægyptians* of Old received it of the *Israelites* sojourning among them; as may be gathered from (b) *Herodotus* and (c) *Diodorus Siculus*, though they erroneously derive it from the *Ægyptians* to the *Jews*.

That *Circumcision* was properly a *Sacrament*, that is, not a bare *external* Sign, to distinguish Men in a civil Capacity, but significant of an *inward spiritual Grace*, is clear from several Passages relating to it, both in the *Old* and *New Testament*. In the Book of *Deuteronomy*, *Moses* endeavouring to persuade the People to a free and ingenuous Obedience of God's Laws, commands them to (d) *Circumcise the Foreskin of their Hearts*. *Jeremiah* threatening the *Jews*, That they, tho' *Circumcised*, should be punished with the *Uncircumcised*, gives this Reason for it: (e) *Because all the House of Israel are Uncircumcised in the Heart*. *St. Stephen* upbraiding them with their Unbelief and Hardness of Heart, and Cruelty to Christ and all the Prophets, calls them, (f) *Uncircumcised in Heart and*

(a) *Joseph. Antiqu. Lib. viii. Cap. 4.* (b) *Herodot. Euterpe.*
 (c) *Diodor. Sicul. Lib. 1. De Colchis.* (d) *Deut. 10. 16.* (e) *Jer.*
 9. 25. (f) *AAs 7. 51.*

Ears. And St. Paul, having charged them with many grievous Crimes, which they committed in Confidence of their *Election* through *Circumcision*, concludes thus, (a) *He is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that Circumcision which is outward in the Flesh: But 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.* All which shews, what Opinion the more pious and intelligent among the *Jews*, had of their *Circumcision*, that it obliged them to a most strict and holy Observance of the *divine Laws*; that it was a Symbol of their Readiness to retrench the unlawful Desires and Affections of their Hearts, however painful and grievous it might be to part with them.

In the Accounts of the *Patriarchs Religion*, we find, that they did not satisfy themselves with the inward Devotion of their Hearts, nor the Prayers and Praises of their Lips, how serious and spiritual soever they might be; but they added *Sacrifices* of the best Things they had, to their other Acts of Worship. (b) *Cain* and *Abel* brought their Offerings to the Lord, one of the Fruits of the Ground, which he tilled; the other of the Flocks and Herds, which he kept. And though we read not of *Noah's Sacrifice* until his Thanksgiving (c) for Deliverance from the Flood, yet we need not hence conclude, that this was the first Time he or any other pious Man ever built an *Altar*, or offered any living Creature thereon. But, perhaps, we may from him derive the Custom which held many Ages after, of performing such solemn Devotions on Hills and eminent Places. *Holy Scripture* tells us, (d) *That the Ark rested on the Mountains of Ararat*: And other (e) grave Authors ob-

(a) *Rom.* 11. 28, 29. (b) *Gen.* 4. 3. 4. *Selden de Jure Naturæ & Gentium*, Lib. iii. Cap. 2. (c) *Gen.* 8. 20. (d) *Gen.* 8. 4. (e) *Plato*, Lib. iii. *de Legibus*.

serve, that mountainous Places were first inhabited by Mankind ; either as being soonest dry, and fit for Pasture and Tillage ; or because the *Flood* had struck such a Terror into the Sons of *Noah*, that they durst not trust themselves on the lower Ground, more subject to Inundations. This is certain, that the *Hebrews* and *Greeks*, and most other Nations, had their Places for solemn Worship on the Tops of Mountains. *Abraham* was commanded to offer (a) his Son *Isaac* for a *Burnt-Offering* upon one of the Mountains in the Land of *Moriah*. *Balak* the King of *Moab*, (b) took *Balaam* to the Tops of Mountains, to sacrifice to his Gods, and to curse *Israel* from thence. Hence it is that we read so often in the Books of *Kings* of high Places, whither Men went up to worship, and that not only *Idolators*, but those of the true Religion, even as (c) *Samuel* himself did, when he anointed *Saul* to be King over *Israel*. In like Manner, the *Trojans* sacrificed upon Mount (d) *Ida*, and the (e) *Persians* upon their Mountains. And both at *Athens* and *Rome*, their most sacred Temples stood in the highest Places of their City. This universal Agreement of Mankind, in choosing the most eminent Places for their religious Worship, is most reasonably derived from *Noah* and his Family, who, for the Reasons aforesaid, first erected their *Altars* in such Places.

(a) *Gen.* xxii. 2. (b) *Numb.* xxiji. (c) *1 Sam.* ix. 12. &c.
 (d) *Hom. Iliad.* 9. v. 170. (e) *Xenophon. Cyropæd.* Lib. viii.



C H A P. VIII.

THE MOSAICAL DISPENSATION.

THE great *Minister* of this *Dispensation*, was *Moses*, a Prophet and Law-giver of the *Jews*, Son of *Amram* by *Jochabed*, born after his Sister *Miriam*, and his Brother *Aaron*. About this Time the King of *Egypt*, either apprehending Danger from the prodigious Increase of the Children of *Israel*, or moved with the Predictions of his Priests, (*a*) That a Man was ready to be born into the World, who should be the Author of Ruin and Desolation to the *Ægyptians*, but bring Liberty and Glory to the *Israelites*; published an Edict, strictly commanding, that whenever the *Hebrew* Women were delivered of a Male-Child, it should be cast into the River *Nile*, and drowned; and that whoever should presume to conceal such Children, both they and their whole Families should be put to Death. Now when *Moses* was born, (*b*) his Mother *Jochabed* hid him three Months in her own House; but fearing she should be discovered, she put him in a little Boat of Bulrushes, daubed over with Slime and Pitch, to keep out the Water, and laid it in the Flags by the River's Brink, in a Place where *Thermuthis*, the King's Daughter, used to bathe herself. This Princess coming, and finding the Child, was very much pleased with him. His Sister *Miriam*, appearing as one accidentally there, took upon her to call a Nurse, and called the Mother. By this Means, *Moses* had the Benefit of a good Education, which, in Conjunction with his great natural Parts, and the special Assistance of the *Almighty*,

(*a*) *Josepb. Antiq. Lib. ii. Cap. 5.* (*b*) *Exod. ii.*

qualified

qualified him for the many wonderful Works he wrought afterwards. When he was about (a) Four-score Years of Age, he led the Children of *Israel* out of *Ægypt*, in order to conduct them to the Land of *Canaan*. This (b) happened in the 430th Year after *Abraham* came into *Canaan*, and in the 215th Year from *Jacob*'s Descent into *Ægypt*. So that when it is said, (c) *The Sojourn of the Children of Israel, who dwelt in Ægypt, was four hundred and thirty Years*; the Time is to be computed from the Beginning of *Abraham*'s Pilgrimage.

After the People had travelled about three (d) Months in the Wilderness, they came to Mount *Sinai*, where God at first had appeared to *Moses* in a Flame of Fire in a Bush. This (e) Mountain, incomparably the highest in all that Country) appears dreadful and inaccessible to all that behold it; and it being an ancient Opinion, that God often came down upon it, it was held Sacred by the Inhabitants. To the Top of this, *Moses* ascended, and continued there forty Days and forty Nights; in which Time he received *Laws* for the Government of the People both in Church and State, in Peace and War, from the immediate Dictates of God himself. These *Laws* the *Jewish Doctors* distinguish into *Moral*, *Ecclesiastical*, and *Political*; which Distinction they will have to be intimated by those Words, frequently occurring in the *Mosaick Writings*, *Laws*, *Statutes*, and *Judgments*.

By **L A W S** they understand, the *Moral Precepts*, or *Ten Commandments*, written upon two Tables of Stone with the Finger of God.

By **S T A T U T E S** *Ceremonial Rites* relating to *Burnt-Offerings*, *Sacrifices*, *Purifications*, and other *Ecclesiastical Matters*.

(a) *Exod.* vii. 7. (b) *Josepb. Antiq.* Lib. ii. Cap. 6. (c) *Exod.* xii. 40. (d) *Exod.* 19. (e) *Josepb. Antiq.* Lib. iii. Cap. 4.

By JUDGMENTS, *Political Laws* and *Ordinances* for the Use of the civil Magistrate, in the Administration of Justice, and deciding of Controversies between Man and Man.

The *Moral Law* is obligatory to all Mankind, in all Ages and Countries of the World, being the Sum and Substance of that original Law of Righteousness, ingraven at first on the Tables of Man's Heart; but being much obliterated and defaced by the *Fall*, is now conceived in express Words, and consigned to Writing by the supreme Judge, that Men may no longer plead Ignorance of their Duty. The *Ecclesiastical* and *Civil Laws* of the *Jews* were of a different Nature, binding them not as they were Men, but as a particular Church and People; and so they were not of an eternal, but temporary Obligation.

When St. Paul says, (a) *The Law had a Shadow of good Things to come*, and that there was a Necessity it should be changed, he is to be understood of the *ecclesiastical* or *ceremonial Law*; which, he teaches us, was abolished and done away in *Christ*. But when he says, *By the Deeds of the Law there shall no Flesh be justified* (b); this is true even of the *moral Law*, which however perfect in its self, yet cannot be so compleatly fulfilled by any Man in this frail State, as to acquit him of all Sin in God's Sight. However, we (c) Christians do not make void this *Law*, but we own its binding Force upon us, and establish it among us.

But though the *Ceremonial Law* is now abrogated since the Coming of *Christ*, yet we are not to think that any Part of it was (d) instituted without good Reason; though such Reason may be so buried in the Dust of Antiquity, as that it may pass our Skill, at

(a) *Heb. x. 1. vii. 12.* (b) *Rom. iii. 20.* (c) *Rom. iii. 31.*
 (d) *Spencer de Legibus, Heb. p. 4.*

this Distance, to discover it. So much of it as we well understand, we find to be rational, and worthy of its divine Founder ; and therefore it is but fit we believe the same of what we do not understand. It is highly absurd to imagine, that God would have tied up this People to such a strict Observance of these *Laws*, that they might not add nor diminish a Tittle, if any of them had been without good Reason. God is the Fountain of Wisdom and Reason ; his very Nature forbids us to ascribe any Thing to him, much less any *Law* or *Ordinance*, which is irrational. It was the peculiar Character of *Pagan* Ceremonies, that they were groundless and senseless, and not only obscure and unaccountable, but had all the Signs of fanatick Rage and Madness in them ; the Prince of Darkness taking a Pleasure in abusing the Folly of Mankind, and holding them in the most abandoned and deplorable Slavery. But the God of Wisdom never delighted in such Worshippers ; he never was pleased *with the Sacrifice of Fools*. The wisest and best of his Servants, who have been most conversant in the Study of his *Laws*, have highly applauded them for their wise and excellent Contrivance. (a) Behold, (says *Moses*, in some of his last Words to the People of *Israel*) *I have taught you Statutes and Judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so, in the Land whither you go to possess it. Keep therefore, and do them ; for this is your Wisdom and your Understanding in the Sight of the Nations, which shall bear all these Statutes, and say ; Surely, this great Nation is a wise and understanding People. For what Nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all Things that we call upon him for ? And what Nation is there so great, that hath Statutes and Judgments so righteous, as all*

(a) Deut. iv. 5, &c.

this Law which I set before you this Day? And David, who studied them Day and Night, gives the like high Encomium of them. The Law of the Lord (a) is perfect, converting the Soul: The Testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the Simple: The Statutes of the Lord are right, rejoicing the Heart: The Commandment of the Lord is pure, enlightening the Eyes: The Fear of the Lord is clean, enduring for ever: The Judgments of the Lord are true and righteous altogether.

The modern Jews divide their *Laws* and *Ceremonies* into three Ranks or Orders. The *First* of which contains all the Precepts of the written *Law*, comprised in the *five Books of Moses*. The *Second*, those of the oral *Law*, which are the Traditions collected by their *Rabbins*, and several Constitutions, which they call the *Commandments of the wise Men*, set down in the Book they call the *Talmud*. The *Third* Sort contains those Things which Use and Custom have authorized at divers Times, and in different Places, which they call *Customs*. Of these, the *two first* are generally received by all the *Jews*, though dispersed through all Parts of the World: But as to the *Customs*, they are different according to the several Places where they dwell. Their whole Worship consists only in reading the *Law*, and certain Prayers they make in their *Synagogues*; for they have no *Priesthood* among them, nor Place for *Sacrifices* since the Destruction of the Temple at *Jerusalem*. They hold *Seven principal Articles of Faith*.

- I. That God is One, Incorporeal and Eternal.
- II. That this God alone is to be worshipped:
- III. That that there have been, and may still be Prophets.

(a) *Psal.* xix. 7.

IV. That *Moses was the greatest Prophet, that was ever inspired by God ; and that the Law he left, was dictated by God in all its Precepts.*

V. That *the said Law is immutable ; that nothing can be added to it, or taken from it.*

VI. That *the MESSIAH is to come, who shall be more powerful than all the Kings of the Earth.*

VII. That *God shall raise the Dead at the End of Time ; and that there shall be an universal Judgment.*

Upon their Crucifixion of our blessed *Lord*, their *Church* and *State* were presently dissolved, and they carried Captives into all Nations ; among whom they are looked upon as Objects of divine Vengeance to this Day ; having never been able to recover their Country, or remove that general Aversion which all the rest of the World have for them. In the Reign of the Emperor *Adrian*, they attempted a Restauration, under the Conduct of *Barchochebas* ; but this Attempt failing, their Condition became more desperate and hopeless. They have since endeavoured to make themselves independent, but could never accomplish it. None of them are in any military Office, nor any ways dignified in the State ; but are Bankers, Usurers, Custom-house Men, Brokers, Druggists, Interpreters, &c. We have several Decrees of *Councils*, Rescripts of Emperors, and Edicts of Princes against them. To relate how often they have been expelled *France*, *England*, and *Spain*, would be too tedious a Digression ; and therefore I forbear, and proceed now to the *Evangelical Dispensation*, or the glorious Light of the *Gospel*.



C H A P. IX.

The EVANGELICAL DISPENSATION :

Or, The CHRISTIAN RELIGION.

OUR Redemption by *JESUS CHRIST*, from whom we are denominated *Christians*, leads us to reflect on the miserable State we were in before, and by what Means we were involved in it.

In the Account which the holy Scripture gives of our *first Parents*, we are told, that God placed them in a delightful Garden, and gave them Leave to eat freely of the Fruit of every Tree, except only the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil : *Of which*, says he, *thou shalt not eat : For in the Day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die.*

It is a frivolous Cavil, which some have raised against this Method, which God took for the Tryal of Man's Obedience ; that he should forfeit all his own and his Descendents Happiness by the eating of an Apple, as they love lightly to express it. But they may with as much Reason (and indeed they often do with equal Boldness) arraign the Wisdom of God, in the Institution of the Sacraments, or any positive Act of divine Worship. For some of which they cannot find such a Reason in the Nature of Things, as they may for this : It being very agreeable, that Man, who in his original State, was to be nourished by the Fruit of the Trees, should, for the Tryal of his Obedience, be forbid to taste of some One of them.

But this Prohibition was soon broke through, and consequently the Penalty annexed to it, was incurred. Man lost the Blessing of Immortality, and became subject to the Dominion of Death. For so we must necessarily

fully understand the Commination, *In the Day that thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die*; not by an immediate Separation of Soul and Body, for that happened not to him 'till several hundreds of Years after, but becoming liable to Pains and Diseases, and gradual Decays, which should at last end in Death. In this Sense we must interpret the Words, while we take them to signify the Dissolution of the human Frame, which from hence we infer, would never have been dissolved, if the Condition of Obedience had constantly been performed.

Since then our *first Parents* did actually rebel against God, and consequently made themselves obnoxious to his Curse, which was Death, it remains for us to consider, how far this Curse is to be extended, and whether it affected the Nature of Man in whole or in part; whether the actual Offenders only suffered by it, or whether the whole Species or Progeny be comprehended in it.

Some there are who contend, that the Sin of our *first Parents* was merely personal, and that their Posterity is in no Sense guilty of it, nor answerable for it. But the undeniable Effects and Consequences, force us to explode this Assertion. For if ever a perfect Freedom from Pains and Death was the Privilege of our Nature, we have certainly lost it, by the Experience of all Generations, who have been always subject to these Miseries even in the State of Infancy and Childhood, before they were capable of committing any personal or actual Sin. Now the Punishment being thus obvious and clear, the original Guilt of the first Transgression must be necessarily supposed to cleave to every individual Person; otherwise it would be but agreeable to the Laws of Justice, that every Child of Man should be permitted to grow up, 'till he became an actual Offender; which is not done; and therefore it must be some original Sin, antecedent to all we can think of, but the first of our Kind, which has thus en-

tated Pains and Death upon the whole Race, in all Ages and Parts of the World.

Some again will allow no more to be intended by the Curse than a Condition of Mortality, with the Diseases and Calamities incident thereunto. They grant, indeed, that when a Man comes to act for himself, he is accountable for his Actions in a future State, and that if they be criminal, they must be expiated some Way or other, or else they will bring him to certain infernal Punishments prepared for ungodly Men: But as for *original Sin*, they think the Guilt of it pursues a Man no farther than the Grave; that when he once arrives there, the Sentence of divine Justice is satisfied in this Particular, and the Soul stands in no Need of any farther Expiation or Atonement for it.

This Principle is chiefly advanced by *Quakers*, who use no Baptism at all, and by *Anabaptists*, who deny it to Infants and little Children. That they may not seem to neglect their Salvation, they assert, that nothing wants to be done to such Innocents, who have not attained to the Knowledge of Good and Evil; that having never done any thing to offend God, they will, by Virtue of their own Innocence, be received to his Mercy. Hereupon they very much lessen the noxious Influence of *original Sin*, and tragically aggravate the Cruelty of that Sentence, which leaves such tender Souls to a miserable State in another World. Let us see what Defence there is in Scripture and Reason for such Sentiments.

And first, nothing can be more true than this, that Children are not naturally and by Birth-right Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven. Even the first Man himself, in his most perfect State, had no Title to this Kingdom. For he could not have it, except God his Creator had vouchsafed to give it him. But we can find no Foundation for such Title in the first Covenant: His highest Privilege here specified, was to be the Lord of this lower World. And though God might have

have translated Men when multiplied upon Earth, to heavenly Habitations, as he did *Enoch* and *Elias*, yet this had been an Act of his own free Grace, it is no express Article of his Covenant with Mankind ; how much less can any such Privilege be assumed or challenged by his Posterity, in this fallen accursed State ? But now if the Souls of Children, which are the most essential and considerable Part of Man, should by Virtue of their own Innocence, be admitted into Heaven, after a few Days, or Months, or Years Conjunction with the Body, that Death which dissolves the Conjunction, would be so far from being a Curse, that it would be the Occasion of a higher Degree of Happiness, than Man in his greatest Perfection could ever naturally aspire to.

But, secondly, The holy Scriptures do abundantly testify, that the Souls of Men, as well as their Bodies, are tainted and corrupted by *original Sin* ; that there is no Man living, though ever so just, but he sinneth often ; that the Imaginations of Man's Heart are evil continually ; that they who are in the Flesh, cannot please God ; and except we be regenerate and born again, we cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven. These Testimonies, joined with our own Reason and Experience, put it out of all Doubt, that we are monstrously degenerated in spiritual Things, from that original Righteousness, that sound and clear Judgment, that Rectitude of Will and Affections, which is said to have been in our *first Parents*.

There is visibly a strong Bias upon our Nature to that which is Evil ; it discovers itself in Children as soon as they begin to act ; they presently fall of their own Accord, and without a Tutor, to the Commission of many Vices ; whereas much Time and Pains are bestowed upon them to bend them the other way, and conform their Minds to the Practice of that which is Good. This evidently shews, that Vice is the native Product of their Souls ; that the Seeds of it are inge-

nerated in them, which want nothing but Time in the tenderest Infant, to ripen them and bring them forth into Action. Hence it is that the *Church* teaches, consonantly to the Meaning of holy Scripture, that *Adam's Sin* brought a Curse upon his whole Offspring as well as himself, and that the Death threatened, affects the Soul as well as the Body, both in this World and that which is to come; which though it be not the Annihilation or Extinction of the Soul, yet is properly stiled Death, in as much as it separates the Soul from the Presence and Love of God, who is the Fountain of Life, and Health, and Comfort. Every Child of Man therefore is naturally under the Sentence of spiritual and eternal, as well as temporal Death. This is the sad and deplorable State, which all Mankind by Nature are in, deriving the Seeds of Sin from their *first Parents*, and bringing forth the Fruits of it when they come to Ripeness of Years, in all kinds of Impiety and Iniquity, by Reason of this *original Sin*.

But though Man had thus utterly lost his own Righteousness, and subjected himself to the Slavery of Sin and Satan, yet God did not cast him off for ever, as he justly might have done, but was pleased to find out an Expedient, whereby his own Justice might be satisfied, and the Offender delivered from the Curse of the Law; and that was, by sending his only begotten Son into the World, to take our Nature upon him, and in our Stead to fulfil the whole Law of God, by the perfect Obedience of his holy Life, and by the infinite Merit of his precious Blood, shed for the Propitiation of our Sins.

By Virtue of this *Propitiation* it is, that Infants being baptized, and dying in their Infancy, are purified from the Guilt of *original Sin*, restored to the Grace and Mercy of God, admitted into the Number of his adopted Children, to be Inheritors of his heavenly Kingdom. And likewise adult Persons, who in Word

or Deed sin after their Baptism, if they truly repent, and unfeignedly believe the holy Gospel, they are absolved by this all-sufficient Sacrifice, and no Stain remains upon them that shall be imputed to their Condemnation. This which *Jesus Christ* hath thus done and obtained for us, is commonly called, *The Work of our Redemption.*

And whereas, before the coming of Christ, the Church of God was then confined to one particular Place and Nation, which was the *Jews*, and their *Temple at Jerusalem*, *Jesus Christ* has, without respect of Nations or Persons, called all People into his *Church*, to partake of the Blessings of his *Gospel*: So that every rational Creature under Heaven, Jew or Gentile, Master or Servant, Noble or Ignoble, yielding Homage, Obedience, and Worship to him, is equally accepted of him: And his *Church* is *Catholick*; that is, the Congregation of Christian People wheresoever dispersed over the Face of the whole Earth.

And for the People which make up this Congregation, they are denominated *the Faithful*, from their professing of Christ, and partaking of his Word and Sacraments in the due Preaching and Administration of them. Hereby all those Assemblies are excluded from the *Church*, among whom the Word is not preached nor the Sacraments administered in due manner, and by proper Persons, as Christ hath appointed. For Christ, as the Head of the *Church*, hath appointed both *Persons* and *Rules* for the good Government of it, and left strict Injunctions for the perpetual Observance of them, as well knowing, that the Ruin of any Society, Ecclesiastical or Civil, begins in the breach of Union and good Order: And therefore we conclude, That where-ever there are two separate Assemblies of Christians, worshipping Christ, in such different Ways, that they cannot Unite and Communicate one with another; one of them cannot be the true *Church* of Christ, because Christ is
our

our common Head, and his Members, like those of the natural Body, have Fellowship one with another; they mutually succour, help, and comfort one another, which they cannot do in a separated and divided State. He came to purchase unto himself a *peculiar People, zealous of good Works*, and therefore not zealous against one another, nor envying at, and striving with one another; for where Envy and Strife is, *there is Confusion and every evil Work*. The Bonds which he left to hold his Members together, were Meekness and Gentleness, Love and Condescension, a forbearing and forgiving Spirit, which for the Sake of Peace and Concord will dispense with many Things which are not so well as they should be, and not forsake the Flock of Christ, because there are some Goats, some unworthy Members in it; remembering, that the *Church* is compared to a Fisher's Net, which caught all manner of Fish, good and bad; and to a Field wherein there grew Tares as well as Wheat, and were ordered to grow together until the Harvest, which is the End of the World.

Christ hath appointed his *Church* as the only Way to eternal Life. In this he promiseth to be with his Servants to the End of the World. In this he dispenseth all the Graces of Justification, Adoption, and Sanctification. The Righteousness of Christ, which is our Justification, can no more be conveyed to us out of his mystical Body the Church, than the vital Heat and animal Spirits of the natural Body can be communicated to a Limb or Part which is separated from it. We cannot become the adopted Sons of God, except we be admitted into his Family, which is the *Church*; We cannot attain to the Inheritance of his heavenly Kingdom, except we continue in this Family. So neither can we be Partakers of the sanctifying Virtue of the Holy Ghost, except we abide in the *Church*; for upon this it is, that Christ promised to send down his Spirit; which he bestows not but by certain Means,

as

as Prayers, Preaching, and the Administration of the Sacraments, as he did even in the Apostles Times, according to the Accounts we have of them in the *Acts of the Apostles*, and which are therefore stiled *The Means of Grace*. We read, That at the first, the Holy Ghost was communicated to Believers, by the Preaching and Laying on of the Apostles Hands, but of none other: And, that (a) *the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved*; which plainly argues, that there was no Salvation out of the Church.

The Rule is still the same to us, and cannot be altered but by the Authority which first established it. For Christ, who gave it, has declared, that it shall continue to the End of the World. Therefore we conclude, that that *Church*, alone which first began at *Jerusalem* on Earth, will bring us to *Jerusalem* in Heaven; and that alone began there, which always imbraceth *the Faith once delivered to the Saints*. Whatever *Church* pretendeth to a new Beginning, pretendeth at the same Time to a new *Church* or *Religion*; and whatever is so new, is in effect none.

It is strange that any who call themselves Christians, should choose that which was anciently esteemed the greatest Punishment on this Side of Hell: I mean to be out of the *Church*. To be cast out by *Anathemas* and *Excommunications*, was once thought very dreadful, however such Censures are now slighted, and reputed but as so many *bruta fulmina*: And sure Hereticks and Scismaticks, who cut themselves off by their own voluntary Act, are not in a better Condition. But let them remember, that while *Noah*, by God's Direction, was preparing his Ark, he was ridiculed and flouted at by the impious World; 'till the Deluge came, and swept all away that were left out of it.

(a) *Acts*. ii. 47.

Now that Ark was always reputed a Type or Figure of the *Church*, and the Application is easy: As many as are out of the *Church*, are in the same State of Perdition.

The *Christian Church* is built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, *Jesus Christ* himself being the chief Corner Stone; who, though he was to the *Jews* a Stone of Stumbling, and a Rock of Offence, yet that happened not for want of sufficient Evidence of his divine Authority; for *Nicodemus* freely professes, for himself and many others: (a) *Rabbi, we know that thou art a Teacher come from God: for no Man can do these Miracles that thou dost, except God be with him.* Nor was he guilty of any Misconduct, or seditious Attempts against the civil Government, as the false Christs were; for he both paid Tribute himself, and exhorted others to do the same; insomuch that *Pilate* declared, That he could find no Fault in him. But the *Jews* Dissatisfaction about him proceeded from their own gross Corruptions, and false Notions of the *Messiah*, whom they expected to appear among them with great Pomp and Grandeur, to deliver them from the *Roman Yoke*, and make them a free People, when as they had much more Need of such a Saviour as could reform their foul Errors, both in Faith and Manners; and could not in Reason hope (if they had not been fatally blinded) that God should deliver them from that State of Servitude to which he had subjected them for the Punishment of their Sins, before they had put away those Sins from among them, and returned to a due Acknowledgment and Observance of the divine Laws. Now such a Saviour was *Jesus Christ*, according to what the Angel foretold of him, when he gave Directions about his Name: (b) *Thou shalt call his Name Jesus, for he shall save his People*

(a) *Jo'n* iii. 2. (b) *Matt.* i. 21.

from their Sins. And therefore notwithstanding the Hard-heartedness of the Jews, and the Opposition of the Gentile World for a Time, such was the intrinsic Goodness of Christ's Doctrine, that it made its Way through all the fiery Tryals, and sanguinary Persecutions which were raised against it by the Malice of wicked Men and Devils. It ministered unspeakable Comforts to the first Professors of it, so that they suffered the most ignominious and painful Deaths with Pleasure, and were so far from thinking themselves unhappy under the Afflictions they endured for Christ, that they rejoiced in that they were counted worthy to suffer for his Name: they took joyfully the spoiling of their Goods; they endured Bonds and Imprisonment, not accepting Deliverance, reckoning, *That these light Afflictions, which endure but for a Moment, wrought for them a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.* Jesus Christ is said to have brought Life and Immortality to Light through the *Gospel*; in Comparison of which our present Condition deserves not the Name of Life; and therefore he says, *Whosoever will save his Life, shall lose it; but whosoever shall lose his Life for my sake and the Gospel, the same shall find it.* He hath opened the Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers, so that now we have a clear Prospect of the Glories of another World; and all the *Martyrs* and *Confessors* have seen with an Eye of Faith, what St. *Stephen* beheld with his bodily Eyes, (a) *the Heavens opened and Jesus standing on the Right Hand of God*: Which glorious View of approaching Happiness, easily induced him to forgive his Persecutors, who hastened him (though undesignedly) to the Enjoyment of it.

If we have any just Value for this great *Salvation*, which Christ hath purchased for us, and revealed to

(a) *Acts* vii. 56.

us, we shall be willing to have the Apostles and first Preachers of it in everlasting Remembrance. We can do no less in Gratitude, than testify a singular Respect for those, who under God have been the Instruments of so much Good to us: Especially when we consider that they have been such great Benefactors to us, not with Ease to themselves, but with the severest Labours, Difficulties and Persecutions, which have commonly ended in the Loss of their Lives. It is therefore very unbecoming us, who by their Ministry have been called out of Darkness into the marvellous Light of the Gospel, to refuse them grateful Commemorations on this Account, when at the same Time, God is so far from being robbed of any Honour by such Commemorations, that they do mightily contribute to his Glory, and to the Maintenance of true Religion and Virtue amongst us.

We of this *Nation* have abundant Cause to be thankful to God for the first Planters of Christianity among us. For if we examine the Religion and Manners of our Forefathers, we shall discover in them a Degree of Idolatry and Barbarity more wretched than was commonly to be found in the Gentile World. *Gildas* (*a*) a Native of this Island, describes to what Excesses their Ignorance and Superstition carried them. "That they were overgrown with the common Errors of the Pagan World: that their Idols were as monstrous and extravagant, and altogether as numerous, as those in *Ægypt*." Which indeed were so gross, that they moved the Indignation of an (*b*) Idolater himself, who thus discharges his Choler upon them.

*Quis nescit, Volusi Bythynice, qualia demens
Ægyptus portenta colat? Crocodilon ador at
Pars hæc: illa pavet saturam serpentibus Ibim, &c.*

(*a*) *Hist.* p. 10.

(*b*) *Juvenal, Sat. xv.*

How *Ægypt*, mad with Superstition grown,
 Makes Gods of Monsters; but too well is known.
 One Sect Devotion to *Nile's* Serpent pays ;
 Others to *Ibis*, that on Serpents preys.
 Fish-Gods you'll meet, with Fins and Scales
 o'ergrown ;
Diana's Dogs ador'd in every Town,
 Her Dogs have Temples, but the Goddess none. }
 'Tis mortal Sin an Onion to devour ;
 Each Clove of Garlick is a sacred Pow'r, &c.

The same *Gildas* assures us, That the deformed and hideous Figures of British Idols were to be seen in his Time. What he relates, is supported by a Passage of *St. Jerom*, in his Epistle to *Heliodorus*: “ That the whole World, from *India* to *Britain*, and from the cold Climates of the North, as far as the *Atlantick* Ocean, were sunk almost to the Condition of Beasts and Insects, and lived a wretched and contemptible Life. For, in Truth, a Man that is ignorant of Him that made him, is upon the Matter no better than a Brute.” *Julius Cæsar*, who invaded this Island about fifty Years before the Birth of Christ, informs us, (a) That the *Druids*, who were the British Priests, in Cases of great Mortality and public Distress, endeavoured to obtain Deliverance by human Sacrifice, which they offered thus: They took Officers, and made large hollow Figures of their Idols. Into these they put such as were doomed to be made the Sacrifice, who were commonly Thieves and Robbers, or some other scandalous Criminals, imagining, that such Wretches were most acceptable to their Deities: But in case there was not a sufficient Number of such, they scrupled not to supply the Deficiency with such as were

(a) *De Bell. Gall.* lib. vi.

Innocent. These Victims they made fast within the wicker Statues of their Idols, and then set Fire to them, and burned them to Death. This is farther confirmed by *Tacitus*, (a) who writes, That when *Suetonius Paulinus* was *Nero's* General in *Britain*, the *Druids* in the Isle of *Anglesey*, used to sacrifice those they took Prisoners, and butcher Men and Women, to inspect their Intrails, for finding out the Success and Events of Things. This gave Occasion to another *Roman* Author, (b) to stile them, *Britannos hospitibus feros*, cruel to Strangers, in regard to this horrible Custom of slaying them in Sacrifice.

Thus we know that we were sometime *Gentiles* (c) carried away unto these dumb Idols: That we (d) sacrificed unto Devils, not to God: (e) Having our Understanding darkened; being alienated from the Life of God, through the Ignorance that was in us. And we are sure that this Darknes was dispelled by the glorious Beams of that Sun of Righteousness, of whom it was prophesied, that he should enlighten the *Gentiles*; that the (f) *Isles* should wait for him, and bring their Sons and their Daughters to the Name of the Lord God of *Israel*; that the Abundance of the Sea (g) should be converted to him, and the Sons of Strangers join themselves to the Lord. And though we cannot ascertain the particular Year, or the Instrument of our Conversion, yet we are assured from ancient Writers of the best Credit, (h) That a *Christian Church* was planted in *Britain*, within the Compass of the Apostolick Age. And some of our most (i) learned Writers have made it probable, that the great Apostle of the *Gentiles*, *St. Paul*, was the Instrument of con-

(a) *Annal* l. xiv. (b) *Hor. Carm.* lib. III. od. iv. (c) *1 Cor.* xii. 2. (d) *1 Cor.* x. 20. (e) *Ephes.* iv. 18. (f) *Isa.* lx. 9. (g) *Isa.* lvi. 6. (h) *Euseb. Demonstr.* l. iii. c. 7. (i) *Stillingfleet Orig. Brit.* p. 37. *Collit. Ecc. Hist.* Vol. I. p. 4.

veying this inestimable Blessing to us. In Memory of which, it is said, the great Cathedral in *London*, supposed formerly to have been a Temple of *Diana*, was dedicated to the Honour of *St. Paul*, being the only Cathedral in any Metropolis in *Christendom*, which bears the Name of that Apostle.

As the Christian Faith was planted here by an eminent Hand, so it prospered and flourished more than in many other Parts of the World. And if our History of King *Lucius* be true, who is said to have reigned one Hundred and fourscore Years after Christ, then our Nation is the first which had the *Church* established in it by the public Authority and Approbation both of Prince and People. However, this is certain, that *Constantine* the Great, the first Christian Emperor, was of *British* Extraction by the Mother's Side.

And though this holy Religion has undergone many Eclipses among us, by the Contempt and Prophaneness of the Old *Britons*, the Persecutions of invading *Danes* and *Saxons*, while they were Infidels, and the gross Errors and Corruptions of the Church of *Rome*, yet God has still been pleased to repair and restore it, by the Labours of Men, singularly eminent for Piety and Learning, especially in these later Days; so that it now shines among us in its native Splendor and Beauty.

And if we consider, not only the future and invisible, but even the present manifest Blessings, which this Religion hath brought along with it; how it hath been attended with the Advancement of human Learning, and the Improvement of all useful Arts and Sciences, whereby Ignorance and Barbarity have no longer a Being among us; but the *British* Nation is exalted in Wealth and Glory above others which were once superior to her: This must convince us what infinite Reasons we have to be thankful to God for it, and how much it is our Temporal as well as Spiritual

Interest, to retain it amongst us, and hold it fast for ever.

If it lay in our way to make Observations of the State of Religion in other Countries; how the *Sister Churches* in the *East*, but little older than ours, have been destroyed several Ages ago, by that poisonous but spreading Root of *Mahometanism*; how strangely the Face of Christianity is deformed, and the Power of it decayed, in those Places, which still retain the Name of it, we must joyfully confess, That we of this Church are happy above all other Churches in *Christendom*.

We do not pretend, that any *Church* is Infallible and absolutely Perfect, and therefore not ours: but this we dare affirm, and can justify, That if we take our Measures concerning the Truths of Religion, from the Rules of the *Holy Scripture*, and the Platform of the *Primitive Churches*, the *Church of England* is undoubtedly, both as to Doctrine and Worship, the purest that is at this Day in the World.

O therefore let us labour to walk worthy of the Vocation wherein we are called: Being so richly planted and watered, let us not prove like the Prophet's Vineyard, (a) and bring forth nothing but a few wild Grapes; but let the Goodness of our Lives, bear some reasonable Proportion to that of our Religion. And let us not (b) be Children tossed to and fro, and carried about with every Wind of Doctrine, by the Slight of Men, and cunning Craftiness whereby they lie in wait to deceive: But (c) but let us hold fast the Profession of our Faith without wavering.

(a) *Isai.* v. (b) *Eph.* iv. 14. (c) *Heb.* x. 23.

C H A P. X.

O F H E A V E N,

The AIM of MAN, and its blessed State of HAPPINESS.

THE grand Objection against *Religion* is, that there is no Benefit or Advantage arising from it, but that all the Changes and Chances of Life, good or bad, happen alike to all Men ; that (a) *there is one Event to the Righteous, and to the Wicked, to him that sacrificeth and to him that sacrificeth not : as is the Good, so is the Sinner ; and he that sweareth, as he that feareth an Oath.* Nay, sometimes a Man's Piety is his Bane and Ruin in this World, exposing him to the Loss of his Peace, his Friends, his Estate, and his very Life itself, as it commonly fared with the *primitive Christians* which made *St. Paul* pronounce of them, that *if in th's Life only they had Hope, they were of all Men the most miserable.* It has been further observed, that many a Man, notwithstanding the Excellency of his Nature, his Religion and Virtue, hath been in worse Circumstances with Respect to the present State, than sundry Species of Brute Animals, who are much freer from Pains and Diseases, from afflicting Cares and Sorrows, have a much truer Taste and Enjoyment of bodily Pleasures, and continue in the Fruition of them many Years longer than the Lives of several Men put together, though they should all be extended to the common Period. It would be difficult to satisfy these Objections, without referring to a future State of Rewards and Punishments, wherein the Mysteries of Provi-

(a) *Eccles. ix. 2.*

dence shall be unfolded, and the present Inequality of its Dispensations adjusted. For to say, that all Mankind is involved in Misery by means of the first Transgression and Forfeiture of Happiness; so that whatever the best of Men suffers, he justly suffers at the Hands of God, is very true indeed; but yet it doth not satisfy the Question, why wicked Men should have a greater Portion of earthly Felicity, than those who truly fear and love God? For, if this World be the only Place wherein Man shall have a Being, we must either say, that God is not a just and wise Judge, in dealing out the present Blessings and Curses so very disproportionably to Mens Deserts; or else, that he exercises no Judgment at all, is no ways concerned in all the Good or Evil that happens in the World: But to affirm either of these, is to espouse as gross and damnable an Error, as any Sect of Philosophers, or Heresy among Christians, was ever guilty of.

Neither will it much mend the Matter to say, that Calamities are sent upon good Men, for the Exercise of their Virtue, which the *Stoicks* mightily harangued upon. The Exercise of Patience, Meekness, Gentleness, and all other Virtues, is doubtless of the highest Importance to a Man, because he is now only in a State of Probation, and shall e'er long be transplanted to another World, where he shall be made perfect, and be for ever delivered from the Society of malicious Men, and from all other *Temptations* which are at present requisite to excite his Devotion, and often send him to *God* his mighty Helper and Deliverer. But without such a Prospect as this, to what End shall a Man exert and blazon his Virtues, especially by Sufferings? Can he flatter himself, that he shall be able by the Influence of his great Example, to put Vice out of Countenance, and make it fly into the most secret Corners of the World; to gain the Victory over Oppression and wrongful Dealing, and inthrone Justice Charity, and Goodness in the Hearts of all Men?

I confess

I confess this single Design of doing so much Service to the World, would be worthy the utmost Endeavours of a brave Man, even though he could expect no Recompence hereafter for such his Beneficence. But, alas! the Experience of almost six thousand Years has fully assured us, that the united Wisdom of Religion and Philosophy, the most lovely Patterns of Goodness in every Kind, the severest Punishments and noblest Rewards, rightly dispensed by the Hand of uncorrupt Justice; in short, all the Frowns and Favours, Promises and Threatnings, Terrors and Encouragements of God and Man, have never yet been able to prevail so far, as to bring over the greater Part of Mankind to the Cause of Religion and Virtue; but the bad Men have always out-numbered the Good, and the Devil has maintained the Style which the Gospel allows him, of being the Prince and God of this World.

So that which Way soever we consider these things, we shall never be able to give a rational Answer to the Objections against the present Dispensations of Providence, nor find sufficient Encouragements and Punishments for good and bad Men, unless we have recourse to the different States in the other World, which we call *Heaven* and *Hell*. Which are indeed Matters of Faith, but yet so universally believed by all Nations of the World, however differing in Religion, or in their Notions of these Places, that we must be insufferable Scepticks, if we should go about to dispute the Certainty of them, even though we had no more than the common Consent of Mankind to ground our Faith upon. But here we have the superabundant Authority of holy Scriptures to put us out of all doubt, that our Bodies, after they have been demolished by the Power of the Grave, and reduced into Earth according to the primitive Malediction, shall be revived again, and become the Habitations of the same Soul and Spirit which now informs them,

and appear before the Judgment-Seat of *Christ*, that every Man may receive according to that which he hath done in the Body, whether it be Good, or whether it be Evil. They that have done Good shall go into Life everlasting, and they that have done Evil into everlasting Fire. These Things are so much inculcated in holy Scripture, that they cannot escape the Notice of the most incurious and thoughtless Person. To begin with the first of these. *Christ's* coming into the World, was on Purpose to open the *Kingdom of Heaven to all Believers*: His Preaching was in order to fit Men for his Kingdom: His most pressing Exhortations to them are to seek it in the first Place, and to part with any thing, with Estate, with Limbs, with mortal Life itself, rather than be withheld by these from entering into it. In this Kingdom he promites to reward his Servants for all that they have done and suffered for his Sake. Hither he ascended, forty Days, after his Resurrection, in the Presence of his Disciples, after he had comforted them with Assurances that he was going before them, to prepare a Place for them in this Kingdom, and then would come again and receive them to himself, that they might reign with him for ever. At the same time that he rose from the Grave, he raised up other Bodies also, to accompany him in his triumphant Ascension; and hath told us, that at the Resurrection to Life everlasting, *he will change our vile Body, that it may be fashioned like unto his own glorious Body, according to the mighty working, whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself.* From this glorious Kingdom he shewed himself to *St. Stephen* at his Martyrdom, causing him to rejoice and triumph in his Sufferings for his Name.

Then Happy, for ever Happy, are those who have run the short Race that is set before them, and obtained the Crown, and are admitted into the City of the living God, the Heavenly *Jerusalem*; where Eye hath

hath not seen, nor Ear heard, neither hath it entered into the Heart of Man to conceive, the Things which GOD hath prepared for them that love him ! into the blisful Presence of God the Judge of All, to *Jesus* the Mediator of the new Covenant, to an innumerable Company of Angels and Arch-Angels, Cherubims and Seraphims, Thrones and Dominions, Principalities and Powers ; to the general Assembly and Church of the First-born ; to the glorious Company of the Apostles, the goodly Fellowship of the Prophets, the noble Army of Martyrs, and to an innumerable Train of holy Men and Women, standing before the Throne, and before the *Lamb*, clothed with white Robes and Palms in their Hands, crying with a loud Voice, *Salvation to our God ! Hosannah in the Higbest !* singing eternal *Hallelujahs* to him that sitteth on the Throne, and to the *Lamb* for ever and ever !

From hence it is, that the Apostles teach us to derive Consolation in all Troubles and Distresses, looking unto *Jesus* the Author and Finisher of our Faith ; considering, that if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him ; and reckoning that this present Life is but a Vapour, a Shadow which passeth away and cometh not again ; that the Afflictions of it are but momentary, and by no means comparable to that exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory, which shall shortly be revealed to us. Finally, St. *John* hath given us a Description of this Kingdom in his *Revelation*, so far as heavenly Things are capable of being described by earthly Patterns, representing to us the glorious Light of it, infinitely beyond that of our Sun ; the excellent Government of it, being under the immediate Administration of God himself, and nothing at all molested by wicked Men or Devils ; the blessed State of its Inhabitants, who are all crowned and adorned in the most splendid Manner, living together in the most exact unity and friendship, serving the Almighty with perfect

Joy and Gladness, affected with no Sense of Pain or Sorrow, knowing no Want of any Thing that is good, but abounding in all Things that are worthy their Enjoyment, or can contribute to their Happiness. With respect to this Kingdom it is, that we are said to have no continuing City here, to be Strangers and Pilgrims upon Earth, to be Sons of God and joint Heirs with *Christ*; to be dead to the World, and alive unto God, through *Jesus Christ*; with whom our Life is hid, with whom at his second appearing, we shall also appear in Glory. Surely God would never have made these Things so great a Part of his sacred Word, if he had not intended, that we should not only believe there is such a Place as Heaven, but likewise fix it very much in our Thoughts, and heartily apply ourselves to the Means whereby we may arrive to it.

The *Kingdom of Heaven* is (through the Merits of *Christ*, which must always be understood) attainable by all Men. The Scripture affirms, that God is no Respector of Persons, nor confines his Grace and Love to any Nation or Order of Men. And whereas the *Jews* of old were the peculiar People of God, now says *St. Paul*, (a) in *Christ Jesus there is neither Greek nor Jew, Circumcision nor Uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, Bond nor Free, but Christ is all, and in all.* A Man's Nation or worldly Circumstances do not incapacitate him from becoming a Member of this Kingdom. Formerly, indeed, Riches and a high Station in the World were great Impediments; our Lord pronouncing it (b) *easier for a Camel to go through the Eye of a Needle, than for a rich Man to enter into the Kingdom of God*: And, *Ye see your Calling, Brethren*, says *St. Paul*, (c) *how that not many wise Men after the Flesh, not many Mighty, not*

(a) *Col.* iii. 11. (b) *Mark* x. 25. (c) *1 Cor.* i. 26, 27.

many Noble are called. On the contrary, *the Poor, the Despised, the Weak, are called the (a) Chosen of God, and Heirs of the Kingdom of Heaven.* But such Expressions as these do chiefly respect those Times wherein they were spoken, when a Man could not be a Christian without hazarding the Loss of his Goods and Preferments, and falling into a State of Reproach and Persecution: For which Reasons those who had great Attachments to the World, were hardly persuaded to risque the Loss of them for future and invisible Blessings; while others, who had little or nothing to lose, were more ready to comply with such Overtures. But now since Christianity is no longer attended with such Inconveniences, a plentiful State is so far from retarding a Man, that it may very well set him forward in his way to Heaven, affording him Leisure and Ability for exercising the most eminent Duties of Piety and Charity, and abounding in those good Works, which Men of narrower Circumstances have no Power to perform.

Not but that the Care of our Soul is consistent with that of our Body, even in the most laborious Kind of Life. *The Poor, says our Lord, have the Gospel preached unto them;* which would be to no Purpose, if they were not capable of the great Blessings it propounds. We are indeed commanded to seek the Kingdom of God in the first Place; but we are no where encouraged to leave our honest Trades and Employments, to devote our whole Time to religious Exercises; nay, we have both the Example and Injunctions of our Masters the *Apostles*, to be diligent in our secular Professions. *Let every Man, says St. Paul, (b) abide in the same Calling wherein he was called. (c) If any provide not for his own, especially for those of his own House, he hath denied*

(a) *Jam. ii. 5.* (b) *1 Cor. vii. 20.* (c) *1 Tim. v. 8.*

the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel. (a) Let him that stole, steal no more; but rather let him labour, working with his Hands the Thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. And yet how vehemently doth he call upon them in other Places to be heavenly-minded, to pray always, to give Thanks in every thing, to press forward to the Mark for the Prize of the high Calling in God? Which is a plain Demonstration, that Diligence in the lawful and necessary Affairs of this Life, is very consistent with a Zeal for the Honour of God, and the Welfare of our Souls. And that this is no impracticable Speculation, we learn from the History of the two great Apostles St. Peter and St. Paul, who followed Fishing and Tent-making, after they were called to the Apostleship and Ministry of Jesus Christ.

Our Blessed Saviour declares, that his Kingdom is not of this World; he came not to change Mens outward Circumstances, and advance the Poor to good Estates: And therefore, since the far greatest Part of Mankind, must by their Labours provide Sustenance for themselves and others, we must either say, that the Kingdom of Heaven was not designed for such Men, which is contrary to many express Declarations and Invitations of the Gospel; or else confess, that no more is required in order to obtain it, than what the necessary Affairs of Life will admit of.

Notwithstanding this, we must take Care that we do not create more Necessities to ourselves, than such as God and Nature have made; which is the Fault of Men that are condemned for Covetousness, and too great Love of the World; they are always apprehensive of future Wants and Necessities, which they have no cause to fear. The Reason is, because

(a). *Ephes.* iv. 28.

they aspire after Happiness in this Life, which they imagine to be founded in the Possession of Abundance of Wealth, whereby they may procure the Pleasures and Honours of the World; which it is natural for us to be fond of; But then we are to remember that our Nature is depraved and prejudiced in favour of these Things; and though they are but transitory and empty, yet they offer themselves to our Senses with the great Advantage of present Enjoyment; whereas the eternal Blessings of Heaven are absent, and perceivable only by our Faith. This makes it necessary that we should abstract our Thoughts, as much as we can, from sensible Objects, and by frequent Contemplation fix them on Things above; and check ourselves sometimes, even in our lawful Affairs and Enjoyments, that we suffer not our Affections to run out too much after them, so far as to frustrate our main Design, which ought ever to be, *the Kingdom of God and his Righteousness.*

The most effectual Means to keep our Hearts right in these Matters, is an habitual Meditation on that Saying of our Lord, *What shall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul?* The whole World can make no Compensation for the Loss of it. For our Senses tell us, that those who have the greatest Share of it, enjoy it but a very little Time: And our Faith tells us, that this short, uncertain Term of Life, is all the Opportunity we shall ever have, of preparing ourselves for the Kingdom of Heaven. If we fail to improve the present Season to this good Purpose, we shall not only be punished with the irreparable Loss of this Kingdom, but likewise with the Pains of that contrary State which we call *Hell*, which I am to speak of in the next Place.



C H A P. XI.

OF HELL; the STATE of the DAMNED there.

THERE is the same Reason for the everlasting Punishment of the Wicked, as there is for the eternal Salvation of the Righteous. The Justice of GOD cannot be cleared and glorified, the Truth of his Word cannot be fulfilled, without it. For there are as plain Threatenings of Hell Torments in God's Word, as there are Promises of heavenly Happiness. *These*, says Christ, speaking of the *Wicked*, *shall go into everlasting Fire*. But to what Purpose should this Fire last for ever, if the Reason of it, which is the Punishment of impenitent Sinners, should cease by their Annihilation? If the Fire be everlasting in which God punishes Reprobates, if the Punishment inflicted on them be everlasting, then must they everlastingly subsist to endure that Punishment; otherwise, there would be a Punishment inflicted, and none endured, which is a Contradiction. And however it may be argued, that some Things in Scripture are called Eternal, which have but a limited or determinate Existence, yet that Sense cannot be put upon the Eternity of Hell Torments, which are asserted in the same absolute, unlimited Terms as the Happiness of Heaven is. Our Saviour, who shall be the Judge of all Men, hath forewarned us, (a) *That it is better to enter into Life halt or maimed, rather than having two Hands, or two Feet, to be cast into everlasting Fire*. And he hath farther explained himself by that repeated Addition, and undeniable

(a) Matt. xviii.

Description of the Place of Torments, *where the Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched.* And that we may be yet farther assured, that this Fire shall never be extinguished, we read, (a) That *the Smoke of their Torment ascended up for ever and ever*; and, that those which (b) *are cast into the Lake of Fire and Brimstone. shall be tormented Day and Night for ever and ever*: Which Expression of *Day and Night*, is the same with that which declareth the eternal Happiness in the Heavens, where (c) *they rest not Day and Night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy*: Where *they are before the Throne of God, and serve him Day and Night in his Temple.* If then the Fire in which the Reprobates are tormented, be everlasting; if so absolutely everlasting, that it shall never be quenched; if those which are cast into it, shall be tormented for ever and ever, all which the Scriptures expressly teach; then shall the Wicked never be so consumed, as to be annihilated, but shall subsist for ever, and be Co-eternal to the tormenting Flames.

Having thus asserted the endless Duration of infernal Punishments, it will be proper to consider the Nature of them, which is best accounted for in this Definition; That they consist in Loss and Pain.

The Loss which wicked Men shall sustain, is Two-fold; *viz.* That of the Pleasures and Comforts of this Life, which they once enjoyed; and that of the infinite Blessings of Heaven, which they might have obtained: Together with all Hopes of repairing either of these Losses.

Ungodly Men are for the present alienated from the Love of God, and Desires of Heaven, through the sensual Lusts and Vanities which amuse them. But yet there are very few, if any, among them,

(a) *Rev. xiv. 11.* (b) *Rev. xx. 10.* (c) *Rev. iv. 8. vii. 15.*
 who

who are quite destitute of all Hopes, that they shall some Time or other, before they leave this World, make their Peace with God, and find Rest for their Souls. These Thoughts, it is true, are very confused and indigested in them; but yet how much they help to support their Spirits, may be concluded from that dismal State of Melancholy and Anguish of Mind, which some of them have fallen into, when they have been utterly deprived of these Hopes, and anticipated the Sentence of Condemnation upon themselves.

But when they come to that Place where this Sentence shall be fully confirmed, and are at the same Time bereaved of every Beam of earthly Light and Comfort, and have moreover, a quicker and larger Notion of the Happiness of Heaven, it will not be easy to imagine how severe a Punishment this Loss must be to them. What Rage, what Indignation must overwhelm them, when they reflect on what they have accepted in Exchange for the eternal Peace and Welfare of their Souls! What imaginary, short-lived Pleasures they have preferred above those which are substantial and incorruptible! How will their Consciences upbraid them with the manifold Offers of Grace, and pressing Exhortations to refuse the Evil, and choose the Good, which they have most unkindly and contemptuously rejected! Into what Gall and Bitterness will those miserable Enjoyments be turned, which diverted them from hearkening to these wise and wholesome Counsels! Was it possible, nay easy for them, to have prevented their coming to this Place of Torments, by hearkening in the Days of their Life and Strength, to *Moses* and the *Prophets*, to *Christ* and his *Ministers*? was this very Place pointed out to them, and the Way marked out for them to avoid it? were their Eyes opened to see, and own, and confess it? and yet after all, did they

they knowingly and willingly go on, until they threw themselves headlong into this Pit of Destruction?

Such Reflections as these will, like so many Vultures, be incessantly gnawing the Hearts of Wretches consigned to irrecoverable Perdition; and whatever Excuses they may invent at present, to cheat themselves of a glorious and happy Immortality, in those woeful Regions they will no longer abuse their Understandings, by calling Evil Good, and Good Evil; but will, to their unpeakable Confusion, allow the Wisdom of being Religious, and the inestimable Value of those Blessings which are the Rewards of it.

(a) *There shall be weeping and gnashing of Teeth*, says Christ, *when they shall see Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and all the Prophets, in the Kingdom of God, and they themselves thrust out.* Here the Compassions of God are at an End, the Scepter of his Mercy is no longer held forth, no more Offers of Pardon and Reconciliation are exhibited: But every Thing that has the least Appearance of Good or Comfort in it, is lost to all Eternity.

Having thus shewn how great their Loss is who are shut out of Rest, and how it will be aggravated by those additional Losses which will accompany it; I proceed now to speak of the Nature of those tormenting Pains, which shall without Intermision be inflicted on condemned Sinners.

The Scripture, which must be our Guide herein, doth so plainly acquaint us, that divine Vengeance shall be executed on Reprobates in positive Pains, that it is strange any one should ever dispute or deny it. The Worm that never dies shall prey upon their Souls, and the Fire that never shall be quenched, shall involve their Bodies. For the Bodies of the Wicked as well as of the Righteous, shall be raised again at the last Day, according to the Confession of

(a) *Luke* xiii. 28.

St. Paul, *There shall be a Resurrection both of the Just and of the Unjust*: And so our Lord himself hath taught us, *That all that are in the Grave shall hear his Voice, and shall come forth; they that have done Good, to the Resurrection of Life; and they that have done Evil, to the Resurrection of Damnation.* Now as the Bodies of wicked Men shall be raised again, so there shall be such Punishments prepared for them, as will affect the Bodies, and annoy all the Senses of it, which are expressed by the Terms of Fire and Brimstone, and everlasting Burnings, which excite the most acute and intolerable Pains that Men are capable of feeling. We cannot doubt but every Thing about the Damned shall be most horrid and dismal to the Eyes, most noisome to the Smell, most dreadful and alarming to the Ears, and most pungent and torturing to the Feeling; infomuch that they shall gnash with their Teeth for Anguish, and fill those woeful Regions with confused Shrieks and Howlings, and outrageous Blasphemies against God, by reason of the fierce Execution of his Wrath upon them.

If we consider in what Company Reprobates shall be shut up in the bottomless Pit, it will give us a farther Idea of their Pains: *Go, ye Cursed,* says the Almighty Judge, *into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels.* Now what Sort of Companions the Devils will prove to Men, may be conjectured by their Treatment of them here on Earth. When these evil Spirits have been suffered to take Possession of any abandoned Mortal, into what Convulsions have they thrown him! how have they distorted his Face, and all his Joints and Limbs! how have they agitated him, and forced him to bruise himself, and tear his own Flesh! The many Passages in the Gospel, of *Demoniacks* raging and foaming, and *breaking Chains and Fetters* wherewith they were bound, will abundantly certify us of this. Let

it be remembered withal, That the Devil was a Murderer from the Beginning, and that all Murders, and Acts of Malice; Spite and Envy, which are committed in the World, are done at his Instigation, and then we cannot doubt but he will wreak his Malice to the utmost upon those wretched Sons of Men, whom the Justice of God shall deliver into his Hands, to be tormented by him.

And though I observed before; That the Scripture must guide us in Things of this Nature, yet it cannot be amiss to observe here, That Idolaters and Strangers to our Religion, have very much agreed with us in their Opinion of the State of the Damned. As we are taught to call it a Lake burning with Fire and Brimstone, so they imagine a River to be there, which they call *Pblegethon*; that is, a burning River. As we resemble it to the Burnings of *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, and the Valley of the Son of *Hinnom*, whence we call it *Gebenna*; so they reported, That the Giants which fought against the Gods, were buried under Mount *Ætna*, and in the *Pblegræan* Fields, which Places were continually smoking, and vomiting out Torrents of sulphureous Fire. They held, That there were certain evil Spirits, whom they named *Eumenides*, Fiends and Furies, whose Business was to torment wicked Men with Variety of exquisite Tortures, according to the Crimes they had committed in this Life. The Place of Execution was known among them by the Name of *Tartarus*, which is what we call utter Darkness. This may suffice to shew, what Agreement there is between natural and revealed Religion, concerning the Nature and Quality of infernal Punishments.

Seeing then that we know these Punishments sufficiently by Faith, let us take heed that we never know them by Experience. Let them have that good Effect upon us at this Distance, to keep us

from those wicked Ways which lead to them. For *qui vult media, vult finem*; it is a Madness for any Man to be afraid of the End, and at the same Time in love with the Means which are linked to it. *Solomon* observes, That it is in vain to spread *the Net in the Sight of any Bird*; because she hath Sense enough to conclude, that her Destruction is intended thereby: And therefore Man must be more irrational than the Fowls of the Air, who when the Pit of Destruction is plainly set in his View, doth notwithstanding comply with the Temptations of the Devil, which are thrown out to him on Purpose to decoy him into this Pit. Neither is it consistent with Wisdom and Reason, to flatter one's self with the infinite Mercies of God in contradiction to his plain Declarations. For God hath declared, That this present Life is the acceptable Time, the Day of Salvation, the Opportunity for embracing the Offers of his Grace, and making our Calling and Election sure. Why are we so earnestly exhorted to work while it is called To-Day, to make Haste, and prolong no Time in setting about the Duties of God's Commandments; to watch and pray, that we may be ready to meet our Lord at what Hour soever he shall come? Why is it said in the Parable of the foolish Virgins, that the Door was shut upon them, while they went to buy that Oil which they should have provided beforehand; and when they returned and cried to the Lord to open the Door, he refused, telling them, he knew them not? Are not these sufficient Warnings to us, that if we die in an impenitent State, there is no Help for us, but we must have our Portion with Reprobates?

And lest any Man should flatter himself, that in the Interval between Death and the Day of Judgment, there might be Room to rectify the Errors of this present Life, the sacred Penmen seem concerned to obviate such a fatal Mistake, by often assuring us,
That

That there is no (a) Work, nor Device, nor Knowledge, nor Wisdom in the Grave; that the Night cometh, when none can work; that every Man shall receive according to what he hath done in the Body; and that nothing remains after Death, but Judgment. The Mercy of God is sufficiently magnified, in that he hath fully made known the Terms of Salvation to Men. *Behold, says Moses, (b) I have set before thee this Day, Life and Good, and Death and Evil: in that I command thee to love the Lord thy God, to walk in his Ways, and to keep his Commandments, and his Statutes, and his Judgments. But if thine Heart turn away, that thou wilt not bear, I denounce unto you, That ye shall surely perish.* These Terms being possible to be fulfilled by any Man, his Misery is from himself, if he fails in the Performance. God is not unrighteous that taketh Vengeance; but it is rather necessary for the Vindication of his Justice and Providence, as I have before shewed.

C H A P. XII.

OF OUR EARTHLY HABITATION,

And the Reason of our ABODE, and Duration of our LIFE in it.

BETWEEN both the *States* we have been speaking of, is our Condition here on EARTH, being neither so happy as the Angels, nor so miserable as the Devils; but tasting both of Happiness and Misery, by way of Earnest, as it were, and to determine our Choice, which we will have for our Portion

(a) *Eccles. ix. 10.*(b) *Deut. xxx.*

in a future State. For such is the Will of our Almighty Disposer and Sovereign, that after a short Course of Life spent upon *Earth*, which rarely exceeds seventy or eighty Years, and very often extends not so far, we must be removed from our *Earthly Abodes*, and added to the Society of good or bad Angels, according as our Souls, at their Release from the Body, shall be found qualified.

The Houses that God grants to us are no perpetual Dwellings, but only Inns for our present Conveniency; we therefore should look upon our Houses and Possessions, as upon things that are lett to us, while we sojourn here in our Way to our long Home; for St. *Paul* informs us, that the great Patriarchs of old, *Abraham*, *Isaac* and *Jacob*, declared that they were no better than Strangers and Pilgrims upon Earth, and that their Intention was to march to their celestial Country. He that is travelling into a strange Country, if he be well treated in his Inn, must not set his Heart too much on the good Cheer; and if his Entertainment be bad, he must endure with Patience the Inconveniencies, and contemn all the Disorders that happen during his Abode there. If the Way be deep, full of Mud, Briars and Thorns, he must get out of it as soon as he can; if it be good and pleasant, he must not stop in it, nor busy himself in needless Enquiries: Every wise and careful Traveller, thinks of nothing but how to advance in his Journey. Likewise we being here accustomed to Plenty and Want, to Riches and Poverty, to Honour and Dishonour, we ought to leave the Things that are behind; and to proceed forward to such as are before, that we may attain to the End and Reward of our Heavenly calling, and so to use these worldly things as not to hinder us in our Journey, or Way to Heaven.

If we have crucified our Affections and Lusts, then are we in a manner dead to this World. If our Heart be in Heaven, the principal Part of our Life is there too;

too; for where our chief Delight is, there we may be said to live. God has given us Faces looking towards Heaven, that he might thereby teach us to lift up our Hearts also, thither and carry thither our Affections and Desires.

This present Life then is a State of Probation and Tryal, a School of Discipline, wherein we are trained up for another. We must not permit ourselves to loiter and be idle in it. The sacred Writers who are our Masters and Tutors, call us to sundry Exercises, according to the Condition and Post assigned us. Are we afflicted with a feeble and crazy Constitution of Body, or with Crosses and Difficulties in our outward Circumstances, or with both these together? 'tis an Exercise of our Patience, Contentedness, and Resignation to the Will of God. We may use honest Means to relieve ourselves; but if they prove ineffectual, we must heartily say, *The Will of our Lord be done.* To repine at the Dispensations of Providence, is to charge God foolishly, as if he were not a wise and a just Governor. Our Life is a Warfare, and we must bravely maintain the Station to which our great Commander appoints us. The greatest Champions in the Army of the Faithful, have been made perfect through Sufferings. After a heavy Load of Calamities both in Body and Estate, *Job (a)* courageously professes, that he will *wait all the Days of his appointed Time 'till his Change come.* But we have a greater Example than this; what could be comparable to the Condition of our blessed Lord, in whom the clearest Innocence, and the most dreadful Sufferings met together? yet he quietly submits, and says, *Father, if this Cup may not pass from me, except I drink it, thy Will be done.* And again, *The Cup which my heavenly Father hath given me to drink, shall I not drink*

(a) *Job* xiv. 14.

it? After so great a Pattern as this, let us be dumb, and not open our Mouth at any Affliction which is laid upon us, when we are sure it is God's doing.

But if, on the other hand, we enjoy the Goods of the Body and of Fortune, as they are stiled, then it behoves us to exercise much Temperance and Moderation in the Enjoyment of them. We are to consider ourselves as travelling in a strange Country, where it would be inconvenient and contrary to our Design, to load ourselves with too much Provision; we should do well to bestow what is superfluous upon our poor fellow Travellers that want it. However, this doth not hinder us from providing for our Families, and laying up something in Store for Posterity: For they must travel the same Road with ourselves. But where there are no such Reasons, we must be more communicative to others; and even in this Case not too restrain'd. As for what we expend upon our own Persons, *St. Paul's* Rule will direct us in every Particular, That we use this World so as not to abuse it. There are certain Bounds wherein we may taste the Pleasures and Delights of it; but it is safer to come short than go to the Outside of our Limits. A Man may indeed abstain from the Pleasures and Comforts of Life, out of an immoderate Love of the World: This is the Abstinence of a covetous Man. He punishes his Body, but it is because he idolizes his Wealth, and counts it a greater Happiness to possess than enjoy. But a Candidate of Heaven abstains only that he may subdue his carnal Affections, and consult the Interest and Comforts of his Soul; that he may have the more to spare for pious and charitable Uses; that he may make Friends with the Mammon of Unrighteousness, and provide himself Bags which wax not old, a Treasure in the Heavens.

In both Estates, of Prosperity and Adversity, the Consideration which will make a wise and good Man not over much affected with them, is this, That they will

will last but a very short Time, and be swallowed up in consummate and unchangeable Happiness. This is enough to keep him steady in his Pursuit of it, against all Temptations on the right Hand and on the left. Indeed if these Houses of Clay were so built, as to last some thousands of Years, bodily Pleasures and Pains would be more considerable; if the Age of Man were commensurate with that of the World, he would have Reason to be more concerned about the Affairs of it. But now that instead of Thousands, we can only attain to some few Scores of Years, and at the End of those Years can boast of but little Happiness, alloyed with Abundance of Pains and Troubles, a Man that hath just Notions of these Things, will not find it difficult to bear the Want of these fleeting and unsatisfactory Joys, or to abstain from them when in his Power, for the sake of those solid and lasting ones which he hath in View, and is ready every Day to arrive at. This is the *Mark, the Prize of the high Calling* which God hath set up for him to aim at, and bend all his Efforts and Thoughts towards it; and whether the Way he is to run be smooth or plain, or full of Flints, Thorns and Briars, it will be all one in a very few Days. Every Wound and Pain will be cured, and he made as whole and as easy, as if he had never felt them.

There is nothing wanting to arm Men with Patience and Moderation in their present Circumstances, but a serious Attention to that eternal State into which they are launching. Who would not quietly bear all the Hardships of this short Life (which yet are seldom inflicted all together upon one Person) that he might escape the intense and endless Torments of *Hell*? Who would not readily give up his whole Portion of earthly Pleasures and Comforts (which yet he may best enjoy within the Rules of Temperance and Beneficence) for the Attainment of that Happiness in *Heaven*, which will fully satisfy all his Desires, and last

with equal Satisfaction to all Eternity? How happy would the Man be esteemed, who should have lived from the Beginning to the End of this World in perfect Strength, and Peace, and Joy? And yet, alas! all this is no more in comparison of eternal Happiness, than a Drop to the Ocean, or a Glow-worm to the Sun. Nothing in this World can hurt us, if we will but imprint that Saying of *St. Paul* deeply upon our Minds; (a) *The Things which are seen are Temporal; but the Things which are not seen are Eternal.*

C H A P. XIII.

Of MAN; the Circumstances of his present STATE,

And the PERIOD of HUMAN LIFE.

WHEN God surveyed the Works of the Creation, the Heavens being adorned with the glorious Luminaries of the Sun, Moon, and Stars; and the Earth replenished with all Things needful for Life and Sustenance; to give the finishing Stroke to his Works, he said, *Let us make M A N in our Image, according to our Likeness. So God created Man in his own Image, in the Image of God created he him, Male and Female created he them.* Thus he summed up all his Works into *Man*, the Universe into an Individual, a lesser Scheme of the Creation, Nature contracted; in him were collected all the scattered Perfections of other Creatures; all their Graces, Ornaments, and Excellencies were united in this divine System of Nature.

(a) 2 Cor. iv. 18.

To *Adam* our first *Parent*, God gave Power and Dominion over all earthly Creatures ; he made him his Vice-Roy and Lord Lieutenant of this lower World, providing for him a delightful Habitation in the Garden of *Eden*. But Man, not satisfied with that sovereign Dominion, that high Station, that blissful Seat assigned him, but aspiring to an Equality with God, emulating his omniscient Maker, fell into the same Sin of Pride, as the Angels had done before him ; for which God thrust him out of Paradise ; saying unto him, *Because thou hast hearkened unto the Voice of thy Wife, and hast eaten of the Tree, of which I commanded thee saying, Thou shalt not eat of it : Cursed is the Ground for thy sake : In sorrow thou shalt eat of it all the Days of thy Life. In the Sweat of thy Face shalt thou eat Bread, till thou return to the Ground, for out of it wast thou taken : for Dust thou art, and unto Dust shalt thou return.*

This Sin of our *First Parents* is the Cause, that the whole Race of Mankind (from the Beginning to the End of the World) either labour and toil for their Bread, or at least meet with Sorrows, Cares, Perplexities and Misfortunes in the Course of their Lives, and that no Mortal is without his Share of some of these. Whereas had our first Parents continued in that State of Obedience God obliged them to, then should we all have been compleatly happy, and have known none of those Sorrows, Pains and Wants which now afflict us. But for the Circumstances of our present State, *Job* (a) hath rightly described it : *Man that is born of a Woman, is of few Days, and full of Trouble. He cometh forth like a Flower, and is cut down : he fleeth also as a Shadow, and continueth not.* Indeed so brittle is the Thread of Life, that we may say of our last Hour what our Lord says of the Day

(a) *Job.* xiv. 1. 2.

of Judgment; *It cometh as a Thief in the Night.* When we least suspect the Approach of Death, it may call us to go hence and be no more. How many Thousands of strange and unexpected Accidents attend us in this Life! (a) *Man also knoweth not his Time. As the Fishers that are taken in an evil Net, and as the Birds that are caught in the Snare; so are the Sons of Men snared in an evil Time, when it falleth suddenly upon them.*

Now whereas God created three sorts of living Creatures, *Angelical, Rational and Sensitive*, assigning to *Angels* an intellectual, and to *Beasts* a sensual Nature, he hath given to *Man* the Intellect of *Angels*, in a Capacity of free and unconfined thinking, the Apprehension of *Beasts* in the Taste, Smell, and other Senses, and a rational Faculty peculiar to *Man*, enabling him to chuse what is most conducive to his Well-being. He hath imprinted his own divine Character and Similitude upon the *Soul of Man*, making it thereby to differ from that of *Beasts*, as it is manifest from the original Account of both; which stands thus; *Let the (b) Waters bring forth in abundance every creeping Thing; and let the Earth bring forth the living Thing according to his kind, &c.* So that from the Earth and Water were they brought forth. But of *Man* it is said; *Let us make Man in our own Image. And God breathed into him the breath of Life, and Man became a living Soul.* Thus God made us little lower than the *Angels*; though the greatest Part of Mankind, it is feared, make themselves lower than the very *Beasts*.

The End and Design of our Abode here, is to serve God in this present Life, that we may enjoy Heaven and Life everlasting in the World to come. Thus we are taught by the heavenly Choir, (c) *Thou*

(a) *Eccles. ix. 12.* (b) *Gen. i.* (c) *Rev. iv. 11.*

art worthy, O Lord, to receive Glory, and Honour, and Power; for thou hast created all Things; and for thy Pleasure they are and were created. Hence we conclude, that Man was created to give Glory, Honour, and Praise to God, and to live in Obedience to his Will and Pleasure. The Dissolution which we suffer by Death, puts not an End to the Soul, for *that returns to God who gave it*: Nor absolutely to the Body, but only for a Time, till the Resurrection, when *this Corruptible shall put on Incorruption, and this Mortal shall put on Immortality*: It being equally as possible for God to restore our Bodies, after they have been reduced to Dust in the Grave, as it was for him at first to produce all Things out of Nothing. He who erected Man out of the Ground into that excellent Shape and Figure he now bears, cannot want Power to raise him out of the Dust again at the last Day. But to put this Power out of all Doubt, the holy Scripture gives us an unquestionable *Demonstration* of it, in the History of *Lazarus* (a) where it is said, that when *Jesus, Martha and Mary* came to his Grave, where he had lain four Days, and was supposed to be in a putrifying Condition; *Jesus cried with a loud Voice; Lazarus, come forth. And he that was dead came forth bound Hand and Foot with Grave Cloaths. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go. Then many of the Jews which came to Mary, and had seen the things which Jesus did, believed on him.* In the following Chapters we have an Account, that the *Sisters of Lazarus* made *Jesus* a Supper; to which many of the Jews came, *not for Jesus's sake only, but that they might see Lazarus also, whom he had raised from the Dead.*

When our Saviour was crucified, the *Evangelist*

(a) *John xi.*

tells us, (a) that *the Graves were opened, and many Bodies of Saints which slept (or were dead) arose, and came out of the Grave after his Resurrection, and went into the Holy City (Jerusalem) and appeared unto many.* Our Lord himself the Evening of the Day on which he arose, appeared unto his Disciples being all assembled together, with the Doors shut, and stood in the midst of them; and Fear came upon them all, as being persuaded that it was a Spirit; until Christ bid them not be afraid, but observe his Hands and Feet, that it was he himself.

The very *Pagans* themselves believed that the Soul survived its Release from the Body; otherwise they had never Deified their Ancestors, and other famous Men, to whose Ghosts they offered Sacrifices, and invoked them in their Prayers. They also believed, that there was a future State of Happiness and Misery, to reward the Good, and punish the Wicked. Of which there are certain Foretastes in this Life. What Raptures and Transports of Joy does the pious Man feel in spiritual Communion with God by holy Meditations, Prayers, and Thanksgivings! What Terrors seize upon the Wicked, when some great Calamity, like a Voice from Heaven, summons him to Judgment, especially when Death looks him in the Face! What frightful Apprehensions is he under! What Pangs and Tortures rack his Conscience, in Foresight of the horrible Doom and Vengeance prepared for him! Thus we find, Nature itself bears Testimony to the Immortality of the Soul, and a future State.

As the human Body was formed out of the Earth, so the Soul was derived from the Breath of God, which is a farther Argument of its Immortality. And we are said to retain the Image of God, when we

(a) *Mat.* xxvii. 52.

imitate his Perfections ; as when we are merciful to our Fellow-Creatures, because God is Mercy itself. It is this Part of Man more especially, which God made after his own Image. To this he hath given Eyes which can in a Moment reach the distant Parts of the Earth, and pierce through the gross Veil of Flesh, to the Contemplation of spiritual and heavenly Things.

The wonderful Art and Wisdom of GOD in the Formation of our Bodies, appears in the Multitude of Uses, to which the several Parts are designed. *Galen*, in his Book *De Formatione Fætus*, takes Notice, That there are in a human Body above six Hundred several Muscles, and at least ten several Purposes or Uses to be observed in each of these ; as, proper Figure, just Magnitude, right Disposition, Insertion of proper Veins and Arteries, which are all of them to be duly placed ; so that about the Muscles alone, six Thousand Uses or Ends are to be attended to. The Bones are reckoned to be 284. The distinct Scopes or Intentions in each of these, are above Forty ; in all, about one hundred Thousand. And thus it is in some Proportion with all the other Parts, the Skin, Ligaments, Vessels, Glandules, Humours, and the whole Structure of the Body. The Failing in any one of these, would cause Irregularity, and in many of them, such as would be very incommodious. Now to imagine, that such a Frame, composed of so many Parts, to the right Order and Motion whereof such an infinite Number of Intentions are required, could be made without the Contrivance of some wise Agent, must needs be irrational in the highest Degree. All other Animals, with down-cast Eyes, are depressed to the Ground : Man alone hath the Privilege to walk upright, and with an erect Countenance to discover Things afar off ; to provide for his Safety, and to avoid Dangers. All Animals have Tongues ; but the Tongue of Man only can
form

form Words by which he declares his Thoughts. How wonderfully, says *Job*, is *Man formed in the Womb!* He cannot see or perceive how the Members are set together. *Galen* challenged any one, upon an hundred Years Study, to find out, how any the least Fibre, or most minute Particle, might be more commodiously placed. Some think it a notable Argument of divine Wisdom, that Men are so wonderfully distinguished by their Faces, that there are not Two in all the World absolutely alike. But I think they are near as well distinguished by their Voices, their Mien and Gesture; and perhaps by their Hand-writing, inasmuch as they all differ in the shaping of their Letters, though writing the same Sort of Hand, and taught by one and the same Master. Indeed, unless there were certain Notes of Distinction in Men, what Confusion and Disorder would necessarily follow? what Frauds and Cheats, and false Witnesses? what Subversion of Justice and Judgment? Who could be safe in his Estate or Life? who could swear that such or such Persons committed Murders, Assaults, Thefts, Robberies, if Men were not clearly distinguished one from another?

St. PAUL teaches us to spiritualize and sanctify the Use of our bodily Members, when he saith, (a) *I beseech you, Brethren, by the Mercies of God, that ye present your Bodies a living Sacrifice, holy, acceptable to God, which is your reasonable Service.* There is a Necessity of feeding the Soul, no less than the Body. The Food of the Soul is Knowledge, particularly the Knowledge of Religion, the Doctrines of Christianity, the Things that concern our eternal Peace and Happiness. Knowledge is the Root, and Practice the Fruit. It is impossible for us ever to do God's Will, before we understand it: The Word

(a) *Rom. xii. 1.*

must be received into an honest and good Heart, and well digested and understood, before it can be productive of good Works.

The Care and Adorning of our Body often employs too much of our Time and Thoughts: Let it suggest to us how our Souls should be clothed with holy and virtuous Habits. *Be ye clothed with Humility*, saith St. Peter, *(a) with the Ornament of a meek and quiet Spirit*. When our Bodies are sick and wounded, we call the Physician and Surgeon. Let us remember, That Sin is the Disease of the Soul; for the Cure of which, an humble, serious, hearty Repentance is the only Physick.

The *Eye* that beholds no evil Thing with Delight, becomes an acceptable Sacrifice. The *Lips* that speak no Guile, are a spiritual Oblation. The *Tongue* which uttereth no Evil, is rendered an Holocaust. However, it is not enough to restrain the Members from Evil, but they must also be exercised in that which is good: The *Eyes* in reading the Word of God, and other good Books; the *Tongue* in Prayers and Praises, and all Kind of useful Discourse; the *Hand* in labouring in an honest Calling, and ministering to the Wants of the Necessitous; our *Feet* swift to do every good Work, and walking in all Humility, as in the Sight of God; the *Ear* in hearkening to all profitable Discourses; the *Knees* bended in our divine Worship. In short, our whole *Spirit*, and *Soul*, and *Body* must be pure and holy, constantly disposed to, and commonly practising every Thing that is Virtuous and Praise-worthy.

In the *Jewish Church* there was required a Sacrifice of Beasts; we are now commanded to present our *Bodies* a holy, acceptable, and lively Sacrifice,

(a.) 1 Pet. v. 5.

by crucifying our Lufts and finful Affections, dying unto Sin, and living unto Righteousness. We are to offer still, not the Flesh of Bulls, and the Blood of Goats, but the rational Sacrifice of our own *Bodies*, the Incense of fervent Devotion; the Thank-offering of Praise: (a) *That our Prayers be set forth in God's Sight as Incense, and the lifting up of our Hands as an Evening-Sacrifice.* We must dedicate the First-born of our Souls, pure and holy Thoughts; the first Fruits of our Strength, our best Years, in the Worship of God. We must vow to him, and pay the daily Oblation of sincere Obedience. (b) *He that keepeth the Law, bringeth Offerings enough. He that requiteth a good Turn, offereth fine Flour. He that giveth Alms, sacrificeth Praise. To depart from Wick- edness, is a Thing most pleasing to the Lord; and to forsake Unrighteousness, is a Propitiation.*

(a) *Psalms cxli. 12.* (b) *Ecclus. xxxv. 1, 2, 3.*



THE END OF THE FIRST PART.

T H E
Christian's Companion :

O R, T H E
S U M
O F T H E
Christian Religion.

P A R T II.

CONTAINING THE
SUM of our DUTY
T O
G O D.

*Thou shalt Love the LORD thy GOD with all thy
Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Mind.
This is the first and great Commandment. Matt. xxii.
37, 38.*

D U B L I N :

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S - U - M

Christian Religion

P A R T I

CONTAINING THE

SUM of our DUTY

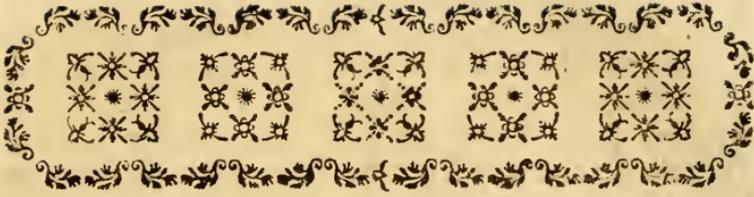
TO

G - O - D

By the Rev. Mr. J. GORDON, Minister of the Gospel in the Church of England, at the City of London.

G U B L I S H E D

By J. GORDON, at the City of London.



T H E
SERVICE and WORSHIP
O F
G O D,
O N T H E
L O R D ' s - D A Y .

P A R T I I . C H A P . I .

AS Almighty GOD gave himself six Days for Creating the *World*, so he hath been pleased to give us six Days for our Worldly Affairs, to provide for the Food of the *Body*. And as He rested on the seventh Day from his Works of Creation, so he hath ordained, That one Day in seven Man should cease from his bodily Labours, and seek after the spiritual Food of his

Soul. But here the great Creator's Resting is not so to be understood, as if it implied any Weariness in him, or Inability to farther Action: For (a) *the Creator of the Ends of the Earth, fainteth not, neither is weary.* He rested or ceased from his Labours, only because he had finished his Work, and saw that every Thing was very good. *He blessed the seventh Day, and hallowed it*; that is, He dedicated it in a special Manner to his own Service.

Moreover, our Day of Rest is changed from the Seventh to the first Day of the Week, because this is the Day whereon we commemorate our blessed Redeemer's *Resurrection* from the *Grave*, who on the *Morning* of this *Day*, triumphed over Death and Hell, and Ransomed us from our Slavery and Subjection to them. This is the *Weekly Festival* to us Christians, because the Work of our *Redemption* was this Day finished and compleated. Accordingly, we find the Apostles transferred their religious Assemblies, with the Ministrations of the divine Word and Sacraments to this Day; which was farther sanctified, in that our Lord then appeared to them, and blessed them after his Resurrection, and sent down the holy Ghost upon them after his Ascension, in so extraordinary and glorious a Manner upon this Day. So that though we have not any express Command, yet we have the Practice of the Apostles, and the full Approbation of Christ, to warrant us in changing our Day of Rest from the Seventh to the first Day of the Week.

To the end then that we may celebrate this our *Christian Sabbath* in an acceptable Manner, let us follow the pious Example of the primitive Christians, who used to spend the *foregoing Eve* in Prayer, Examination, and other religious Exercises, to fit them for the Duties of the ensuing Festival. Whence we

(a) *Isaiab xl. 28.*

may suppose our Church derived the Custom of Reading in *Saturday's* evening Prayer, the *Collect* proper for the *Sunday* following. Let us then retire from our worldly Concerns, and take an Account of our Actions the Week past, bewailing our Sins of Omifion and Commifion, and imploring God's Mercy and Pardon for the fame. This will be much more fatisfactory and profitable to us in the End, than the late Fatigues of Bufinefs, or the more unpardonable Diversions of Plays and Entertainments, which render us very drowfy, or what is as bad, very carelefs and difcompofed in the Publick Worfhip of God.

We fhould, I think, make it a Rule, to *Rife on Sunday Morning*, three Hours at leaft before the Service of the Church begins; if not rather as early this Day, as on any other of the Six, that we may be duly prepared both in Body and Mind, to prefent ourfelves in the Houfe of God. *David's* Eyes prevented the Night-watches, that he might be occupied in God's Word; and fhall we fuffer ours to be clofed with Sleep, when the Sun inlightens the World, and calls us forth to the more glorious Light of the Gofpel? By which, if we work while it is called To-Day, our Bodies fhall rife out of their dark Repositories far brighter than the Rays of this great Luminary; and fo fhine, as never to fet, or be obfcured by any the leaft Spot or Clomp.

When you *Awake*, Lift up your Soul with Thankfgiving to your Creator, for preferving you that Night, and affording you the Beginning of another Day, efpecially a Sabbath-day, to Labour for his Glory, and the eternal Welfare of your own Soul. When you *Rife* out of your Bed, let it put you in Mind of the Refurrection; and lift up your Heart to God in this, or the like Ejaculation:

O Lord, grant, that as thou restorest our Bodies from Sleep and the Darknes of the Night, to the Light of the Day; so our Souls by thy Grace may be rouzed from the Lethargy of Sin, and invested at the general Resurrection with eternal Glory.

Much Time ought not to be spent in *adorning these perishable Bodies*; which stand in need of Cloathing for no other Reason, but because we fell from our original Perfection, and lost the more precious Robes of Innocence. Alas! what can we be proud of in these Accoutrements of the Body, which are only the Monuments of our Sin and our Shame? If *Solomon* in all his Glory was less shining than one of the Lillies of the Field, how little reason have any Mortals to value themselves for the Figure they make? How poor and low a Design is it, to go to Church, only or chiefly, to be seen, or to aim at the Applause of the nicest Dresser in the Congregation? To be very exact in the adorning of the Body, and very negligent of the Ornaments of the Soul, Meekness and Humility, which in the Sight of God, are the most precious and becoming Embelishments?

This I say, to correct that false Value which is commonly put upon these Things. For otherwise we should without doubt distinguish this from common Days by a *neater and cleaner sort of Apparel*. Every Solemnity requires it, but especially this. Who should we honour with the best of our Substance, but him who is the Giver of it? We know what strict Rules God prescribed in his ancient Church concerning the Things relative to his Worship. The Wood of the Tabernacle and Temple was to be of the choicest Cedar. The Vessels of the purest Gold; the Robes of the finest Linen. The Persons of the Ministers were to be venerable, without Maim or Deformity; the Beasts for Sacrifice without Spot or Blemish, and the very best of the Flock. What was the
Substance

Substance of all these Shadows, but this: That God the Author and Giver of all good Things, will be served by holy Men in the purest and holiest Manner; and that we must be exact both as to our Persons and Performances?

When you have put on your Dress in a suitable Manner, *read some Portion of holy Scripture*, both before and after your Closet Devotions, and let your Reading be with due Reverence and Attention. Such a good Beginning of the Day, is the most likely Means to carry you through all the other Duties of it with Seriousness and Alacrity in your Devotions. He that is truly devout and religious in private, will be free from Hypocrisy and Ostentation in Publick.

If you are *Master* of a *Family*, they must have a share in your *domestic Worship*; not only Wife and Children, but Servants too. They will never serve you faithfully on the Week Days, if you suffer them to neglect the Duties of the *Lord's Day*. Besides, how irreligious is it, to be less concerned for God's service than your own? If you will not keep a Servant that is unfaithful in your own Affairs, much less should you entertain one that is disobedient to God, how skilful soever he may be in other Matters. See then that your Servants and Children mispend not the *Lord's-day* in Sloth or vain Recreations. Remember you are accountable to God for those Souls he hath committed to your Charge. Take care therefore, that you add not to the Number of your own, by a Connivance at their Sins. Nay, that you hinder not your Temporal as well as Eternal welfare. For the Worship of God in a Family derives a Blessing upon it; even as God is said to bless the House of *Obed-Edom* for his Ark's sake, which was kept there.

When you *Return from Church* to your House, be as serious and religiously disposed as at your going

out. Let your Discourse be rather of what you have heard, than of News or secular Matters. It is the Practice of too many, as soon as ever they come out of the Church, to fall into a Conversation which favours not at all of that Place. When you happen into such Company, either give a Turn to their Discourse, or leave them. Where God gives particular Directions for the due Observance of his own Day, he restrains Men from speaking their own Words, (a) as well as finding their own Pleasure, and doing their own Works. Immediately after you are come home, you would do well to resort to your Closet, and there render Thanks to God for the Opportunity he hath afforded you of enjoying the Ministry, and wholesome Instructions of his blessed Word, beseeching him, That it may be as Seed sown in good Ground, which may bring forth Fruit unto everlasting Life.

And though you are not to turn this Day of Joy and Gladness into a Fast, though you should eat your Bread with a chearful and thankful Heart, yet I would advise you to *Dine rather sparingly than plentifully*, that you may attend on the remaining Duties of the Day without Heaviness. And therefore if your Circumstances will afford you a well furnished Table, consider God's Mercy in feeding you, while there are so many *Lazarus's* that would be glad of the Crumbs that fall from your Table; and chuse rather to dispense the Surplusage among your poor Neighbours, whose Souls will bless you for such Refreshments, than to feast those who have no need; so will you add Almsgiving to your Prayers, and offer a most acceptable Sacrifice to God.

Talk of God's Word sitting down and rising up; let your Heart be Heavenly, and your Discourse sa-

(a) *Isaiab* lviii. 13.

voury, seasoned with Grace. *Having thus refreshed your Body*, return to the Food of your Soul; read the Scriptures and other good Books, and make Proof of the Attention and Intellectuals of your Family, by questioning them about the Things they have heard that Day. This is recommended to us by the Practice of our blessed Lord himself, who when he had spoken many Things to the Multitude in Parables, and was come into the House, *he said (a) to his Disciples, Have ye understood all these Things? And again upon the like Occasion, (b) When he was alone, he expounded all Things to his Disciples.*

When the *Evening Service* calls you to Church, see that your whole Family accompany you thither, and attend with the same Gravity and Devotion as before. Many think they have done enough, if they have spent the former Part of the Day at Church; but this is a great Mistake. God hath reserved to himself a whole Day, not a Part of a Day. To alienate any Part of it, is Robbery, and the worst Sort of Robbery, Sacrilege. Unless therefore you and your House appear the second Time in the religious Assembly, you cannot be said duly to sanctify the *Lord's-Day*.

After the whole *public Service of the Day is over*, take Care of running into that common Irregularity of making impertinent and needless Visits. Hereby you not only neglect the Well-ordering of your own Families, but interrupt the Methods of Devotion in others. If the Weather invite you to a Walk, let your Walk be for the same End as *Isaac's* was, *to meditate*. Walks and Visits are not proper Conclusions of this holy Day, except there be a mutual Disposition in the Company to converse in a Strain of Piety, and engage in such Conference as may lead towards Heaven, and help forward in the Way thi-

(a) *Matt.* xiii. 5. (b) *Mark* iv. 34.

ther. But those that have Families to look after, will be best employed in spending the remaining Hours of the *Lord's-Day* at home, in such a devotional Way of Reading and Discoursing, as was before recommended.

And forasmuch as the Sanction of this Day extends to the *Stranger within our Gate*, it behoves those who have Guests and Lodgers, to let none abide under their Roof, who are wilful Prophaners of it; and all that keep Inns and other public Houses, must be careful not to entertain any licentious, disorderly Company. If there were not such Receptacles for loose Persons, their Reformation would be much more easily effected; and therefore they will have a sad Account to give of their domestick Charge, who for the sake of a little wretched Gain, suffer their Houses to be filled with shameful Debaucheries and Blasphemies, to the manifest Outrage of the divine Majesty, and the Hindrance of his holy Religion.

We are all forward enough to restrain him, who shall offend against any Law wherein our own Interest is concerned: Why then are we so slack and remiss in vindicating the Honour of Almighty God? The Reason is plain; We have not that Flame of holy Zeal which ought to inspire every christian Heart: We love ourselves more than we love our God, and therefore have a quicker Sense of Offences committed against ourselves than against him.

Seeing God who is the Proprietor of all our Time, challenges but one Day in seven to himself, it is great Wickedness in us to grudge him the whole, or presume to defraud him of any Part of it. What strange Partiality is this, to exact the Labours of six entire Days of our Servants, and put off our Lord with the Service of three or four Hours on his Day? Such a (a) *false Balance is Abomination to the Lord*:

(a) *Prov. xi. 1.*

It is a contemptuous perverting of his solemn Laws, which command us to (a) *keep his Sabbaths and reverence his Sanctuaries*; and inflicted Death on him, who should break in upon this sacred Time with the Business of his Calling; but how much more doth he deserve it, who squanders it away either in Idleness, or in doing those Things which are unlawful to be done at any Time?

Never account it Rudeness to avoid trifling Company, or if engaged in it, to silence unprofitable Discourse at this Time. Every Thing we now think or speak should have some Tendency to Piety and Devotion. Nor must we barely cease from prohibited Labours, but while our Bodies rest, our Souls must be at work, in improving our spiritual Treasure, increasing in the Knowledge and Love of God, and finding still greater Pleasure in drawing near to him, whose Presence must make us happy to all Eternity.

Not but that there are some bodily Services commendable at this Time. To visit the Sick, to relieve the Poor and Needy, to do any good Office to those who are in pressing Want, and whose Case is such as cannot be delayed. In order to this, we are permitted to take Journeys, and even to omit the public Worship of God, for the immediate Performance of such good Offices. Those who are otherwise persuaded, are not sufficiently acquainted with the Will of God, who hath declared that he prefers *Mercy before Sacrifice*; and our blessed Lord, who came to do this Will with the greatest Exactness, did not forbear such Works on the Sabbath, notwithstanding the Offence which the Scribes and Pharisees took at him for it.

In your *Evening's* Retirement at Home, *enter into your Closet*, and there lay open your Soul before GOD in Prayer. Here likewise, *meditate* on what you have

(a) *Exod. xxxi. 14.*

heard, admire the Glory of God in his Works, the Goodness of God in his Providence, and the infinite Mercy of God in his Promises: Certainly Meditation is one great Duty of the Sabbath, without which, to hear the Word of God only, is but to swallow our Meat without chewing it. Thus if we endeavour to sanctify the *Lord's-Day*, the Lord will sanctify his Day and his Ordinances unto us, and by them convey so much Joy and Comfort unto our Souls, that they shall be a temporary Heaven unto us, and fit us for that eternal Sabbath, where we shall continually give Praise and Glory unto him *that sitteth upon the Throne, and to the Lamb for ever and ever.*

The *public Ordinances* are not to be neglected upon pretence of serving God in private; as our Lord saith in another Case, *These Things ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.* You will say, perhaps, you spend your Time as religiously at Home, as you can at Church; that you read, pray, catechize, and the like: But let me tell you, You do all this out of Season; you mistake and misplace your Duty, adhering to one Part of it in plain Contempt and Neglect of the other. This is like robbing a Man of a greater Sum, and paying him a less. You disobey the Command of God in neglecting the Public, and so cannot expect his Blessing upon your private Acts of Religion.

Have you conceived any Dislike of your Minister? It may be he hath disobliged you by doing no more than what was his Duty to do. But let him be supposed to have real Infirmities, either in his Intellectuals or Morals; yet the constant Course of divine Service is such, as if duly attended on, may abundantly profit you from his Mouth. The Efficacy of the Word and Sacraments depends not on the Parts or Virtue of the Minister, but on the Grace of God accompanying the Piety and Attention of the Hearer.

A precious

A precious Treasure may be conveyed to you in an earthen, despicable Vessel; and that God who fed *Elijah* by a Raven, can with the same Facility, convey heavenly Manna to your Soul by the Offices of an unworthy Minister.

But the sober and intelligent Christian will by no Means prefer the Minister's Compositions, which we usually style *Preaching*, before the Heavenly and more immediate Acts of Worship in the *public Prayers*. For *Prayer* is not only the Means, but the End too, as being a moral Duty, a Branch of natural Religion, whereby the Creature acknowledgeth his Dependence on God, and withal confesses the Power, the Wisdom, the Goodness, the Mercy of his great Creator and Benefactor, imploring his Aid, and giving Thanks for his Blessings. So that it is an Act of great Humility and Gratitude, and of Love too, whereby the Soul ascends to God in devout and affectionate Breathings and Aspirations. Besides, it is also an Act of Repentance, in confessing and begging Pardon for our Sins; so that there is a great deal of Morality in *Prayer*; for which it is to be regarded as a Thing intrinsically good in itself; as being directly, and as such, the Service and Worship of God.

But now **P R E A C H I N G**, though it be an Ordinance of God, and a Means of Grace, yet is it no more than a Means; and accordingly is no farther valuable, than as it serves in order to Prayer, and other christian Duties, to build Men up in Faith and Holiness of Life, which is what we properly mean by *Edification*. *Hearing* is not in itself a religious Act, as *Prayer* is; nor is it an Act of Charity to our Neighbour, nor is the Hearer himself the better for it, any otherwise than as he designs well in it; and directs it to a right End, and in some good measure attains the End of it. And therefore to place all Religion in hearing of Sermons, or to rest in it as a
Completion

Completion of our Duty, is to mistake the Scaffold for the Building, to confound the Means with the End, and to prefer Precepts above Practice; as they do, who come to Church, and endure the Prayers only for the sake of the Sermon: I say, This is to prefer the Means before the End, which is contrary to all the Principles of Reason as well as Religion: And I must needs add, A strange Way of serving God, who is the God of Order, and not of Confusion, as the Apostle observes in a Case not much unlike this. But this it is to have a Zeal for Religion, and not know where to place it, nor how to employ it, and so set up our own Notions and Prejudices in the Room of it.

We must not think we are at the End of our Duty when we have heard a Sermon, though never so attentively; but we must lay up in our Hearts those Instructions and good Rules which are then given us, and apply them faithfully to the directing of our Lives. Therefore whenever you come to the Physician of your Soul, do the same Thing as you would with the Physician of your Body. You do not come only to hear him talk, and tell you what will cure you; but you intend to follow his Prescriptions in order to the Recovery of your Health; and if you fail of Success by neglecting to observe Rules, you acknowledge the Blame must lye at your own Door. Be as just to your Soul as you are to your Body, and conclude, That without serious Practice, those Things you learn will rise up in Judgment against you, and make your Condemnation so much the heavier; for so St James (a) assures you, That if you are Hearers only, and not Doers of the Word, you deceive your own Souls.

(a) James i. 22.

A CHURCH is a Society of Christians, gathered together for the public Worship of God, in the due Administration of the Sacraments, preaching of the Word, Prayer, and praising of God, in order to promote Sanctity of Life here, and attain everlasting Happiness hereafter, which are the great Ends for which a *Church* was constituted.

When you are upon your *Way to Church*, say with the Holy Psalmist, (a) *How amiable are thy Tabernacles, O Lord! My Soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the Courts of the Lord: My Flesh crieth out for the Living God. (b) I will go into his Tabernacle, and fall low on my Knees before his Footstool.*

When you approach the *Church-door*, consider you are now entering the Presence-Chamber of the great King of the World, whose Throne of Glory is in Heaven above, but his Throne of Grace is in his Temple here below; lift up then your Heart, and say, *Surely the Lord is in this Place! (c) How dreadful is this Place! This is none other but the House of God! this is the Gate of Heaven! (d) Blessed are they that dwell in thy House! they will be always praising thee!* When God appeared to *Moses* in a Flame of Fire, out of the midst of a Bush, he said to him, (e) *Draw not nigh hither: Put off thy Shoes from off thy Feet, for the Place whereon thou standest, is holy Ground.* The *Mahometans* have so great a Reverence for their Places of Worship, that in Token of Respect, they take off their Sandals before they come into them. How much more should we reverence the Sanctuary of the true God? With what Humility should we present ourselves before him? With what Devotion should we tread his Courts, and compass his Holy Altar?

(a) *Psalm lxxxiv.* (b) *Psalm cxxxii. 7.* (c) *Gen. xxviii. 16, 17.* (d) *Psalm cxix. 18.* (e) *Exod. iii. 5.*

When you come to your Seat, at your first kneeling down, address yourself to the Almighty for his Grace and Acceptance, in these or the like Ejaculations: (a) *Let the Words of my Mouth, and the Meditation of my Heart, be now and ever acceptable in thy Sight, O Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer!* (b) *Lord, open thou mine Eyes, that I may see the wondrous Things of thy Law. Make me to understand the Way of thy Precepts.*

After these preparatory Acts of Adoration, do not presently relax your Thoughts, and imagine you have done Homage enough to the infinite Majesty you come to worship. We read, that the *Elders of Israel* trembled at *Samuel* when he came among them; and shall not we much more tremble at the Presence of him that is higher than the highest? The holy Angels cover their Faces, as not able to behold the Brightness of the divine Glory. If such awful Regard be paid by Angels, who are themselves holy and honourable in a very eminent Degree, what Abasement can be low enough for us, who appear with so many sinful Defilements? If then you have any intermediate Space between your private Ejaculations, and the Beginning of the public Service, let it not be spent in talking, or gazing about you; but in improving your Devotion by reading or meditating; that so, whenever the Minister begins, you may be duly composed to join with him, and to go through the whole Office with less wandering or disorder of Mind. Be not curious to know what passes in the Congregation, and where are the finest Dresses; but govern your *Eyes* so, as that they may not divert your *Ear* from the Minister, nor your *Heart* from GOD, the Object of your Worship. Remember that your Business here is to converse with him; therefore shut out all

(a) *Psalms* xix. 14. (b) *Psalms* lxxxiv. 4.

Thoughts of the World, and set a Guard upon all your *Senses*, that no treacherous Thought steal in to betray you. God requires the Intention of the Heart and Thoughts in his Worship: Without that, the outward Adorations of the Body will avail nothing.

If some People's Bodies were as much out of the Church as their Minds, I am afraid we should have but thin Congregations. Nay, they can speak without thinking. They can draw near to God with their Lips, when their Hearts are far from him; running after their Pleasures, or worldly Affairs. But however Men may be imposed upon, *God is not to be mocked*. They hear the Language of the Tongue, but he that of the Heart. And therefore think not to conceal yourself under the Vizard of Hypocrisy; but conceive God, as he really is, always looking upon you, and taking an Account, not only of the Matter of the Actions you perform, but of the Manner how you perform them. Do not think therefore to pass some bodily Adorations upon him, instead of the spiritual Sacrifice of the Heart: For *he searcheth the Heart, and trieth the Reins*, and will render to every Man, not only according to his Works and Words, but even according to his very Thoughts. Take then special Care to keep your Mind intent upon every Part of the Service. Be as humble in the Confession of your Sins, and as exalted in celebrating the divine Praises, as you possibly can. However, let not spiritual Worship supersede the outward Indications of it; but be upon your *Knees* at your Prayers, and *stand up* when you render Praises to God.

In the Entrance upon our Church Service, the *Sentences of Scripture*, and the *Exhortation*, serve excellently to excite Men's Hearts to a devout Performance of the following holy Duties. Among which, the *Confession of Sins* properly comes first, because our Sins have made a Breach and Distance between God

and our Souls; they hinder our Prayers from ascending to him; they restrain his Blessings from coming down upon us. This Impediment therefore must first be removed, before we can perform other Services with good Effect. And to be upon our Knees in Confession, is the most natural and agreeable Posture, because the Abasement of our Bodies expresses the Humility of our Minds.

Next after Confession, follows the ABSOLUTION, to be pronounced by none but the Minister: The People should by no Means repeat it after him, as some do very injudiciously, but only receive it with Reverence. It is God's Pardon declared by a proper Minister to the People. But towards the Conclusion of it, you may say to yourself:

Lord, let this Pardon pronounced by thy Priest, be sealed to my Soul, and convey to me the Remission of all my past Sins.

And now I have mentioned the People's pronouncing the *Absolution* after the Minister, I must farther observe, That many read the *Exhortation, Lessons, and Commandments* after him with a loud Voice; which is not only offensive to others, but likewise an Invasion of the Priest's Office.

The *Psalms*, which are Parts of our daily Service, are of all Scripture the fullest of Devotion, and abound much in Praises and Thanksgivings; and therefore to be read standing, as the most suitable Posture for such Sort of religious Offices: That the Erection of our Body might more fully express the Elevation of our Mind.

What sincere Christian can be ashamed publicly, and with an audible Voice, to make Confession of the *Holy Catholic Faith*; it being a Duty we owe both to God and Man; that is, an Act of divine Worship, and a Declaration that we hold the same *Faith* with all good Christians? And therefore it is required of us, that we not only believe with the Heart unto
 Righteousness,

Righteousness, but likewise make Confession with the Mouth unto Salvation.

Wherever our Prayers are divided into those small Portions we call *Versicles*, the People are to attend to that Part which the Minister utters, as well as to that which they are enjoined to pronounce themselves. What the Minister prays vocally, the same must the People pray mentally; and so they make the whole Service one continued Act of Devotion.

But you must not repeat those *Prayers* and *Collects* with an audible Voice, which are to be said by the Minister alone. This is contrary to the Design and Rule of the *Church*, which always directs People when they are to speak out, and consequently commands them at all other Times to be silent, and to speak to God in their Hearts, or with such a Motion of their Lips, as may give no Disturbance to others.

Our excellent LITURGY is so far from favouring of any Popish Superstition (as some have injuriously objected against it) that it was composed by the most eminent Prelates and Instruments of the Reformation, in the Reign of King *Edward VI.* who very judiciously and piously contrived the Prayers always to begin with some Attribute of Almighty God, and to end in the Name and Mediation of Jesus Christ. Their Style is admirably fitted both for imploring the Mercies of God, and rendering him unfeigned Thanks for the same. The Words are grave, and well suited to exalt our Thoughts to the highest Pitch of Adoration, Zeal, and Love; insomuch, that (a) Men of the best Sense and Learning have been moved to Tears in the Use of them. And they are but few in each Prayer, that when we have said one, we may proceed to the next with renewed Attention and Warmth of Devotion.

(a) *Dr. Hammond's Life.*

Accept, O Lord, the Prayers and Praises of thy Servants; and grant, that thy Words may take deep Root in our Hearts, that so they may bring forth the Fruits of good Living, to the Honour and Praise of thy Name; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Besides this weekly Tribute of Time to God, there are certain *Annual Festivals* to be observed in Memory of some special Mercies: Such as the Birth and Resurrection of our Lord, the Descent of the Holy Ghost, the Anniversaries of the Evangelists and Apostles. These Days are set apart for the solemn Worship of God, and a *Service of Thanksgiving* for the particular Blessing we then commemorate. To doubt of the Lawfulness of such Solemnities, is very unreasonable, as though it were Superstition in us thus to glorify God, for making the Apostles and first Preachers of the Gospel, Instruments of revealing to us Christ Jesus and the Way to Salvation. To say, That it contradicts the Commandment, which bids, us work Six Days, is as groundless; for that is only a Permission to us to work Six Days, if our Necessities require it: But otherwise, we may spend as much Time in the publick Worship of God, as our Circumstances will permit. The *Jews* had several Holy-Days, which were not of Divine Institution; as that of the Feast of the Dedication of the Temple; and our Lord was pleased to observe them, and consequently approved of them.

And as we are bound to frequent and thankful Commemorations of the Divine Favours, so must we sometimes be as publick in our *Humiliations* and penitent Confessions of Sins, both National and Personal, which provoke God to remove his Blessings, and inflict the severest Punishments upon us. We must be heartily sorry for such Provocations, testify our Detestation and Abhorrence of ourselves for them, earnestly deprecate the Divine Vengeance due
to

to them, and implore the Aids of preventing Grace to keep us to a stricter Obedience, and Love of God for the Time to come. And to this purpose there are certain Days of Fasting and Humiliation appointed by the *Church*.

C H A P. II.

Of our DUTY and SERVICE to G O D

On the *W E E K - D A Y S* :*Or, the DAILY EXERCISE of a CHRISTIAN.*

AS soon as you *awake* in the *Morning*, fix your Mind on the Goodness of G O D; Let the Thoughts of Him and his Word enter first into your Heart, and take Possession of it before any secular Cares invade it; so will you find a better Disposition to Piety and Virtue all the Day following.

Consecrate the Work of every Day with the Service of the supreme King and Governor: Offer him the first-Fruits of your renewed Life, the Morning Sacrifice of Praise and Adoration, breaking forth in the Transports of the divine Psalmist:

(a) *Early in the Morning will I direct my Prayer to thee, O Lord, and will look up. (b) It is a good Thing to give Thanks unto the Lord, and to sing Praises unto thy Name. O thou Most High! To shew forth thy loving kindness in the Morning, and thy Faithfulness every Night. (c) Praise the Lord, O my Soul! while I live will I*

(a) *Psal* v. 3. (b) *Psal*. xcii. 1, 2. (c) *Psal*m. cxvi.

praise the Lord: yea, as long as I have my Being, I will sing Praises unto my God. (a) Every Day will I give Thanks unto thee, and praise thy Name for ever and ever.

*Thus when the Morn in Crimson drest,
Breaks through the Chambers of the East,
My Mind in thankful Praises shall arise,
Like Incense, or the Morning Sacrifice.*

While you are putting on your Raiment, think on the general Resurrection of the last Day, *when the Corruptible shall put on Incorruption, and this Mortal put on Immortality.* Let this Meditation forward you to your Prayers, and inspire your Heart with Reverence and Zeal, remembering the awful Majesty you are approaching, the great Inspector of all the World, who searcheth the Heart, and trieth the Reins; who vouchsafes you this farther Opportunity of bowing your Knees to him, which you know not but that it may be, and ought therefore so seriously to be employed, as if it was really your last. With this kind of Homage must you recognize your omnipotent Sovereign. *He is thy Lord God, and worship thou him.* By frequently repeating these devout Acknowledgments, you will gain a quick Sense of your Obligations to keep his Statutes and observe his Laws; you will see the Reason and Importance of your Duties, and acquire a Facility and Satisfaction in the Discharge of them.

We are *daily* contracting new Debts, which render us obnoxious to our Judge. Our Arrears to God and our own Souls are every Day growing upon us. And shall we not at least obviate the Arrest of Justice, by timely suing out for a Pardon and Release? Our

(a) Psalm. cxlv. 2.

Lives and Comforts are continually surrounded with Diseases and Deaths, whose Arrows fly at Midnight, and destroy at Noon-day; and shall we not at all Times, whether going out, or coming in, lying down, or rising up, remember to put ourselves under the Protection of divine Providence? Shall we not entreat God with our whole Hearts, *To lift up the Light of his Countenance upon us*, to guide and direct us in all our Ways that we may please him, upon whose Favour our Happiness depends? We know that we are daily dying, that Death is every Moment advancing towards us; and can we of all Men imagine we shall be exempted from the common Fate; and not rather address ourselves to God in that excellent Prayer: *Lord make us to know our End; and so teach us to number our Days, that we may apply our Hearts unto Wisdom?* And as we pray unto God, so must we praise him for all his Benefits; for his Fatherly Care in giving his holy Angels charge over us, and guarding about our Beds while we slept, and affording us another Day for the great Work of our Salvation.

If your Time will permit, add to your Prayers, the *Reading some Portion of holy Scripture*, with that Reverence and Attention which the awful Presence of God, who is more especially near you at such Times, will justly command. By this your Faith will be strengthened, and your Repentance improved. Be sure you dont shift off this Act of Piety upon trivial Pretences, as if you wanted Leisure, when you have enough to spare. Remember that God knows all your Affairs; and that he hath given this short Life only to prepare you for that which is everlasting: to this End all your Concerns, whether of Profit or Pleasure, must be subservient. Abridge the Night then, if you cannot intrench upon the Day; and take something from your Sleep, to add to your Divine Employment.

If possible, frequent the *publick Prayers* of the Church as a singular Blessing to the Place where they are daily used, that your Presence may be exemplary to others, that you may bear your Testimony to their sacred Worth, and secure a lasting Blessing to yourself thereby.

Having thus begun with God, *continue in his Fear all the Day long*. Be strict in the Regulation of your Thoughts, Words, and Actions. Bring the good Resolutions of your Retirement, into the Practice of your active Life. Be just and upright in your Dealings, diligent in your Calling, innocent in your Diversions, charitable in your Treatment of others: In all your Ways acknowledge your most righteous Lawgiver, and set him before your Eyes in every thing you do.

In *all your Actions* consider what will be acceptable to God, rather than what is for your own carnal Satisfaction and Advantage. Prefer that which will bear the Tryal of his Judgment, before that which may seem good in your own or the World's Eyes. We answer not the End of our Reading, Hearing and Praying, unless they make lasting Impressions upon us, which may abide by us in our worldly Affairs: such as may leave no Darkeness or Gloominess in our Minds, no Bribery or Corruption in our Conscience, no Obstinacy or Peevishness in our Will, no Disorder or Irregularity in our Affections. Above all, let those most important Words of our blessed Lord, be continually speaking in your Heart: (a) *What shall it profit a Man, if he gain the whole World, and lose his own Soul? or what shall a Man give in Exchange for his Soul.*

Let your *Conversation be seasoned with Salt*, says the same *sacred Oracle*; which hath a sovereign Quality

(a) *Matt. xvi. 26.*

of seasoning other things to which it is applied. Let us beseech God that in all our Communications with others, we may be so far from corrupting them, that they may receive Profit by us, and we no Harm from them; that by an easy, chearful, and gracious Deportment, we may win others to the Love of that good Spirit, which we profess to be led by. Yet we must not *cast our Pearls before Swine*, such profligate Persons whose foul Manners are not to be corrected by any wholesome Admonitions; but avoid them as carefully as we would the most infectious and pestilential Disease.

Venture *not Abroad*, till you have besought God that he would be your Guide, and lead you in a safe and good Way, defending you from all Dangers ghostly and bodily. In vain do you fortify yourself against the innumerable Hazards of mortal Life, except his fatherly Care be over you, in your going out and in your coming in. *He keepeth all our Bones, so that not one of them is broken.*

Observe *such Temperance in Eating and Drinking*, as that you may not exceed either in the Quantity or Quality of your Diet. Let your Meals be so moderate as may serve their just Ends, to refresh your exhausted Spirits, and repair your Strength for the Business and Duties of your Life. Let the Provisions of your Table excite you to praise the liberal Donor of all your good Things, who hath endowed Man with a Dominion over the Beasts of the Field, the Fowls of the Air, the Fishes of the Sea, and every green Herb, that they should all supply him with Food and Sustenance. Beware that you turn not this Grace into Wantonness by feeding too plentifully, or studying too much Delicacy in your Meats and Drinks.

In *the Business of your Calling*, encourage yourself, that you are in the Way of your Duty, and depend upon God who hath appointed you to this Station, for his Blessing in it. Resolve in your Mind, the ma-
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ny difficult Occurrences and Perplexities through which the good Hand of God hath graciously led you; look up to him for that Discretion, to which he doth instruct not only the *Husbandman* but the *Tradesman*; that Prudence which directs the Way, and which is promised to the good Man for the ordering of his Affairs.

In *Matters of Gain*, do not use all the Arts which Custom may seem to authorize. He that will always walk upon the Brink, is in great Danger of falling: He that will do the utmost of what he may, will sometime or other be tempted to do what he should not. *Provide things honest in the Sight of all Men*; that is, endeavour all you can to do that which is just and equitable to all, and not as the Way of the World is, to contrive how to over-reach and outwit other People. It is not enough for a Man to be satisfied of his own Integrity, but he must abstain from all Appearance of Evil. He must not only injure no Man, not only do things which are barely just, but likewise things which are laudable and of good Report: Acting up to the Rule of our Lord, who commands that our (a) *Light should so shine before Men, that they seeing our good Works, may glorify our Father which is in Heaven*: Intimating, that we must not so much consult the Advantage of our own Reputation, as the Glory of God, and the Interest of Religion in our Christian Conversation.

In the *Management of our Affairs*, that which is necessary to render them successful and comfortable to us, is a high Regard to God's Glory, as our chief End in all we do. This sanctifies our Endeavours, and carries us through them with Chearfulness. On such a Principle we can repose our Minds, and expect every Event with Courage, as being resolved that

(a) *Matt. v. 16.*

what pleaseth God shall likewise please us. By such a Resignation and Acquiescence in Providence we shall arm ourselves against the Sting of a Multitude of anxious Cares and Fears. Our Minds will be raised above the little Objects of Sense, and no Troubles or Distresses shall be able to bear us from our Anchor of Hope in God. Do we believe that the Love of God extends itself to us in all Varieties of Fortune, however contrary to our present Desires of Interests? Let us then entirely commit ourselves to him as to a most gracious Father, saying with Holy *David* (a) *What Time I am afraid, I will trust in thee*; and not doubting but we shall find the Truth of that Promise, that (b) *All things shall work together for Good to them that love God*.

Opportunities of saying and doing that which is Good, can rarely be wanting to us, if we have but a ready and willing Mind; which we must obtain of God by diligent Prayer. Let us therefore be constant and earnest Petitioners, *That by his holy Inspiration we may think those things that be Good, and by his merciful Guidance may perform the same*.

What little Reason have we to be averse to *Retirement*, or at a Loss how to dispose of ourselves, when we are left *alone*, and have no Business upon our Hands? If we did but employ those vacant Minutes in Searches after God, and the Society of the Blessed above, we could never be less alone than when retired to divine Contemplation, and converse with heavenly Objects. Thus improving our spiritual Acquaintance in our Retirements from the World, Solitude could never be irksome nor Time lost to us.

We must not limit our Devotions to the Morning only, but after the Example of holy *David*, (c) *wait on God all the Day long*; that is, our Desires must be

(a) *Plas.* xxxvi. 3. (b) *Rom.* viii. 28. (c) *Psal.* xxv. 5
towards

towards him, the Motions of our Souls, like the Fire on the Altar, must aspire to him, we must maintain a quick and lively Sense of his Omnipresence, infinite Justice, and universal Goodness; we must observe the Conduct of his unerring Wisdom in all the Occurrences of Life, and by short and frequent Ejaculations, render him Praise and Thanks, and beg his Direction, Assistance, and Blessing in all our honest Undertakings. This is, with the devout *Psalmist*, to *set God always before us*, to have our Eyes ever upon him; and with the *Apostle*, to *pray without ceasing*. Not that we should be always in our Closets, or on our Knees; it is not the length of our Prayers, which prevails so much with God, as the Frequency and Ardor of them: when we exert them, as spiritual Darts, to repel the Assaults of Satan and the wicked World. We must be habitually disposed, always ready to ascend up to Heaven in religious Thoughts; the Business of our Vocations must not engage us so far, as to alienate our Hearts from God, and devote them to the World. *Man shall not live by Bread alone, but by every Word that proceedeth out of the Mouth of God*. We then most truly live, when our Souls can rejoice in him, when we find a Delight and Pleasure in Communion with him, and conform ourselves to his Image by continual Acts of Holiness and Goodness. When in the Business of our Calling, the secret workings of our Hearts are Heaven-wards, and raise themselves to God in silent Breathings unheard and unobserved by the World. This holy Life spent in devout and constant Communion with God, is truly to live the most pleasant, most comfortable Life, mortal Man is capable of on this Side of Heaven.

How sadly then do those Men pervert the End of Living, and destroy their own Souls, who are wholly sensual in their Imaginations, and live without God in the World! And what prodigious Multitudes are there, who have no Notion of that sweet Communion with

with God we have been speaking of! who lie down and rise up, go out and come in, in the constant Pursuit of the Profits and Pleasures of the Body, without God in all their Thoughts! though they feed upon his Bounty, and prolong their Life from Day to Day by his merciful Long-suffering, yet they seem not to perceive it; they own no Dependance on him, nor appear at all solicitous to preserve themselves in his Favour.

How absurd and wretched is their Folly, (a) *who rise early, and go late to Rest, and eat the Bread of Carefulness*, denying themselves the necessary Refreshments and Comforts of Life, only that they may encrease a useles Heap of Wealth! This is to prefer the Means before the End, and to possess, rather than to enjoy. Others again make themselves really miserable, out of an imaginary Fear that they shall be so. They anticipate those Wants by anxious Sollicitude, which might be prevented by a timely supply, could they but practise that Patience and Affiance in God, which our Lord recommends, when he says, (a) *Take no thought what ye shall eat, or what ye shall drink, or wherewithal ye shall be cloathed. For your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things*; and he on whom all living Things wait for their Support, will not deny these needful Succours to his own Children, who according to his Will, seek his Kingdom and Glory in the first Place; who having Food and Raiment, can be content therewith, not coveting those superfluous Riches, which are apt to lead Men into Temptation and a Snare, ministring to many extravagant Lusts, which drown Men in Perdition and Destruction.

But that you may persevere in the Duties of the Day with better Success, *Be mindful of those Things*

(a) *Psal. cxxvii. 2.*

which were the Subject of your Morning Supplications. You prayed for the Inspiration and Guidance of God's holy Spirit; keep your Mind pure, your Thoughts holy, your Body chaste and temperate, that so it may be an agreeable Temple for the holy Ghost. You prayed for assisting Grace, to fortify you against Temptations; do not then give way to them when they offer themselves; much less let your Mind wander and seek out the Occasions of sinning. You asked for a Spirit of Resignation and Conformity to God's Will; let this Mind appear in you under every Dispensation of his Providence. Be content to want those outward good Things which he is pleased to deny you, and never use indirect Means to help yourself in any Case. You prayed for those social Graces which respect your Neighbour, that you might love him as yourself; be not then forward to speak Evil of him; nor pleased with his ill Fame when you hear it, nor willingly give Credit to it; but rather hope it may be a Mistake, or Calumny which Time will confute.

Did you heartily desire God to *forgive your Enemies*? Do you then offer them all reasonable and fitting Terms of Reconciliation. Remember how short-lived a Christian's animosities must be: If you will observe the apostolick Rule, you must not suffer the Sun to go down upon your Wrath. If your Conscience tells you, you have wronged another, acknowledge your Offence, satisfy him as well as you can for any Damage he hath sustained thereby, and assure him of fair Treatment for the Time to come. If he hath wronged you, and refuses, when required, to do you Justice, though there are particular Cases wherein you may (and sometimes must) demand Reparation at Law, yet you must not presume to be your own Avenger; in so doing, you would rebel against God, who hath put the Sword of Justice into the Hand of the publick Magistrate, his own Vice-gerent. It is
your

your Part and Duty to pray to God for the Forgiveness of his Offence, and the Change of his Heart to a better Temper; and when Opportunity serves, refuse not to do him any kind Office, with a chearful and ready Mind. For he that doth Good to his unrelenting Enemy, gives the best Proof that God is his Father, *who makes his Sun to rise on the Evil as well as on the Good, and sends his Rain both on the Just and on the Unjust.* And as God doth not repute us wicked Men for the ordinary, and scarce avoidable Infirmities of human Nature; so neither must you presently esteem that Man your Enemy, who accidentally says or does some harsh thing; since you yourself want the Forgiveness not only of God, but Man, in many Offences of too free and unguarded Conversation. The most cogent Motive to mutual Forbearance in such Cases, is this; That we cannot lye down at Night in Assurance of God's Favour, unless we are at Peace with Men; nor in Faith ask Forgiveness of him, except we forgive our Brethren their Trespases.

When the Business of the Day is over, *Set apart a convenient Portion of Time, for your Evening Devotions:* For which prepare yourself by Examination and Meditation, with some proper Part of Holy Scripture. In your Review of the Day past consider, 1. What Sins and Failings you have been guilty of, and be humbled for them. 2. What Mercies and Blessings demand a Sacrifice of Thanksgiving. 3. What Crosses have exercised your Patience and Submission. 4. What Improvements you have made in Divine Knowledge and virtuous Practice. If you have proceeded well to Day, do not lose Ground to Morrow; but if ill, redeem the Time past by the well spending of what remains. 5. Observe how your Devotions have been performed and hence judge of the State of your Soul. And for the sincere and impartial Discharge of this Examination, let that of *Solomon* encourage

courage you ; (a) *He that covereth his Sins, shall not prosper ; but whoſo confeſſeth and forſaketh them, ſhall find Mercy.*

The Example of our *fiſt Parents* is a Proof to us, how prone Man is to cover his Sins ; or if detected, to extenuate and leſſen them, to transfer the Blame from himſelf to others ; nay, ſometimes to varniſh Sin over with falſe Colours, and pretend it was his Duty to do that which is the plain Tranſgreſſion of it. But in vain do we trifle with God, who ſees the moſt hidden Thoughts and Intentions of our Hearts, and requireth Truth in the inward Parts. He expects we ſhould impartially arraign ourſelves for all our Sins : If we reſuſe to do this, he will ſet them all in order before us, at that Day when he ſhall bring every idle Word and evil Thought, as well as ſecret Action, into Judgment. It behoves us therefore in our daily Examination, diligently to recollect all our Sins, to confeſs every Particular, and to implore God's merciful Pardon, that ſo we may prevent the ſtrict and terrible Account of the laſt Day ; which will beſt be done by examining our Conſciences every Night concerning the Occurrences of the Day paſt, to humble our Souls before God for what ever we find amiſs, and to reſolve by the Aſſiſtance of Divine Grace to correct that Error for the Time to come. Thus vigilant was (b) holy *David* in the courſe of his Life : *I called mine own Ways to remembrance, and turned my Feet unto thy Teſtimonies. I made haſte, and prolonged not the Time, to keep thy Commandments.* Conſider of what dangerous Conſequence it may prove, to omit this daily Examination. If you lye down in the Guilt of but one unrepented Sin, there is a Poſſibility of your loſing Heaven by it. For who can tell that you ſhall ever have an Opportunity to repent of it, or

(a) *Prov.* xxviii. 30. (b) *Pſalm* cxix. 3.

live to see the Light of another Sun? Such frail Creatures are we, that even the best of our Works are much debased with Imperfections; how careful then should we be, to condemn ourselves for every known and apparent Sin we commit? Since, as the Apostle assures us, (a) *If we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged of the Lord.*

But if neither the Examples of the best of Men, nor the Admonitions of God himself can persuade us to set about this so important a *Duty*; will it avail any thing to urge the *Præctice* of meer Heathens in this Particular? Yet I shall just acquaint you that *Seneca* walked by this Rule, and *Pythagoras* prescribed it, as you may learn from his Golden Verses at the End of this Chapter.

To facilitate this Work to you, enter sometimes into such *Meditations* as these: I have a Principle of Life within me, which can never be extinguished. I must be eternally happy or miserable hereafter, according as I behave myself here. After a short Time allowed me on Earth, to prepare for another World, my Soul shall be divested of this Body, and live for some Time in a separate State. Afterwards, my Body shall be raised again, and be reunited to my Soul. I shall be the same Man for Substance as I am at present: I shall be judged according to the Works I have done in this mortal Life; and an irreversible Sentence shall consign me to a State of Happiness or Misery, wherein I shall abide for ever, without any farther Change or Alteration.

At this Reflection make a Stand, and look into the boundless Ocean of ETERNITY; think what amazing Changes you must in a short Time undergo, and how nearly it concerns you to be always prepared for them. Let these Things be en-

(a) 1 Cor. xi. 31.

graven upon your Heart, and you cannot easily be at a Loss for serious Meditations at any Time.

When *you compose yourself to Rest*, recommend yourself again to God, reposing securely under his Protection, submitting intirely to his Disposal, and trusting your Soul in his Hands, as a faithful Creator and Preserver, who will cause you to awake again, either in this Life, or in that which is Everlasting,

The *more Days you spend according to this good Method*, the more correct will your Life be, the easier will the Duty grow, the more Pleasure you will take in it; you will not dispense with yourself for the Obfervance of it: you will only be sorry that you begun to live so no sooner. If you are not already in some such Course, lose no Time in bringing yourself to it.

When we have the Testimony of our Conscience to tell us in the Words of *St. Paul*, *that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity, not with fleshly Wisdom, but by the Grace of God, we have this Day had our Conversation in the World*; we may then lie down in Peace with God, with ourselves, with the World; in a sweet Composure and Calmness of Mind, enjoying that sound Conscience which is the softest Pillow, being a continual Rest as well as Feast.

Remember that many who go well to Bed, shall never rise again, until they are awakened with the amazing Sound of the last Trumpet. Therefore go to your Bed as to your Grave, commit Soul and Body to the never-sleeping Vigilance of your Almighty Guardian. Take Leave of the World and all its Concerns, and resign yourself in the Words of the Holy Psalmist:

(a) *I will both lay me down in peace and sleep; for, thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in Safety. Return*

(a) Psalm iv. 8.

to God as thy Rest, O my Soul; for he hath dealt bountifully with thee.

Thus religiously should you open every Day, and close it again with the Word of God and Prayer.

As we put off our Cloaths when we go to Bed, so must we put off our Bodies when we come to die. Death strips us, and sends us naked out of the World as we came into it. It dissolves the Union between Soul and Body; leaving the one among Earth and Worms, and sending the other to the Father of Spirits, from whom it was derived. Our Grave-Cloaths are but a kind of Night-Dress; O that we could think of putting on the one with as much Ease as we do the other! In this Bed we rest for some few Hours; but when our Bodies come to be lodged in the Grave, they shall rest till the joyful Morning of the Resurrection dawns in upon them. Thus may your bed put you in mind of the Grave, your Sleep of Death, your Waking of the Resurrection.

When you awake in the Night, and Sleep departs from your Eyes, keep out evil Thoughts, which will then busily haunt you, by fixing your Meditations on God and heavenly Things, and sweetly meditate on Him in the Night Watches. Remember that the (a) *Keeper of Israel never slumbereth nor sleepeth*; and that (b) *the Darkness is no Darkness with him, but the Night is as clear as the Day. The Darkness and Light to him are both alike. Thus David's Eyes prevented the Night-watches, that might be occupied in God's Word. He called to remembrance his Song, and in the Night he communed with his own Heart, and searched out his Spirits.* And his Character of a Blessed Man is, *That he meditates in the Law of God both Day and Night.*

(a) *Psalms* cxxi. 4. (b) *Psalms* cxxxix. 12.

MOTIVES *taken from the* Consideration of
Death, to excite us to a Christian Conversation.

Consider *every Day* as not knowing but that it may be your last, That when your last shall come indeed, you may not be found unprepared. Your Life is in continual Suspense and Uncertainty; it hangs by a slender Thread which is easily cut: What manner of Person then ought you to be in all Holy Conversation and Godliness? You (a) know not in what Hour your Lord cometh, and therefore you ought to look for him every Hour. Imagine that you see his Harbinger *Death* running before him, which is the surest way to keep you in a due Expectation of him. In the Morning when you rise, think he may summon you before Night: In the Evening when you lye down, conceive him calling upon you as he doth in the Gospel, to have your Loins girt, and be ready, even at Midnight or at Cock-crowing, to meet your Lord.

But alas! instead of reckoning every Hour our last, we vainly promise ourselves many Years of Life and Health still to come, and value ourselves, with the Rich Man in the Gospel, upon our great Estates and Provisions. But how easily would our high Looks and proud Hearts be humbled, if we had but an habitual Faith, that *Dust we are, and unto Dust we must return?* "Nothing so effectual (saith St. Bernard) to make a Man have a low Opinion of himself, and all Things about him, as a settled Persuasion that he is Dying daily." Nothing so great a Spur to the Dispatch of necessary Business, as a due Estimate of the Shortness and Uncertainty of Life. *Whatsoever thine Hand findeth thee to do, saith Solomon (b), do it with all thy*

(a) Luke xii. 36. (b) Eccl. ix. 10.

might : for there is no Work nor Counsel in the Grave whither thou art going. (a) I must work the Works of Him that sent me, saith Christ, while it is Day : the Night cometh, when no Man can work.

Be mindful of Things past, careful of Things present, and provident of Things to come. Whether we are abroad or at home, sleeping or waking, the Grave is always ready for us ; it is daily swallowing up our dearest Friends and Acquaintance ; yet we attend their Funerals without taking warning by their Death, to put us in mind, that we must go to them, but they not return to us.

We love to put the Thoughts of our latter End far from us. When we are in a firm State of Health, we have no Notion of what it is to be sick ; we little consider how suddenly a fatal Disease may surprize us, taint our Blood, corrupt our Vitals, and put a Period to our Lives. 'Tis no Security to us, that we are Young and Vigorous, since Multitudes are daily snatched away in the Strength and Flower of their Age : Whence St. *James* gives this sharp Reproof to the Atheistical Confidence of worldly Men in his Time : *(b) Go to now, ye that say, To-day or To-morrow we will go into such a City, and continue there a Year, and buy and sell, and get Gain : whereas ye know not what shall be on the Morrow.*

It should be a farther Incitement to us, to be very strict and sincere in every Duty, *(c) In that we are always in his Sight, to whose Eyes all things are naked and open : (d) who looks down from Heaven upon all the Sons of Men, and considereth all their Works : nay, their very Words and Thoughts, as David's Confession declares : (e) There is not a Word in my Tongue, but thou, Lord, knowest it altogether. Thou understandest my Thoughts afar off.* In short, nothing whether near or

(a) John ix. 4. (b) James iv. 13, 14. (c) Heb. iv. 13. (d) Psalm xxxiii. 13, 15. (e) Psalm cxxxix.

far off, past, present, or to come, necessary or contingent, great or small, but it lies fully open to one single View of the Divine Omniscience. God is always present with us, and his Eye is upon us, where-ever we are, or whatever we are doing. O that we were so happy, as with holy *David*, to set the *Lord always before us*. What Temptation of Pleasure or Advantage could prevail with that Man to commit a Trespass, who knows that he cannot do it, but in the Presence and Sight of his Judge, who hath strictly forbidden it, and will eternally damn him for it? On the other Hand, What Difficulties or Dangers can deter a Man from his Duty, who lives under the Influence of this Faith? For what can more animate a brave Soldier, than to fight in the Sight of his Prince or General, who will be sure to take Notice of those that distinguish themselves, and reward them with particular Marks of his Favour? How then must the Soldier of Christ acquit himself in his Combats with the Corruptions of his Flesh, and the Malice of wicked Men and Devils! How will he be excited to fight the good Fight of Faith by this Consideration, That the Captain of his Salvation stands by him, not only to see how he behaves himself, but to strengthen and support him with Power to overcome, and then to crown him with eternal Life!

Consider moreover, the great Ease and Peace which will redound to us, from a sincere and thorough Compliance with the Laws of our Religion. That which of all Things, next to the Guilt of Sin, makes Mens Lives uneasy and troublesome, is their too eager Concern and Sollicitude for the obtaining or securing the Things of this World. But surely our Reliance on God, if any Thing, would cure this restless Sollicitude, and make us, as the Apostle advises, to live without Carefulness. By which I do not mean, that it would or should make a Man neglect

glect the Duties of his particular Calling, or those honest Methods which God allows him to use for the obtaining, not only the Necessaries, but Conveniences and Comforts of Life: But his Faith will teach him, after having used his own hearty Endeavours for those Purposes, not to disquiet himself about the Success of them, but to refer the Issue intirely to God, and acquiesce in it, as knowing that he perfectly understands his Circumstances, and is better able to chuse for him, than he is for himself.

What *abundance of Fears and Anxieties doth he discharge himself of*, that can cast himself and all his Cares upon the Almighty, who he knows is always with him, and cares for him? He is not discomposed with melancholy Thoughts and uneasy Apprehensions. He walks before God in great Security all Day, and rests under the Shadow of his Wings at Night, being assured that God who is about his Bed, makes him dwell in Safety. In Time of Adversity, how comfortably may a Man reflect, That all his Wants and Troubles are seen and known of him, who is able to supply them, and willing too, if he sees it best for him? That how bitter soever his Cup may be, it is of his heavenly Father's mixing, who never afflicts his Children willingly, but always for their Good: Who perfectly understands their Weakness, and the Strength of the Potion; and will either so abate this, or supply the other by the Power of his Grace, that it shall work for their Good; the Affliction, though for the present it may not seem joyous, but grievous, shall afterward yield the peaceable Fruit of Righteousness.

At all Times, in all Places, upon all Occasions, he hath free Access to God, represents his Infirmities, his Wants, his Pressures to him; and by a faithful Application of the divine Promises to himself (in which he doth as assuredly believe God speaks to him, as if an Angel from Heaven brought him the Message)

he comforts and supports himself under, or rather exults and triumphs over them. Is he perplexed with Difficulties, out of which he knows not how to extricate himself; at a Loss which way to turn, or what to do? He applies to himself that encouraging Word of the *Psalmist*, (a) *Commit thy Way to the Lord, and he shall bring it to pass.* Is he under a Temptation that seems too powerful for him? He lays hold of God's favourable Declaration to *St. Paul*, in a like Extremity; (b) *My Grace is sufficient for thee; for my Strength is made perfect in Weakness.* Is he surrounded with Dangers which threaten every Thing that he values and loves, even Life itself? He confirms himself with that Promise which God made to his Church of old, by the Prophet *Isaiab*, (c) *Fear not, thou Worm Jacob, for I am with thee: be not dismayed, I will strengthen thee; I will help thee, yea, I will uphold thee with the right Hand of my Righteousness.* (d) *When thou passest through the Waters, I will be with thee, and through the Rivers, they shall not overflow thee: When thou walkest through the Fire, thou shalt not be burnt, neither shall the Flame kindle upon thee.*

The frightful Suggestions of Satan may possibly disturb, and the Mistakes of a timorous Mind, wrought up by an unhappy Complexion, may sometimes deject even a very good Man. But so long as he conscientiously avoids all presumptuous Sins, and penitently bewails all his Infirmities, he may justly expostulate with his tumultuous Thoughts in the Language of holy *David*: (e) *Why art thou cast down, O my Soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me? Still put thy Trust in God; for I will yet praise him, who is the Health of my Countenance, and my God. In God's Word will I re-*

(a) *Psal. xxxvii. 5.* (b) *2 Cor. xii. 9.* (c) *Isaiab xli.*
 (d) *Isaiab xliii.* (e) *Psal. xliii. 5.*

joice; in the Lord's Word will I comfort me; yea. in God have I put my Trust, I will not be afraid what Man can do unto me (a) I will sing of thy Power, O Lord, and praise thy Mercy betimes in the Morning; for thou hast been my Defence and Refuge in the Day of my Trouble. He will with infinite Satisfaction hear St. Paul make a general Challenge to all the Powers on this Side Heaven, to hurt the sincere Christian: (b) *Who shall lay any Thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather that is risen again, who even at the right Hand of God, who also maketh Intercession for us.*

May he grant us all the Grace, timely to consider the great Importance of Serving him a few Days, in the Practice of those Duties to God, our Neighbour and ourselves, which are here faithfully, though concisely represented, that so we may attain those everlasting Crowns of Glory, which he hath purchased for us! The amiable Qualifications of which important Duties are: An Integrity that cannot be corrupted: A Resolution in Goodness that cannot be baffled by Temptations: A Superiority of Soul, that is above the Allurements of the World: An Evenness of Temper, which Injuries cannot easily discompose: A Principle and Habit of doing Good, which no Ingratitude or Unworthiness of the Object can weaken: A Conversation with God and heavenly Things, which makes the Soul both great and humble; which extinguishes in it all Envy at the Prosperity of others; but enlarges its Tenderness and Compassion for the Miserable: A mild Generosity of Temper ever ready to do Good, but with Prudence and Discretion, and in the sweetest and most obliging Manner. These are such

(a) *Pfal.* lix. 16. (b) *Rom.* viii. 33, 34.

Embellishments and Ornaments as will not fail to win the Admiration, Love and Praise of all the sensible and observing part of Mankind.

To persuade ourselves that we are grown to a Maturity and perfect Stature in Christ, when we have had but some few transient Thoughts about Religion, which have never sunk deep in our Hearts; to esteem our Righteousness a just Qualification for the Kingdom of Heaven, when it is not only inferior to that of the Scribes and Pharisees, but far short of the very Pagans; this hath no Foundation in Scripture, and is intirely a new Gospel. No; every Christian must be filled with the Holy Ghost, that is, with his Heavenly Inspiration, influencing and cherishing pure Desires, like the hallowed Fire of the Alter, which though buried sometimes in Ashes, yet upon a litle stirring, glows and sparkles again. No body supposes that Heaven should always actually fill our Minds; It must in some Measure give Way to the World, in admitting those necessary Refreshments which craving Nature exacts of us; and without which it cannot long subsist.

If our Minds be much affected with the Contemplation of heavenly Things; if we are earnest to know what we shall do to be saved; if we love to employ our Time and Pains in Religious Duties, and feel a divine Warmth in our Souls when we are at our Devotions, and enjoy ourselves most when we approach God in his Ordinances; then have we comfortable Assurance, that the spiritual and eternal Life is actually begun in us.

*Let not th' insidious God of Sleep surprize,
Nor steal in Slumbers on thy weary Eyes,
Till every Action of the former Day,
Strictly thou dost, and rigorously survey.
With Rev'ence at thy own Tribunal stand,
And answer truly to thy own Demand:*

Where

*Where have I been? In what have I transgress'd?
 What Good or Ill hath this Day's Life express'd?
 Where have I fail'd in what I ought to do?
 To God, to Man, or to myself what's due?
 Nicely enquire what things from first to last,
 From Morning-Light to Evening-Stars have past.
 If evil were thy Deeds, repenting mourn,
 And let thy Soul with strong Remorse be torn.
 If good, the Good with Peace of Mind repay,
 And to thyself retir'd, with Pleasure say;
 Rejoice, my Soul! thou hast well spent this Day.*

*[move,
 These Thoughts, and chiefly these, thy Mind should
 Employ thy Study, and engage thy Love.
 These are the Rules which will to Virtue lead,
 And teach thy Feet the heavenly Paths to tread.*

C H A P. III.

Of the LOVE of G O D.

THE Love of G O D is the fundamental Principle and Source of all RELIGION; it branches out into all the Duties which we owe to our *Relations* and all the *World*. Nay, we cannot *Love* ourselves, so as to pursue our own real Benefit and Advantage, except we first *Love G O D*. This *Love* therefore is in the first Gospel most justly styled the *Great Commandment*. It is the Seed of all those good Fruits, which the holy Spirit produceth in us. The Efficacy and Influence of it is most universal; the Circuit of it most comprehensive, virtually containing in it all other Laws and Duties of Piety. *St. Paul* affirms of a lower Degree of *Love*, that of our Neighbour,

Neighbour, that it is the fulfilling of the whole second Table; whatever human Duty there is, it is briefly summed up in this, *Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself*. With stronger Reason yet must we conclude all the Duties of Piety to be comprised in the *Love* of *GOD*, this being the first and greatest of those two Hinges upon which (as our Lord expresses it) *hang all the Law and the Prophets*.

As this *Love* is most capacious in its Extent, so is it most high and noble for the Dignity of its Object. It terminates in the most excellent of all Beings; it is exercised in the most pure and heavenly Acts; its Seat is the most refined Part of the rational Soul; and it imparts Virtue and Worth to all other Acts of Duty. For no Sacrifice is acceptable to God, which is not kindled by this celestial Fire; no Offering sweet and pure, which is not seasoned with this Holy Salt. Nothing we do, is truly religious or virtuous, which proceeds not from a Design, or at least from an habitual Desire and Aim to please God.

He who hath commanded us to *Love* him with all our Heart, and Soul, and Strength, and Mind, cannot be pleased with us, when we act upon a different Principle, either as Men-Pleasers, or chiefly regarding our own carnal Advantages and Satisfaction. How can we be the Servants of God, when we do our own Will, and dispose of ourselves as we see fit, without Respect to his Glory? *Love* is so powerful an Attractive, that wherever it is real, it prevails against all other Motives of Hope or Fear, Honour or Dishonour, in Favour of the Person or Thing which commands it. One needs not any Force or violent Means to constrain him to do that which he *loves*; but whatever Hardships or Dangers are in the Way, he willingly encounters them, and cheerfully endures them for the Sake of the beloved Object; the Excellency of which is imprinted upon his Soul
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in such lively Characters, that his Thoughts are continually turned upon it, the whole Stream of his Affection runs towards it, and bears down all Opposition to arrive at it.

To the End then that our Souls may be filled with a due Measure of *Divine Love*, we must study to inform our Understandings with just and worthy Notions of God; always having a reverential Awe and Esteem of him, apprehending him especially as our infinitely merciful Father, in whom we live and move and have our Being; the sole Author and Fountain of all the Blessings we either have at present, or can ever hope to enjoy; in whose Favour we can want no Manner of Thing that is good; but without whom our Portion is nothing but extrem Woe and Misery. It is he who with unwearied Vigilance protects us from ghostly and bodily Evils, and with an inexhaustible Stock supplies all our Wants, mercifully supporting us with the Comforts of this Life, but much more graciously conducting us to the everlasting Joys of his heavenly Kingdom, where we shall be made unspeakably happy by his glorious Presence, and the Pleasures and Blessings of his right Hand; where there is no Shadow of Death, or Sense of Pain, or any Thing that can create the least Affliction either to Body or Mind.

Such Views of the divine Goodness, frequently renewed and attended with a lively Faith, must gradually warm our Hearts, until we become inflamed with the Love of the Almighty Author of all Good. We cannot thus acquaint ourselves with God, but we must necessarily love him with that intire and ardent Affection which he exacts of us. For shall these faint Resemblances of Good, these Glimmerings of Light and Happiness here below, so powerfully attract our Eyes, and raise our Admiration; and shall not that boundless Ocean, of which these are but small Emanations, overwhelm us with Wonder, and excite in
us

us a Longing and Thirst to approach him? Let us but meditate on God, until we are heartily persuaded with the Psalmist, *That there is none comparable to him, in Heaven or in Earth*, and then we shall think it no Extravagance to break out in the same Rapture: (a) *Whom have I in Heaven but thee? and there is none upon Earth that I desire besides thee.*

These serious Regards are the Foundation upon which the *Love* of God is built, the Beginning of that true Wisdom, which takes off the Heart of Man from the World, and unites it to its proper and only sufficient Object. Hence we may observe, that those devout Persons have most eminently excelled in the Love of God, whose Minds have been most accustomed to meditate on the divine Excellencies, and the gracious Dispensations of Providence; their thankful Hearts have supplied their Tongues with continual Praises and Adorations of him *who dwelleth on High, and yet humbleth himself to behold the Things that are in Heaven and Earth*. They have given the World a true Image and Character of the divine Majesty; so infinite in Wisdom, so all-sufficient in Power, so perfectly just and holy; but above all, so abounding in Mercies and loving Kindness, that if all the wisest Men upon Earth should meet together, and consider what *supreme Lord* they would chuse, who should be most beneficial to them; they could not wish or invent any Thing more for the Welfare and Comfort of Mankind, than what is to be found in the most perfect Nature of GOD.

What State and Distance do earthly Sovereigns for the most Part keep? How hard is it for the lower Rank of their Subjects to be admitted into their Presence, and lay any Petition before them? But the Great King of all the Earth, allows the meanest Man

(a) Psalm lxxiii. 25.

free Access to him at all times ; nay, a kind of intimate Converse and familiar Communion ; being no Respector of Persons for their outward Condition ; he is equally regardful of all that call upon him ; or if he hath a more special Favour to any, it is to those who are in the most afflicted and abject State, most destitute of Worldly Friends and Comforts : To these he hath given very particular Assurances of Relief in their Distress, Protection in Danger, and a Recompence for all their Losses and Sufferings. He recommends them to the Rich and Powerful Men of the World. He makes their Case his own, and reckons the Aids administered to them, as given to himself. How infinitely more gracious is this Condescension, than what is generally seen among Men !

Farther ; Our Earthly Patrons and Benefactors are limited in their Power and Abilities to do us good. They may be tired with our frequent Applications, and disobliged by restless Importunities ; so that we must use their Benevolence cautiously, and their Favour sparingly, for fear of quite losing it. But the great Preserver of Men fainteth not, nor is ever weary of doing good. He invites us to make all our Requests to him ; to cast all our Cares upon him ; and is then most pleased with us, when we are most assiduous and importunate in our Addressses ; when, like *Jacob*, we wrestle with him, and will not let him go, until he hath given us a *Blessing* ; or like the *Syrophenecian* Woman in the Gospel, who solicited our Lord for the Cure of her Daughter, and would not be repulsed by any Delay or harsh Answer, until Christ dismissed her with this Applause : *O Woman, great is thy Faith ! Be it unto thee even as thou wilt.*

How far then should it be from a cold Indifferency, and idle, wandering Thoughts, in our Communion with God ? as if it were a Task and a Drudgery to us to serve him. Which Disposition is
a sure

a sure Demonstration to us, that we do not love him as we ought. For where true *Love* is, nothing seems painful and grievous. Like Fire (to which it is commonly resembled) it warms the Breast, agitates the Spirits, quickens all the Powers of the Soul, and vigorously moves them towards the beloved Object. And we may as well imagine that Fire will not take hold on combustible Matter, as that Love will not actuate the Faculties of the Soul and Body, in order to fulfil its Desires. The Holy Psalmist, who had most exalted Notions of the Divine Goodness, expresses the Efficacy of this Love, by such Desires as cannot be concealed: (a) *As the Hart panteth after the Water-brooks, so panteth my Soul after thee, O God! My Soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: When shall I come and appear before God? When he was forced to abscond in the Wilderness of Judah, for fear of Saul, he represents it as his greatest Affliction, that he could not appear in the Church, and publick Worship of God.* (b) *O God, thou art my God! early will I seek thee: My Soul thirsteth for thee, my Flesh longeth for thee, in a dry and thirsty Land, where no Water is: to see thy Power and thy Glory, so as I have seen thee in the Sanctuary. Because thy Loving kindness is better than Life, my Lips shall praise thee. Thus will I bless thee while I live: I will lift up my Hands in thy Name. My Soul shall be satisfied as with Marrow and Fatness; and my Mouth shall praise thee with joyful Lips, when I remember thee upon my Bed, and meditate on thee in the Night-watches.*

Besides this inward Warmth of Affection, it is an allowed Proof of our Love of God, if we keep his Commandments. (c) *He that bath my Commandments, and keepeth them, saith Christ, he it is that loveth me. So that if we are conscious to ourselves that we wil-*

(a) Psalm xlii. (b) Psalm lxiii. (c) John xiv. 21.

fully offend in any Particular, or neglect any Branch of our known Duty, or do but superficially and carelessly perform it, the Love of God is so far from being perfected in us, that we have not the least true Degree of it. And therefore we must earnestly beseech Almighty God, so to inspire our Hearts with his Grace, that we may have an equal Respect to all his Commandments, and not only do those Things which he requires, with the Faculties of our Bodies, but likewise with the Desires of our Souls; and find Pleasure in the doing of them.

The Motives which are proper to excite this *Love*, and kindle this Flame in our Hearts, are innumerable: and though intimated in some measure already, yet well deserve to be summed up together, and set in one View.

Let us be continually possessed with Thoughts of our intire Dependance on God: That he is the Author and Dispenser of all our good Things: His Air we breathe, his Ground we tread on, his Food sustains us. The Bodies we carry about us are the Work of his Hands, the Soul and Spirit which informs them, is the Breath of his Mouth. He hath created great Variety of Things for our Use and Pleasure; a spacious, beautiful and stately Heaven to shine upon us with its bright Luminaries; he hath filled the Earth, Air, and Waters with such Creatures as supply all our Bodily Wants and Necessities. Holy *David* is often in Raptures at the Contemplation of this rich Furniture and curious Fabrick of the Almighty Architect. (a) *How manifold are thy Works, O Lord! in Wisdom hast thou made them all! The Earth is full of thy Riches: so is the wide Sea also, wherein Things creep-*

(a) *Psalms* civ.

ing are innumerable, both small and great. (a) *When I consider the Heavens, the Work of thy Fingers, the Moon and the Stars which thou hast ordained ; what is Man, that thou art mindful of him ! and the Son of Man, that thou visitest him ! Thou madest him to have Dominion over the Works of thy Hands ; thou hast put all Things under his Feet. All Sheep and Oxen, yea, and Beasts of the Field : the Fowl of the Air, and Fish of the Sea, and whatsoever passeth through the Paths of the Sea.*

But besides this Dominion which God has given to Man over all earthly Creatures, he hath made him peculiarly to excell in the Dignity of his Mind, having in this respect more especially created him in his own Image, adorned his Soul with many Divine Graces, and put him in a Capacity of rising above this earthly Habitation, to a glorious Inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven.

To this End, he hath revealed to us those Means of Salvation, which we could never have discovered by the Light of our natural Reason or Understanding ; and for our Guides to this Happiness, he hath not only enlightened his Church with the Doctrine of many inspired Prophets and Teachers, but hath vouchsafed to send us his own Son, made like unto us, that in our own Nature the Fulness of the Godhead might dwell Bodily ; that through him we might receive the Adoption of Sons, and be fitted for the Society of Heaven, by the Exercise of his Holy Religion here on Earth.

And whereas through the Perverseness of our own Wills, and the Power of Temptations which surround us, we are prone to offend our Heavenly Father, and forfeit that Happiness, which on the Condition of our Obedience, he hath fully insured to us ; the same Son of God, who by fulfilling the Divine Law, and

(a) *Psalms. viii.*

suffering in our stead, hath purchased this Happiness for us, appears now in Heaven our Mediator and Advocate, in a Body like unto us, making continual Intercession for us. Whereupon our Heavenly Father is pleased not to take the Forfeitures we make, but to accept of our Repentance, to pardon our Offences, and receive us again to his Favour, and the Privileges of his Children, in as ample manner, as if we had always been dutiful and obedient to him. This is a Mercy which well deserves our most fixed Regard and Admiration. (a) *Behold what manner of Love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God! and if Sons, then Heirs; Heirs of God, and Joint-Heirs with Christ.* (b) *And if we sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous; and he is the Propitiation for our Sins.*

Being in this Condition of Sons, we are not treated with Severity and Rigour. Our God imposeth on us no difficult or burthensome Task; he exacts no costly Sacrifices or tedious Observances; but is satisfied with our pious and chearful Acknowledgment of his Mercies, and our hearty Endeavours to perform those Services, which are so far from being grievous, or any way superfluous, that our own Welfare, Comfort, and Advantage, rightly apprehended, would abundantly dispose us to do them; it being indeed the Essence of our Happiness, the Joy of our Soul, the *Manna* which shall feed us to eternal Life, to do the Will of our Heavenly Father.

To this most tender and compassionate Father, this great and only Benefactor of ours, we owe the easy, just, and pleasant Duty of Love. If we are destitute of this Heavenly Affection, we are none of his Children. This Resemblance is absolutely neces-

(a) 1 John iii. (b) 1 John ii. 1.

fary to declare us his genuine Offspring : (a) *For God is Love, and every one that is born of God, loveth God.* This intitles us to the Benefits of his Family, to his Paternal Care of us, and Provision for us : (b) *For the Lord preserveth all those that love him :* that is, he suffers nothing to hurt them, but causeth all things, how crofs and difficult soever they may appear, to work together for their good. So that if we do not love God, we are not only monstrously ungrateful and wicked, but imprudent, even to a Degree of Infatuation : because being alienated from the Love of God, we are at the same time excluded from his Presence and Favour, and consequently from all Safety, Joy and Comfort : We are exposed to all the dreadful Effects of divine Wrath, to the Misfortunes of the World, and the Anguish of an evil Conscience : We are abandoned to the Malice of Devils, and consigned to their unpeaceable, accursed Society for ever.

If our *Love* of God be sincere, it will be so constant as to hold out under all Circumstances and Conditions of Life. It is built upon such Motives as are of Perpetual Duration ; and therefore is not alterable by any Variety of Fortune. If God vouchsafes us the Light of his Countenance, and appoints our Mansions in the Sun-shine of Prosperity, we ought humbly to rejoice, and thankfully look up to the Hand which dispenses these Blessings. But when, on the contrary, he hides his Face from us, and suffers our Sun to be overcast with the Clouds of Adversity, we know that these are not the Strokes of his heavy Displeasure, but Corrections which proceed from his merciful Care of us : (c) *For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth ; and scourgeth every Son whom he receiveth.* In restraining our Desires, and proceeding in a Way dif-

(a) Heb. xii. 5. (b) 1 John iv. (c) Psalm cxlv. 20.

ferent from what we had proposed, he acts the Part of a wise Master of a Family, who will not indulge his Children in their Cravings, when he knows it would be to their Hurt ; and can rather bear their Crying sometimes, than have them spoiled and ruined with always having their own Will and Way. It was the Saying of a (a) Learned Divine, one who every way merited that Character, when he saw any of his Acquaintance perplexed about the Management of their difficult Affairs : *When will you begin to trust God, and permit him to govern the World ?*

Even a mere (b) Heathen Writer could see, what a Christian hath much more Reason to be sensible of : That we may more safely trust God than our own Prudence, and that he loves us better than we do ourselves.

*Permittes ipsis expendere numinibus, quid
Conveniat nobis, rebusque sit utile nostris,
Nam pro jucundis aptissima quæque dabunt Di.
Carior est illis homo, quam sibi.*

Intrust thy Fortunes to the Powers above.
Leave them to manage for thee, and to grant
What their unerring Wisdom sees thee want.
In Goodness, as in Greatness, they excel :
Ah ! that we lov'd ourselves but half so well !

(a) Dr. Hammond. (b) Juvenal. Sat. x.



C H A P. IV.

Of Divine P R A I S E S

And T H A N K S G I V I N G S.

THE Soul which is truly disposed to admire and praise its great CREATOR, can never want Matter for the Subject of grateful Sentiments. Our Daily Restoration to Life and Action, by the renewed Light of every Morning; the Preservation of our Health and Limbs from the Perils to which we are exposed every Moment; the plentiful Provision which God is pleased to make for us, by granting us seasonable Returns of Summer and Winter, Seed-Time and Harvest, and causing the Clouds to drop down Fatness upon the Womb of the Earth; the gracious Method of Providence in recruiting our exhausted Stores, and affording us the Means of daily Subsistence; the Opportunities we have of exercising the great Duties of Religion, and growing in Grace and Virtue, are all Blessings which like the Streams of a River are continually flowing in upon us; though we had the same many Years since, yet they hold on their Course; the Springs are everlasting, and fail not.

If we add our past Receipts to what we are incessantly taking in, how surprizingly great will the whole Sum appear! The Royal Prophet *David* hath set us this Pattern of comprehensive Gratitude: He treasured up the divine Benefits in faithful Memory; he was always recollecting and reviewing them in his Thoughts,

Thoughts, and representing them in the most advantageous Light, according to their just Dimensions and endearing Circumstances. (a) *I will remember the Works of the Lord, and call to Mind thy Wonders of old Time. I will think also of all thy Works, and my Talking shall be of thy Doings.* (b) *Have I not remembered thee on my Bed, and thought on thee when I was waking? Because thou hast been my Helper, therefore under the Shadow of thy Wings will I rejoice. I will give Thanks unto thee among the People: I will sing Praises to thee among the Nations.* (c) *For thy Mercy is greater than the Heavens, and thy Truth reacheth unto the Clouds.* (d) *Blessed be the Lord, who daily loadeth us with his Benefits.*

It is not enough to have our Hearts touched with a Sense of God's Goodness; they must be enflamed and ravished with the Contemplation of it; they must entertain it with the same Satisfaction, as a thirsty Traveller drinks down the fresh and cooling Streams. Gratitude is of a fruitful and diffusive Nature; it will not be smothered under sullen Looks and a silent Tongue. It will not content itself in lonesome Soliloquies, and secret Whispers of the Divine Praises; but loudly echo them forth, and animate others to join in the melodious Harmony. The sweet Singer of *Israel* is all Exstasy and Rapture, when he tunes his Harp to celebrate the Praises of the Most High. He invokes Heaven and Earth, the Celestial Quire of Angels, the several Estates and Generations of Men, the innumerable Company of all the Creatures, to assist and join in Concert with him, in magnifying the glorious Name, and recounting the noble Acts of the Great Author and Fountain of all Blessings and Comforts.

(a) *Psalms lxxvii.* (b) *Psal. lxiii.* (c) *Psalms cviii.* (d) *Psal. lxxviii.*

How easy and reasonable is this Homage, to avow our Dependance upon, and Obligations to him! to publish to the World our manifold Receipts of his undeserved Favours! (a) *To sing of the Mercies of the Lord for ever, and make known his Faithfulness to all Generations!* If he had bid us do some great thing in return for his inestimable Kindness, have made his Altars to overflow with Wine and Oyl, and clouded the Skies with whole Burnt-offerings; should we not have done all this? How much more when he requires only the cheap Tribute of the Heart and Tongue, and such other Acts of grateful Love as we are always in a Capacity to render him?

The Heathen World spared for no costly Sacrifices and well composed Hymns to honour their Imaginary Deities, and set forth the famous Achievements of their Heroes; those to whom, in their Opinion, they owed the Fruits of the Earth, the Comforts of Life, and the Defence and Safeguard of their Country. They were indeed mistaken in the Object, but not in the Substance of the Duty; paying a Debt that was really due, but not to such Creditors. I wish these Men, however superstitious in other Things, do not rise up in Judgment with the Men of this Generation, and condemn them, who knowing the true God, honour him not as God; who receiving the highest Instances of his Goodness; don't testify a just Esteem of it; and consequently neglect the most *Essential* and *Noble Part* of *all Religion*, and render themselves *unworthy* of further Mercies, by their vile Abuse of what they have already received.

There is no Incident of Life, but what yields us sufficient Occasion to love God; how much then shall we be in Arrear of Duty, if we commonly ne-

(a) *Psal.* lxxxix.

gleect to do it? But yet if God should bestow no more Blessings upon Men, than what they are truly thankful for, it is to be feared that many who now have Abundance, would quickly come to want, and the Fields which bring forth a Hundred fold, would produce Thistles instead of Wheat, and Cockle instead of Barley.

As *Solomon* sends the Sluggard to the Ant to learn Industry and good Husbandry; so God justly upbraids his unthankful People with the Example of the Ox and Ass, who acknowledge their Owners and their Stalls. The dumb Creatures about our Houses shew us a manifest Sense of Gratitude for the Maintenance and Protection we afford them. So that not only the Pagans, but the very Brutes may shame ungrateful Christians into Gratitude.

Having shewn the Necessity and Reasonableness of *Thanksgiving*, we may next consider how often it ought to be performed; concerning which *St. Paul's* Rule is, (a) *That we should give Thanks to God always, for all Things*; which Word, *always*, imports, not an incessant speaking forth his Praise, but a ready Disposition, an habitual Inclination to it; such as Men have to their daily Affairs; in which, though there are frequent Respites and Intermiſſions, yet the Design is continually prosecuted. As we say, such a one is writing a Book, or building a House, or taking a Journey, though at that present he may be Sleeping, or Eating, or doing something else; but his Design sleeps not, his Purpose is not interrupted. And thus we are to understand our Lord and his Apostles, when they exhort us to continue instant in Prayer and Thanksgiving; our Hearts must always be fixed and prepared to these Duties; like a well tuned Instrument, though not actually played on, yet always rea-

(a) *Ephes. v. 20.*

dy for the heavenly Anthem. It is not the Act but the Habit that denominates a Man in any Kind of Grace or Virtue. (a) *The righteous Man, saith David, is ever merciful, and lendeth.* Not that his Hand is always distributing, but his Heart is always inclinable to do it when Need requires. Even so a grateful Man doth always give Thanks, by being disposed on all Opportunities actually to express his *Thankfulness*.

In order to acquire this good Disposition, we must in the first Place, endeavour to maintain a constant Calmness and Evenness of Temper. We can hardly conceive what *Thankfulness* is, without including Pleasure and Satisfaction in the Notion of it: Our Minds must be bright and serene, that we may with a pure Flame offer this Sacrifice. And therefore they who are often drunk with intemperate Rage and Passion, must needs lose many Opportunities of giving God the Glory, and receiving in themselves the Comforts of his Mercies.

No Time can be unseasonable for the Praises of God. When in our Walks we survey this ample Theatre of the World, contemplating the stately *Beauty* and *Order* of all its Parts, then should our Hearts be affected with a Sense of Gratitude, and our Lips break forth into devout Praise, with the holy Psalmist: (b) *The Heavens declare thy Glory, and the Firmament sheweth thy handy Work.* (c) *The Eyes of all wait upon thee, and thou givest them their Meat in due Season. Thou openest thine Hand, and satisfiest the Desire of every living Thing.* (d) *Unto thee lift I up mine Eyes, O thou that dwellest in the Heavens.* (e) *Accept, I beseech thee, the free-will Offerings of my Mouth, O Lord: And teach me thy*

(a) *Psal.* xxxvii. 26. (b) *Psal.* xix. (c) *Psal.* cxlv. 15, 16.
(d) *Psal.* cxxiii. 1. (e) *Psal.* cxix. 108.

Judgments From every Object of Sense, from every Event of Providence, we may extract fit Matter of Thanksgiving. If our Returns were as frequent as our Receipts, they must be made every Moment. However, there are some special Seasons, which do more loudly demand them. When any new remarkable Boon is conferred upon us; when our gracious God prevents us with his Blessings; when we are delivered from Straights in our Apprehension inextricable, escape Dangers very impending, and to human Views inevitable. In such Circumstances as these, we have a most proper Theme of elevated Praise to the Father of Mercies, and God of Help and Comfort in Time of Need.

When we collect together in our Minds, (as we should often) the merciful Dealings of God with us through the Course of our Lives; how strangely we have found Friends and Relief in extreme Distress; how well we have escaped the Hands of Robbers in our Travels, or the Infection of Diseases in a general Sickness, or Fire in some common Conflagration; how much we are, by the Blessing of God upon our Employments, raised above Want in our Way of Living: But above all, How graciously the good Hand of God hath conducted us in the Paths of Piety and Virtue, so as to preserve us from many grievous Sins, into which we were sometime in Danger of falling. Upon such Remembrances as these, we should kindle our Sparks of Thankfulness into a Flame, and look up to our mighty Deliverer and Benefactor with most humble Adoration and Gratitude.

Not that we are to confine our *Thanksgivings* only to great and signal Mercies. Those of daily and ordinary Use are to be put into our Recognitions. Indeed we should not esteem any of God's Blessings small, if we well considered what it is to want them. A Breath of sweet and wholesome Air, a Cup of refreshing

refreshing Water, a few Hours of comfortable Repose, are in common Estimation but ordinary Matters; and yet how precious is any one of these to the poor afflicted Wretch that wants it?

As thus we are obliged to be *Thankful* for our own, so likewise for the Blessings which befall others. The Christian Spirit requires us, not only to make Prayers, but Thanksgivings for all Men; to rejoice with them that do rejoice; to take Pleasure in the Prosperity of others, and heartily thank God for it. Could we but attain this sociable Part of Charity, we need not envy the Wealth and Splendor of the greatest Princes. In such a friendly Sympathy, while the Glory of all is given to God, the Satisfaction of all will redound to ourselves. Our Neighbour's good Success is ours, if we equally triumph in it: His Riches are ours, if we delight to see him enjoy them: His Virtue is ours, if we are bettered by it, and have hearty Complacence in it. By this means a Man derives a Confluence of all Joy upon himself, and makes himself, as it were, the Center of all Felicity, enriches himself with the Plenty, and satiates himself with the Pleasure of the whole World. Reserving to God the Praise, he enjoys the Satisfaction of all the Good that comes to his Knowledge.

Thus St. *Paul* reasons from the Similitude there is between the (a) natural Body of Man, and the mystical Body of Christ, the Church; that as in the former there is a Sympathy of Pleasure and Pain between all the Members; so we who in Christ are united into one Body, and Fellow-members one with another, should have the same quick Sense of one another's Conditions: If one Member suffer, all the rest should be in pain for it; if one rejoice, the Joy should be diffused through all the rest.

(a) 1 Cor. xii.

But

But to proceed: We are not only obliged to give Thanks for pleasant and prosperous Occurrences, but for those likewise which cross our Desires, and distaste our natural Sense; for Poverty, Sickness, and Disgrace; for all the Sorrows and Troubles, the Disasters and Disappointments that befall us. We ought to say Grace to our Physick, as well as to our Food; because though unpalatable, it conduces to our Health: And for the same Reason, all Adversities, which are intended by God for the Restoration of our Soul's Health, are proper Subjects of our Praise and Thanksgiving. *I will thank the Lord for giving me Warning: My Reins also chasten me in the Night-season. (a) I know, O Lord, that thy Judgments are right, and that thou in Faithfulness hast afflicted me.*

Were the Choice of our Condition wholly permitted to us, we should make a very disadvantageous Election. We should naturally embrace a rich and plentiful Estate; when as God knows many Times it would make us slothful and luxurious; it would either swell us with high Thoughts, or encumber us with anxious Cares, or expose us to dangerous Temptations, and render us forgetful of God. We should, no Doubt, be fond of the Applause and Favour of Men; but this, God sees, would debauch our Minds, and tempt us to arrogate immoderately to ourselves, and sacrilegiously to rob the Almighty of his Honour. Therefore he suffers us in much Mercy to labour under the Reproaches of Malice and Envy, that we may glory only in his Favour, and pursue more earnestly the Delights of a good Conscience: Which wise Conduct of our Heavenly Father highly merits our utmost Thanks and Praise.

Indeed the Advantages which may be made of Afflictions, are so many and so great, that we should

(a) *Psalms* cxix. 75.

not only acquiesce, but rejoice in them; we should receive them cheerfully at God's Hand, as Tokens of his Love, who like a Physician to our Souls, administers such Potions to us, as, though bitter, will end in Health, Strength and Joy. We should interpret them as Arguments that we are in that straight and narrow Way which leads to everlasting Life, and that these momentary Afflictions are working for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of Glory.

But all our Songs of Praise, our highest and sweetest Accents must be, for the Means of Grace, and for the Hope of Glory. Herein we must exceed, as far as the reasonable Soul doth in Dignity surpass this frail and short lived Body; as far as the infinite Duration of Eternity out-measures the narrow Limits which terminate this uncertain Life. We are, it is true, greatly indebted to God for our Creation, for calling us out of Nothing into this high and honourable Station among his Works. But how much more for calling us out of Darknes into this marvellous Light, the Knowledge of himself and Jesus Christ whom he hath sent to redeem us! How much more for raising up this mortal Flesh to a State of Immortality, and exchanging our earthly for a heavenly Habitation! We ought not to receive our bodily Food without lifting up grateful Hearts to him who filleth all Things living with Plenteousness; much less will Ingratitude be excused for that Bread which, from Above is God's blessed Word and Sacraments, whereby our Souls are nourished to everlasting Life. To these Spiritual Mercies, the Holy Psalmist gives the Preference in his Method of Praise. First, He incites his Soul to (a) glorify God for the Pardon of Sins; and then he commemorates Temporal Mercies: *Who satisfieth thy Mouth with good Things, making thee young and lusty as an Eagle.*

(a) Psalm ciii.

And now, what little need can there be of farther Incitements to the Practice of this Duty? Unless we are quite divested of that Affection, than which none is more strongly interwoven in the Original Constitution of our Souls, to be sensible of Benefits received; to love and respect those who exhibit them; to acknowledge them with suitable Expressions, and be ready to make competent Returns for them. Even the worst of Men, the most barbarous and savage, retain something of a natural Sense of Benefits conferred upon them. Ingratitude is such a deformed and monstrous Birth, as none will own: It is detested and abhorred of all Men. But in the Court of Heaven, and at the Tribunal of our supreme Benefactor, from whom we receive whatever we enjoy, no Manner of Offender shall be more terribly arraigned, more surely condemned, or more severely punished, than the *ungrateful* Man.

What Excuse can we find to plead for the Neglect of so reasonable a Duty; and which is withal so cheap and easy, so sweet and delightful? The Pleasure of it is often attested by one who was well experienced in it. *(a) It is a good Thing to give Thanks unto the Lord; and to sing Praise unto thy Name, O thou Most High! To tell of thy loving Kindness early in the Morning; and of thy Truth in the Night-season. O praise the Lord, for he is good! O sing Praises unto his Name, for it is lovely!* What Thought can enter into the Heart of Man, more comfortable than this, That the most wise and mighty King of Heaven and Earth, is concerned to do him good? That by a secret and invisible Influence he disposes the Hearts of Men to become his Friends and Favourers; Men who are many Times averse enough to other good Works; who perhaps had no Relation to him, nor

(a) Psalm xcii.

any Acquaintance with him; who sometime were his avowed Enemies, and might rather have been expected to have done him ill Offices? That such Men should be converted into his Benefactors, and seek to do him good; this must needs transport a Person of common Sense and Piety, into Admiration and Love of that greatest and best of Governors, who hath the Hearts of all Men in his Hand, and makes them subservient to his own gracious Purposes.

O infinitely Amiable! when shall I love thee without Bounds, without Coldness, or Interruption! Let me never suffer any Creature to be thy Rival, or to steal my Heart from thee! Let me have no other God, no other Lord, but thee! O let the World never more command my Affections, which I withdraw from that to fix on thee! Whatever is amiable in the Creatures, is derived from thee, who only art perfectly Excellent. O Blessed JESUS! who didst love me so dearly, as for my sake to endure a painful and shameful Death; how can I live without being thine? When shall all carnal Affections die in me, and all Things belonging to the Spirit, live and grow in me? When shall I be willing to lay down my Life for thee, who hast shed thy precious Blood for me?

Let Riches, Honours, Pleasures, Friends, Health and Strength, and all Things fail me, I am still resolved, by his Grace, to rejoice in the Lord, and to joy in the God of my Salvation! On the other Hand, let all these earthly Blessings be poured out upon me, yet am I still determined, that as it is my Duty, so shall it be my Delight and Comfort, to serve my GOD. I will not be cast down or dejected at any severe Dispensation, which the Men here below count a Loss or Affliction; but still behave myself like a Candidate of Heaven, and live above the Smiles and Frowns of this World!

Make me, O GOD! diligent and earnest in pleasing thee! Let me discharge the most painful and costly Duties,

Duties, and forsake Friends, Riches, Ease, and Life itself, rather than disobey thee! Thine Eyes are upon the Ways of Man, and thou seest all his Goings. Let all the Earth love and fear thee; for thou knowest and canst reward their Service. Praise the Lord, O my Soul! and all that is within me, praise his holy Name! Praise the Lord, O my Soul! and forget not all his Benefits! Who can express the noble Acts of the Lord: or shew forth all his Praise? Which forgiveth all thy Sins: and healeth all thine Infirmities? Which saveth thy Life from Destruction: and crowneth thee with Mercy and loving Kindness?

Thus I have inculcated this Duty of *Divine Praise and Thanksgivings*, with repeated Instances and Motives, as it was necessary for me to do, because an exact Performance of it, promotes and facilitates the Practice of all other Duties; since the more we are sensible of our innumerable Obligations to God, the more we shall in Prudence study to please him by a sincere Obedience, that thereby we may secure to ourselves the Continuance of his loving Kindness and Mercy. While we are paying our Tribute for what we have received, we are disposing our Lord to new and greater Favours; we render him more propitious to us, and ourselves more dutiful and loyal to him. For how can we at the same Time piously acknowledge our Dependance on him, and yet venture to alienate him from us by any wilful Violation of his sacred Laws? The Memory of past, and Regard of present Mercies, will confirm our Faith, augment our Love, and improve our Obedience for the Time to come.

Let us then glorify God both (a) *in our Bodies and in our Souls, which are his.* Let us (b) *honour him with our Substance, and with the first Fruits of*

(a) 1 Cor. vi. (b) Prov. iii. 9.

all our Increase. Seeing all that we are, and all we receive, is from his free Bounty, O therefore let us employ all to his Glory; our Parts, our Estates, our Health, our Time, even all the Powers of our Souls and Bodies. Let us daily exercise ourselves in that Praise which is the supreme Joy of Paradise, the Perfection of angelical Blifs: That so at the End of our Days, we may be found such good Proficients as shall be adjudged worthy to be added to the heavenly Choir, who continually encompass the Throne of the most High, and prostrate themselves before him, saying:

(a) *Blessing, and Glory, and Wisdom, and Thanksgiving, and Honour, and Power, and Might, be unto our GOD for ever and ever.*

(a) *Revel. vii. 12.*



THE END OF THE SECOND PART.

THE
Christian's Companion :
OR, THE
S U M
OF THE
Christian Religion.

P A R T III.

CONTAINING OUR

D U T Y
T O
O U R S E L V E S.

*Love not the World, neither the Things that are in the World.
If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not
in him. For all that is in the World, the Lust of the Flesh,
and the Lust of the Eyes, and the Pride of Life, is not of
the Father, but is of the World. And the World passeth away,
and the Lust thereof: But he that doeth the Will of God,
abideth for ever, 1 John ii. 15, 16, 17.*

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1832

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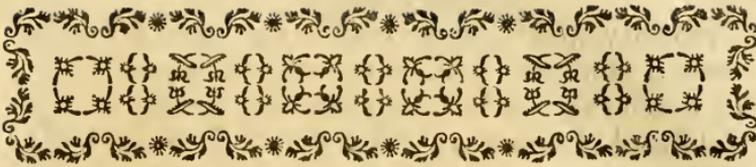
OF

OURSELVES.

THE COMPANION OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, AND THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD, AS FAR AS THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD IS CONCERNED. THE COMPANION OF THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION, AND THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD, AS FAR AS THE HISTORY OF THE WORLD IS CONCERNED.

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OF OUR

D U T Y

T O

OURSELVES.

P A R T III.

IT is an Observation which some have made concerning the *Moral Law*, That it teaches us our Duty to GOD and our *Neighbour*, but says nothing of any Concern or Regard we are to have for *Ourselves*. To this it may be answered, That we then derive the greatest Blessings upon *Ourselves*, when we are most observant of our Duties to *God* and our *Neighbour*; for then are we most secure of that Love and Protection which alone can make us happy. However, there are in holy Scripture several

of Honesty and Virtue, which are more especially intended for the Welfare of our Souls and Bodies, and which may all be comprehended under that general Head of Sobriety, laid down by *St. Paul*, (a) in Contradistinction to that Piety which is owing to God, and that Righteousness and Charity we are to discharge towards all Men. I shall endeavour to represent this Duty in the several Branches of it, as it respects both Soul and Body: The Welfare of the Soul consists in the good Government of its Affections and Passions: In order to which the Exercise of many Virtues is required. I shall begin with H U M I L I T Y, as that which may justly claim the Precedence of all the rest, as being the Foundation whereon they must all be built; and without which the Candidate of Virtue will prove like that foolish Man our Lord speaks of, (b) *who built his House upon the Sand.*

(a) *Titus* ii. 12.

(b) *Luke* vi. 49.



C H A P. I.

O F H U M I L I T Y.

THE HUMILITY I here propose to speak of. is the *Rule* of that Esteem and Opinion we ought to have of *Ourselves* : It keeps us from over-valuing any Thing within or without us, and from being too much disturbed at any Sights or Contempts which other Men may cast upon us. The two Extreams opposed to this Virtue, are *Pride*, on the one hand, and *Puffanimity*, or too abject a Spirit, on the other,

P R I D E is briefly and pertinently defined by St. Paul, *A thinking of one's self more highly than we ought to think* ; which false Valuation renders Men very presumptuous, and prone to break through the Laws of God and Man for the compassing of their ambitious Ends. This Sin of *Pride* is the Parent of all Mischief in Heaven and Earth. An Ambition to be as great as the most High, was the Ruin of Angels : An Attempt to be as knowing and as wise, was the Fall of Man. And so *Pride* hath forfeited all Happiness, and been the Cause of all Miseries, Temporal and Eternal. There is scarce any Branch or Species of Sin whatever, but if we trace it to the Stock on which it grows, we shall commonly find *Pride* at the Bottom of it. I might instance in a Multitude of Particulars, which owe their Birth to this fertile Parent.

First, all Dissatisfaction with our Condition ; all Murmurings and Repinings at God's disposal of us, derive themselves in a direct Line from their Mother

Pride. St. *Jude* expresses (a) the Sin of the proud Angels thus: *They kept not their first Estate.* They were not pleased with that Station wherein God had created them, but moved above their proper Spheres, and so confounded that sacred Order, which the Divine Wisdom had established in Heaven. For the same Reason Men become Rebels in the State, and Hereticks in the Church, because they are conceited of their own Abilities and Merits, and think they ought to have the Precedence of all others. Like the old Pharisees among the Jews, *they think very highly of themselves, and despise others.* They have an extravagant Opinion of their own Understanding, an immoderate Conceit of their own happy Genius; but a very low Esteem of other Mens Performances and Management of Affairs. Thus ambitious *Absalom*, ripe for Rebellion, pities the ill Conduct of his Father *David*, and wishes, (b) *Oh that I were made Judge in the Land, that every Man which hath any Suit, or Cause, might come unto me, and I would do him Justice.* Thus the false Apostles and deceitful Workers who opposed St. *Paul*, represented him to the People as a poor, weak, ungifted Brother, and pretended, that they were much his Superiors in Eloquence and (c) Learning, and preached the Gospel more freely and spiritually than he did.

Secondly, Other Sins have a Relation, though a more remote one, to this of Pride; as *Anger*, which by the wise *Solomon* is denominated (d) *proud Wrath.* A peevish, angry Man is very apt to think himself ill used, and interprets every little Neglect or Mistake of those about him, as an Affront put upon him. So likewise Backbiting and Slandering, though it may be the immediate Effect of Envy, yet it flows originally from Pride, which makes Men esteem them-

(a) *Jude* v. 6. (b) *2 Sam.* xv. (c) *2 Cor.* xi. (d) *Prov.* xxi. 24.
selves

felves the only Persons who deserve to shine and be applauded, and consequently are apt to fully the Character of those by whom they apprehend themselves to be lessened and obscured.

These, and many more pernicious Fruits spring from that bitter Root of Pride ; whence it is justly detested of God ; (a) *Every one that is proud in Heart, is an Abomination to the Lord* : And threatened with unavoidable Vengeance ; *Though Hand join in Hand, he shall not be unpunished* : And this was executed in a very remarkable Manner upon the proud and haughty King *Nebuchadnezzar*, who was driven from the midst of his Glory, (b) to dwell and feed with the Beasts.

Of this *Pride* there are several Sorts ; one in Vain-glory, or an excessive Thirst after the Praise of Men. Which is so devouring a Sin, that in any good Duty or Christian action, it destroys the Virtue of it, rendering it unacceptable to God, and unprofitable to ourselves. This spoiled all the Religion of the Scribes and Pharisees. They made long Prayers, but it was in the Corners of the Streets, to be seen and admired for it : They gave Alms, but they founded a Trumpet to give notice of it : They fasted, but they disfigured their Faces, that their Fasting might appear to Men. In all their good Works they had an Eye to the Observance and Applause of the World, and were more concerned for their own Honour, than for the Glory of God. Hence they are so often branded with the Name of Hypocrites, and declared more incapable of the Kingdom of Heaven, than the very Publicans and Harlots, who had Humility enough to confess, and repent of their Sins.

(a) *Prov.* xvi. 5. (b) *Dan.* iv.

But there is another kind of Vanity which is still more abominable, and that is, when Men are proud of their Ability to commit any Vice, and ambitious to be esteemed the first in the Rank of Offenders. (c) *When they declare their Sin as Sodom, and bide it not, but take Pleasure in recounting their lewd Actions. This the Scripture justly styles, gloryfying in their Shame, and denounces a particular Woe against such Boasters: (a) Woe unto them that are mighty to drink Wine, and Men of Strength to mingle strong Drink.*

Other Sorts of Pride are, overmuch Confidence, Assurance, obstinate Persisting in our own Ways against good Reason and the Persuasions of able Advisers; magisterially assuming a Power which belongs not to us, to dictate and prescribe to others. These are Dispositions no ways becoming the Followers of *Jesus Christ*, who hath set forth himself as a Pattern of Meekness and Lowliness to all his Disciples; and I have already intimated, that they are the Cause of Divisions and Heresies in Religion.

And thus much of the Nature of *Pride*, and the most noted and common Branches of it. I proceed to the other Extream of *Humility*, which is *Pufflanimity*, or a falling short of what one ought to do, out of a false Modesty, or Fear of Ostentation. And it is generally seen in the following Instances.

1. In not exerting and employing those Gifts which God hath bestowed on us, in the Office or Business to which he hath been pleased to call us. This Negligence is expressly condemned in the Person of that unprofitable Servant, who went and digged in the Earth, and hid his Lord's talent. It is not in our own Choice whether we will discharge the Duty of our Calling, but we are strictly bound to do it. And

(a) *Isaiab* iii. 9. (b) *Isaiab* v. 22.

therefore any Magistrate or Minister must not fail in executing the necessary Parts of his Office, merely out of Fear lest he should be thought a forward Man, for doing that which perhaps his Brethren round about him have by their Mismanagement perverted, or brought into Disuse. To such treacherous Dealers belongs that Curse, which is denounced against those who do the Work of the Lord negligently: A virtuous Emulation in good Things, is so far from being a Breach of Humility and Modesty, that it hath ever been encouraged by the wisest of Men in all Ages and Parts of the World.

2. In an Averseness to be seen performing any publick Duty of Piety or Charity. When we are in the Exercise of those good Works, which it concerns none but God and our own Souls to know, we are then indeed to avoid the Notice of the World; to shut our Closets when we pray, to give our private Alms in secret, to conceal our voluntary Fastings and Mortifications. But when any of these Duties are to be performed in publick, we are to exert an Alacrity and Zeal in the Discharge of them. When we present ourselves in the Church of God, to worship him in the midst of the Congregation, we must not neglect those Gestures of standing, kneeling, bowing, and lifting up our Hands in Prayer, so as may testify the unfeigned Devotion and Fervour of our Hearts. At a publick Collection for the Poor, or for promoting any good Work, as we ought to contribute in Proportion to our Circumstances, so I think we should not be cautious of letting it be known what it is we give; for we are commanded, *To make our Light shine before Men*; and when can we do it more seasonably, than when the Influence of our Example is likely to incline others to the same pious and charitable Acts? In such Cases, the more conspicuous our Zeal is, so much the more commendable; and we
need

need not fear incurring the Guilt of Pharisaical Ostentation, when we are moved, not by a Desire of our own Glory, or the Praise of Men, but the Glory of God, and the Edification and Comfort of our Brethren.

3. Persons in any Honourable Station or Employment, should take Care not to sink the Dignity of their Profession by an affected Humility. In the Exercise of their Function they ought to appear in that distinguishing Habit, and with that Gravity of Deportment, as may gain them a just Reverence and Authority. It is not an Argument of an humble, but a dissolute, degenerate Mind, to neglect any honourable Appendage, or be too free and familiar in Words upon these Occasions. It is an Observation grounded upon the best Experience, that *too much Familiarity begets Contempt*. It doth so, not only to the Person of him who bears any grave Office, but likewise to the Office itself which he bears, and he acts in Contradiction to all Sense and Reason, who thinks to preserve a due Reverence for himself, while he prostitutes that of his Order. St. Paul, notwithstanding all his Precepts and Practice of Humility, hath told us, (a) *He magnified his Office*, and therefore a Man may be very strict in those publick Regards, and yet be very humble in his private Capacity. Some in the same Ministry, have thought they have done it Service, by a very open, and (as they take it) good natured Conversation, even as unreserved as the Vulgar themselves. But the constant ill Effects which attend such Liberty, fully demonstrate the Absurdity of their Pretence.

In short, the Nature of *Humility* is such, as hinders no Man from taking his proper Place in the World,

(a) Rom. xi. 13.

from using such Marks of Distinction as are proper to his Rank, or from asserting any just Right or Privilege. He may aim at those Honours and Dignities which are above him, so long as he strives lawfully for them, and labours to acquire them by the honest Arts of Ingenuity and Industry. For these are the Rewards of Virtue, and are designed to distinguish the Diligent from the Slothful; and therefore it can be no Fault to seek after them. Nay, there are some Cases wherein even a modest and humble Man, may be allowed to set forth his own Worth, and enumerate his good Deeds; as *St. Paul* doth to the (a) *Corinthians*. And he is obliged to do this, when there is no other Way to stop the Mouth of Calumny, and remove any Slander which may be prejudicial to the Honour of God, or the Welfare of the Publick in Church or State.

C H A P. II.

OF CONTENTMENT.

CONTENTMENT is a Virtue which gives us Ease in all Circumstances of Life, and Varieties of Fortune. It is a fixed and permanent Habit of our Mind, not murmuring or repining at our Lot, but cheerfully accepting that Portion which is dealt out to

(a) 2 Cor. xi.

us. As it gives way to no unnecessary Anxieties, so it does not indulge the transient Excesses of Mirth, which like Lightning, vanish in a Moment. It imparts a Beauty and Amiability, to those who enjoy it, by testifying the Satisfaction of their Hearts in their Looks. The chearful and resigned Christian by a Complacency in the State assigned him, discovers a secret Approbation of the Dispensations of Providence. This happy Frame of Mind consists in a constant habitual Gratitude to the great Author of our Beings. An inward Chearfulness is an implicit Praise and Thanksgiving for all the Determinations of the Divine Will. It is a Temper always even and unruffled, whether under the Smiles or Frowns of the World: This calm and easy Disposition makes us happy in ourselves, agreeable to those we converse with, and acceptable to him whom we were made to please. How far the Infirmities of our Nature will allow us to advance towards this Virtue, will appear by examining particular Cases.

First then, it seems natural to be *Content* in the Day of Prosperity, when the Comforts of Life flow in upon us, and Success crowns our Undertakings; when we are healthy in our Bodies, happy in our Families, honourable in Reputation, supported by a Multitude of Friends supplied with all Necessaries and Delights out of a plentiful Estate. Men generally pretend to be very easy in such Circumstances as these, and to have no craving or solicitous Thoughts after any Thing further. But this for the most Part is but meer Pretence and Outside. If a Man be an ill Man, (and God knows such make up the greatest Part of the World) he hath no solid Contentment, or Pleasure in all this; but is continually tortured and annoyed with some restless Passion which is never to be satisfied. How far is the

the ambitious Man, in the highest Pitch of human Glory, from being at the End of his Wishes ? The last Conquests of *Alexander* seemed to bring him no nearer the Thoughts of Peace, than he was when he first set out from *Macedon*. The immense Riches of *Haman*, his numerous and gallant Retinue, his Advancement above all the Princes and Servants of King *Abasuerus*, availed him nothing, by his own Confession, so long as *Mordecai*, a poor Jew, with whom he had no Concern, refused to stand up and shew him Respect. To run through the whole Series of vexatious Passions, Avarice, Lust, Malice, Revenge, &c. and shew how they spoil the Enjoyment of the best outward Circumstances, by restless Pursuits after their Objects, and exquisite Remorses when they have obtained them, would be tedious, and not very necessary ; because these their mischievous Effects are generally well known and understood.

But when these outrageous Furies are banished from the House of Plenty ; when the Voice of Wrath and Clamour is not heard ; when there are no proud and haughty Looks, no Rioting or Lasciviousness, no blaspheming of God, or Contempt of Religion ; but Temperance, Soberness, and Modesty are preserved ; when as Riches encrease, Works of Piety and Charity are multiplied, to the Honour of God, and the Benefit and Comfort of such as want ; this is truly to enjoy a prosperous Condition ; and thus the good Man alone enjoys it, because he alone makes this right Use of it.

But can this good Man possess his Soul in Patience, when he is in the adverse State, pressed on every Side, passing as it were through Briars and Thorns, labouring under the Injuries of the World, and the Frowns of Providence ? Is there any Room for Peace and Contentment in such Afflictions ? We are assured there is, by

by the Apostle St. *Paul*, who had experienced the severest Hardships which are incident to mortal Life ; and after all, declares, he had learned in whatsoever State he was, therewith to be *Content*.

The Ground of this *Contentment* is the Faith of a good Christian, which fixes not upon Things Temporal, but Things Eternal ; it places his Treasure in Heaven, and shews him he is in no Danger of losing it by the short Storms and Tempests of this. With this Prospect he can easily raise to himself several Arguments of Patience and *Contentment* under Afflictions. As, 1. He will look upon every Affliction (which he brings not upon himself by his own Fault or Mismanagement) as a sure Token of God's fatherly Care and Love of him. With this Encouragement the Royal Preacher, and after him St. *Paul*, exhort us not to be weary of God's Correction ; because he correcteth whom he loveth ; even as a Father the Son in whom he delighteth. For, 2. An Affliction well improved, conduces much to the Amendment of our Lives ; it puts us upon sifting and examining ourselves, to discover what it is which hath provoked our heavenly Father to lay this Chastisement upon us. And it quickens us to the Practice of many other Virtues, which before lay concealed, and as it were dead in us. Tribulation is the (a) *Trial of our Faith* ; it worketh (b) *Patience, and Patience, Experience, and Experience Hope*. It teaches us to see the Rod, and him who hath appointed it, to adore that good Hand which mercifully reclaims us by Corrections now, that we may not be condemned to suffer for ever. It is not improving an affliction that makes it a Curse, whereas if improved, it is as great a Blessing as any

(a) *Jam. i. 3.* (b) *Rom. v. 3.*

God is pleased to dispense amongst the Children of Men; therefore we should be very thankful that he is pleased not to give us over to our own Heart's Lust, which would be the heaviest Curse that could befall us. 3. In Time of Affliction God is most nigh to his Servants, and most ready to strengthen and comfort them. He is styled by one who had often tryed him, (a) *A very present Help in Trouble*, not only to deliver out of it, but likewise to support under it. If he leads us into Temptation, he watches over us, to deliver us from the Evil of it. (b) *He will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able to bear; but will with the Temptation make a Way to escape, that we may be able to bear it.* And his Faithfulness herein hath been justified by the Suffrages of his most tryed Servants. St. Paul professes, that he could do *all Things through Christ who strengthened him*: And he glories chiefly in his Infirmities, in Tribulations, in Distresses, in Persecutions; for *when I am weak, saith he, then am I strong.* i. e. When I think myself most unable to bear that Load of Afflictions which is laid upon me, then do I presently feel myself most wonderfully strengthened by the Power of God. 4. Afflictions well endured do not only endear us to God in this present Life, but will moreover augment our Felicities in the Kingdom of Heaven, as we are often assured by Christ and his Apostles. *Blessed, says our Lord, (c) are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. Rejoice and be exceeding glad when ye suffer righteously; for great is your Reward in Heaven. We faint not, saith St. Paul, (d) though our outward Man perish. For our light Affliction, which is but for a Moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal Weight of*

(a) *Psal. xlvi. 1.* (b) *1 Cor. x. 13.* (c) *Mat. v. 4. 12.*
 (d) *2 Cor. iv. 16.*

Glory. 5. Afflictions are often necessary to wean our Affections from this World, and fix them on the everlasting Joys above. We are too prone, when we have sufficient Means, to gratify all our sensual Desires, and take our fill of Pleasures, to the utter Neglect and Ruin of our immortal Souls. And therefore when we cannot be safely trusted with all our good Things, it is best for us to part with them, or be restrained by some sharp Dispensation, from surfeiting on them. A severe Fit of Sickness, or a Fall from a lofty to a mean Condition, or the Discipline of a Prison for some Time, hath brought back many a Man from the Gates of Hell, and plucked him as a Brand out of the Fire. From some such happy Calamity (as I may call it) doth many a Man date the Salvation of his Soul. Had it not been for this one Misery, he had been miserable to all Eternity.

And thus I have reckoned up some of the most considerable Reasons which may persuade a Man to Patience and Contentment under Afflictions. But then the Patient (as I intimated before) must be a Man of Piety and Virtue; a Man of a sound Christian Faith, who believes the Life of the World to come, and the Inheritance which Christ hath purchased for us there. And he must order his Conversation so, that his Hopes may be consistent with this Faith, and his Title clear to the heavenly Promises. For otherwise, if his Prospect extends not beyond this World, he must of Necessity be concerned for it as his All, and it will be hard to find Means to assuage his Grief, occasioned by great Losses and Afflictions. To such Comforters he will be apt to reply as *Micah* did, (a) when he had lost his Idols: *Ye have taken away my Gods, and what have I more?*

(a) *Judges* xviii. 24.

And what is this that ye say unto me, what aileth thee? I confefs indeed, that a *cheerful* and *contented* Mind is very necessary, considering the many Crosses and Misfortunes to which all Estates of Men are subject, to procure that small Share of Happiness which is attainable in this Life; so that the Man who hopes for nothing hereafter, would in common Prudence, choose to pass through all the Inequalities of Fortune with a smooth and even Temper. But whatever Face Men may put upon it, inward Peace is certainly the Gift of God; which how should that Man ever expect to receive from him, whose Hope and Trust is not in him? or, Where should he seek for Satisfaction, when he hath mingled all Things about him with so many Furies, by the Lies, Perjuries, Blasphemies, and all Sorts of Violence and Injustice which he hath been guilty of? And thus much for the Ground of *Contentment*.

Now though we are in Duty bound to be *Content* in the most abject Condition that can befall us, yet we are not obliged so to approve of it, as to seek no Deliverance from it. The Church of God instructs us in our daily Prayers, to supplicate for ourselves and others, a happy Issue out of all Afflictions: And consequently we are permitted to use the Means proper for our Relief; as Medicines against Sickness; Recourse to the Law against grievous Wrongs and Oppressions; Diligence to raise ourselves above a mean, necessitous Condition; Application to the civil Powers, to release us from any Hardships they may have laid upon us. But if after all honest Endeavours used, we cannot better our Condition, we must contentedly acquiesce under the Burden, and say, *The Will of the Lord be done*.

And though we are to make a Difference between a Fast and a Festival, between Occasions of Mourning and Rejoicing; yet as to our general Lot, be it

what it will, we ought to bear it chearfully and thankfully. *Plato* hath laid it down as a Principle in his Philosophy, That whatever is permitted to befall a *Just Man*, whether Poverty, Sickness, or any of those Things which seem to be Evils, it shall either in Life or Death conduce to his Good; and, that nothing would be more unhappy, than a Man who had never known Affliction. He compares Prosperity to the Indulgence of a fond Mother to her Child, which often proves his Ruin: But God's Chastisements, to those of a wise Father, who would have his Sons exercised in Labour, Disappointment and Pain, that they may gather Strength, and improve their Fortitude. If a Heathen had this Sense of the divine Severities, how much more should a Christian dutifully submit to them? Whose Profession is declared to be a Warfare, wherein he hath many Enemies to encounter, and his own Heart, the most dangerous of all; who must suffer before he can triumph, and bear the Cross in order to obtain the Crown.

Certainly, it is some Reproach to Religion, for its Professors to be often complaining of and bemoaning their Circumstances, as if God were a hard Master, and had made the Terms of Salvation too rigorous. Whereas his Worship is no melancholy Service; but he is best pleased with those who serve him with a joyful Heart. It would grieve a Man to see how few there are who understand the true Spirit of Christianity; how some contract a Gloominess even from the Practice of that Religion, which most enlivens and invigorates the Faculties of the Soul; *whose Ways are Ways of Pleasantness, and all her Paths are Peace.* How some Men indulge themselves in Passion and Wrath, others in Peevishness and Forwardness: One is arrogant and assuming, another vain and frothy; a third morose and censorious, and others addicted to other particular Humours and Singularities;

gularities; contrary to that *Spirit of Religion*, which smoothes the Roughness of our Natures, and teaches us to be of a calm and quiet Disposition.

Physicians themselves will tell us, that a quiet and peaceable Mind, not disordered with violent Passions, nor oppressed with immoderate Cares and Anxieties, is a great Preservative of bodily Health. Which one good Effect of *Contentment*, would prevail with every prudent Man to habituate himself to it. But when the Mind itself is more dangerously wounded by the contrary Passions, than the Body can be; when it is habitually indisposed for the Duties of Piety and Devotion, which very much consist in Praises and Thanksgivings, and a chearful Acceptance even of the severest of God's Dispensations: When it is incapable of that Love and good Will, that Affability and Courtesy which is due to Men; and in too great Disorder to administer Comfort to others, or encourage and support them under any Pressures; then the End of our being here, is lost; we are dead both in a spiritual and civil Capacity; we not only defraud our Souls of those blessed Fruits of the holy Spirit, Love, Joy, Peace, Meekness, Gentleness, but we anticipate those infernal Pains, that Horror and Anguish which is the Scourge of damned Reprobates, and to which the Fiend of Discontent will hurry us, except we cast him out, and be restored to a peaceable and heavenly Frame of Mind.

I confess, this turbulent Spirit hath got such a Mastery over some Men, that one would scarce hope to see him dispossessed. But it is the Craft of the great Deceiver to make all his Powers look fierce and gigantick, that so he may terrify his Slaves, and make them despair of ever recovering their Freedom. Yet a calm, but constant and unwearied Application, hath never failed to tame and subdue the most outrageous Lusts. Some of the ancient Philosophers have ventured by the meer Power of Nature

to attack them. A *Seneca*, an *Epietetus*, have laid down Rules for maintaining the Tranquillity of the Mind against all those Accidents which commonly ruffle and discompose it. And shall the supernatural Grace of God, conveyed to us in the Means of Religion, be less serviceable to us? Or is it not the Prerogative of our Faith above all human Wisdom, that it triumphs over the World, and makes us more than Conquerors? It was well said of one concerning *Alexander's* Conquests, *Bene ausus est vana contemnere*; it was not so much that he ventured, but he saw there was really less Danger in Things, than other Men commonly apprehended. We abuse ourselves with airy Spectres, and murmur and complain when we are threatened, not hurt. If we would but approach them with a steady Virtue, and face them bravely, we should find them prove mere Bubbles, unable to do us any Mischief.

Let it, in the last Place, be a constant Rule with us, whatever our own Misfortunes or Disadvantages are, never to seek for *Contentment* (as too many are apt to do) in reflecting upon those of other Persons. Partnership in Sufferings may alleviate the Calamity in some Cases; but to what purpose is it sought after, or rejoiced at, where every Man must bear his own Burden, and it cannot be divided? This is contrary even to a (a) Pagan Rule of Charity, which forbids us to *rejoice at the Evils which befall other Men*; and it justly provokes God to continue at least our own Sufferings upon us; and many Times to increase and aggravate them.

(a) *Ne malis gaudeas alienis.*

C H A P. III.

O F C H A S T I T Y.

CHASTITY may well be set in the Front of those DUTIES we owe to our *Bodies*, since the Apostle opposes the contrary Vice, as the special Sin against them. (a) *He that committeth Fornication, sinneth against his own Body*; i. e. Though all other outward Sins, as Theft, Murder, and the like, are committed by the Body as the Instrument; yet in the Sin of Uncleanness, the Body is not only the Instrument, but the Object also; for the unclean Person doth not only sin *with* his Body, but he sins *against* it. He enervates, and many times distempers and destroys it. At least, he fixes a Brand of Infamy upon it, such as no other Sin leaves behind it, degrading it from that excellent Honour whereunto God advanced it, by making it the Member of an Harlot. There are several other Arguments by which the Apostle in this Chapter pleads against *Uncleanness*; as, That our Bodies are the Members of Christ, as well as our Souls: That they are the Temples of the Holy Ghost, sanctified for his Habitation and Service; and therefore must not be prophaned or defiled with noysome Lusts, which are most contrary to his Purity: That they are to be raised in Incorruption, and fashioned like unto

(a) 1 Cor. vi. 18.

Christ's glorified Body : If they were to be for ever lost among Dust and Worms, then it were no great Matter how we used them ; but since they are to be that Garment which our Souls shall wear to all Eternity, in the Presence of a most pure and holy GOD, it highly concerns us to keep them unspotted from the *Flesh*.

Now for the particular Kinds and Degrees of *Uncleanness*, they are of so gross a Nature as may not well bear a very exact Description. Under the Letter of the *seventh Commandment*, are contained not only the known Sins of Adultery and Fornication ; but all other Kinds of Filthiness, mentioned by *Moses* in the eighteenth Chapter of *Leviticus*, and by *St. Paul* in the first Chapter to the *Romans*.

But it may suffice to observe, That we are so far from being toleratèd in *any* unclean Acts, that we are strictly restrained from the Lewdness of the Heart and Tongue. *St. Paul* allows not any (*a*) *Corrupt Communication* to proceed out of our Mouth. But our blessed Lord pronounces that Man guilty of Adultery, who doth but (*b*) *look upon a Woman to lust after her in his Heart*. Whereby all carnal Desires consented to, though never breaking out into Actions ; and all dwelling and insisting on such Thoughts, and fancying of impure Objects with Delight, are Violations of *Chastity*. And therefore he who easily gives a Loose to such Thoughts, ought to look upon himself as restrained from the outward Act, rather by some temporal Consideration, than by the Power of Conscience, or Motives of Religion : Because these would oblige him to keep a clean Heart and a modest Tongue, as well as a chaste Body. Besides, he who hath no Government of these, is in continual Danger of actual Enormi-

(*a*) *Ephes.* iv. 29. (*b*) *Matt.* v. 28.

ties ; it being much easier to abstain from the Beginnings of this Sin, than to confine it to mere Thoughts and Words. But above all, it is to be considered, That even these lower Degrees are such as render Men very odious in the Eyes of God, who seeth the Heart, and approves of none who are not pure there. *Blessed are the pure in Heart.* says Christ, *for they shall see God.* We therefore shall not see him, if we take no Care to keep from the Defilement of lustful Thoughts. It hath been observed by some, That we never find any List of those Sins which shut Men out of the Kingdom of Heaven ; but this of *Uncleanness* hath a special Place in it.

The ill Consequences of this Sin are not easily reckoned up. First of all, it is one of those Sins which never go alone ; it hath a long Train of black and hideous Vices attending it. It abounds with Lies and Perjuries, and the Violation of the most sacred and solemn Vows : It occasions much loss of Time, and Neglect of necessary Business. It oftentimes corrupts the whole Mass of Blood, and renders us Weak and Impotent. It brings a Stain and Blemish upon our Reputation, and many times transmits it to our Posterity. What a Multitude of People have fallen miserable Sacrifices to this inordinate Lust ! some in the Loss of their Lives, and others of their Estates ! How hath it ruined the Peace of Families, and filled them with dreadful Confusion and Disorder ! How many Children derive the Diseases entailed upon this Sin in an infirm Constitution ! It may not, perhaps, discover itself in their younger Days ; but in the Progress of Years, it bursts out with the greater Violence. How many fair Estates hath it devoured, and obliged the Heirs of them to take irregular Courses for their Support, and finally hurried them to an unfortunate End !

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The nauseous *Disease* which commonly follows upon the habitual Practice of this Vice, can be exceeded by nothing but the Racks and Tortures of the Guilty Conscience, and those Infernal Pains which are to succeed them in the Society of Unclean Spirits. For he who punishes this sort of Sinners with such terrible Judgments in this Life, what Place will he think too hot for their Lusts in the Pit of Destruction? *They shall have their Portion, saith St. John, in the Lake which burneth with Fire and Brimstone.*

With what Resolution and Obstinacy then, should we arm ourselves against all Temptations and Allurements to this Vice? We ought certainly to be always upon our Guard, that we be not insnared by the Baits and Wiles which are laid for us, to intangle us in the Bonds of this Iniquity, and make us Slaves to this bewitching Lust. Accordingly, we must take Care not to pamper our Body with too luxurious Feeding, not to frequent wanton Plays and Entertainments, and other Incentives to it, not to indulge ourselves in Sleep and Idleness; but on the contrary, be diligent in our Callings, and pass our leisure Hours in some honest Recreations, and profitable, or at least innocent Conversation. And if a Temptation of this Nature will be intruding, reject it immediately, without so much as giving it a Hearing; for a Parley in this Case is dangerous, and one may be betrayed by it. Above all, we must beg of God, the Fountain of Purity and Holiness,

To sanctify our Hearts by the Inspiration of his good Spirit, that our Souls and Bodies may be preserved clean and undefiled unto the Coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

C H A P. IV.

O F T E M P E R A N C E.

THE second Virtue which concerns our *Body*, is **TEMPERANCE**; whereby we are taught to abstain from all unlawful *Pleasures*; and to use those that are lawful with due Moderation. We must particularly be careful, that we do not exceed in Eating and Drinking, Sleep, Recreation, and Apparel.

The end that we are to serve in these Things, is bodily Health, and the Refreshment of our Spirits, that we may be the better able to perform all the religious and civil Duties of Life. It is a just Observation, That *we must eat to live; and not live to eat.* Not that we are limited to such a Quantity of Food, as will just keep Life and Soul together. It was one of the fore Judgments God threatened to bring upon the Jews, (a) *That they should eat Bread by Weight, and with Care, and drink Water by Measure, and with Astonishment.* Plenty of Corn, and Wine, and Oyl, was always esteemed a great Blessing, for this plain reason, That we might be served in greater Plenty, than in Times of Scarcity. We may certainly make

(a) Ezek. iv. 16.

a Difference between a Feast and an ordinary Meal. *Wine* (a) is given to cheer the Heart of Man, and *Oyl* to make his Face to shine. But then it is presumed, that for the most part we live sparingly, not studying sensual Gratifications, nor making Provision for the Flesh, to fulfil the Lusts thereof. Our Diet must be no more, either for the Quantity or Quality of it, than what our Health requires, and our Circumstances can well bear.

Gluttony and Drunkenness are not only brutish, but dangerous Sins; they not only transform Men into Beasts, but into the very worst of Beasts, or rather into Furies and Devils. They set Nature in a Flame, dethrone Reason; and bring a Man under the Dominion of the vilest Lusts and Passions. The horrid Imprecations and Blasphemies which are uttered, the Rapes, Murders, and other Outrages which are committed in such Excesses, are not to be numbered. How many Thousands of Men have squandered away fair Estates, reduced themselves and their Families to miserable Poverty, ruined the Constitution of their Bodies, and the Faculties of their Souls, and unfitted themselves for the Service of God and Man, merely by intemperate Living? It is a needful Caution which our Lord gives against these Sins: (a) *Take heed, says he, lest at any time your Hearts be overcharged with Surfeiting and Drunkenness, and so that Day come upon you unawares.* This may be understood of a sober and vigilant waiting for our Lord's coming to Judgment; But it may likewise serve very well to admonish us of the great Change we must all one Day make. Since this Life is so short and so uncertain, that we may be snatched out of it with little

(a) *Psalms* civ. 15. (b) *Luke* xxi. 34.

or no Warning, in what a serious and sober Frame of Mind ought we to preserve ourselves. What a dreadful thing is it to consider the State of the Drunkard, who is sometimes hurried out of the World in the midst of a Debauch, but can rarely be acquitted of Self-murder, if we look at the Distempers which he brings upon himself, which commonly cut him off many Years before his natural Life would have expired? How shall he be able to lift up his Face before his great Judge, when he is called to give an Account of that precious Time which he hath so prodigally wasted, those good Creatures of God which he hath so shamefully abused, that Reason and Understanding which he hath so strangely stupified, and that Life which he hath put an end to, before God's appointed time? To say nothing of the Part he hath in the Sins of his *Companions*, by helping to bring all these evils upon them as well as himself. Can such a Wretch find any Grounds to hope, that his brutish Soul shall ever taste of the refined Pleasures of a future State? No, saith *St. Paul*, (a) *Be not deceived; Drunkards shall not inherit the kingdom of God*; no more than other enormous Sinners, in whose Company he places them. But to proceed:

There is, moreover, a *Temperance* to be observed in *Sleep*; which when it exceeds the Space allowed to necessary Refreshment, is very pernicious both to the Body and Soul. Experience teaches us, That it corrupts the Blood, exhausts the Spirits, wastes natural Heat, and lays the Foundation of several Diseases. It weakens the Memory, clouds the Understanding, and invites the Tempter to debauch the Soul with

(a) 1 Cor. vi. 10.

many loose and vicious Thoughts. Besides, it is an utter Enemy to Business, and consequently an Impediment to Riches, Honours, and Advancement in the World. On which Account the Sluggard is often upbraided by *Solomon*, who sends him to the *Ant* to learn Industry, and forewarns him, that he will scarce have Rags left at last to cover his drowsy Carcass.

Since *Sleep* is the Image of *Death*, one would wonder why any rational Man should indulge it: For every Hour that we spend in Sleep, may be taken out of the account of Life; so that a Man who sleeps a fourth Part of his Time, may be said at threescore to have been dead fifteen Years of it. The Bed having so near a Resemblance to the Grave, it is pretty hard to account how People come to be in Love with it. It is more a vicious Habit which they contract, than any Necessity of Nature; for those who accustom themselves to Vigilance, and are withal temperate in other Things, find Nature satisfied with a very little Sleep.

Lastly, for *Temperance* in *Apparel*: Cleanliness is commendable in all; but the Gaiety and Fashion of it, is to be suited to our Quality and Circumstances in the World. It is great Arrogance for Persons of mean Birth and Fortune to vie with the Rich and Noble in this respect. The use of Cloathing, I confess, is not only to defend the Body from Cold and other Injuries, but likewise to beautify and adorn it. As Man is Lord of all earthly Creatures, he may lawfully use them for Raiment, as well as Food. However, we must take heed that we value not ourselves too much upon these external, inanimate Things, which shall *all perish in the using*, as the Apostle observes: And it cannot but humble us, to consider, that Man's Want of Cloathing is the Effect and Consequence

quence of his Sin; and therefore he should not commit the like Sin again (I mean *Pride*) in the Use of it.

In short, *Temperance* is a Virtue which restrains all our unruly Appetites from Luxury and Excess, and from the Vanities and Follies which our Extravagance throws us into. It regulates our Enjoyments by the Rules of Nature and Reason, and distinguishes Men from Brutes, and Men of Sense and Wisdom from Fools, by making a right and profitable Use of their good Things.

C H A P. V.

OF RECREATIONS.

BY RECREATIONS we mean such pleasant Exercises and Entertainments, as are proper to refresh the *Mind* after it is tired with much Study or serious Business.

In the Use of *Recreations*, Two things are to be observed, *First*, That the Matter of them be lawful and honest. *Secondly*, That we spend not too much time upon them.

Our first Care then must be, not to indulge any Pleasure or Diversion, which may impair our Health, stain our Reputation, dishonour the Office and Character we bear in the World; or which may give just Offence and Scandal to others, or prejudice them in
their

their good Name, Estate, or Interest. Such Diversions as these are very improperly called Recreations; the short and false Pleasure they afford, can by no means atone for the real Mischief they do to us. Instead of exhilarating and enlivening the Spirits, they cast a damp upon them, and leave a Sting and Remorse behind them. *Even in Laughter, the Heart is sorrowful; and the End of that Mirth is Heaviness.* The great Seducer of Mankind conceals his Hook in gilded Baits, and deludes his Votaries with some present short-lived Gratifications, into great and lasting Miseries. Thus it is in all Sorts of Intemperance and Excess; the delicious Morfels which were so sweet to the Palate, turn to Gall and Choler in the Stomach; and the Spirits which fly out in extravagant Mirth, leave a melancholy Faintness and Dejection of Mind. Or if the Heat and Vigour of Youth, should prove less sensible of such pernicious Effects which attend a voluptuous Life, yet they will be sadly felt and remembered in the Infirmities of old Age; which were enough, one would think, to deter any rational Creature from plunging into Excesses so rashly as many do; Since, in the Judgment of an excellent (a) Person, he that eats and drinks so as to bring the *Gout* or *Stone* upon him, though a great while hence, unmans himself, and acts as a Beast. But besides the Pains of the Body, in what sad and bitter Reflections do all unlawful Enjoyments end? how fast do their Dregs stick to the Soul, corrupting and poisoning the whole Spirit and *Genius*, and settling into the worst of Habits? What a wretched and shameful Character is it, which we sometimes hear given of certain Persons, That they were once very ingenious Men, until they had drowned their Parts by immoderate Drinking, or lost themselves in a vain and idle Course

(a) Dr. Hammond, *see his Life* fol. p 16.

of Life? But I need not here insist much on the ruinous Consequences of Excess, since I have spoken of them under the Heads of *Chastity* and *Temperance*. Let me only inculcate what I hinted at before, That we must not divert ourselves at the Expence of another's Interest or Welfare. There are some Men who have a strange unhappy Genius this Way; they really delight in Mischief, and never please themselves so well, as when they abuse and exasperate other People. But if it be the worst Idea that we can form of the Devil himself, that he rejoices in the Vexations and Torments of Men, what Opinion must we have of those Wretches, who set up for his Executioners, and chuse that Part which is most acceptable to him? The Sport of these Madmen is, to cast Firebrands, Arrows, and Death. Destruction and Unhappiness is in their Ways, and the Way of Peace have they not known. How much then are another Sort of Persons to be commended, who are so far from being pleased with seeing others abused and tormented; that they will not so much as put the very Brutes to pain for their Sport and Diversion, but shun and condemn such Pastimes, (too much practised in this Nation) wherein they are baited for the Entertainment of the Spectators.

Secondly, Our *Recreations* must not be only lawful, but moderate; they must not devour too much of our precious Time. For what is the End of Recreation, but to refresh our oppressed Spirits, to unbend them awhile, and give them Rest, that we may return to our Business again, with renewed Vigour and Application? When we are thus revived, we must have so much Command of ourselves, as to break off, and proceed with the Business of our Profession; otherwise we shall act as imprudent a Part, as he who should be always doing something to procure a good Appetite, but never mind to take in solid Food, when his Stomach is fit to receive

and digest it. God who hath sent us into the World, to work while it is called To-day, will exact an Account of us, how we have employed our Time; and though he graciously allows us sufficient for necessary Refreshment by Sleep in the Night, and some Ease or Recreation in the Day; yet if we indulge ourselves so much in any of these, as to hinder, instead of advancing our principal Design, it is to be feared our righteous Judge will sentence us, with the Appellation of wicked and slothful Servants at the last Day. For certainly he deserves no better a Character, who being in a State of Health and Strength, squanders away his Time in those Diversions, which are the proper Entertainment of none but sickly and infirm Constitutions.

In the Choice of our *Recreations* we should do well to prefer such, as are not only lawful in their own Nature, but likewise safe in their Tendencies. There are Games or Sports of several Sorts, which for the matter of them are not sinful; but yet they commonly prove the Occasions of many gross Enormities, because those who use them, grow too much in Love with them; they hazard too much on the Chance of them, so as to impoverish their Families, and deprive their Posterity of the Inheritance they were born to; they practise the Arts of Cheating and Lying; out of an immoderate Desire of Gain: This leads them into Quarrels, which are attended with Imprecations, Oaths and Blasphemies, and sometimes with Bloodshed and Loss of Life.

For these Reasons, the wiser and better Sort of Persons are very sparing in the Use even of lawful Games; and chuse rather to divert themselves with friendly Visits and innocent Conversation, or else to exchange a more knotty and painful, for a more easy and pleasant Kind of Study. Thus it is reported

ported of Bishop (*a*) *Sanderſon*, that while he was a Country Clergyman, when his Thoughts were harraſſed with any perplexed Studies, in which he was much exerciſed, he would divert himſelf with reading Genealogies and Heraldry. And his very Recreation had made him ſo perfect in them, that he could in a very ſhort Time give an Account of the Deſcent, Arms and Antiquity of any of the Nobility or Gentry of this Nation. Many others by thus mixing Profit with their Pleaſure, have much improved and accompliſhed themſelves in their moſt leiſure Hours.

C H A P. VI.

D U T I E S P E C U L I A R

To the R I C H, &c.

THOSE whom God hath been pleaſed to bleſs with Plenty of all Things in this World, are to take care, 1. That their RICHES be not made the Inſtruments of Vice and Sin. 2. That they manage them ſo as to be the Means of doing much good in the World.

Fiſt, *rich Men* muſt take heed that the Portion of good Things God hath entrusted them with, be not perverted to the Service of Sin and Satan.

(*a*) See his Life by J. Walton.

There are many pernicious Lusts which attend a prosperous and wealthy State. It is hard for a Man to possess much, and not to set his Heart too much upon it, not to be incumbered and distracted with worldly Cares and Business, so as to neglect his better Part, the Improvement of his spiritual Knowledge and Salvation of his Soul. *Riches* are apt to extinguish that lively Sense we ought to have of our continual Dependance on God; to puff us up with Pride, and persuade us that we are self-sufficient; they deaden our Zeal in Prayer, and choak the good Seed of God's Word sown in our Hearts. They serve as Fuel to sensual Affections, and carry debauched Persons through all their lewd Practices. They make ambitious Spirits insolent and apt to oppress their Inferiors. It is lamentable to observe how many Persons of high Birth and Fortune, especially in their youthful Blood, break through all the Laws of God and Man, in Confidence that their own Power and Greatness will protect them. Not only particular Families, but whole Nations and Empires have been ruined by too much Prosperity and Plenty. Thus it fared with the ancient State of *Rome*. While *Hannibal* and the *Carthaginian* Army hung over them like a Tempest, and kept them in Fear, they were eminently strict in the Practice of Religion and Virtue. But when the *Roman* Arms prevailed against *Carthage*, so far as to have it intirely at their Disposal, some of their most prudent Counsellors declared against the utter Excision of it, fearing that the Bridle being once taken off, the *Roman* People would rush into all Manner of vicious and impious Courses; as indeed, upon the Removal of this Restraint, they quickly did. And the same Thing hath happened in *Christian*, as before in *Pagan Rome*. Its gross Errors and Corruptions have grown up when the Storms of Persecution were blown over, and a long Tranquillity and Sunshine of

of Prosperity succeeded. And may we not fetch a like Instance from the People of *Israel*, when those Thorns in their Sides, the old Inhabitants of *Canaan* were quite extirpated? How did their Fulness and Security make them forget their Almighty Deliverer and Benefactor? Notwithstanding that solemn Precaution given them by *Moses*, (a) *When thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly Houses and dwelt therein: and when thy Herds and thy Flocks multiply, and thy Silver and thy Gold, and all that thou hast is multiplied: then beware that thou forget not the Lord thy God; and say in thine Heart, My Power, and the Might of mine Hand hath gotten me this Wealth.* And thus I might proceed to the End of the Prophets, and thence to the Evangelists and Apostles, in all which we find this Lesson constantly inculcated, That we must not set our Hearts upon Riches; that they are apt to alienate our Affections from God, and make it hard for us to enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; that we cannot serve God and Mammon; that if any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him: With much more to the same Purpose, intimating how dangerous an easy and plentiful Estate is to our spiritual Welfare. I shall only add the modern Censure of that judicious Divine (b) *Dr. Hammond*, who living to see the Ruin of *Monarchy* and *Episcopacy* in this Nation, and heartily wishing they might both be restored, yet observed withal, “ That Persecution
 “ was generally the happiest State of the Church;
 “ that she then grew fastest, when she was pruned
 “ most. That all Kind of Prosperity, even that
 “ which we think we can most justify, the flourishing
 “ ing of a *Church* and *Monarchy*, is treacherous and
 “ dangerous; and nothing so intirely safe and whole-

(a) *Deut.* viii. 11. (b) *See his Life Fol.* p. 28.

“ some, as to be continued under God’s Disciplines.
 “ That those who are not bettered by such Methods,
 “ would certainly be intoxicated and destroyed by
 “ the pleasanter Draughts.”

The Folly of many rich Men is prodigious, in that they esteem their *Wealth* as the greatest of Blessings. They stick at nothing, so they may but add to their Heaps. If they have any God, it is the Mammon of Unrighteousness, who commands their Obedience against all the Laws of Piety and Virtue. When the rapacious *Pharisees* heard our blessed Lord preach against Covetousness, they derided him. But, alas! Multitudes who by Baptism were made his Disciples, do the same every Day. They despise those *Doctrines* which recommend Spiritual above Temporal good Things, and represent Earth as nothing in comparison of Heaven. They think it some lessening of their Greatness to submit to the Rules of Religion, and betray any Fear of God. And yet without his Love and Favour, how empty are all their Riches? They cannot deliver them from the Hands of their Enemies, nor give them a Body free from Diseases and Pains, nor release the Mind from guilty Fears, and importunate Lusts and Passions, which are the Bane of all outward Enjoyments. Indeed, if we consider Things aright, we shall find, that Riches are but an Adjunct, not the prime, fundamental Cause of worldly Happiness. There must be *Mens sana in corpore sano*, a good Conscience and a sound Constitution, before a Man can have a true Relish of any Thing he enjoys. But before all these, we must endeavour to make God gracious and favourable to us, and then we may be happy, though denied the good Things of this Life, or deprived of them by the various Changes and Accidents which daily happen in the World.

The

The only Advantage which the *rich Man* hath above the *Poor*, is, the good Use he makes of his *Riches*; not in taking his Fill of sensual Pleasures, and exalting himself like the unjust Judge in the Gospel, above the Laws of God and Man; but in procuring, as much as in him lies, the Welfare of all Men, beginning with his own Family, and forming all such as are under his Charge, to the best Principles of Religion and Virtue. And here I cannot but with Grief observe, how unfortunate our Nation too commonly is, in young Gentlemen of good Quality and Fortune, who instead of being an Honour, are a Reproach and Blemish to the Place they fill; who glory in their Shame, and are odious Examples of Vice and Lewdness. This casts a severe, but just Reflection on the Management of their Parents, who did not take care to have their tender Years seasoned with right Notions of *God* and *Religion*, but ventured them abroad in the World, without the sovereign Antidote of wholesome Instructions against the Infection of wicked Men. Surely if these Parents had any Love, I will not say for the Souls, but the Bodies and Estates of their Children, they would take care to educate them in such virtuous Rules, as might, in all Probability, restrain them from Gaming, Intemperance, Uncleaness, and other Vices; for the Principles of Religion will teach Men to debar themselves from many expensive Vices, and so by this Means save a great Part of their Estates, and likewise preserve their Bodies from those Diseases which are the necessary Effects of Debauchery, and cut them off in the Strength and Flower of their Age. I shall hardly be allowed to urge the Wounds, and Stains which Vice leaves upon the sacred Character of Honour. Yet Books of *Heraldry* will inform us, that as Coats of Arms were at first obtained by some brave and virtuous Action, so in those best Times, they were liable to forfeiture

by a profligate Life. *Ob scelera & vitæ turpitudinem honestæ Nobilitatis decore privetur*, says the Law, *quia nulla sine honestate Nobilitas*. But the Degeneracy of later Ages hath in a great measure superseded such good Laws, and left Honour in Conjunction with the most odious Vices.

However, a plentiful Estate meeting with a truly great and virtuous Soul, affords extraordinary Opportunities of doing Service both to God and Man, which is the second Thing that every *rich Person* is to propose to himself. Is a Man's Lot fallen in a fair Ground? Hath he a goodly Heritage? Doth his Cup overflow with the Oil of Joy and Gladness? Is his Station in the high Places of Honour and Power? What a large Field hath he of Praises and Thanksgivings to the King of Kings, and Lord of Lords, whose Hand dispenseth the Blessings of this Life, taking them from one, and giving them to another! who is pleased to make him one of his principal Stewards, intrusting him with the greatest Number of Talents, and thereby giving him an Opportunity to purchase to himself an exceeding great Reward in the Kingdom of Heaven. How much is it in his Power to advance true Religion and Virtue in the World, by heartily embracing them himself, and thereby recommending them to others who are under his Influence, and will be determined in their Practice by his Example! What a glorious Instrument may he be in God's Hands, of dispensing Blessings of all Sorts round about him, by imparting some of his Goods to feed the Hungry, cloath the Naked, ransom the Prisoner, and encourage every pious and useful Design! How happily may his Sagacity defeat the Wiles of fraudulent and malicious Men, and maintain the Cause of defenceless Innocence against the mighty Oppressor! Indeed there is no outward Calamity we can think
of,

of, but Wealth and Power in the Hands of a good Man, will administer Relief to it. But then with regard to himself, the *great Man* hath Opportunities to illustrate those Virtues which can hardly appear in a low Fortune. In the midst of the Ornaments and Ensigns of Honour, to be Meek and Condescending; in Crowds of Flatterers and Admirers, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; to be temperate at a Table which abounds with the most powerful Temptations to Luxury, and Chaste and Modest where no Opportunities are wanting to be otherwise: These are Virtues which merit the Praise and Admiration of all Men, and give him a near Resemblance to the Author and Fountain of all Goodness.

Let but *rich Men* thus endeavour to make themselves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, by expending it in such a Way as may provide them Bags which wax not old, a Treasure in the Heavens. Let them use this World as not abusing it, considering that the Fashion of it passeth away, and that in a short Time they must possess no more of it, than the poorest Beggar. Let them remember, That how high soever they may be in the World, yet they are always in the View of that glorious Being who is exalted infinitely more above them, than they are above the meanest of their Brethren: And that, however they may abound in all Things, they have nothing but what they received from him, who sees how they employ it, and will reckon with them for it; and though he is no Respector of Persons, yet he is a strict Observer of every Man's Works; according to the Goodness and Greatness of which, he will proportion his everlasting Rewards. If *rich Men* would but act agreeably to these Considerations, they would not suffer their Advancements and Grandeur to minister to their
Pride

Pride and Vain-glory; and they might, with him who had well improved the greatest Number of Talents, obtain the first and highest Places in the heavenly Kingdom of their LORD.

(a) Set then your Affections on Things above, not on Things on the Earth. Mortify therefore your Members, &c. inordinate Affections, evil Concupiscence, and Covetousness, which is Idolatry. (b) The rich Man said to his Soul, Thou hast much Goods, laid up for many Years; take thine Ease, eat, drink, and be merry: But God said unto him, Thou Fool! this Night thy Soul shall be required of thee; then whose shall those Things be, which thou hast provided? So is he who layeth up Treasure for himself, and is not rich towards God. (c) But thou, O Man! flee these Things. Charge them who be rich in this World, That they be not High-minded, nor Trust in uncertain Riches, but in the Living GOD; who giveth all Things richly to enjoy, that they do good, that they be rich in good Works, ready to distribute, laying up for themselves a good Foundation against the Time to come, that they may lay hold on eternal Life.

(a) Col. iii. 2. 5. (b) Luke xii. 19, 20. (c) 1 Tim. vi. 6.



D U T I E S

Proper to the P O O R E R Sort.

AS for the *Poorer Sort of People*, they are represented by the Servant who was intrusted with one Talent; and in him they may learn, that the smallness of their Trust, will not excuse their Neglect of it, but they shall be strictly accountable for that common Capacity with which God hath endued them, the Faith of *Jesus Christ*, whereunto he hath called them, and the Opportunities he affords them to improve the Gifts of Nature and Grace, by the publick Ministry, as well as by religious Conversation, Reading or hearing in Private. To those who must live by the Sweat of their Brows, and the Labour of their Hands, God hath given six Days in seven for the Exercise of their ordinary Callings; reserving but one of this Number to himself, called therefore the LORD'S DAY; which is the Weekly return of their publick Worship, when they must wholly lay aside their worldly Affairs, and apply themselves seriously to the Care and Concern of a better Life. Not that they are supposed to live without God in all their Thoughts all the rest of their Days. What Man living is there but may spare a quarter of an Hour at a time, or something more, every Morning and Evening, to confess his Sins to God, to praise him for his Mercies, and to implore his Gracious and Fatherly Protection from all Dangers
Ghostly

Ghostly and Bodily? Who can want time to invoke the Blessing of God upon his bodily Food, as often as he receives it, and to render him Praise and Thanks for the same? How many Hours in a Week are commonly squandered away by the most indigent and laborious Persons, either in downright Inactivity, or vain, unprofitable Discourse? and can they want Leisure to lift up their Hearts to God in Prayer, and devout Meditations and Conferences? However they may delude themselves and the World with such Pretences, yet the Searcher of Hearts will not be so deceived: *He knows their down sitting, and their uprising, and understands all their ways*; and how much room they have for spiritual Things, even in the Course of their daily Life. (a) *These Words, saith he, which I command thee, shall be in thine Heart, and thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy Children, and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine House, and when thou walkest by the Way, and when thou liest down, and thou risest up.* Were the common People among the *Jews* obliged to this habitual Piety and Devotion, and can we think that the Professors of a more excellent and refined Way of Worship are more at Liberty to be carnally minded? Surely No; *St. Paul* pronounces it as an universal Truth, *That to be carnally minded is Death*; and therefore he requires all Christians to mortify their carnal Lusts, and to set their Affections on things Above. And *Christ* saith unto the People who followed him for the Loaves: *Labour not for the Meat that perisheth, but for that Meat which endureth unto everlasting Life.*

We cannot consider the Character of a true Christian Spirit, but we must sadly bewail the Degeneracy of the Vulgar at this Day, and the monstrous Growth

(a) *Deut. vi. 6.*

of those Vices which are a flat Contradiction to it. Things are come to that pass, that he is esteemed a very good Man, who hath kept the negative Part of the *Commandments*; if he hath not robbed or defrauded his Neighbour; if he be free from those mean Vices of Drunkenness, prophane Swearing and Cursing, obscene and filthy Discourse, which though they sink Men as low as the Brutes, yet are they so common among the lowest Rank of Men, that they hardly take them to be any Faults at all; nay, sometimes they are so infatuated, as to glory and pride themselves in them, as if they were rare and valuable Accomplishments.

Indeed it is Pity, since the divine Judgments due to these Sins are not commonly executed in this World, there are not more severe and frequent Inflictions of those Temporal Punishments enacted by the Civil Authority. If they could not in Time change the Hearts of Men, they would at least restrain them from wounding religious Ears with their outrageous Tongues, and from encouraging the younger Sort by their lewd Examples to run with them into the same Excesses of Riot. And if to the due Execution of these Laws, were added the voluntary, unanimous Resolution of those who keep domestic Servants, and employ Labourers, not to entertain any in their Business, who after sufficient Admonition, should presumptuously offend in any of the aforesaid Respects, we might then hope to see a People more worthy of the Christian Name, and be less apprehensive of those publick Judgments, and that fiery Indignation which we justly fear should break forth upon a sinful Nation.

It is a deplorable Argument of the Decay of Christian Faith amongst Men, that the *poorer Sort* who have little or no Hopes of enjoying the Happiness of this Life, are no more concerned for that which is to come. To be miserable both in Soul and Body, to
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be despised of Men and hated of God, is a Condition so forlorn and destitute, that we may well wonder how any thinking Man can support himself under it without Distraction. But when the Poor in this World are rich in Faith, when they look for an Inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven, and live so as to secure to themselves the Favour and Love of God, then their afflicted, despised Condition cannot be irksome to them, but rather a Sign that they are in the straight Way and narrow Path that leadeth to everlasting Life: then they will bear their Poverty, not only with Patience but Cheerfulness, and bless God for conforming them in this Respect to the Image of his Son *Jesus Christ*, who though he was rich, yet for our Sakes he became poor, and thereby hath sanctified and honoured the low Estate.

I N F E R E N C E S from the foregoing
C O N S I D E R A T I O N S ;

With some RULES for avoiding those SINS
we are most inclined to.

HA V I N G now seen the infinite Concernment of a sober and virtuous Life, with Respect to our Welfare in this World as well as the next: It remains in the last Place, to add some necessary Motives to arm ourselves with unchangeable Resolutions against all the Temptations that may offer to pervert us.

It is a shameful Disparagement both of Faith and Understanding, to accept of any Honour, Profit, or Pleasure,

Pleasure, which this World can afford, as an Equivalent for our Interest in the Love of God, and that heavenly Inheritance which he hath entailed on our Obedience. Let the present Advantages be ever so great, if they are inconsistent with any Part of our Duty, we may reject them with this Answer, That we shall be unspeakable Losers by them. What would it profit us to gain the Friendship of all Mankind, with the Forfeiture of the divine Favour? To fill our Houses with Silver and Gold, and at the same Time to lay ourselves under the heavy Curse of God's Wrath? It was the melancholy Reflection of a Prince's Favourite in Disgrace, that if he had been as careful to please his God, as he had been to flatter and humour his Prince in his irregular Courses, he would not have forsaken him in his old Age. No, God is infinitely more constant than any Patron on Earth; and his Love and Favour is like his Being, *everlasting*. *Moses* had a just Sense of this, when he *refused to be called the Son of Pharaoh's Daughter; esteeming the Reproach of Christ greater Riches than the Treasures of Egypt: for he had Respect unto the Recompence of Reward*: That Reward which would shortly commence in immortal Glory; and therefore did infinitely out-weigh the short lived Pleasures of Sin on the one Hand, and the as short Sufferings for a good Cause on the other. This easily determines a wise Man in his Choice, and even an ill Man in his Judgment. For *Balaam* who served for the Wages of Unrighteousness, yet wished his End might be like one of the Servants of God, and that he might *die the Death of the Righteous*. But the Reward of resisting Temptation is not always deferred to another Life: a great and victorious Virtue hath been crowned even in this World. Had not *Joseph* been more afraid of sinning against God, than offending his wanton Mistress, he had never risen out of his Vassalage, to be *Pharaoh's* prime Minister, and Lord
of

of all *Ægypt*. When any *Temptation* offers itself, let us say with him, *How can I do this great Wickedness, and sin against God?* and with *Solomon*, *My Son, if Sinners entice thee, consent thou not.* That which is truly honourable and virtuous (says one of the Philosophers) stands its Ground; it is still taking deeper Root, and spreading larger Branches; but whatever is besides the Principles of Conscience and Honesty, is very apt to vanish, and drops like Blossoms in the Spring. An Observation so very like that of the *Psalmist*, that it is fit they should be put together. (a) *I have seen the Wicked in great Power, and spreading himself like a green Bay-Tree; yet he passed away, and, lo! he was not: I sought him, but he could not be found. Mark the perfect Man, and behold the Upright: for the End of that Man is Peace.*

But it is not enough for us to make general Resolutions against *Temptations*: We must like Men in a besieged City, observe where we are the weakest, and employ our strongest forces about such Places. Thus he who hath been guilty of Excesses in Drinking, should not venture himself into Company, which is likely to run beyond the Bounds of Moderation. He who is apt to be criminal in his Love of Women, should like *Job*, make a Covenant with his Eyes not to look too much upon them. That Person's Virtue is much to be suspected, who makes near approaches to pleasing *Temptations*. Can a Man take Fire in his Bosom, says *Solomon*, and his Cloaths not be burnt? It is almost as reasonable to hope that Fire will not burn, as that a Man shall escape innocent from that *Temptation* which he is inclined to, if he converses freely with it. Men of uncommon Prudence and Continnence, have yet chosen to keep out of the Influence of such alluring Objects. When

(a) *Psal.* xxxvii.

Ulysses failed by the *Sirens*, he ordered himself to be tied to the Mast, lest he should be drawn away by their singing. It is reported of *Agésilauſ* the *Lacedemonian*, that he refused to salute a beautiful Maid that was presented to him; and of *Cyrus* the *Persian*, that he would not see *Panthea*, another fair Woman. It is no lessening of any Man's Courage or Conduct, to own himself not invincible. Indeed all the Appetites and Passions of Man are implanted in him for very good Reasons; and it is fit they should be moved and wrought upon by their proper Objects. But when the Laws of Morality and Religion, make the Application of those Objects unlawful; then it is a Point of Wisdom to keep at a distance; and our daily Prayers teach it us; *Lead us not into Temptation.*

Finally, Examine yourself how far you have been Active as well as Passive in *Temptations*; in what Cases you have by Word or Example allured others to Lust or Intemperance, excited them to blind Rage, or hindered and discouraged them from the Practice of any Duty. And be as solicitous to bend them the other way, by shewing them your own and their Error, and inviting them to join with you in a serious Repentance; that so, however you have been Partaker in their Sins, you may be acquitted from bearing a Share in their Punishment.



THE END OF THE THIRD PART.

THE
Christian's Companion :

OR, THE

S U M

OF THE

Christian Religion.

P A R T IV.

CONTAINING OUR

D U T Y

TO OUR

NEIGHBOUR.

—*Thou shalt Love thy NEIGHBOUR as THY-
SELF. Matt. xxii. 39.*

D U B L I N :

Printed for JOS. SHEPPARD, Bookfeller, in SKINNER-ROW.

M,DCC,LXIX.

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

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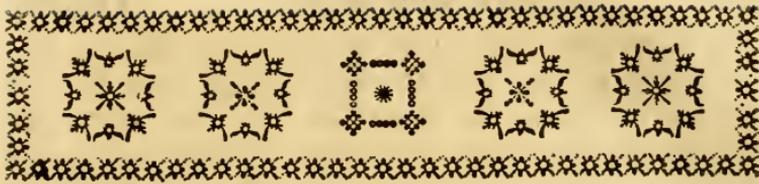
DEPARTMENT OF PHILOSOPHY

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OF OUR

DUTY

TO OUR

NEIGHBOUR.

PART IV. CHAP. I.

Some Considerations previous to Marriage.

BEFORE I come to speak of the DUTIES of the MARRIED STATE, it may not be amiss to premise a Word or two of ADVICE to such as are yet *single*, and under Deliberations of *changing their Condition*.

I cannot begin better than with recommending to them a serious and frequent Perusal of the *Office of MATRIMONY in our Service-Book*. For I think it very preposterous to engage in a solemn Covenant, before you have well considered what the Articles of

that Covenant are. And if you allow these a due Examination, you will be very careful what Sort of Person you chuse for your Consort. For upon this Choice the Happiness or Misery of your future Life depends. There is no putting off these Bonds at Pleasure: When once the Knot is tyed, it is like the *Gordian Knot*, which *Alexander*, after much Trouble to untie it, at last hewed in Pieces. It is no otherwise to be dissolved but by the Knife of Fate. And therefore, before you engage, it behoves you to see that you have an agreeable *Yoke-fellow*. How to know this before-hand, is indeed something difficult: Yet there are good Grounds to hope well, if you advance by fair and regular Steps; of which I will suggest to you some of the most considerable.

And first, having begged of GOD to direct you in this weighty Affair, resolve to make none the Partner of your Bed and Fortune, who will not readily concur with you in his Worship. I know it is common for Persons of different Principles in Religion, to marry together: But certainly they are more governed by carnal Motives, than by any Regard to Truth and Unity; and are either ignorant or forgetful of the Laws both of the *Old* and *New Testament*, which expressly prohibit this. *Moses* forbidding the People of *Israel* to have any Commerce with the *Canaanites*, peremptorily restrains them in this: (a) *Thou shalt not make Marriages with them: Thy Daughter thou shalt not give unto his Son; nor his Daughter shalt thou take unto thy Son. For they will turn away thy Sons from following me, that they may serve other Gods.* And in Prospect of the same fatal Consequence, *St. Paul* commands the converted

(a) *Deut.* vii. 3.

Corinthians, (a) *Not to be unequally yoked with Unbelievers*. Thus these prudent Law-givers would not venture to make Profelytes of the Heathen, by marrying their People with them. They were more apprehensive that the Wife might corrupt her Husband, than the Husband convert his Wife. And they knew that at best one principal End of conjugal Society would be defeated, which is, That the married Persons should join together in their Prayers, and mutually assist each other in all divine Offices, both public and private.

Next after *Religion*, the *Parentage* and *Education* of the Person should be regarded. For considering how many sinful Propensions there are in every one of us, a prudent Person will be careful in this Case, not to be joined to one, whose natural Stock hath been improved by corrupt Examples. A polluted Fountain cannot send forth pure Streams; neither, as our Lord justly reasons, do Men gather Grapes of Thorns, or Figs of Thistles. Children are very apt to imitate the Manners of their Parents, not only by a Communication of Natures, and the early Prepossessions of their tender Minds, but likewise upon the Authority of their Example. And though we do not by any Means own the Distinctions of Virtue and Vice to be founded in *Education*, yet the Inclinations to them most certainly are, and that so strongly, that oftentimes the clearest Convictions and united Forces of *Religion* and *Interest*, can never eradicate them. Hence we see some Vices as hereditary in Families, as their Estates and Honours.

Thirdly, In Matters of Estate and Fortune, the Candidates of *Matrimony* should be so far from promising more than can be performed; that on the

(a) 2 Cor. vi. 14.

contrary, I would advise them to represent their Circumstances rather meaner than what they really are. Whatever exceeds Expectation after Marriage, will prove a new Increase of Love and Satisfaction. Whereas to procure one's Fortune to be over-rated by common Fame, and insnare others with it, may prove at last the worst of Injuries. For a Man may not only deserve, but have real Occasion for that Portion of Money he depends on; and to be disappointed of it, may cast him into such Straits, as finally shall ruin his Credit and Dealings in the World.

But suppose the Mistake should not prove quite so destructive; yet why must Lovers lye at the Catch one for another, and be brought together by Cheat and Imposture? Why must a Woman's Portion be wrapt up in the Clouds, and made such an unspeakable Secret and Mystery? Is it because she doubts her personal Accomplishments will not sufficiently recommend her? Alas! he that courts the Fortune, rather than the Owner of it, will cool in his Affections proportionably as that wastes; and if it prove considerably less than was given out, nothing but Reproaches and ill Usage must be expected from his exasperated Spirit.

The like Fraud is no less criminal on the Man's Side, who knowing his Circumstances to be desperate, yet upon the Credit of his Estate or Stock, obtains a considerable Fortune by Marriage, which he consumes in his old licentious Courses, reducing himself to Exile or a Prison; and his Wife and Children (if she prove a Mother) to the Want of all Things at present, and the melancholy Prospect of continuing for ever in the same forlorn Condition.

Farther; A Man who understands his Happiness, will not be so fond of a great, as a good Fortune;
I mean,

I mean, what the Parents are justly possessed of, and can bestow upon their Child with a good Conscience. For though the Daughter be ever so innocent, as to her own Person, yet if her Parents endow her with the Fruits of their Fraud, Extortion, or Oppression, there is Reason to fear lest it should bring a Curse with it, and infect the rest of a Man's Substance. The divine Sentence passed upon such Riches, is, That they shall be consumed; and that while Parents are heaping up their unjust Gains for their Children, God lays up a Curse for them: And I doubt not but Observation will fully confirm the Truth of this.

But after all, though *Religion, Family, Education,* and *Fortune* should prove very good, yet there are some *Canonical Impediments* which may make it unlawful for a Couple to *marry*: as, a Pre-contract, or former Engagement of either Party to marry another Person; and certain Degrees of Kindred by Blood or Affinity; which, however you may be persuaded of in your own Mind, as to the Morality of them, yet while the *ecclesiastical Law* stands as it doth, they are not only Hindrances of *Marriage*, but Grounds of its Dissolution, even after it is solemnized. Besides, one of the Parties, if married by *Licence*, makes Oath, That there are none of these Impediments in their Case; and the *Minister* who marries them, adjures them, as they will answer it at the last Day, to confess, if they know of any Impediment, why they may not lawfully be joined together in Matrimony. And however they may forbear to discover it in Words, yet if they stifle Conscience when it cries out within them, they must not hope to prosper in a Marriage, which was obtained by prevaricating with GOD and Man.

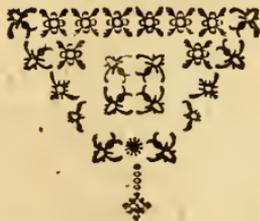
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When they find the Way clear from these Obstructions, if they are under the Power of Parents or Guardians, they must not presume to dispose of themselves in *Marriage* without their Advice and Consent. This is supposed by the Church in that Question, *Who giveth this Woman to be married to this Man?* And then her Father or Friend takes her by the Hand, and gives her to the Minister, and the Minister to the Bridegroom. Which though it be done to all Women, yet was, I doubt not, intended for such as have Parents or Guardians, to shew, that they cannot give away themselves. And the Licence says expressly, That without their Consent, *this shall be no Licence.* Indeed all Laws, not only of God and Nations, but of Nature itself, require this. A Man's Daughter is certainly nearer to him than any of his Goods; and therefore to insinuate with her, and steal first her Affections, and then her Person, is the highest Injury, and the worst kind of Robbery. Other Losses are retrievable; but this is a Damage which can never be repaired. Nay, you are her greatest Enemy, while you pretend to be her best Friend: You make her guilty of grievous Impiety against God and her Parents, by drawing her to the last Act of Disobedience, even to the breaking of their Hearts, if they be very tender of her. Instead of their Company, and Rejoycings, and Blessings at her Wedding, she is now carried from them by a clandestine Marriage, which commonly ends (by the just Judgment of God) in as much Sorrow to herself, as it created to them. The most passionate Lover often proves but an unkind Husband, and the Children when grown up, take the same Liberty to dispose of themselves.

On the other Hand, where Children have been merely passive, and resigned themselves to the Disposal of their Parents, their *Marriage* hath commonly been very prosperous; and there are two good Reasons

sons for it: 1. That divine Benediction which is the peculiar Portion of dutiful Children, bestowed on them by him who can easily make Husband and Wife amiable to each other, however they may appear to the rest of the World. 2. It is highly probable that Parents will make better Matches for their Children, than they can themselves; because Parents act by Reason: They have tryed the State already, and know what makes it comfortable or otherwise; they will take Care of Circumstances, Temper, Reputation, and every thing that is requisite. Whereas young Persons are unexperienced, and more intent upon Beauty, Gallantry, and an agreeable Conversation, by which they are diverted from those Things which are more durable and essential to a happy Life.

These are the *Precautions* which I had to offer, in order to make a Wife an happy Choice in *Marriage*. I now proceed to consider the *Duties* of such as are already in that State.



Of Relative D U T I E S.

C H A P. II.

Of HUSBANDS to their WIVES.

AS a Man should be cautious in chusing a WIFE, so he must be constant in loving her; and that not with a common Degree of Love, but as his own Body, or as Christ loveth his Church; both which Measures of Love St. Paul inculcates in the fifth Chapter of his Epistle to the *Ephesians*; observing in the one Instance, That *Christ gave himself*, that is, laid down his Life, *for the Church*; and in the other, *That no Man ever yet hated his own Flesh, but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the Church*. Which fully proves that Conjugal Love is indispensably necessary both by the Laws of Nature and Religion.

And indeed, Experience testifies, That no Marriage Duty can be well performed without Love. For the Man having taken the Woman from her Friends and Relations, and, by making her his Wife, acquired a full Power and Authority over her Body and Goods; if this Power be tempered with Love, it will degenerate into Tyranny, and the Woman is reduced to the worst State of Slavery; a Slavery incapable of the Benefit of Redemption, and not be terminated by any thing but Death. But God and Nature

ture have so ordered it, that the *Husband* cannot abuse his Wife, but at the same time he hurts and punishes himself. For his own Happiness consists in mutual Returns of Love from his Wife. But what Pleasure can he take in finding himself loved by her, if he hath no just Value and Esteem for her? What Fetters must the Bonds of Matrimony be to him, who is daily fretted and galled by them, and forcibly held to the Society of a Person, with whom he has united in Affection? This therefore is the first and main Ground of Conjugal Felicity, That *Husbands love their Wives*.

Now I take it for granted, That this Love was begun, and the Flame of it sufficiently kindled before Marriage; so that the Man voluntarily binds himself in the most publick Manner, and most sacred Terms, to leave all other Women for the sake of this: To live with her, love her, comfort her, honour and maintain her in every Condition and State of Life. The Question is, By what means these good Promises may best be performed, and Love continued according to these Beginnings?

I *Answer*; Love is undoubtedly maintained by the same Respects and Endearments which first gave it Life. If these fail, it is as natural for Love to pine and fall into a Consumption, as it is for a Ship to slacken its Course upon the falling of the Wind; or the Fire to decay when it is not supplied with Fuel. One may justly wonder at the high Professions of Kindness Lovers usually make to each other, and the thin Harvest of Performances afterwards: As if the State of Matrimony were another World, and all that entered into it, drank of the River *Lethe*, and forgot whatever they had said before.

Let but the *Husband* carry the same good Looks towards his Wife, and speak to her in the same endearing Language, and be as ready to oblige her in all his Actions, as he was before Marriage, and he
will

will unquestionably maintain the Character of a loving and tender *Husband*. He will then bear with her Infirmities, kindly accept of all her good Offices, and wisely encourage her in them, by giving her due Praise and Commendations. He will not exact more of her than she is able to perform, nor deny her any reasonable and modest Request, nor be too parsimonious and strait-handed. He will be far from all Bitterness, and not use any sharp Reproofs, but upon very great and weighty Occasions. The *Husband*, it must be owned, hath an Authority over his Wife, which he may exercise by Commands, Reproofs, Instructions, Admonitions, as Need shall require. (a) *The Man is the Image and Glory of God*: He is the Head of his Wife, and the Governor of his Family, and therefore any Neglect in him is very dishonourable to God, and pernicious to those committed to his Charge, because he hath none in his House who can over-rule him, and correct his Errors. But he must not treat his Wife as his Servant. Her Inferiority is such as comes near to an Equality with him, and makes it unreasonable for him to be imperious and lofty. He must remember, that she is his Yoke-fellow, and by the Laws and Consent of all Countries, the Mistress of the House, the Affairs whereof are under her Direction and Management: In which Province he must support her by his Authority, and protect her against the Insolence of Servants; treating her himself with such Respect, and asserting her Right with such Strictness, as may make them in awe of her. This *St. Paul* might have an Eye to, when he said, *Giving Honour unto thy Wife, as unto the weaker Vessel*; that the Weakness of her Sex may be set above Contempt, and secured from Injuries by the Honour and Esteem which her *Husband* pays her.

(a) 1 Cor. xi. 7.

It is a great Mistake in *Husbands* to think their Superiority over their Wives cannot be maintained without supercilious Looks and imperious Language. To be obeyed more out of Fear than Love, is the Condition of a Tyrant, and is neither safe nor pleasant. Much less can their Authority consist with a licentious, profligate way of Living. A *Husband* who is addicted to Drunkenness, or any kind of Lewdness or Debauchery, must become odious to his Wife, as well as to the World, and (a) *teach her an evil Lesson against himself*, as one expresses it, by opening a Door to the like wicked Practices. So likewise a peevish and morose Temper in the *Husband*, sours the Spirit of the Wife, and makes her odious and distasteful in her Conversation.

If therefore the *Husband* consults his own Ease and Comfort, he will not be too rigid a Censurer of his Wife's Actions, nor apt to entertain Jealousies and Suspicions of her; nor by rash and hasty Expressions provoke and offend her; but with Mildness convince her of her Error, rather intreating than commanding her, covering her Infirmities, and in no Case exposing her to the Contempt and Reproach of the World.

These are short Hints of a *Husband's* Duty towards his Wife. I will not meddle with the Laws of the Marriage-Bed, which will not fail to be observed under the Influence of true conjugal Affection. Indeed when these are once grossly violated, by the *Husband's* withdrawing himself from the Bed of his Wife, either out of Aversion to her, or for the criminal Love of some other of her Sex, the Bonds of Marriage are in Effect dissolved, the Relation is at an End, and the Terms of *Husband* and *Wife* become insignificant.

(a) *Ecclus. ix. 1.*

D U T I E S of W I V E S to their
H U S B A N D S.

THE Covenant which every *Wife* voluntarily engages in to her *Husband*, is, To obey him, serve him, love, honour, and keep him; and, forsaking all others, to keep only to him. Now this is not a late Invention of the Church, as some querulous Persons seem to fancy, but it appears that the very End and Design of the Woman's Creation was for the Service of Man. (a) *It is not good (said God) that Man should be alone: I will make an Help meet for him.* And afterwards he declares to the Woman her Condition, in these Words: (b) *Thy Desire shall be to thy Husband, and he shall rule over thee.* Upon which St. Paul grounds her Subjection, and enjoins her Obedience in several Places, particularly, *Ephes. v. 22. Wives, submit yourselves unto your own Husbands; as unto the Lord. For the Husband is the Head of the Wife, even as Christ is the Head of the Church. Therefore, as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let the Wives be to their own Husbands in every Thing.* 1 Tim. ii. 11, 12, 13, 14. *Let the Woman learn in Silence with all Subjection. But I suffer not a Woman to teach, nor to usurp Authority over the Man, but to be in Silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the Woman being deceived was in the Transgression.* This Pre-eminence

(a) Gen. ii. 18.

(b) Gen. iii. 16.

of the Man is requisite by the Laws of Nature, being founded upon that Strength, Sufficiency and Majesty of the one Sex; and the Softness and Weakness of the other.

This being the plain Duty of the *Wife*, she must have an affectionate Love for, and due Esteem of her Husband, as the Root and Ground of her Submission. No Honour or antecedent Dignity in the *Wife*, no Superiority of Birth, Education, Fortune, or Parts, can discharge her from Subjection to her Husband: Whatever Disadvantages may be in his Condition, or Person, whatever his Infirmities, (not depriving him of his Reason) or Mistakes and Errors in Religion, there always lies an Obligation upon his *Wife*, from the Laws of her Creation, from the Ordinance of God, and from her own solemn Vow in Marriage, to love, honour, obey; and serve him.

The Circumstances which must attend the Performance of these Duties, are, Complacency, Cheerfulness; Modesty and Humility. The *Wife* must resolve to be content with her Husband's Fortune; which, if it be but narrow, she must be the more frugal in the Management of it; and rather study to increase it by her Diligence, than waste it by Slothfulness or Luxury in Diet or Apparel. Solomon's Character of a good Wife, is, (a) *That her Husband's Heart doth safely trust in her. She will do him good, and not evil; all the Days of her Life. She riseth while it is yet Night, and giveth Meat to her Household*, by her well ordering and improving every Thing to the best Advantage. She studies not her own Features, so much as the Beauty of her Family; and her greatest Pleasure is, to see a commendable Provision of all Necessaries in it. Moreover, as her Concerns are altogether at Home, so she will think it a modest and

(a) *Prov.* xxxi.

decent Thing to refrain from too frequent Visits ; and then, more especially, when her Husband is absent ; rather delighting to employ herself in the Affairs of her own Family, which is her peculiar Province, than to interfere in those of her Neighbours.

The Obedience of the *Wife* is shewn in a chearful and ready Compliance with her Husband's Requests ; she takes Care that whatever he wants, be done for him forthwith in the most kind and obliging Manner. If he expresses his Dislike of any Thing, she endeavours to rectify it : If he agrees not to any Undertaking of her's, she easily desists. All this she doth with such agreeable Looks and becoming Language, as makes her Husband easy in his own Mind, honoured by all his Family and Friends about him ; and herself esteemed as an affectionate and prudent *Wife*, and a great Blessing to her Husband and Children.

For a Woman to think that she lessens herself by this mild and submissive Carriage, is a most absurd and pernicious Imagination. Whether it be suggested to her by some false Friends and dissolute Companions, or flow from her own Pride and Self-Conceit, it does her infinite Mischief, making her imperious and perverse, disrespectful and froward to her Husband, whose Affections are thereby alienated from her, and the Family filled with Quarrels and Contentions, and all Manner of Disorder. Whereas the mild, complying *Wife* governs while she submits, winning the Heart of her Husband by her gentle and courteous Behaviour, so that he hath no Power to deny her any reasonable Request.

If the *Wife* object against the Husband's Commands, as carrying but little Sense or Reason with them, let her review the Rule of her Obedience, which binds her to Subjection in *every Thing* ; that is, in every Thing not contrary to God's Will, who put her in this State of Subjection. The more irrational
and

and arbitrary his Demands are, the greater is the Merit and Praise of her Obedience in complying with them. In the *Eastern* Countries, where washing the Feet was a servile Office, as we learn from the Gospel, yet the *Wife* was not exempted from it: We are told that this was reckoned among the Services due from her to her Husband. And sure she could not think it too mean a Condescension, after our Lord had stooped so low as to wash the Feet of his own Disciples.

As the Union between *Husband* and *Wife* is the strictest that can be, they two being one Flesh, so their Interests, Credit, and Reputation, are inseparable: And therefore it is needless to caution the *Wife*, that she carefully conceal the Infirmities of her Husband; since she cannot expose him to the World, without bringing a Shame and Reproach upon herself.

C H A P. III.

D U T I E S of P A R E N T S to their C H I L D R E N.

TH E R E is nothing in the *Decalogue*, or *Ten Commandments*, of any Duty which *Parents* owe to their *Children*. Not that there is no such Thing; but for Brevity's Sake, it is omitted, as being less necessary to be enjoined, than that other of *Children* to their *Parents*. For *Parents* have the strongest Arguments imaginable, natural Affection,

common Prudence, and the Fear of God, to incite them to do all good Offices both to the Souls and Bodies of their Children, who, by Reason of their tender Years, cannot take Care of themselves.

The first Thing that Parents have to do, is, that in Case the Mother be incapable of nursing her own Children, they provide a good Nurse; for it is an undoubted Observation, that Infants suck in the Distempers and ill Humours of unhealthful Nurses.

When Children are grown up, it ought to be the serious Care both of Parents, and those who, at Baptism, take upon them the Charge and Office of Parents, who have bound themselves by solemn Vows in the Presence of God and his Church, to see that those for whom they are Sureties, be instructed in all those Things which a Christian ought to know, and believe for the Good of his Soul; that they be brought up to lead a Godly and Religious Life. Every such Person doth, by the very Nature of the Engagement into which he enters, say unto God, what *Judah* said unto *Israel* his Father, *I will be Surety for the Child; of my Hand shalt thou require him; if I bring him not unto thee, and set him before thee, let me bear the Blame.*

Because *Parents* may be wanting in this Part of their Duty, there are several Injunctions laid on them, though not in the *Second Table*, yet in other Places of Scripture, for the well educating and managing of their Children. The most comprehensive is that of the Apostle, (a) *Fathers, provoke not your Children to Wrath; but bring them up in the Nurture and Admonition of the Lord.* In which Words they are directed with what Temper they ought to manage their Children; and in what Things to instruct them:

(a) *Ephes. vi. 4.*

Which two Rules well observed, make up the Character of *good Parents*.

As to the *Temper* of *Parents* in governing their Children, there are two Extreams which they commonly run into ; Severity on the one Hand, and Indulgence on the other.

Children, it is commonly presumed, are oftner spoiled by the Lenity and Fondness of their *Parents*, than by a harsh and over-rigorous Discipline. With this ill Oeconomy God charges *Eli* the Priest, that (a) *his Sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not*. Yet he reprov'd them with grave and serious Language, shewing them withal, the Danger of their impious Courses. *Nay, my Sons : For it is no good Report which I hear of you. Ye make the Lord's People to transgress. If one Man sin against another, the Judge shall judge him : But if a Man sin against the Lord, who shall entreat for him ?* This, I am afraid, is more than some Christian Parents do for their Children ; yet this did not acquit *Eli*, because it did not reform his Sons. They were hardened Men, vehemently addicted to youthful Lusts, and not to be reclaimed by the soft Reproofs of a mild, indulgent Father. He should have animadverted on them with the utmost Indignation and Displeasure, and have made them smart under all the Punishments he could inflict, either as a Parent, or High-Priest, until he had effectually reformed them, or removed them from their sacred Office. In Cases of Hardness and Obstinacy, *Solomon*, who perfectly understood the Duty of a Parent, advises to use Severity. *Foolishness*, says he, (b) *is bound in the Heart of a Child ; but the Rod of Correction shall drive it far from him*. (c) *He that spareth the Rod, hateth his Son : But he that*

(a) 1 Sam. iii. (b) Prov. xxii. 15. (c) Prov. xiii. 24.

loveth him, chasteneth him betimes. (a) Chasten thy Son while there is yet Hope; and let not thy Soul spare for his Crying.

Notwithstanding, Severity is not to be equally exercised upon all Sorts of Children. That which will not bend some stubborn Spirits, will too much oppress and crush others of a finer Frame. The Temper and Disposition of the Mind must be studied as carefully as that of the Body, and the Applications of Discipline and Correction, must be like that of Physick; whereof a Dose but strong enough to carry off the noxious Humours of a robust Constitution, would prey upon the Vitals, and destroy the very Life of a weak one. Some free and ingenuous Natures there are, which never want a Spur, but as soon as they understand what their Parents or Governors require, they readily set about it, and are never better pleased than when they perceive they have satisfied them. Now such Children as these, if they happen to commit an Error, must be kindly and gently admonished of it, and set right again.

To exclaim at them in great Commotion, and terrify them with passionate Threatenings; to quarrel at them, and reproach them for every Mistake; to be apt to strike them hastily, and in Anger; to abound in Punishments, and be very sparing of Rewards: This Kind of Nurture would strangely discourage Children of a tractable and generous Mind, who study nothing so much as how to recommend themselves to the Favour of their Parents and Masters. This would make them despair of ever being able to please, when they had endeavoured so often, and never found Acceptance. It would fully the Brightness, and imbitter the Sweetness of their in-

(a) *Prov. xix. 18.*

nocent Souls; it would fill them with Melancholy, make them peevish and ill-humoured, cast a Damp upon their virtuous Inclinations, cause their Hearts to swell against their Parents, and provoke them to indecent, undutiful Language. In short, the unreasonable Harshness and Rigour of Parents, creates in their tender Children an Aversion to those good Things which they labour to instill into them, when they find that the Learning of them is made such a bitter Task, and intolerable Drudgery.

This then I conceive to be the Sum of the *Parents Duty* with reference to the Nurture and Usage of their Children. As you must not suffer any Sin or ill Manners to grow up with them, for want of sufficient and seasonable Corrections; so take care to make yourselves in the general, easy and agreeable to your Children. Do not carry it towards them with that habitual Spleen and Bitterness, as if you hated them, and esteemed them your greatest Burdens and Grievances; for that is the Way to make their Spirits rise against you, and to render their Behaviour towards you less reverent and endearing, than what you expect and wish to see in them. Do not teach them even good Things with too much Acrimony and Violence; for that is the Way to turn their Minds against them, to be very uneasy at the mentioning of them, and to dread the Times when they are usually called to an Account about them. Do not be too apt to tease them with the ungrateful Remembrance of their past Faults, or to strike them with surprizing Vehemency and Wrath upon the immediate Commission of any wrong Thing; or to bind heavy Tasks and Burdens upon them, and rarely encourage them with pleasing Looks, or kind Words and suitable Rewards. But let your Treatment of them be such as may preserve and improve their good Temper, render

your Commands delightful to them, and fully convince them that all the Restraints you lay upon them, and Tasks you injoin them, are indispensably necessary for their good, and that you do in all Things earnestly consult the Welfare of their Souls and Bodies.

Having thus far considered the Conduct and Temper to be used in the Education of Children, let us next take a short View of the Things most necessary for them to be instructed in.

The first Thing Children should be taught, is the Knowledge of God; and that Knowledge is most easily infused into them by the Reading and Hearing of the Holy Scriptures. For no Books are more intelligible than the practical Parts of these sacred Writings; and no Histories more admirable and delightful. It is the Advice of a judicious and learned Father (and Reason subscribes to the Goodness of it) that young Children should be acquainted with these divine Precepts and Histories, before profane Tales and Fables are put into their Hands, and imprinted on their tender Minds.

2. Let Children be constantly instructed in that judicious, sound, and truly christian *Catechism*, which the Church hath provided for them. This is Milk for Babes, even the sincere Milk of God's Word. Here they are sure to meet with the great Fundamentals of Christianity, the *Lord's Prayer*, the *Creed*, the *Commandments*, and the Doctrine of the *Two Sacraments*, explained without Multitude of Words to burden the Memory, or Nicety of Sense to perplex weak Understandings; but with such Brevity and Clearness, as may form in young Children a sound Faith and religious Disposition, and confirm them in the same, when they grow up to riper Years.

3. To

3. To this constant Method of Catechizing, let other Opportunities be added of instilling Piety into Childrens Minds. Let the great and wonderful Works of God be often inculcated upon them; especially such remarkable Instances of divine Providence, as happen in their own Time. When there are Wars, Famines, Conflagrations, or any grievous Mortality, let Children be told, That these are the Rods and Scourges with which God chastises the Sins of Men. On the other Hand, when Health, Peace and Plenty are restored, or any other signal Blessing is granted, let them be taught to acknowledge God the Author and Giver of all good Things, and to render him Thanks and Praise for the same.

4. It is the Duty of *Parents* to train up their Children in the Worship of God, both Public and Private. To keep them to their Prayers Morning and Evening, and to other Acts of Family Devotion. To see they pay a due Attention to the *Service of the Church*; for which purpose they should instruct them, as soon as they are capable of Learning, how to use the *Service-Book*, and be ready to turn to the several Parts of it; directing them likewise how to behave themselves, when to stand, when to kneel, and how to go through the whole Office in the most devout and reverent Manner. In speaking of sacred Things, they should accustom them to great Seriousness; as, not to mention the Name of God, or recite any Passage of Holy Scripture, but upon a grave Occasion; never to utter any Curses or Imprecations; to treat all Things relating to Religion with a particular Veneration.

Parents ought to take more Care to get a Portion for their Childrens Souls in Heaven, than to make Provision for their Bodies on Earth. If, as *St. Paul* says, a Man does not provide bodily Sustenance for his own, or for those of his House, he be worse

worse than an Infidel, how much worse than an Infidel must he be, that does not relieve their spiritual Wants, and suffers his Family to neglect the Salvation of their Souls?

Do but observe how many disobedient *Children* are the Sorrow of their Parents: Which might generally be prevented, if their tender Years were well seasoned by early Infusions of Piety and Virtue. This is the best Method you can take to secure the Obedience and Tractableness of your *Children*; for notwithstanding the Obligations of *Nature*, the Duties of mutual Relation stand most firm on the Principles of *Religion*.

Lastly, *Parents* must educate their Children in the Duties of civil Life; disposing them to all the good Offices of Justice, Humanity, and Mercy. They must breed them up to some honest Employment, and fortify their Minds against Lying, Cheating, and all Kinds of fraudulent Dealing, by shewing them how base, dangerous, and displeasing to God such wicked Practices are. They must warn them against the Infection of ill Company, and the destructive Ways of Intemperance, Uncleaness, and all irregular and lawless Living, by declaring to them the Curses and Judgments which God hath threatened to such Children, and letting them see to what shameful Ends others who have followed such Courses, have brought themselves at last. They must accustom them to govern their Tongues, so as to speak Evil of no Man, to refrain from Backbiting and Slandering, and from such provoking and scurrilous Language, as begets Quarrels and Contentions. In short, to observe all those Rules of Civility and Honesty, whereby Love and Peace are maintained, and every Man secured in the Privileges and Respects due to him. If Parents do not take Care thus to regulate the Affections of their Children, their vicious Desires and Propensions will grow from
a small

a small Degree, to the greatest Extream: As for Instance, Courage soon grows into Anger, and then Rage; Frugality makes an easy Progress to Covetousness, and finally centers in Miserableness, and that Want which it would avoid: There is a ready Transition from Benevolence and Generosity, to Profuseness and Extravagance; from Religion not built upon sound Principles, to Superstition and Enthusiasm; from rational Hope, to Confidence, Pride, Conceit, Vain-glory, and Presumption, &c. We should therefore cultivate their Natures, and make sound Principles the Rule and Measure of all their Actions. For by letting the Reins of Government hang loose, Children will abandon themselves to the Sway of those Passions, which they are most inclined to follow.

This is the Substance of that Care which *Parents*, or those who are in the Room of Parents, are obliged to take of young Children. In discharging these Duties, they may justly hope, not only to reap the Comfort of their Childrens Obedience, and filial Affection and Assistance in any Wants, but likewise to fill the Church with good Members, the State with good Subjects, and all Societies and Professions with good Masters and Servants. Hereby a Stop would be put to that Deluge of Prophaneness and Irreligion amongst us, which is very much owing to the ill Government of particular Families. For it is in vain to hope for Reformation of Manners, while domestick Discipline is so much out of Order. Magistrates and Ministers, notwithstanding their Diligence in their respective Offices, can only lop the Branches of spreading Vice: It is the Business of *Parents* and *Heads* of Families, to pluck it up by the Roots, and put an End to it. And since their own Examples are not always the best Directions, they ought to be the more diligent in laying down good Rules, and seeing them duly observed in their Houses.

Houfes. This would in fome meafure atone for their own perfonal Failings, and enable them to give a good Account both to God and the World, of the Perfons committed to their Charge.

DUTIES of CHILDREN to their PARENTS.

IN the Front of the *Second Table*, which contains our Duties towards our Neighbour, that Command is very properly placed, which obliges CHILDREN to honour their PARENTS. Now *Honour* is a Word of a very extenfive Signification, comprehending all thofe particular Acts of *Duty*, that Fear and Reverence, that Gratitude and Affiftance, that gentle and tractable Spirit, which are moft neceffary to the Support of Authority and good Government. As to the outward Expreffions of this Honour, they muft be determined by the Faftion and Custom of particular Countries. As among us, *Childrens* Honour and Duty to their *Parents*, is expreffed by ftanding in their Prefence, uncovering their Heads, craving their Bleffing upon their Knees; and, in general, by keeping Silence when their Parents fpeak to them; by uſing Terms of Reſpect and Deference when they have occaſion to ſpeak to their Parents; by waiting on them with all Readineſs; by aſſiſting and ſuccouring them with all Cheerfulneſs, whenever they pleaſe to require, or do really ſtand in Need of the Service and good Offices of their *Children*. And one Thing I may add, becauſe it is a Fault to which *Children* are too prone,

prone, as thinking it to be no Sin; and that is, They are not to defraud their Parents, or take any Thing without their exprefs Leave; the Censure which Solomon hath passed upon such a Practice, is enough, one would think, to deter them from it: (a) *Whoſo robbeth his Father or his Mother, and ſaith, It is no Transgreſſion, the ſame is the Companion of a Destroyer.*

In this Latitude is filial Honour and Obedience explained by the ſacred Writers: By *Moses*, (b) *Ye ſhall fear every Man his Father and his Mother.* By *Solomon*, (c) *My Son, bear the Inſtruction of thy Father, and forſake not the Law of thy Mother.* By the Son of *Sirach*, (d) *Honour thy Father and Mother both in Word and Deed.*—*Help thy Father in his Age, and grieve him not as long as he liveth. And if his Underſtanding fail, have Patience with him, and deſpiſe him not when thou art in thy full Strength.* By *St. Paul*, (e) *Let Children learn to ſhew Piety at home, and requite their Parents,* or render them ſuitable Returns. With many more Paſſages to the like Purpoſe.

The Arguments from Nature and Reason which inforce this Duty, are many and obvious.

1. From Parents it is that *Children* derive that Life and Being, which is the Foundation of all the Comforts, Pleaſures, and Happineſs they are capable of enjoying.

2. To their Parents they owe their Preſervation, Maintenance and Protection in their moſt helpless State. There is no Sort of living Creatures ſo naked and deſtitute, and ſo long before they come to help themſelves, as we are; as if God had thus ordered it on purpoſe to beget Endearments between us and

(a) *Prov.* xxviii. 24. (b) *Lev.* ix. 3. (c) *Prov.* i. 8.
(d) *Eccluſ.* iii. (e) *1 Tim.* v. 4.

our Parents, that we should long require their Care and Tenderness towards us.

3. Besides the daily Cares and Fears for *Children* in nursing them, and bringing them up, Parents are commonly at great Expences with them (and such as they cannot always bear without Inconvenience to themselves) to provide Means for their future Subsistence throughout the whole Course of their Lives.

4. Children do not only partake with their Parents in all the Comforts of their Fortune, and Ornaments of their Condition; but they often receive from them Provisions for their whole Name and Posterity: The Wealth which Parents have acquired, usually devolving upon their *Children*, and *Childrens Children*.

To this we may add, That not only our temporal, but eternal Welfare too, depends much upon the Care and good Instructions of our Parents. If we are brought up in the Nurture and Admonition of the LORD, if we are set right in the Way to everlasting Happiness, it is generally owing to their pious Example or Discipline.

From all this we may learn the Reasonableness of the Duty here enjoined, and what strong Obligations are upon *Children* to render to their Parents all Love, Respect, and Obedience in Word and Deed. This all civilized Nations have been persuaded of, and by the Light of Nature and Reason concluded, That as Parents have the Compassion most resembling that of GOD towards their *Children*, as they are the principal Instruments by which God's Blessings are conferred upon them; so they should be esteemed as God's Representatives, and as his most lively Images have a special Veneration paid to them.

The Reward and Blessing annexed to the pious Discharge of this Duty, is Length of Days, and consequently

frequently Health and Strength, Peace and Quietness, with a competent Supply of Food and Rayment, and all Things needful and convenient for us; for otherwise long Life would not be a Blessing, but a Burden and a Punishment.

It deserves to be taken Notice of, That there is a great Congruity between the Duty enjoined, and the Reward propounded; that it is very fit those who are grateful to the Authors (under God) of their Life and Being, should enjoy that Life and Being, long and well; that those who love, honour, and succour their Parents, should have Joy, Honour, and Comfort of their own *Children*; that those who have been accustomed to Acts of Obedience and Courtesy at home, should have a happy Genius in pleasing others, and by that means, win the Love and Esteem, the good Wishes and Suffrages of all the best Part of Mankind; and so have unenvied Favours and Preferments conferred upon them. Of this we have many Examples in all Kinds of History, particularly in the Accounts which Holy Scripture gives of such good Men.

On the contrary, the Neglect and Contempt of our Parents, hath always been reputed, next to Atheism and Blasphemy against God, the most heinous Sin that *Children* can be guilty of. And God, who hath promised his Blessing to obedient *Children*, hath denounced a terrible Curse to the Disobedient. (a) *Cursed be he that setteth light by his Father or his Mother*, was one of the Anathema's proclaimed upon Mount *Ebal*, and to which all the People were to say *Amen*. And the same is solemnly published in our *Churches* once a Year, and is the Second in the Catalogue of most heinous Offenders, to shew in what Company GOD and Man have thought fit to place such *Children*.

(a) *Deut.* xxvii. 16.

But besides this Threatening of a Curse, the divine Law assigned a particular Punishment to be inflicted upon stubborn, rebellious Children; a Punishment no less than Death, and that Death of the most ignominious Kind; as being executed upon Idolaters and Blasphemers, Death by stoning. This Law we have at large, *Deut. xxi. 18, &c.* *If a Man have a stubborn and rebellious Son, which will not obey the Voice of his Father, or the Voice of his Mother, and that when they have chastened him, will not hearken unto them: Then shall his Father and his Mother lay hold on him, and bring him out unto the Elders of his City, and unto the Gate of his Place: And they shall say unto the Elders of his City; This our Son is Stubborn and Rebellious; he will not obey our Voice; he is a Glutton and a Drunkard. And all the Men of his City shall stone him with Stones, that he die: So shalt thou put Evil away from among you; and all Israel shall bear and fear.*

I have but one Thing more to add; That by the Rule of Proportion, we may reduce to this Duty, the Obligation we have to honour all those, who are any ways beneficial to us, and do us as kind Offices as our natural Parents. Such are they who relieve, protect, or defend us; they who provide for our Education or Subsistence by any honest Employment; they who watch over us for the Safety of our Souls or Bodies: Such are Magistrates and Governors in Church and State: Our Benefactors and Patrons; our Schoolmasters and Tutors; our special Friends and faithful Counsellors. All these doing us the Offices of Parents in some Respects, are so far intitled to our filial Reverence and Observance.

C H A P. IV.

D U T I E S of M A S T E R S to
S E R V A N T S.

G O D, the ſupreme L O R D of the whole Earth; hath made one Man to differ from another in Quality and Condition : He hath assigned to every Man a certain Place and Station in the World, and limited him by certain Rules, how to comport with others that are above or below him, or upon the Level with himſelf : For which ſee particularly, *Ephes. vi.* And he hath appointed a Day wherein he will convene all Mankind before his Tribunal, and as their Great Maſter, reckon with them for what they have done, and reward or puniſh them according to their Deſerts, without any Reſpect of Perſons. From whence it is evident,

1. That the Diſtinction of *Masters* and *Servants*; is only temporary, a Matter of mere Oeconomy, for the better ordering the Affairs of this Life ; but wholly ceases at Death, and extends not to a future State.

2. That with Reſpect to God, the ſupreme Governor, *Masters* are only *Stewards* in his Houſe, ſet over the reſt of his Family, to provide for them, and keep them in good Order, and ſee that they do the Will of their Maſter in Heaven ; being accountable

to him for their Stewardship and Carriage toward such as are under them.

This Consideration was, in antient Times, a great Motive to *Masters* to treat their *Servants* with Clemency and Humanity, as we learn from the Profession of *Job*, to this Purpose: (a) *If I*, says he, *despised the Cause of my Man-Servant, or my Maid-Servant, when they contended with me; What then shall I do when God riseth up? And when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? Did not he that made me in the Womb, make him? And did not One fashion us in the Womb?*

If *Masters* did but lay this Consideration to Heart, That however in Regard of outward Government, there is a Difference between them and their *Servants*, yet, under God, they are all as Fellow-Servants, being all subject to him, and bound by him in mutual Duties one to another; this would effectually restrain them from all Acts of Inhumanity and Insolence, from all Injustice and Oppression; and mightily incline them to Patience and Tenderneſs, and not so much to gratify their own Humours and Passions, as to consult the Glory of their Master in Heaven, and see that his Will be done throughout their whole Family.

In the first Place, therefore, *Masters* who would have good *Servants*, must endeavour to be good Men themselves, and set good Examples by a religious and virtuous Conversation; particularly, by praying Morning and Evening in their Families, and reading good Books at all proper Seasons. It is not for him to command others, who hath no Command over himself. Governors may then with a good Grace correct Vice in others, when they permit it

(a) *Job*. xxxi. 13.

not in themselves: But how shall a Man punish the Sins which he commits? *Quid verba audio, facta cum videam?* It behoveth that the Rule be streight and orderly; if you intend to bring Things to a Rectitude: Men speak by their Actions, as well as by their Words; and their Practice hath a greater Influence upon others, than their Precepts. If the Behaviour of *Masters* before their *Servants*, be light and vain; if they betray their Infirmities; if they are given to drinking, swearing, gaming, lewd Company, or other Vices; if they are too remiss and negligent, either in the Duties of Religion; or the Affairs of their Calling; if they spend too much Time in Sleep and Diversions: In short; if they make their *Servants* Accomplices with them in any unlawful Thing; it will be very contradictory for them to complain of such Faults, or hope to redress them by any Reproofs or Correction. By the *Master's* effectual Influence upon *Servants* it will come to pass, that their Actions will be interpreted his, it being plain, that all who set ill Examples, are answerable, not only for their own personal Sins, but also for those Sins, which others commit by their Pattern. The evil Actions and Enormities of others shall be attributed to him, if he made them bad by his Example: This must needs lie very heavy on his Mind. On the other Hand, their good Deeds will be imputed to him, because they were the Effect of his Authority. And how joyful a Reflection must this needs be, that the virtuous Actions of so many Persons are esteemed his own? It clearly follows then, that those who preside over others, are greatly concerned to look to their own Lives.

As *Masters* must not infect their *Servants* by their own ill Example, so neither must they suffer them to be infected by the wicked Conversation of others. To this End, they must endeavour to keep them from falling into *loose Company*, and contracting vici-

ous Acquaintance when they go Abroad, especially on the *Lord's Day*; a Day appointed by God for the Good of the Soul; but very often abused by improvident Servants, to the Ruin of their Souls and Bodies. It is the *Master's Duty* then, to see them attend on the Service of the Church as diligently, as they do on his Business in the Week-Days. They may, perhaps, grudge at this strict Order for the present; but the Time will come, when they will be very thankful to you for such Confinement; in the mean Time, God will bless you in them, by giving them Grace to serve you diligently and faithfully; which you can never expect, if you do not take Care to make them his Servants in the first Place.

And that you may keep them to the Observance of good Rules, you must take Care to maintain your Authority over them, by demeaning yourself with the Dignity and Awe of a *Master*, by keeping your *Servants* at a reasonable Distance, commanding them nothing but what is just and honest; and strictly exacting the Performance of such Commands.

This may be done without excessive Rigour and Austerity. *St. Paul* advises *Masters* to forbear *Threatening*; by which he doth not mean that they should never bend their Brows, nor menace refractory *Servants* with Punishment; for Impunity is the Mother of Licentiousness, and hardens wicked Persons in their Crimes: But he forbids them to be sour and morose in their Looks, so froward and perverse with their Tongues, that their *Servants* cannot tell what they mean, nor know what will please them. Or, by forbearing threatening, *Masters* are to understand, that when they have threatened *Servants* for their Faults, they should not be over hasty in their Punishment, but wait with some Patience for their Amendment, after the Example of their Heavenly Master, who, though he threatens Sinners, yet he is patient,
long-

long-suffering, slow to Anger, and delights more in remitting, than executing Judgments.

This condemns their Practice, who fall upon their *Servants* with vehement Rage and Fury, as if their Life and Limbs were of no more Value than the Brutes. God foresaw that some *Masters* would be thus unmerciful in their Corrections; and therefore he made a Law (a) to regulate the Number of Stripes that were to be inflicted on offending *Servants*.

However, there can be no Doubt but Correction must be used sometimes, and so far proportioned to the Greatness and Aggravations of the Fault, as to make the Offender sensible of it, and careful to avoid it for the future. Both Reason and Scripture require, that the *Servant* who knew his Lord's Will, and did it not, should be beaten with many Stripes: But he which knew not, and did commit Things worthy of Stripes, should be beaten with few Stripes. There is a *Servant*, of whom *Solomon* observes, that *he will not be corrected by Words*, but is presumptuous and self-willed. And there is another, of an ingenuous, modest, and tractable Disposition, careful in the main to please; who, if he happens to make a false Step, he humbly confesses it, and studies by future Diligence to make Amends for it. Now a *Master* would ill acquit himself, if he should not make a great Difference between these two: If by Remission and Indulgence, he should suffer the former to despise his lawful Commands, and trample upon that Authority which God hath given him for the good Government of his Family; or so harshly punish the Failings and Mistakes of the other, as utterly to discourage him, and make him despair of ever being able to please. A prudent *Master* should

(a) *Deut.* xxv.

have especial Care, to shun that Austerity and Rigour which discourages his Servant's Endeavours, and also that Softness and Indulgence which encourages his Vices.

For these Reasons, a wise *Master* will not be so attentive to the present Advantages he shall receive with his Servant, as the Family he comes out of, and the virtuous Principles and good Temper he is endued with. It is better to use this Precaution in choosing, than to venture in Hopes of reforming those that are spoiled to his Hand. They may sooner corrupt his Children, and the rest of his Servants, than change ill Nature, or relinquish their ill Habits and Customs, which are a second Nature, and very often too hard for the Power of Man to rectify.

But while *Masters* inspect the Manners of their *Servants*, they must not over-look the State of their Bodies. It is their Interest as well as their Duty, to allow them such Food and Raiment, and moderate Rest and Refreshment, as may preserve their Health, and repair their Vigour and Spirits for undergoing their Business. God hath provided for the merciful Usage of the very Beasts, forbidding to *muzzle the Mouth of the Ox that treadeth out the Corn*, and ordering, that the labouring Beast shall rest every seventh Day, as well as his Master. How much is a Man, though of the lowest, most servile Condition, better than a Beast? It is therefore the Will of God, that *Servants* who are of the same Species with their *Masters*, and differ from them only in Rank and Quality, should enjoy all Accommodations of Diet, Lodging, and Rest from their Labours; especially when they do their Business so well as not to deserve Punishment in any of these Respects, for their Disobedience or gross Negligence. And if they happen to spend their Health and Strength in the Service of any one *Master*, it would be very ill in him,
when

when they come to be disabled by Sickness or old Age, to turn them away destitute and helpless.

It is a great Blemish in the Life of *Cato* the elder, a Man otherwise of a noble Character, that he would dismiss those who had worn themselves out in his Service, and deny them Victuals when they were past their Labour. Hear what *Plutarch*, the Writer of his Life, says of this. “ It is unnatural to think, “ that there ought to be no farther Commerce between Man and Man, but just while there arises “ some Profit therefrom. For we see that good Nature hath a larger Field than bare Justice, to exercise itself in. Strictly speaking, indeed, we are “ bound to deal with Men according to Law and “ Justice ; but we may extend our Goodness even “ to irrational Creatures ; and it is doubtless the Part “ of a good natured Man to keep his very Horses, “ not only while they are able to work, but when “ they are old and past it. The *Athenians*, when “ they made their *Hecatompodon*, which was a spacious Piece of Ground, turned in those Mules to “ feed, which had undergone the hardest Labour. “ We are not to use any living Creatures like old “ Potsherds, and throw them away when they are “ broken with Service. If it were for nothing else “ but to express the Sense we have of Humanity, a “ Man ought always to shew himself tender in these “ Things. For my Part, I would not so much as “ sell my Draught-Ox on the Account of his Age ; “ much less dismiss an old Servant for the saving of “ a little Money, and send him, as it were, into “ another World, by turning him both out of the “ Place and Way of living which he hath been always accustomed to.”

Finally, those who employ poor People, not only as Domesticks, but Day-Servants and Labourers, must look to it, that they exact not an unreasonable Task for an inconsiderable Recompence ; nor detain

their Wages when they are due ; but give them that which is just and equal ; as they tender the Favour of Him who is above all, and sees all, who promises to hear the Cry of the Poor and Needy, and to help them to their Right, that the Man of the Earth be not exalted against them ; who threatens to be a swift Witness against those who oppress them in their Wages ; and thus bespeaks *Masters* in their Behalf : (a) *Thou shalt not oppress an hired Servant that is poor and needy ; whether he be of thy Brethren, or of the Strangers that are in thy Land within thy Gates. At his Day thou shalt give him his Hire, neither shall the Sun go down upon it ; for he is poor, and setteth his Heart upon it ; lest he cry against thee unto the Lord, and it be Sin unto thee.*

D U T I E S of S E R V A N T S to M A S T E R S.

THE first Thing required of *SERVANTS*, is *Obedience*, which is so essential to their Condition, that when they cast off this, they can be no longer *Servants*. This *Obedience* is either active or passive.

The active Part of a *Servant's* *Obedience*, consists in a due Observance of his *Master's* Commands and Instructions. This diligent Observance was so much the Practice of *Servants* in the best of Times, that *David* alludes to it, as the fittest Comparison to

(a) *Deut.* xxiv.

illustrate the Strictness of his Piety and Devotion.

(a) *Behold*, says he, *as the Eyes of Servants look unto the Hand of their Masters, and as the Eyes of a Maiden unto the Hand of her Mistress; even so our Eyes wait upon the Lord our God, until he have Mercy upon us.*

This looking to their Hands implies not only a Dependence on them for Succour and Relief, but also a Readiness to hear and execute whatever they would have done. So our great Master Christ hath determined, when he (b) instances in a Servant that had been plowing all Day long; yet when he comes home, his Master doth not bid him straightway sit down and take his Supper; but requires him first to make ready for his Master, and wait on him, and afterwards to eat and drink himself: And for this the *Servant* hath no Thanks; he hath done no more than what was his Duty to do.

It is likewise one Branch of *Servants* Duty to join with their Masters in the Worship of God, when they have the Happiness to be placed in true Christian Families. This was a great Means of propagating Christianity in the first Beginning of it. When the Master and Mistress embraced the Faith, then presently all that were in the House believed and were baptized. And as *Cornelius* the Centurion was a devout Man, so the Soldier that waited on him bears the same Character.

But, secondly, There is a passive as well as active Obedience required of *Servants*; and that is, patiently to bear Reproof and Correction when they deserve it; nay, when there is no other Reason for it, but the Choler and hasty Spirit of their Governors. For so St. *Peter* expressly charges them: (c) *Servants, be subject to your Masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward.*

(a) *Psal.* cxxiii. (b) *Luke* xvii. (c) *1 Pet.* ii. 18.

For this is thank-worthy, if a Man for Conscience toward God endure Grief, suffering wrongfully. For what Glory is it, if when ye be buffeted for your Faults, ye take it patiently? But if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God.

But when they are reprov'd and correct'd for real Faults, they must not only be patient, but speedily reform and amend whatever is amiss. Thus their Sufferings will redound to their Advantage, and, like wholesome Physick, purge out ill Humours. By this Means an ill Servant is many Times rescu'd from Destruction, and brought to live happily and comfortably all the Days of his Life. *In Time past,* says St. Paul of Philemon's Servant, *he was unprofitable, but now profitable both to thee and me.*

Having thus explained the Nature of that Obedience both active and passive, which *Servants* owe to their Masters, I shall next consider in what Manner and Circumstances this Obedience ought to be testified; or what are the Qualifications of an obedient *Servant*.

The first Qualification of such a *Servant*, is Reverence and Modesty, which must be expressed in a submissive Carriage and respectful Language. The Obedience and Courtesy of *Servants* must be suited to the Quality of their Masters. Above all, They must take Care to govern their Tongues; not speaking in the Presence of their Masters or Mistresses without good Reason; not answering again when it is not required of them, but silently attending to that which is commanded. When they are to make answer, they must do it readily and clearly, not daring to lye or equivocate, or conceal any Part of what is demanded of them. In conversing with others, they must not expose the Persons, or divulge the Affairs of the Family in which they live, but cover and excuse every Thing which may be apt to lessen

lessen them in their Persons, Fortunes, Understandings and Passions.

The second Qualification of good *Servants*, is, Sincerity and Faithfulness in their Master's Business; preserving his Goods, and studying by all honest Means to improve and increase them. I may, not improperly, apply that Charge to Servants, which *St. Paul* gives to *Timothy*: *Keep that which is committed to thy Trust.* *Servants* must take care, that the Things with which they are entrusted, be not lost, spoiled, or impaired by misusing. And if they know of any Damage done, or intended to be done, by others to their Master's Goods, they must endeavour to prevent it, or acquaint their Master with it, that he may provide against it.

Masters and Mistresses are forced in many Things, to depend upon the Integrity and Industry of their *Servants*; who if they are sincere and honest, will not deceive them; but apply as heartily to their Business, dispatch it with as much Speed, and be as solicitous for the Interest and Welfare of their Master, as if his Eyes were actually upon them.

Faithful *Servants* will moreover be ready to do all kind Offices to all Persons in the Family to which they belong. They will, to the utmost of their Power, promote Peace and Love, and both by Advice and Example, encourage their *Fellow-Servants* to virtuous Courses, and dissuade them from lewd and vicious Practices.

And because Children, which are most dear to their Parents, must needs be often in the Company of *Servants*; therefore honest *Servants* will be particularly careful to preserve them from Danger, and keep them from the Company of rude Children. And will be so far from teaching them any ill Words, or encouraging them in any indecent Thing, that they will unteach them such Things, if they find they have learnt them, and endeavour to form them

them to Modesty and good Manners in all their Words and Actions.

A third Qualification of good *Servants*, is Cheerfulness in doing their Business. When St. *Paul* commands them to serve with a good Will, he doth, by a necessary Consequence, forbid them to be lazy, sluggish, and negligent in their Service; or to put on lowering, melancholy Looks, to be heavy and discontented, to go about Things grudgingly, and as it were by Compulsion. Such Service must needs be untowardly performed; or if outwardly well done, yet the Doer of it can have little Comfort, and as little Acceptance either with GOD or Man.

Lastly, a fourth Qualification of a good *Servant*, is a good Sense of Religion and the Fear of God. This, though last in the Order of Place, is first in the Course of Things, being the Basis on which all the other good Properties are founded. There are indeed some *Servants*, who out of By-respects may serve well in many Things, but never in all. They will never keep constant to all the Rules of Sobriety and Virtue. They will one way or other give a Loose to their corrupt Affections. If the Ends for which they flatter; and study to please, are not answered, if they do not find as much Favour and Advantage as they promised themselves, their Industry flags, and their Obsequiousness turns to the greatest Presumption. Whereas a *Servant* who truly fears God, will be sure to do his Business faithfully, not only when his Master smiles and rewards, not only when he frowns and threatens, but at all other Times, when he seems to take no Notice of him. For when there is no other Motive to animate him to his Duty, his Conscience, Fear, and Sense of the all-seeing GOD, is instead of a thousand Motives and Spurs to him. He is fully persuaded

suaded, That while he is faithful to his earthly Master, however he may accept and reward him, the great Master of the Universe is pleased with him, and will not suffer him to lose his Reward. This is the plain Doctrine of *St. Paul*, with which I shall conclude this Head: *(a) Servants, be obedient to them that are your Masters according to the Flesh, with Fear and Trembling, in Singleness of your Heart, as unto Christ: Not with Eye-service, as Men-pleasers, but as the Servants of Christ, doing the Will of God from the Heart. With good Will doing Service, as to the Lord, and not to Men. Knowing that whatsoever good Thing any Man doth, the same shall be receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.*

OF INDUSTRY in our CALLINGS.

ONE of the Three Things which wise CATO repented of, was, That ever he had spent a Day idly, without doing something to good Purpose. I am afraid many *Christians* will have Days, and Weeks, and Years of mispent Time to account for at the *Last Day*. How unprofitably doth a great Part of Mankind suffer their Life to run out, as if their Soul was given them for no other Use, but (like Salt) to keep their Body from putrifying above Ground!

The Nature of our BUSINESS is Twofold, Religious and Civil, for this Life and a Better. We must seek the Kingdom of GOD and his Righ-

(a) *Ephes. vi. 5.*

teousness, in the first Place; but this doth not exclude the Care of our Bodies. Six Days in Seven are by the divine Law allowed for our worldly Affairs. And though we must in all our Actions have an Eye to the Glory of God, yet this is no where said to be inconsistent with an honest secular *Employment*. Our Condition in this Life is such, that we cannot subsist without Food and Rayment, which cannot be had without much Pains, and the Exercise of many Arts. The Knowledge of the liberal Sciences, the Laws of our Country, the learned Languages, are not born with us, nor supernaturally infused into us; but acquired with much Study and Application of Thought. Now whether we labour with the Head or the Hand, in both Cases it is our Duty to be diligent. So *Solomon* commands; *Whatsoever thine Hand findeth thee to do, do it with all thy might*. And so *St. Paul*, *Be not slothful in Business*. Indeed, we have innumerable Examples of Industry about us: The whole Creation is in continual Action; the Sun, Moon, and Stars are always running their Courses; the Seasons of the Year perform their incessant Revolutions; the Birds, Beasts, and Fishes seek their Food, and serve the respective Ends of their Nature with unwearied Assiduity. All Things are full of Labour. The great Author of all Things never slumbereth nor sleepeth. And his only begotten Son, when made Man, led a very laborious and active Life upon Earth; and hath arraigned and condemned Slothfulness in the Person of the unprofitable Servant.

The Blessing and Favour of GOD and Man is assured to the *Industrious* by repeated Promises of Holy Scripture: *The Hand of the Diligent maketh rich*. *He that tilleth his Land, shall be satisfied with Bread*. *Seest thou a Man diligent in his Business? He shall stand before Kings, he shall not stand before mean*

mean Men. The Hand of the Diligent shall bear Rule ; but the Slothful shall be under Tribute. This is commonly seen in the World. Many a Person of mean Birth and Fortune, hath been raised to great Riches and Honours by no other visible Means but his own indefatigable Application to his *Business*.

On the other Hand, Idleness is doomed to Ignominy and Want in the same sacred Writings. *Drowsiness shall cloath a Man with Rags. Yet a little Sleep, a little Slumber, a little folding of the Hands to sleep. So shall thy Poverty come as one that travaileth, and thy Want as an armed Man.* And this likewise is confirmed by common Experience.

If an idle negligent Man be placed by his Friends in the most advantageous *Business*, or plentiful Circumstances, his Affairs quickly go backward in the World, his Stores are exhausted, his Debts grow upon him, until at last he becomes a Bankrupt, or ends his Days in some loathsome, obscure Prison.

Learn then by others Ruin to prevent your own. Consider how much better it is to procure yourself Health and Plenty, and Reputation, with your honest Pains, which a little Custom will make easy and pleasant to you ; than to stupify your Senses, and contract Diseases and Debts, and keep yourself and your Family in a beggarly, starving Condition, by abandoning yourself to a sottish, dissolute, indolent Course of Life. Shake off that Spirit of Slumber which would arrest you, and make you a Prisoner to your Bed in the most precious Part of the Day, the Morning. Wean yourself from an ill Habit of rambling Abroad, and getting out of the Sight of your *Business*. Confine yourself to it, though it may seem irksome, until you find the Advantage of it, and that will not fail to reconcile

cile you to it, and make you easy and happy in it.

Some indeed there are, who running into the other Extream, are over-sollicitous for the World. This we daily see in the covetous Man's Practice: He is so eager in the Gaining of Riches, that he hath no Time or Care to perform his Duty to God. Nor doth he only offend against his Soul, but his Body too; for he often denies himself those necessary Refreshments he wants. Besides, he that loves Money immoderately, will not care whom he cheats and defrauds, so he may bring in Gain to himself: And from hence spring those many Tricks of Deceit and Cozenage so common in the World; taking Advantage of the Buyer's Ignorance in the Worth or Quality of the Goods, concealing their Faults, overrating them, and giving short Measures.

Some again, make the very Necessities of the Oppressed, the Means of their Oppression: Thus it is in the Case of Extortion and griping Usury. Extream Want of Money gives Opportunity to the Extortioner to exact from the Man that wants it; to which he is forced to yield, to supply his present Occasions. But let such consider what the Scripture saith; *He that oppresseth the Poor, shall surely come to want.* Nor is Wealth thus gotten, much less uneasy in the Possession, than unlawful in the Obtaining; for between the Care of Getting, and the Fear of Losing, the covetous Man scarce enjoys a quiet Hour. Hence therefore, we may conclude, That the too eager Love of the World, is inconsistent either with the Love of GOD or ourselves.

Do *Business* then, but be not a Slave to it: Keep your Mind always at its own Disposal; remembering your main Concern, whatever Constraint your *Business* may lay upon your Actions and outward Attendance. And whenever you are entangled in Difficulties, rely not upon human Prudence; but go with
Moses

Moses into the Tabernacle, to ask Counsel of God.
 (a) *The Time is short; it remaineth therefore, that they who buy, be as though they possessed not: And they who use this World, as not abusing it: For the Fashion of this World passeth away.*

C H A P. V.

OF FRIENDSHIP and HUMANITY.

THE Definition which some give of FRIENDSHIP, is, That it is *an Union of Souls*; and so much indeed the Scripture speaks of it; *Thy Friend, which is as thine own Soul*: intimating, That a higher Degree of Love may be contracted by FRIENDSHIP, than by any Kind of natural or civil Relation.

The Laws of his Religion oblige every Christian to love all his Neighbours as himself: But there is between FRIENDS a mutual Confidence and Readiness to assist each other. There is a very high and hearty Concern for each other's Welfare, both of Soul and Body. And therefore it is well observed by the Writers upon this Subject, That there can be no such Thing as *Friendship* between wicked Men, because they are so far from consulting each other's Good, that they draw one another into destructive and damnable Courses. Upon this Principle I conclude, That I must not yield to do any

(a) 1 Cor. vii. 29.

Thing for my *Friend*, which is contrary to any religious or moral Obligation. I may give him any Thing of my own, but I must not wrong or rob another to serve him. I may run the Hazard of my Life and Estate for him in a just Cause; but I must not set my Soul and Conscience to Sale for his Sake. In doing this, I should forfeit the Love and Favour of God, and break through the Rules of Justice and Honesty. This is not *Friendship*, but a Conspiracy against GOD and Man, a joining of Hands, and uniting of Forces to do the more Mischief.

But in true and virtuous *Friendship*, we are bound to do all kind Offices for our *Friend*, to give him the best Advice we can in any difficult Cases, to support and comfort him under any Affliction, to defend his Person and Goods from Violence, and his Character from causeless Aspersions, and faithfully to keep such Secrets as he shall have Occasion to communicate to us.

And above all, We must be religious Guardians of our *Friend's* Virtue, and not suffer him to fall into any Sin, if we can prevent it; nor to continue in any without *friendly* Admonitions, and Endeavours to reclaim him. These Admonitions must not extend only to grosser Faults, which common Fame and People at a Distance must take Notice of; but also to more inward Failings and Infirmities; nay, even to suspicious and doubtful Actions. To preserve the Person we admit to a near Intimacy and Confidence with us, only from being scandalous, is as poor a Design in *Friendship*, as it is in Physick, for a Professor of it only to secure his Patient from the Plague. Neither must our Care stop at his Faults, but look beyond them, to such virtuous and good Qualities in him, as may be improved and rendered more perfect.

Lastly,

Lastly, We must be constant in our *Friendship*, continuing to treat our *Friend* with the same free and kind Conversation in the Day of his Adversity, as in the Height of his Prosperity; as also not being subject to Misapprehensions or apt to be disobliged by any Mistakes or Inadvertencies we may observe in him.

Universal LOVE and CHARITY.

HUMANITY inclines us to a general Tenderness and good Will for every one of our own NATURE and SPECIES; but yet proportioned to the several Degrees of Relation we bear one to another: Whether that Relation be founded in Blood, or Affinity, in old Acquaintance and Hospitality, or in being Fellow-Citizens, and of the same Country. All these are Grounds of more particular Love and Affection.

But in the Main, we are obliged to imitate the divine Bounty and Goodness by an *universal Love and Charity to all Mankind*. God hath so ordered the present State and Circumstances of Things, as to make Society necessary for the Support and Comfort of Life. He hath interwoven the Interest of Men, and made the Happiness of every particular Person depend upon the Welfare of the Publick; that each particular Person, from a Sense of his own Wants, might see, how reasonable it is for him to be aiding and assisting to others. Just as it is in the natural Body of Man; if one Member rejoice, all the rest rejoice with it; if one suffer, all the rest suffer with it. And as in the Body, the inferior

and less honourable Members have their necessary Use, so it is in Society. The poor labouring People exercise those Trades which supply their Superiors with necessary Things, and give them Leisure to attend on learned Professions and Affairs of State. Nay, even those Persons who seem to be useless in the World, such as together with their Poverty are disabled by Age or Infirmities, and wholly to be maintained at the Charge of others, yet they give us an Opportunity of exercising those divine Graces of Charity and Mercy, which make us most nearly to resemble our heavenly Father. This is the Way which he hath found out for us to express our Love and Gratitude to himself. Our Goodness extends to God no otherwise, but as we exhibit it to *those* whom he hath created in his *Image*. For *no Man hath seen God at any Time*; but *if we love one another, we know that God dwelleth in us, and that his Love is perfected in us*. So likewise our blessed Saviour accepts of our Kindness to his poor Servants, as the best Way of testifying our Love to himself. *Verily I say unto you, inasmuch as ye have done it to these my Brethren, ye have done it to me*.

This beneficent *Temper* endears us to Men as well as to God. The World is wise enough to know their Benefactors, and to prefer Mercy and Peace before a Spirit of Outrage and Fierceness. And we commonly see those Promises fulfilled, That *merciful Men obtain Mercy*; and, That *the Meek inherit the Earth*.

By the Tyes of common Humanity, as we are Men, and Partakers of the same common Nature, we are obliged *to love, and to do Good to one another*: But in how much more peculiar and eminent a Manner, ought we to look upon ourselves as *Brethren* by our Christian Profession; being all the Children of God in Christ, all Members of the same Body, all Partakers of the same Spirit, all Heirs of the

the same blessed Hope of Immortality? (a) *There is one Body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one Hope of your Calling; One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism, One God and Father of All. Wherefore, I beseech you, saith the Apostle, (b) that ye walk worthy of the Vocation wherewith ye are called, with all Lowliness and Meekness, with Long-suffering, forbearing one another in Love, endeavouring to keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace. For, (c) Though I speak with the Tongues of Men and Angels, and have not Charity, I am become as sounding Brassy, or a tinkling Cymbal. And though I have the Gift of Prophecy, and understand all Mysteries, and all Knowledge, and though I have all Faith, so that I could remove Mountains, and have no Charity, I am nothing. And though I bestow all my Goods to feed the Poor, and though I give my Body to be burnt, and have not Charity, it profiteth me nothing. Charity suffereth long, and is kind; Charity envieth not; Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no Evil, rejoiceth not in Iniquity, but rejoiceth in the Truth; beareth all Things, believeth all Things, hopeth all Things, endureth all Things.*

Having therefore all the Encouragements which Heaven and Earth, God and Man can give us, to abound in Love one towards another, let us exercise this most agreeable and noble Virtue, the Bond of all other Virtues, and Sum of the whole Law, the best covering for our Sins, and most acceptable Sacrifice to God. (d) *Let all Bitterness, Wrath, Anger, Clamour, and Evil-speaking be put away from us, with all Malice: And let us be kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, as we trust God for Christ's Sake will forgive us.*

(a) *Ephes. iv. 4.* (b) *Ephes. iv. 1.* (c) *1 Cor. xiii.* (d) *Ephes. iv. 31.*

C H A P. VI.

Of CHARITY and ALMS-
GIVING.

THE Pattern of Goodness which our blessed LORD hath proposed to our Imitation, is of the highest Kind: *(a) Be ye merciful, as your Father which is in Heaven is merciful.* Now the Mercy of GOD is over all his Works; He hath a Tenderness for every Creature. It follows then, That our CHARITY must, according to our Ability, extend itself to every Person who stands in Need of Relief and Assistance, when we have no just Reason to suspect that he will make an ill Use of it. This distinguishes us from the Scribes and Pharisees, who saluted none but their Brethren, and lent with an Expectation to receive it again with Advantage. But Christ hath given us quite contrary Rules, commanding us to do Good to those that hate us, and to lend where we can hope to receive nothing again. And St. Paul exhorts to the same universal Beneficence: *(b) As we have Opportunity, let us do Good unto all Men.* From the Premises, we may draw these Two Conclusions.

(a) Luke vi. 36. (b) Gal. vi. 10.

First, That the Objects of our *Charity*, are the whole Body of Mankind.

Secondly, That the Exercise of it must be regulated by our Abilities, and according as we have Opportunity.

As to the Objects of our CHARITY, our Saviour hath told us, *The Poor ye have always with you, and when ye will, ye may do them good*; and we daily experience the Truth of this Saying. Many, together with their Poverty, are lame and blind, and by Age or Sickness, or some other unhappy Circumstance, under an absolute Inability of helping themselves. These we must assist with our Hands and our Purfes, our Basket and our Store. Some for Want of a good Education, or virtuous Inclinations, stand more in need of our Counsels and Instructions: To such as these good Books are the most suitable Presents we can make. Others require our Patronage to vindicate them from the Injuries offered to their Persons, Estates, or Reputation: All this is excellently summed up by Holy *Job*, in that Apology for himself, which he opposes to the hard Censures of his Friends, *Chap. xxxi.* Where he tells them, *He did not eat his Morsel alone, but the Fatherless was Partaker with him. He did not suffer the Poor to go without a Covering, but the Naked was warmed with the Fleece of his Sheep. The Stranger did not lodge in the Streets, but he opened his Doors to the Traveller. He was Eyes to the Blind, and Feet to the Lame; a Father to the Poor, and an Advocate to the Oppressed.* Thus we must do Good to All, not only to our poor Brethren who can make us no Recompense, but to our Enemies, to Men of different Countries and Religions. For which purpose the *Samaritan* is recommended to our Imitation, who succoured the *Jewish* Traveller in his Extremities,

mities, although in the general, *Jews* and *Samaritans* were had in the greatest Detestation one of another.

We must not satisfy ourselves to do *Good* in our own Generation, but consult the Welfare of Posterity. There are many Parishes, where the far greatest Part of the Inhabitants are labouring People, who can just make shift to provide their Families with daily Bread, but have nothing to spare for the Education of their Children. How many such Children, who have afterwards proved great Ornaments to Church and State, had been abandoned to a vile Course of Idleness, Lying, Stealing, and Profaneness of all Sorts, and perhaps been cut off by the Hand of the Executioner in the midst of their Days, had it not been for the pious Munificence of our Forefathers, in founding Nurseries of Learning, and endowing them so as to afford a liberal Education to such Persons whose Circumstances could not answer the Charges of it?

We have more especially Reason to hope, That the next Age will be better than the present, by means of the many *Charity-Schools*, which, God be praised, are now set up almost all over the Nation, and supported by those who have, I doubt not, a true Zeal for the Glory of GOD. The excellent Purposes of which *Schools*, so much for the Welfare of the Body in an industrious, as of the Soul in a religious Method of Education, are too well known to want a particular Account in this Place. What a blessed *Charity* is this, when we consider the Persons who are the Objects of it! For rarely are the Objects of *Charity* enumerated in Holy Scripture, but the Outcast and Fatherless are particularly recommended. How many of these are really such? and how many more are little better than such? whose Parents though living, yet being over-burthened by a Family too numerous for their small
Income,

Income, or what is worse, disabled from working by Age or Sickness, or really negligent of their Children, are no Parents to them in the most weighty Concerns of their Life, a virtuous Education, and a good Employment.

And while other Benefactions only supply bodily Wants, this hath a peculiar Influence upon the Soul; by this, Children are taught the most useful Art of living well, and the most gainful Trade of laying up Treasures in Heaven. Besides, the Impressions of Religion and Virtue which they receive in their tender Years, and which it is to be hoped they will retain as long as they live, are a Benefit not only to themselves, but to all that are round about them; a Benefit not confined to their own Times, but which descends to future Generations.

Secondly, We must exercise our *Charity* according to our respective Abilities and Opportunities. The Apocryphal Books afford us excellent Rules to this Purpose. (a) *If thou hast Abundance, give Alms accordingly. If thou hast but little, be not afraid to give according to that little: for thereby thou layest up a good Treasure for thyself against the Day of Necessity.* (b) *Give unto the most High according as he hath enriched thee, and as thou hast gotten.* And it was undoubtedly the Practice as well as the Doctrine of the first Age of Christianity, that against the first Day of the Week every Man should lay by a Part of his Week's Wages or Gains, according as God had prospered him, to be applyed by the Governors of the Church to the Use of the Poor. For whose sake, when they are very numerous and necessitous, a good Man will abridge himself of some lawful Pleasures and Enjoyments, rather than not spare what is requisite to keep them from starv-

(a) *Tobit* iv. 8.

(b) *Ecclus.* 35. 10.

ing. Indeed a wise Steward will lay to Heart that Law which he is told shall judge him at the last Day; *viz. That to whom much is given, of him shall much be required*; which plainly gives him to understand, that he is but a Trustee for pious and charitable Works, that the Overplus of his Estate, all that is not necessary for the well-being of himself and his Family, must be expended upon them; which if he fails to do, he is guilty of a Breach of Trust, and accountable for it at the last Day. God hath made ample Provision for his whole Family; he hath appointed divers Ranks of Men in it: Some he hath set over the rest, to give them their Meat in due Season. As they may not take it of themselves by Fraud or Force, so neither may the Almoners withhold it from them, *when it is in the Power of their Hand to give it*. Neither may they part with it grudgingly, and, as it were by Compulsion, but freely and readily, in Obedience to their great Master's Will, who *loveth a chearful Giver*. And together with our own Bounty, we must be so far from hindering, that we must do all we can to promote the Liberality of others.

This is the Way to secure ourselves in the Possession and Enjoyment of our good Things; this puts a comfortable Relish into them, and confirms them to us and our Posterity, against the Rapine and Violence of wicked Men, and all outward Accidents and Calamities, better than any human Power or legal Settlement. *The Merciful, says our Lord, are blessed, for they shall obtain Mercy*. They are not only clear from those inhuman Vices, Covetousness, Injustice and Oppression, which render Men odious and detested in the World, but they abound in those amiable Virtues of Liberality and Goodness, which command the Esteem and Favour of Mankind. They most resemble the divine Majesty; whose Hand is always open, plentifully dispensing to every
Creature;

Creature; and are most lively Images of *Jesus Christ*, who came into the *World*, as he declares of himself, not to be ministered unto, but to minister; and hath pronounced it *more blessed to give, than to receive*. They have a continual Feast of Chearfulness, Contentment and Satisfaction as well in what they impart to others, as in what they reserve to themselves. They find the Truth of those seeming Paradoxes, that scattering is the Way to encrease, while withholding more than is meet tendeth to Poverty; that *a small Thing which the Righteous hath, is better than great Riches of the Ungodly*. But above all, they lay up for themselves Treasures in Heaven, and live in a joyful Expectation of meeting their Judge, who hath promised to have a special Regard to such good Works, and to reward them with extraordinary Degrees of Happiness.

If our Mind were but under the Influence of that Religion we profess, we should then be fully persuaded, that our Opportunities to do *Good* are the greatest Blessings God can confer upon us in this Life; and that to receive no temporal Rewards for our good Works, is a good Pledge and Assurance to us, that we shall be everlastingly rewarded at the Resurrection of the Just. And while those who neglected to rescue the distressed Members of *Christ* from perishing, by a seasonable and easy Benevolence, shall hear that dreadful Sentence pronounced upon them, *(a) Depart from me, ye Cursed, into everlasting Fire, prepared for the Devil and his Angels. For I was an hungred, and ye gave me no Meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me no Drink: I was a Stranger, and ye took me not in: Naked, and ye clothed me not: Sick, and in Prison, and ye visited me not:* We on the other Hand, shall be graciously

(a) *Mat. xxv. 34, &c.*

admitted into the Joy of our *Lord*, for having approved ourselves good and faithful Servants in these Respects.

Let us then every Day be careful to turn all superfluous and unnecessary Expences, into Acts of *Charity* and *Mercy* to the Poor; let us break off our Sins by this Righteousness, and render God propitious to us by such Sacrifices; so shall we make ourselves Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, and when these Things fail us, be received into everlasting Habitations.

C H A P. VII.

The GOVERNMENT of our T H O U G H T S.

ALTHOUGH our THOUGHTS fall not under the Regulation of human Laws, as being nothing to the World, until they discover themselves in Words and Actions; yet they are all naked and open to the Eyes of God, who is the Searcher of Hearts, and requires Purity in the inmost Recesses of the Breast.

When the *Scribes* and *Pharisees* quarrelled at the Disciples of *Christ*, for eating before they had washed their Hands, contrary to the Tradition and Custom received among them, our *Lord* takes Occasion to instruct the People, that, (a) *not that which*

(a) *Mat. xv.*

goeth into the Mouth defileth a Man; but that which cometh out of the Mouth, this defileth a Man. For out of the Heart proceed evil Thoughts, Murders, Adulteries, Fornications, Thefts, false Witness, Blasphemies. These are the Things which defile a Man.

The Heart is the Fountain whence all our Words and Actions flow; they lie there as Seeds and Plants in the Ground, bringing forth Fruit according to their Kind. And therefore as *Christ* justly argues against the *Pharisees*: (a) *Either make the Tree good, and his Fruit good; or else make the Tree corrupt, and his Fruit corrupt: For the Tree is known by his Fruit. O Generation of Vipers, how can ye, being Evil, speak good Things? For out of the Abundance of the Heart the Mouth speaketh. A good Man out of the good Treasure of the Heart, bringeth forth good Things; and an evil Man, out of the evil Treasure of his Heart, bringeth forth evil Things.*

Vain *Thoughts* have not only a Tendency to Sin, but are in themselves sinful. For that which makes Sin to be Sin, is the Want of Conformity to the Will of God. And that vain *Thoughts* are not conformable to his Will, he himself declares, when he warns us against drawing near to him with our Lips, and suffering our Hearts to wander from him, especially when we are about any religious Duty. This Want of Sincerity and Attention is charged upon the *Pharisees*, as what destroyed the Heart and Virtue of all their Religion. (b) *Well did Esaias prophesy of you, Hypocrites: This People draweth nigh unto me with their Mouth, and honoureth me with their Lips; but their Heart is far from me.* And therefore their Worship is declared to be vain, and they compared to whited Sepulchres, (c) *which outwardly appear beautiful, -but are within full of dead*

(a) *Mat. xii.* (b) *Mat. xv.* (c) *Mat. xxiii.*

Mens Bones and all Uncleannests. This is the Reason why our Lord so constantly styles these Men Hypocrites; it being of the Essence of Religion, that it be inward and hearty. (a) *For God is a Spirit, and they that worship him, must worship him in Spirit and in Truth.* He is said to require Truth in the inward Parts, and none but the pure in Heart shall see him.

Our *Thoughts* then being so well known to God, and so necessary a Foundation of our Words and Actions, it behoves us to watch over them, and see they be employed about their proper Objects. (b) *Keep thy Heart with all Diligence, saith Solomon, for out of it are the Issues of Life.* Suffer them not either to be trifling and impertinent, or to fasten and dwell upon the Temptations of the Devil; but exercise yourself, as St. Paul did, *to have always a Conscience void of Offence toward God and toward Man.* Be constantly furnished with wholesome Food for your Soul; as the Attributes of God, that he governs all Things, that he had made this Life short and uncertain; but hath appointed a Day wherein he will raise us all out of our Graves, and call us to an Account for the Things we have done in the Body, and reward or punish us to all Eternity, according as our Works shall be; and take Occasion, from the Objects you daily meet and converse with, to make such Remarks, as may be for the Improvement of your spiritual Faculties and Affections. This was our Saviour's Way, always to take a Hint from the Company or Business he was in, to discourse of Heavenly Things.

Idleness being commonly the Occasion of most vain and wicked Imaginations, is therefore carefully to be

(a) *John iv.* (b) *Prov. iv. 23.*

avoided: Those who say they know not how to spend the next Hour, should so order the Course of their Life, that their Portions of Time, as much as is possible, may be filled up with some useful, or at least some innocent Employment.

When any *Sinful Thought* enters your Heart, endeavour to direct your Mind to some other Object, and be careful to check and smother the first Beginnings of Sin. And if you use yourself thus to guard and watch over your Heart, you will in Time, obtain such a Command over it, that you will have very little Trouble from those irregular Passions, which heretofore upon several Occasions used to be kindled in you.

Where we see Men so very cold and backward to spiritual Things, and so apt to spend all their *Thoughts* upon trifling, vain, or worldly Matters, there is Reason to think, that it is with a great deal of Pains and Reluctancy, that they can bring themselves to think of their everlasting Concernments; but when once they have devoted themselves to the Service of God, so as to make it their chief Concern, they will find it so far from being a Force upon them to meditate on spiritual Things, the Love and Favour of God, and a pure Conscience, that it will be natural for them to think of such Things, and they will find the greatest Pleasure in so doing.

But because as St. Paul affirms, (c) *We are not able of ourselves, so much as to think a good Thought, we must beseech God to create a clean Heart, and renew a right spirit within us, that so the Thoughts and Meditations of our Hearts, which are naturally evil continually, may, by the Inspiration of his Grace, be so sanctified, that they may always be acceptable in his Sight.*

(c) 2 Cor. iii. 5.

C H A P. VIII.

The GOVERNMENT of the
T O N G U E.

THE *Government* of the Tongue hath, in all Ages, been esteemed a Lesson, fit to be taught by the wisest Masters, and not easily learned by the aptest of their Scholars. For the *Tongue*, as St. *James* observes, though it be but a little Member, yet is more untractable than any kind of Beasts, or Birds, or Serpents, or Things in the Sea, which have been and may be tamed by Mankind. Whereas, a contentious, slanderous, brawling *Tongue* is rarely, if ever, brought into order, and taught to move by the Laws of Reason. It is like a Spark of Fire, which however small in itself, yet falling upon combustible Matter, often sets whole Towns in a Flame, and reduces them to Ashes. Or like the biting of a Viper, which leaves little or no visible Wound, but soon diffuses a deadly Poison all over the Body. Just so an ill *Tongue* many Times doth a deal of Mischief before it is perceived. Great Need hath every one therefore to follow holy *David's* Practice, (a) *To set a watch over his Mouth, and to keep the Door of his Lips.*

To specify all the Faults of the *Tongue*, might seem tedious. The Vice of *Lying* comprehends ma-

(a) *Psal.* cxliii. 3.

ny in one. Nothing is more common nor more deplorable, than the Liberty People take in prostituting their *Tongues* to Falshoods in their Communications one with another, to quibble and prevaricate in their Dealings, until they are hardened in such Frauds, and are so far from thinking it a Sin, that they account it a laudable Art and Mystery in Trade. Whereas the Scripture expressly says, that *a false Weight and false Measure are an Abomination to the Lord*, and for the very same Reason over-reaching in *Words* must be so too. *St. Paul*, in his first Epistle to the *Thessalonians*, a People of great Wealth and Trade, commands, (b) *That no Man go beyond, that is, over-reach, or defraud his Brother in any Matter, because that the Lord is the Avenger of all such.*

Not to insist upon the several kinds of *Lyes*, which are commonly distinguished into the *Pernicious*, the *Officious*, and the *Jocular*, they may all be placed under the first Denomination, and none to be jested with upon any Pretence whatever. *Epaminondas*, an Heathen, had so great a Regard to Sincerity, that he would at no Time repeat a Falshood, though but in jest. Let us, who are the Disciples of Christ, resolve to let our *Tongues* and our *Hearts* always go together, for the *Tongue* is the Interpreter of the *Heart*. But there is another Sort of *Lye* very current in the Affairs of Life, which we may call the *Promissory Lye*. Men think they oblige and gratify their Friends, by making them large Promises, but often fail in their Performances, partly through meer Oscitancy and Forgetfulness; and sometimes by a rash and absolute Engagement to do that which should be undertaken with Caution, and upon certain Conditions; as that, in case something of great Moment should interpose to alter the State of Things;

(b) 1 *Thef.* iv. 6.

a Man may be secure in his Truth and Honour, without an actual Performance of his Promise. But then he must be so clear, as not to want any Help from Shifts and Equivocations, to bring him off. The Reasons of his non-Performance must be such as he would be willing to admit himself, were he in the Place of his disappointed Friend.

Lye not one to another, Brethren, but let every Man speak Truth to his Neighbour: for ye are the Members one of another. The detestable, Nature of this Sin may be estimated from its Author, and its Punishment. The Original Author and Father of *Lyes* (a) is the Devil, as we learn from Christ's Mouth: And the Punishment of *Lyars* is in his Company, (b) *in the Lake which burns with Fire and Brimstone, which is the second Death.*

It is something odd to observe how much Men practise the Trade of *Lying*, and yet how they pretend to abominate and loath it. There is not, in common Estimation, a greater Affront can be put upon a Man, than to charge him with a *Lye*. The Scandal and Reproach of it hath proved to some more intolerable than Death. And why so, but because of the baseness and diabolical Nature of this Vice? It makes them so very nearly related to the Devil, that indeed Christ declares him to be their Father; so that whenever they are called *Lyars*, they are in Effect called Children of the Devil. Let us then pray to God in the Words of the Psalmist, (c) *Deliver my Soul, O Lord, from lying Lips, and from a deceitful Tongue.*

Next to *Lying*, we may place that which usually hath a great Alliance to it, *Backbiting* and *Slandering*.

(a) *John* viii. 44. (b) *Rev.* xxi. 8. (c) *Psalms* cxx. 2.

Offenders of this Kind are innumerable. Little Conversation passes, where something is not said to the Disadvantage of some absent Person; many Times upon no better Grounds than bare Hear-say, and uncertain Report. Few, even of the graver Sort, scruple to rehearse any Thing of this Kind they have learned from others. Now there are, I must confess, just Reasons why Men that are notorious for any Vice or Crime, should be exposed and represented as they deserve, not only to prevent others from falling into their Hands, and suffering by their Wickedness; but that they may undergo that Shame and Reproach, which ever was and must be the Portion of such ill Men.

St. *Paul* (a) would not allow the Christians at *Corinth* to have any Communication, religious or civil, with any Brother that was a Fornicator, or Covetous, or Idolatrous, or a Railer, or a Drunkard, or an Extortioner. And if they were thus bound to shun such Persons, no doubt but they might give the true Reason for it. But where a Man's Faults are not grown habitual to him, and hurt no body but himself, there not only Charity, but common Civility obliges us to be tender of his Reputation, and leave him to his own Correction, or to the private Admonitions of his faithful Friend. Or if he was formerly engaged in evil Courses, but is now reformed and become a good Man, Charity teaches us to cover his past Sins, even as we beg of God not to remember our Iniquities. And in general, where there is Room for a fair and candid Construction, we must be ever ready to make it, being more inclinable to defend than accuse, where the Matter will bear it, as considering, that *he shall*

(a) 1 Cor. v. 11.

have Judgment without Mercy, who hath shewed no Mercy.

To speak Evil of others, is not only Uncharitable, but Imprudent: for scarce any Man can be so blind, as not to see, That he who brings him ill Stories of others, will be apt to treat his Character no better, on another Occasion. There is no greater Evidence of the bad Temper of Mankind, than the general Proneness of Men to this Vice, who commonly incline to the censorious and uncharitable Side, and seem to be better pleased with hearing Evil than Good of others; which shews human Nature to be strangely depraved from its original Rectitude and Innocency. And though they all pretend to be the Disciples of him who taught nothing but *Kindness, Meekness, and Charity*, yet it is strange to see with what a slanderous and virulent Tongue, they will asperse and traduce other Mens Reputation, although the Injuries of this Nature are so great, that they are beyond all possible Reparation. Even some who make a more than ordinary Profession of Christianity, at the same Time do live in a most palpable Contradiction to the Precepts of that holy Religion, notwithstanding the Apostle (a) sets *Backbiters* with Fornicators, and Murderers, and Haters of God, of whom it is said, (b) *That they shall not inherit the Kingdom of God*: And in another Place, (c) the Character which the Apostle gives of such Men, is, *That they shall be Lovers of themselves, Covetous, Boasters, Evil-speakers, without natural Affection, Perfidious, False-accusers; &c.* And St. James (d) expressly says, *If any Man among you seemeth to be Religious, and bridleth not his Tongue, but deceiveth his own Heart, that Man's Religion is vain.*

(a) *Rom. i. 29.* (b) *1 Cor. vi. 10.* (c) *1 Tim. iii. 2, 3.*
 (d) *Chap. i. 26.*

That you may therefore beware of this heinous Sin; bridle your Tongue, and be cautious and circumspect of your Words; be not forward to speak of the Faults of others, without great Reason and Necessity, and do not delight to hear Ill of them. Give no Countenance to busy Persons, who having an Itch of talking and meddling in the Affairs of other Men, which do no ways concern them, love to blazon their Miscarriages: Or if you cannot decently reprove them, then divert the Discourse some other Way; or if you cannot do that, seem not to mind it, and so you may sufficiently signify, that you do not like it. Indeed a main Cause of the Corruption of Mankind commonly consists of the Viciousness of Conversation, which insensibly infects and debauches Men's Minds; as it is truly observed by the Apostle, *Evil Communication corrupts good Manners.*

Did Men but consult their own Happiness, they would refrain from *Evil-speaking*; for who knows whose Good-will he may stand in Need of in the Chances and Affairs of this Life? And how well-pleasing is this to GOD, how acceptable to others, and delightful and easy to ourselves, to govern well our *Tongues*? *What Man is he, saith the Psalmist, (a) that desireth Life, and loveth many Days, that he may see Good? Keep thy Tongue from Evil, and thy Lips from speaking Falsehood.*

As we must not be forward to speak Evil of those whom we cannot commend, so we ought not to *detract* from any Man's real Worth and deserved good Character, but readily give him all the Praise and Encomiums which he deserves. Virtue certainly is as much to be honoured, as Vice is to be reproached and despised. The Devil is called, *the Accuser of the Bre-*

(a) Psalm xxxiv. 12, 13.

ibren, because he disparages their Goodness, and seeks for Blemishes in their Holy Life, as he did in the Case of *Job*. This he doth to depreciate Virtue, and rob it of its due Encouragement. And all envious Tongues are his Instruments in this Work, and Enemies to the common Good. Thus *Judas* spoke with Envy of the Woman who anointed our Lord's Feet with precious Ointment, pretending it might have been put to a better Use; *Why was not this Ointment sold for three Hundred Pence, and given to the Poor?*

In *conversing* with any Man, our Language must be as respectful as his Quality deserves; reverent to superiors, humble to inferiors, kind and courteous to all Men. This is the Way to gain ourselves Esteem, and make every Man our Friend. If others do not the same to us, it may be out of Ignorance; we must not be provoked by it, but teach them by our Example to behave themselves better. There is a Regard to be shewn to human Nature in every Man, and the Violence of it by scurrilous, contemptuous Language, is a very grievous Sin, as our Lord hath taught us in his (a) Exposition of the sixth Commandment.

Common *Swearing* and *Curfing* are such monstrous Sins, that we may well say of the Tongue addicted to them, (b) *It is set on Fire of Hell*; Blasphemies and Imprecations being represented in Scripture as the Language of Devils. The Name of God is *great, wonderful* and *holy*, not to be mentioned but upon grave Occasions, and with the greatest Veneration. This he hath strictly commanded, and enforced that Command with a Threatning to the Transgressors of it; and that Threatning he hath sometimes executed in a direful Manner; to admonish all Blasphemers, what a *fearful Thing it is to*

(a) *Matt. v. 22.* (b) *James iii. 6.*

fall into the Hands of an angry God, who is infinitely jealous of his Honour.

Lastly, Though we may be *free* and *pleasant* in our Discourse at Seasons of Mirth and Rejoicing, and thereby promote Chearfulness and good Humour, yet we must ever be careful to keep our Tongues within the Bounds of Piety, Charity and Sobriety; not to burlesque Scripture, or ridicule any Thing that is Sacred; not to break any bitter sarcastical Jest upon the Company, or play with the Character of any absent Person; not to let any *corrupt Communication* proceed out of our Mouth, in lewd Songs or Stories; but see that our Discourse be seasoned with Salt, as the Scripture speaks, and have nothing noisome or offensive in it. In the main, we must, as the best Rules instruct us, (a) be considerate in our Words, and slow to speak, remembring in our Words, (b) that in them *there wanteth not Sin, there are divers Vanities*, and that a *Fool's Voice is known by them*. But, (c) *be that hath Knowledge, spareth his Words: And a Man of Understanding is of an excellent Spirit*.

(d) *There is not a Word in my Tongue, but, lo! O Lord, thou knowest it altogether.* (e) *Let all Clamour and Evil-speaking be put away from you.* (f) *Put them in Mind to be no Brawlers, but gentle, shewing all Meekness unto all Men.* (g) *The Wisdom that is from Above, is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be intreated.* (h) *Finally, be ye pitiful, be courteous, not rendering Evil for Evil, or Railing for Railing, but contrariwise Blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye may inherit a Blessing.*

(a) *Prov. x.* (b) *Eccl. v.* (c) *Prov. xvii. 27.* (d) *Psalms cxxxix. 4.* (e) *Ephes. iv. 31.* (f) *Tit. v. 12.* (g) *Jam. iii. 17.* (h) *1 Pet. iii. 8, 9.*

 The RULE of our ACTIONS.

C H A P. IX.

Of a PEACEABLE and CHRISTIAN
CONVERSATION.

AS the inward Peace of our Minds consists in the good Disposition of our Thoughts and Affections; so the *Peace* of SOCIETY is maintained by a meek and calm Deportment one towards another. Quarrels and Contentions commonly spring from unguarded Expressions, and indiscreet Handling of Matters. Our blessed Saviour therefore, who came to promote Peace and good Will among Men, hath done all that was possible to prevent the Beginnings of Wrath and Strife, denouncing a Woe against that Man by whom the Offence cometh, while he crowns the Lovers of Peace with temporal and eternal Beatitudes: (a) *Blessed are the Meek, for they shall inherit the Earth. Blessed are the Peace-makers, for they shall be called the Children of God.* They who are not only inoffensive themselves, but apt to reconcile others, and compose the Differences that are between them, shall be esteemed as the Off-

 (a) *Matt. v.*

spring of that God who is the Fountain of Peace and Love.

There are few Precepts in holy Scripture so often inculcated upon us, as those which concern the ordering of our Words and Carriage towards others, so as to avoid Strife and Debate. And because it is impossible but that Offences will come (for however we may govern our own Passions, we cannot command those of other Men) therefore we must be ready to bear with them, and not exact every Thing by the strictest Rules. We must be content in some Cases to sustain Loss, and recede from our own Right. Not that Religion binds us to give up ourselves a Prey to Men of no Conscience nor Honesty. There are good Laws made for the Security of our Persons and Estates, and we shall do well to put ourselves under their Protection, when we are in real Danger. But we must not be litigious, nor forward upon every slight Occasion to drag Men to Courts and Prisons: And even when there is sufficient Cause for such Kind of Redress, we must not be rigorous and overhasty in our Proceedings. This was the Fault of the Servant in the Gospel, whose Lord forgave him ten Thousand Talents. He went and arrested a Fellow-Servant of his, who owed him a hundred Pence, and threw him into Prison until he should pay the Debt, when he might have had it without all this Trouble, if he had waited with Patience a little longer. This cruel Treatment incensed his Lord against him to put the old Bond of ten thousand Talents in Execution. A fair Warning to all Creditors, that when they seek for their just Debts, they temper Mercy with Justice, proceeding leisurely, and (like the beloved Sons of God) with Bowels of Mercies, Kindness, Meekness, Long-suffering.

At the same Time the Debtors must be admonished, That they be neither fraudulent nor negligent in answering just Demands; but pay what they have contracted

contracted for with a ready and willing Mind. Otherwise they will prove the Disturbers of the Peace, and be answerable for all the ill Consequences of their Frauds and Neglects, not only which fall upon themselves, but upon the Persons and Families of their Creditors, who many Times are impoverished and ruined by the base Practices of their Debtors.

In bearing the Offences of daily Incurfion, we are to consider our own as well as other Mens Infirmities, that *in many Things we offend all*, and therefore do mutually stand in Need of brotherly Kindness and Candour. If we were to govern ourselves by the strict Laws of *Retaliation*, one Affront and Injury would still beget another, and there would be no End of Contention, no Room for a charitable Pacification. But now we are forbid to return Evil for Evil, and Railing for Railing. If the Injury be such as calls for Revenge, we are not to take it with our own Hands. This would be to make ourselves Judges in our own Cause, to usurp the Office of the Magistrate, even of the Sovereign *Arbiter*, who hath said, *Vengeance is mine, I will repay it*: Who, it may be, is pleased to humble some proud Conceit in us, by suffering such Indignities to be put upon us; and then not to take them patiently, is to spurn against him. This made *David* meekly suffer the Cursing of *Shimei*, when his Servants offered to take off his Head for it. (a) *So let him curse, because the Lord hath said unto him, Curse David. Who then shall say, wherefore hast thou done so?*

But if we were allowed Retaliation, as it was under the old Law, yet *Forgiveness* is far sweeter, and yields a more rational and durable Pleasure. The Monuments of our Mercy are far a more pleasing and delightful Spectacle than those of our Cruelty;

(a) 2 Sam. xvi.

and no Sort of Thought doth usually haunt Men with more Terror, than a Reflection upon what they have done in the Heat of Revenge. But to overcome Evil with Good, to be kind and beneficent to Enemies, may soften their Hearts, and bring them to a Temper worthy both of Men and Christians.

Most of the Wrath and Anger which disturbs the World, proceeds from a Root of Pride. Men care not how much they lessen and detract from others, while they are so tender of their own Honour, that they cannot bear the least Omission of Respect, but are all in a Flame at the Man who neglects them. The Spirit of *Haman* could so little brook the uncourtly Carriage of *Mordecai*, that he would not be atoned with the Blood of the Offender, but the whole Nation of the *Jews* must fall a Sacrifice to his Ambition. Thus haughty Men never think themselves great, but when their Feet are on the Necks of their Enemies. They think it is high and noble, to revenge their Quarrels, and crush all that offend them. Whereas the true Magnanimity is quite the Reverse of all this. *God*, says the *Psalmist*, *is a righteous Judge, strong and patient, and he is provoked every Day*. He is continually provoked by a World of impious Men, and he can easily destroy them every Moment; yet he declares his almighty Power most chiefly in shewing Pity and Mercy. *Christ* was the express Image of his Father's Wisdom, infinitely superior herein to the *Scribes* and *Pharisees*, and he was as far from their Vanity and Ostentation; not disdainful that the meanest of the People, and even their young Children, should come about him when he taught. The greatest Unworthiness and Ingratitude of Men, could not stop the Current of his Mercies towards them. When he was urged by his Disciples, to call down Fire from Heaven upon an inhospitable City of the *Samaritans*, he checked his mistaken Advisers, and meekly departed to another City.

City. In his last Agonies, after a cruel Tryal of mocking and scourging, when he was reviled on the very Cross, with unparalleled Insolence and Rudeness, he made the best Apology for his Murderers which their Crime was capable of: *Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.* If it was fit for the Son of God, to set such a Pattern of Meekness and Gentleness, how much more fit is it for the Sons of Men to follow it? *Let us then not be overcome of Evil, but overcome Evil with Good.*

I conclude with St. *Austin's* Character of a peaceable Man. "He corrects, says he, as much as he can, whatever he finds amiss in the World. And though his well-informed Judgment will not suffer him to approve of several Things which he sees others do, yet still he puts it not in their Power to shake and discompose his own Temper."



THE END OF THE FOURTH PART.

TO sum up the whole, I will add in the last Place, the divine Benedictions, which accompany the righteous Man in the Performance of the foregoing Duties.

Blessed is the Man that walketh in the Ways of the Lord. (a) As the Heaven is high above the Earth, so great is his Mercy toward them that fear him. The Mercy of the Lord is from Everlasting to Everlasting, upon them that fear him; and his Righteousness upon Childrens Children: To such as keep his Covenant, and to those that remember his Commandments to do them. (b) Unto the Upright there ariseth Light in the Darkness: He is Gracious and full of Compassion, and Righteous. Surely he shall not be moved for ever: The Righteous shall be had in everlasting Remembrance. He shall not be afraid of evil Tydings; his Heart is fixed, trusting in the Lord. He hath dispersed, he hath given to the Poor, his Righteousness endureth for ever; his Horn shall be exalted with Honour. (c) Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord, that walketh in his Ways. For thou shalt eat the Labour of thine Hands. Happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee. Thy Wife shall be as a fruitful Vine by the Sides of thine House; thy Children like Olive Plants, round about thy Table. Behold thus shall the Man be blessed that feareth the Lord.

(a) *Psal. ciii.* (b) *Psal. cxii.* (c) *Psal. cxxviii.*



THE
T E R M S
O F O U R
S A L V A T I O N .

THE SALVATION of Mankind, though purchased by JESUS CHRIST, is yet insured to every one of us no otherwise, than as we qualify ourselves for it, by performing certain Conditions on our Part.

This is easily explained by the following Instance. When a Lord grants to his Servant the Possession of an Estate, upon Condition that he shall at certain Times come into Court, and openly profess his Fealty and Service to his Lord : No Body will say that the Servant by doing this, purchases the *Estate*, but that he only qualifies himself for it. And upon his Neglect to do this ; especially if he neglects it out of Contempt, or takes part with his Lord's Enemies, and conspires against his Honour and Dignity ; every Body must justify the Lord, if he takes the Forfeiture,

ture, resumes his Grant, and punishes that wicked Servant.

In like Manner is our Title to *Salvation* good, so long as we perform certain Conditions: Which St. Paul hath expressed both negatively and positively: (a) *We must deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts; and live a sober, righteous, and godly Life.*

We must honour our Lord in the Observance of his *whole Will*, not picking and choosing such Parts of it as suit our Humour or Interest, and rejecting the rest; but yielding an equal Obedience to the harder as well as easier Commands. (b) *For whosoever shall keep the whole Law, and yet offend in one Point, he is guilty of all;* because he contemns that sacred Authority which hath enacted them all; and because the same corrupt Mind which emboldens him to violate one Law, would instigate him to break through any of the rest, if Pleasure or Profit should incline him to it. So that his Innocence in other Respects is not owing to his Virtue or Sense of God's Authority; but to his Want of Temptation or Opportunity.

We are then said to be Transgressors of the *Law*, when we wilfully commit those Things which we know God hath forbidden; or omit those Things, which we know he hath commanded and required us to do. If God did not exact universal and impartial Obedience, but allowed secret Reserves for some one bosom Sin, one Man would chuse Covetousness, another Drunkenness, a third Uncleanness, and so on, until it would be no longer true, that *Adulterers, Fornicators, Drunkards, &c. should not inherit the Kingdom of God.* They might entertain Hopes of getting

(a) *Titus* ii. 11, 12. (b) *James* ii. 10.

into it, if universal Obedience without Partiality were not the Condition on which eternal Life is promised.

But by this universal Obedience, is not to be understood such a Perfection of Holiness, as admits of no Alloy or Mixture of Sin, no Deviation from the Paths of Piety and Virtue. It may undeniably be proved from Holy Scripture, that a State of Salvation is consistent with some Failures and Defects in our Obedience; for in this Sense it is said, *There is no Man living who sinneth not.* So that the Perfection required of us, is, not so much in the Work as in the Will; by Reason of the Infirmity of our Nature we cannot always stand upright; but we ought heartily to endeavour it, and sincerely to repent of and amend whatever we find amiss in us.

This may serve to set those right, who doubt whether God requires an absolute and unfinning Degree of Holiness; and those also who are in a more dangerous Error, thinking he will save Men through Christ, who forsake not their Sins, nor do the Duties which he hath commanded. *Christ* our Saviour declares, That except we repent, we shall perish, and this Repentance must consist, not only in a Ceasing to do Evil, but in a daily Improvement and filling up of those good Duties, wherein we find we have been deficient. Thus *Christ* saith: *Every Tree that bringeth not forth good Fruit, is hewn down, and cast into the Fire.* *St. Paul* testifies, That *without Holiness no Man shall see the Lord.* *St. Peter* exhorts us to (a) *add to our Faith, Virtue, and to Virtue, Knowledge; and to Knowledge, Temperance; and to Temperance, Patience; and to Patience, brotherly Kindness; and to brotherly Kindness, Charity.*

(a) 2 Pet. 1. 5.

In this Sense therefore God requires perfect Obedience to his Commands ; and enjoins it as a Condition without which we shall not be saved, that in what Instances soever we have in Time past offended, in those we walk warily for the Time to come ; in whatever Points of Duty we have been wanting, we now advance and grow in Grace.

He therefore who lays hold of the gracious Promises of the Gospel, to recover himself from any known Sin, and is so sensible of his past Infirmities, as thenceforth to keep a stricter Watch over himself ; he who upon a Review of his Performances, perceives that he gets Ground, and is more and more confirmed in all Goodness ; he who industriously avoids the Temptations by which he hath formerly fallen ; who unavoidably meeting with Trials which formerly prevailed over him, hath now the Faith and Power to hold out against all their Importunities ; This Man hath the best Grounds to hope, that he is in a sure State of Salvation.

Thus much is the indispensable Duty of every penitent Sinner, that he demonstrate the Sincerity of his Love to God, by stricter and closer Approaches to perfect Obedience ; that he daily weaken all vicious Habits, and introduce the contrary Virtues into Practice. This is that Condition of our Acceptance, that Law of the Gospel, which will admit of no Abate-ments at the last Day. And even so, it is an invaluable Blessing to be admitted into the Kingdom of God. But of all those who make a plausible Profession of Christianity, where shall we find one who thus sincerely dischargeth his Part of it ? We may with the Prophet *Jeremiah*, *Run to and fro through the Streets of this City, and seek if we can find a Man ; if there be any that executeth Judgment, that seeketh the Truth,*
that

that serveth the Lord with a perfect Heart and a willing Mind. Two or three in a Parish: Nothing in Comparison of the vast Multitudes who are Baptized and Registered as *Christ's* Soldiers and Servants. So true is that Saying of his: *Many are called, but few chosen.*

This is the truly righteous Man, the *Israelite* indeed, in whom is no Guile; who doth not rest in the external Part of Religion, but worships God with all his Heart, and Soul, and Strength, and Mind; who studies to know his whole Will, and to do it; who is not content with ordinary Attainments, but strives to excel in every Thing that is good. This is the healthy and sound Constitution of the Soul, which like that of the Body, causeth every Faculty to perform its Function with Facility and Pleasure.

Could we but heartily fix upon our great End, and make the whole Business of our Life subservient to it, this would prevent those Inroads which Temptations make upon our Soul, and which render our Obedience partial and defective. We should not receive such strong Impressions from the various Circumstances of this uncertain State, nor so often step out of our Way to catch at the Riches, Honours, and Pleasures of the World. If our Hearts were but in Heaven, our Discourses and whole Conversation would relish of it; our Cares, our Thoughts and Affections, would like the Streams of a River flow towards it. And our Hearts would be there, if our Treasure were there, and we did but esteem the Felicities of that Kingdom according to their true Nature and Dignity. Then would our Feet run the Ways of God's Commandments with Pleasure and Delight, and we should earnestly press towards the Hope that is set before us, the Prize of our high Calling in *Jesus Christ*.

A serious EXHORTATION to REPENTANCE and a good LIFE.

THE absolute Necessity of performing the aforesaid CONDITIONS in order to the Attainment of SALVATION, will bring every considering Person seriously to try and examine himself, whether a Promise being made him of entering into Life, he is not in Danger of falling short of it. Since a little Leaven of wilful Sin, one single favourite Lust, will corrupt the Whole of a good Life, and defeat all Endeavours in other Respects; it behoves you to search for it with all Diligence, and where-ever you find it, to purge it out by a hearty *Repentance*. You may possibly obtain a good Report among Men, at the cheap Rate of a Form of Godliness; but remember, you are not to be judged by them, but by him who requireth Truth in the inward Parts. You may, with *Agrippa*, be almost a Christian, and, with *Herod*, gladly hear, and readily do many Things taught you by God's Word, and yet be in the Bonds of some Iniquity or Lust, which keeps you from laying hold on eternal Life. Consider, that the Wisdom which is from above, is (as St. *James* speaks of it) *without Partiality, and without Hypocrisy*. You may think it a Master-Piece of Art and Policy to palliate your Unsoundness, and give it the Colour of Truth;—but you cannot deceive God, who alone is to determine of your final Condition; and so the Cheat falls at last upon yourself, who flattered your own Heart with the
Sinner

Sinner that goeth two Ways, saying, (a) *I shall have Peace, though I walk in the Imagination of mine Heart.* But of such a one the Scripture saith, *The Lord will not spare him, but his Anger and his Jealousy shall smoke against that Man; all the Curses that are written in this Book shall lie upon him.*

How happy would it be for Men, if they would but seriously lay these Things to Heart, while they have Time and Space for Repentance! If they would but consider how inexcusable every Act of Disobedience in Christians is, since God hath given them both Light enough to see their Way, and sufficient Strength to carry them through it. They are instructed with *St. Paul*, both how to be abased, and how to abound; and not to be puffed up with Prosperity, nor beaten down and dispirited by Adversity. They have in his Person, an Experiment and Proof, that the Divine Aid afforded us, is superior to the strongest Temptations, and enables us to do all Things through Christ who strengtheneth us. That we need not be anxious about the Provisions of this mortal Life, much less enter into any sinful Measures to procure them, since infinite Wisdom is always at Work for us, and hath promised to lay no heavier Burthen upon us than we are able to bear, to withhold no good Thing from us, so long as we live a godly Life; so that we may with full Assurance cry out; the Lord is on my Side, I will not be afraid of any Dangers; he who hath the whole Earth in his Hands, is my Shepherd, I cannot be destitute of any Thing that is convenient for me. Such Considerations as these would in a great Measure, prevent the Miseries of the present Life, and lead us to employ the greatest Part of our most serious Thoughts upon the Welfare of our immortal Souls.

(a) Deut. xxix. 19.

From thus considering the Importance and Reasons of our Duty, we must proceed to form steady *Resolutions* for performing every Branch of it. Are there some Temptations more pleasing to our corrupt Natures, and more apt to prevail over us? We must maintain our Guard against them, and not suffer ourselves by any Means to be brought within their Influence and Solicitations. Do we, upon a Review of our past Lives, observe manifold Omissions of our Duty both towards God and Man? We must immediately resolve to redeem the Time we have lost, by filling up what remains with Abundance of good Fruits. All this we must peremptorily determine, and faithfully execute when the Opportunities of Action offer themselves; daily imploring the Assistance of Divine Grace, to enable us to reduce all our good Designs into Practice, and to persevere unto our Lives End.

How many Millions of Souls are now irrecoverably lost, who rested in some faint ineffectual Purposes of Reformation, flattering themselves, that the Desire of Grace was Grace, and suffering their good Motions to fly off, and vanish away as the early Dew! Such is the double-minded Man St. *James* speaks of, who is unstable in all his Ways: He will reconcile Contradictions, and serve both God and Mammon. He hopes for the Rewards of Piety while he enjoys the Pleasures of Sin, and divides his Services between the Duties of Religion, and the Works of the Devil: Sometimes he is very assiduous at his Devotions, but he runs but a short Course; he quickly starts aside into the broad Ways of the World again.

Indeed there hath been in all Ages a Virtue and Religion, which hath been assumed by ill Men, as well suited the Humours and Interests of the World. The Devil himself chooses to be served with Temples and Sacrifices. He had the Confidence to ask our Blessed Lord and Saviour to fall down and worship him.

When

When the old World was destroyed by the Flood, we cannot doubt but there were more Pretenders to Religion than those who were saved in the Ark; and that many who perished in the Flames of *Sodom* and *Gomorrab*, had often caused the Smoak of their Altars to ascend. And thus it will be at the general Conflagration of all Things. *In that Day*, says Christ, *many will say unto me, Lord, Lord, have we not eat and drank in thy Presence, and thou hast preached in our Streets? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: Depart from me, ye that work Iniquity.* We see then there is something of Singularity in being soundly religious. We must not be discouraged in our Way to Heaven, though we have not all the good Company we could wish. Nay, though Men should revile and persecute us, and say all manner of Evil against us for *Christ's* Sake, we may go on with Courage, as knowing, that *great is our Reward in Heaven.*

In such Cases we may say with the great Apostle, It is a very small Thing for me to be censured of Man, so long as I approve myself to God. For *it is God that justifieth, who is he that condemneth?* Our Account at the last Day will depend not upon our present Reputation in the World, but as then in Reality and very Deed we shall be found to be.

The Joy and Comfort therefore of every good Man, consists in the Assurance he hath of his own Sincerity, that he heartily studies in all Things to please G O D. *The Ground of our Rejoicing*, saith St. Paul, *is this, even the Testimony of our Conscience, that in Simplicity and godly Sincerity not with fleshly Wisdom, but by the Grace of God, we have had our Conversation in the World.* This is our surest Consolation in the midst of the sharpest Afflictions and hardest Censures.

Let us not then run into the common Error of Mankind, who while they are in the Flower of their Health and Vigour, immerse themselves in the Plea-

fures or Affairs of this Life; and are deaf to all Counsels and Persuasions to be wise, and to consider their latter End. This great Work they delay from Time to Time, until old Age overtakes them, and then (contrary to the ancient Law) they offer Sacrifices of the Lame and Blind, the feeble Remains of impaired Health and Strength. But is it fit that God should be pleased with their cold and languid Devotions, after a continued Course of Sensualities, and Abuses of his Grace? The sacred Writers earnestly move us to consider, that *Now is the acceptable Time and Day of Salvation*: Wherein if we refuse to hear and obey the Voice of God, he may justly reject us when evil Days of Fear and Trembling come upon us. Suppose we had an Assurance that we should go out of the World; not by a sudden Death, but gradual Decay, yet how poor a Compensation could we make upon the Bed of Languishing, for all the Impieties and Follies of a mispent Life? When we shall not be able, seriously, to think of any Thing, by reason of our Pains, and the Concern we shall have about the Means to procure some Ease and Respite from them. What a miserable Confusion must they needs be in, who are summoned to give up their Accounts, and so little prepared for it? Or if the great and terrible Day of the Lord should surprize us (as we are often warned to expect it may) what a strange Consternation shall we be in, *when the Son of Man shall appear in the Clouds of Heaven with Power and great Glory; when the Sun shall be darkened, and the Moon turned into Blood, and all the Host of Heaven shall be shaken; when Nature shall labour under its last Pangs and Convulsions; and the whole Creation flame and melt about us: When the Heavens shall be shriveled up as a Roll of Parchment; the Earth torn away from its Center, and every Mountain and Island removed!* What Thoughts can the wisest Heads have in the midst of so much Confusion and Terror? Or if they could have
 any,

any, what Time would there be to put them in Practice? *When they shall see an Angel standing upon the Sea, and upon the Earth, lifting up his Hand to Heaven, and swearing by Him that liveth for ever and ever, that Time shall be no more*; as this dreadful Day is described, *Rev. VI. 15.—X. 5, 6.* Where Sinners are represented at the Appearance of this great Judge, not as flying to God in Hopes of Mercy, but as running from him in utter Despair of it: *When Kings and great Captains, the most mighty and rich Men, shall hide themselves in the Dens and Caves of the Earth, and say to the Mountains, fall on us, and to the Rocks, cover us from the Face of Him that sitteth on the Throne, and from the Wrath of the Lamb: For the great Day of his Wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?* This Wrath is called the Wrath of the Lamb, to signify to us, That nothing is more terrible than Meekness and Patience, when thoroughly provoked and turned into Fury.

In such horrible Distractions shall the stoutest and boldest Sinners upon Earth be, when they shall be surprized by that great and terrible Day of the Lord. And their Case is not much better nor more comfortable, who in the ordinary Course of Mortality, are carried from this World to another, without being duly prepared for so *great a Change.*

I am loth to enter into the Controversy of a *Death-bed Repentance*: I am persuaded there is scarce any such Thing. We have but one Example, that I know of; in the whole *Bible*, of the Repentance of a dying Sinner, *viz.* That of the Penitent Thief upon the Cross. And the Circumstances of his Case are so peculiar and extraordinary, that it cannot afford any Ground of Hope and Encouragement to slothful and improvident Christians. We cannot now suffer in the Company of our Blessed Lord; and if we could, it is not certain that we should behave ourselves towards

ards him so well as the Penitent Thief did, and make so good an End of a bad Life.

Every prudent Man therefore who hopes to be rewarded with Heaven, will begin his Work betimes, and take the Morning of his Life for it, while he can find Pleasure in it, and before irregular Desires settle themselves into Habits, and get the Ascendant and Command over him.

This is the Way to make our *present* Life easy and comfortable to us. Religion is so far from being in itself grievous and distasteful, that it fully answers the Character which the wise *Solomon* gives of it; *Her Ways are Ways of Pleasantness, and all her Paths are Peace.* For this I appeal to the Consciences of those who have tasted all Kinds of Pleasure, whether they do not find more solid Satisfaction in the House of God, and the Sacrifices of Prayer and Thanksgiving offered up in that Place, than in all the airy Diversions of a most splendid Theatre? whether they are not more easy in their Minds, when they keep to a regular Method of Devotion, and strictly adhere to the Laws of Sobriety and Goodness, than when they break through them for the transient Gratification of some intemperate Lust or Appetite? God hath animated us with Heaven-born Souls, which may be amused for a while, but never truly filled with less than that Celestial Food conveyed to them in the Exercise of Religious and Spiritual Duties.

Nothing can be more easily demonstrated than this, That our present Felicities are best secured and enjoyed; when we live agreeably to the Laws of our Religion. Temperance is absolutely necessary to preserve Health, and give a quick and pleasing Relish to our Food. Uprightness in Dealings maintains Commerce and Society, which cannot subsist without it. Affability and Courtesy is the Way to gain Men's Affections, and dispose them to do us any good Office
when

when it lies in their Power. Reverence to Magistrates and Superiors, keeps up the Laws in due Force, and guards against Assaults and Injuries.

But if these Temporal Advantages justify the Wisdom of being Religious, how strongly do those which are Eternal plead for it? How infinitely do *they* weigh down all the Pains and Hardships which can possibly result from it? Were we continually to be upon our Knees; were we daily to encompass the Table of our Lord; were we like the devout *Anna*, never to depart out of the Temple, but serve God with Fastings and Prayers Night and Day; this would be so far from being a Price equivalent to our everlasting Inheritance, that it could not merit a few Years Enjoyment of it.

Surely the greatest Part of Christians are such only by Custom; they have the Face of Religion without the Force of it; are born of Christian Parents, but not regenerated by the Holy Spirit; lay Claim to the Merits of Christ, but want that Love and Obedience which make up the Character of his Disciples. In short, they devise a new Gospel, and propose to themselves a new Way of Salvation.

If we are serious in our Pursuit of Happiness, we must seek it in that Way which Christ, who hath the Disposal of it, hath set before us: We must proceed in an even and steady Course of Piety, must immediately repent of any Error or Misdeed, supplicating God for his Pardon and preventing Grace. We must by a faithful Imitation of Christ, convince the World, that we sincerely believe and embrace his Doctrines; that we fear his Threatnings, by rejecting every Thing that is sinful; that we depend upon his Promises of a better Life, by renouncing the Poms and Vanities of this. Let our whole Spirit and Conversation be so lovely, and venerable, and praise-worthy, as that hence it may be known to what Master and what Religion we belong. O that Men were
wise!

wife! that they understood this! that they would consider their latter End! that they would dwell much upon the Thoughts of DEATH and JUDGMENT, and the unchangeable STATE which follows thereupon.

Of the worthy RECEIVING the Holy
SACRAMENT

Of the LORD'S SUPPER.

THE Office of the *Holy Communion* of the LORD'S SUPPER, properly belongs to that Part of our christian Institution which contains our DUTY to GOD. But because this high Act of Devotion is generally performed at certain special Seasons; I have therefore chose to treat of it distinctly in this Place: and in a compendious Manner; as being persuaded, that Persons who are religiously disposed to be worthy Communicants, cannot want some of those numerous Tracts which are set forth for their Direction in this solemn Part of Religion.

Our Duty of Communicating at the *Lord's Table*, is as clearly declared in Scripture, as any other Branch of Christianity whatever. Our Lord's own Words at the Institution of this *Sacrament*, are, *Do this in Remembrance of me.* St. Paul, who was taught it immediately from Heaven, hath bestowed a particular Discourse upon it, in which he tells us, *That as oft as we eat this Bread, and drink this Cup of the Lord, we do shew forth his Death.* And the Practice of the primitive Church, who rarely, if ever, omitted this

this *Holy Sacrament* in their solemn Assemblies for religious Worship, shews us what was the Sense of Christ and his Apostles in this Point.

This is an Institution of Religion, grounded upon the sole Authority of the Commander, which is here fully sufficient and unquestionable. *Moses* was but a Servant in the House of God; yet Obedience was exacted to his Form of Worship upon the highest Penalties. How much more shall CHRIST, the Lord of the House, be obeyed in such reasonable Services as he enjoins? *He who*, as *St. Paul* speaks, *bath purchased his Church with his own Blood*: Who, as he himself saith, *bath all Power in Heaven and Earth committed to him*.

And while by doing this, we approve our Fidelity and Obedience to our Lord, we are at the same Time enriching ourselves with all spiritual Benefits; as, The Pardon of our Sins, the Grace and Assistance of the Holy Spirit, to confirm us in all other good Duties, and support us under all Hardships and Sufferings; the Assurance of the divine Love, and Earnest of immortal Life.

Gratitude will farther prompt us to Assiduity in this sacred Office. Did our Lord, when he was about to suffer for us, oblige us to commemorate his Sufferings in a Way so easy and agreeable to us; and shall we deny him this reasonable Request, and tell him by our Neglect of it, That we do not think his Passion worth the Remembring? This would be the most horrible Slight and Affront we could offer him. We could not be so unmindful of the dying Words of any Person, for whom we had a real Kindness and Friendship.

The greatest Reason which is pretended for the Neglect of this *Sacrament*, is an Expression of *St. Paul*, intimating the Danger of unworthy Receiving. *He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh Damnation to himself, not considering the*
Lord's

Lord's Body. If the Danger of unworthy Receiving be so very great, it is concluded to be the safest Way, not to Receive at all. But this is a great Mistake, it being equally at least, if not more dangerous, to live in the utter Neglect of this Duty. The Obligations to it have been already mentioned; and the Danger of Neglecting it, is in several Places declared to be very great. *Except ye eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, says Christ, and drink his Blood, ye have no Life abiding in you:* The whole Discourse of our Lord in that Place, may be well applied to this *Holy Sacrament.* Again, They who in the Parable refused to come to the Marriage-Feast, were as surely destroyed for making light of the Invitation, as he who came without a Wedding-Garment.

The greatest Indisposition for this *Sacrament*, is, being an habitual and resolute Sinner. This is the Sense of the *Church*, declared in her Exhortation to this *Sacrament.* *If any of you be a Blasphemer of God, an Hinderer or Slanderer of his Word, an Adulterer, or be in Malice or Envy, or in any other grievous Crime, repent of your Sins, or else come not to that holy Table.* Here we see, that the grossest of Sinners are no otherways debarred Communion, than as they are impenitent, and still engaged in their impious Courses. For afterwards we hear it said to all those who offer themselves to be Communicants: *Ye that do truly and earnestly repent you of your Sins, and are in Love and Charity with your Neighbours, and intend to lead a new Life, following the Commandments of God, and walking from henceforth in his Holy Ways; draw near with Faith, &c.* So that we see, it is not any past Sins of what Kind soever, but only a Perseverance in them, which is a sufficient Impediment to our worthy Receiving the *Lord's Supper.* Our common Defects and unavoidable Frailties and Infirmities, must not deter us. These do not occasion that Unworthiness spoken of by *St. Paul*, which makes it dangerous to communicate.

communicate. There is an Unworthiness which the best Christians are guilty of and confess in that Prayer of the Church: *We do not presume to come to this thy Table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own Righteousness, but in thy manifold and great Mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather up the Crumbs under thy Table.* And after they have communicated, they do not pretend to be wholly cleansed from it, but still acknowledge it in these Words: *Although we be unworthy through our manifold Sins, to offer unto thee any Sacrifice, yet we beseech thee to accept this our bounden Duty and Service, not weighing our Merits, but pardoning our Offences.* You see the Church supposes a Degree of Unworthiness in all Communicants; and yet she calls the Act of Communicating, *Our bounden Duty and Service*; which plainly infers, that we are bounden to Communicate, notwithstanding some Unworthiness and Unfitness for so sacred a Duty.

It is indeed to be confessed that none are worthy to receive this *Holy Sacrament*, but those who believe the Doctrines of the Gospel, and order their Conversation according to the Precepts of it. But there is no Reason why we should continue under either of these Disabilities, since it is so easy for us to remove them, and attain to that Worthiness which is required of us. Besides what hath been already observed from the *Communion Office*, I shall inculcate a very plain and compleat Rule to this Purpose, at the End of our *Church Catechism*: Where the Things required of every Person who comes to the *Lord's Supper*, are said to be these Five:

- First, That he truly repent him of his former Sins.
- Secondly, That he stedfastly purpose to lead a new Life.
- Thirdly, That he have a lively Faith in God's Mercies, through Christ.

Fourthly,

Fourthly, That he thankfully remember his Death.

And,

Fifthly, That he be in Charity with all Men.

In these Things a Man must examine himself; and to do this, there is no more required, than a common Degree of Knowledge, with so much Time as may well enough be spared from the necessary Concerns of Life.

The Rule whereby to examine our past Manners and Course of Life, is the Commandments of God; by which we may, as in a Glass, discover wherein we generally offend in Will, Word, or Deed; such Offences we must bewail, and confess them to almighty God, begging his Grace to prevent us, and preserve us from them for the Time to come. The Sum and Substance of our Faith is best comprehended in the Articles of the CREED; which being propounded to us, for our particular Assent and Acknowledgment, both at our coming into the World, and at our going out of it; I mean, at *Baptism*, and the *Visitation of the Sick*; I cannot doubt but a solemn Recital and Recognition of them, is a good Preparative to the *Holy Eucharist*. I know not whether this be commonly done; I have not observed it to be mentioned in the common Helps to Devotion composed for this Occasion. Perhaps the *Creed* is thought too trite a System of Faith: it is indeed made so, as it is used by some People: But when seriously and deliberately repeated, and ratified by that solemn Form of Assent which the *Church* hath prescribed, *All this I stedfastly believe*, it is that sound and saving Faith which establishes the Soul on the Rock of our Redemption. For a farther Explication of the Nature and Benefits of this *Holy Sacrament*; it will be good to peruse such Chapters of the New Testament as treat of it; particularly the VIth of St. *John's* Gospel, with those Discourses which our Lord made at the Institution of it; *Matth* XXVI. *Mark* XIV. *Luke* XXII.

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For examining the State of our Conscience towards others, that Saying of our Lord must be our general Direction in this Case: *Whatsoever ye would that Men should do unto you, do ye even so unto them; for this is the Law and the Prophets.* Now if any one hath wronged us by Word or Deed, our Wish and Desire is, that they would make us Reparation for the Injuries they have done us. In like Manner, must we be ready to offer Satisfaction and make Restitution to the uttermost of our Powers, for all Injuries and Wrongs we have done to others. This is indispensably necessary, not only for the worthy Receiving of the *Sacrament*, but for the right Performance of any other religious Duty. We cannot be charitable and give Alms, before we be just, and give every Man that which is his Right. God is said to hate Robbery for a Burnt-Offering; to let us know, that however constant and devout we may appear in his Worship, however liberal we may be in contributing to any good Work, if we do it out of any unjust Gains, which we have got by the deceitful Weight and Measure, by Rapine and Oppression, by perverting of Justice and Judgment, it is all an Abomination, and instead of pleading for us, will testify against us at the last Day. And therefore the converted Publican *Zachæus*, when he devoted half his Goods to the Use of the Poor, declared at the same Time, That he was ready to satisfy any Man he had wronged, by making him a fourfold Restitution. This is one of the Scripture Passages read at the *Offertory*, with a Design no doubt, to put Men in mind, That they study to be just, as well as charitable.

Some Men act as if they were persuaded, that their forgiving all the World, was a sufficient Atonement for the Injuries they have done to others. But this hath no Foundation either in Religion or Reason. One Man may wrong *me*, and I may wrong *another*: My Forgiveness of the former, is no manner of Com-

penfation to the latter ; neither doth it acquit me of Fraud and Injuſtice in the Sight of God.

We are indeed all bound to mutual Forgiveneſs, ſo far as not to take Revenge one of another. But this doth not prejudice us in any juſt Demands, nor take away our Claim to that fair and honeſt Dealing which every Man is intitled to. Much leſs may we encourage ourſelves in wronging one Part of the World, becauſe we can forgive ſo many on the other Side as wrong us. This would be to eſtabliſh Iniquity by a Law, that excellent Law of Forgiveneſs which we muſt obſerve towards others, when out of Ignorance, Precipitancy, or Want of Power to do better, they treſpaſs againſt us.

Theſe Things are generally obvious to an ordinary Capacity. But becauſe there may be ſome Caſes wherein a Man cannot quiet his own Conſcience, the Advice of the *Church* is, That he go to ſome diſcreet and learned Miniſter of God's Word, and open his Scruples to him, that he may receive the Benefit of Abſolution, together with ſuch ſpiritual Advices as may give him Eaſe, and miniſter Comfort to him. If this Application were made in due Seaſon, not only before the *Sacrament*, but at other Times when the Mind is perplexed and troubled, it might prevent many diſmal Thoughts, which often increaſe to Melancholy and Diſtraction, to the Diſadvantage of Religion in general, and the Hindrance of many good Duties in the Perſons afflicted with them.

One great End of the *Lord's Supper*, is, to renew that Vow and Promiſe we made in our Baptiſm, to renounce the Devil and all his Works, to believe in God, and to keep his Commandments. This Vow we have grievouſly violated by Thought, Word, and Deed, and ſo have forfeited our chriſtian Privileges, and made ourſelves the Children of Wrath, as we were by Nature. But our gracious and long-ſuffering God is pleaſed to accept of an Atonement, which he hath appointed to be made in this other *Sacrament*, by
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a hearty Profession of our Faith in Christ, our Sorrow for our past Misdeeds, and our unfeigned Resolutions to perform our Part of the christian Covenant for the Time to come. This if we do with a true and faithful Heart, our heavenly Father is reconciled to us, and owns us for his Children, and restores us to all the spiritual Benefits of our Profession as fully, as if we had never done any Thing to forfeit them.

Upon the Approach of this *Holy Solemnity*, when we are recollecting our Transgressions, confessing and bewailing them before almighty God, and imploring his gracious Pardon for the same, we should do well, as holy *David* directs, (a) to enter into our Chamber, and there silently *commune with our own Hearts*. Behold, O my Soul! how the Great KING, *who stretches out the Heavens like a Curtain, and lays the Beams of his Chambers in the Waters, and maketh the Clouds his Chariots, and rideth upon the Wings of the Wind*: How he, I say, hath condescended to prepare that spiritual *Manna* for thee, which will nourish thee unto everlasting Life! How wilt thou escape, if thou neglectest so great Salvation? Here is represented the greatest Love which was ever vouchsafed to Man, *viz.* the Son of God subjecting himself to Death, even the Death of the Cross, to make thee Partaker of a happy and glorious Immortality! the Lord of Life and Glory divested of his Robes, that thy Nakedness might be cloathed with his Righteousness! the Fountain of Riches and Honour humbling himself to the lowest State of Poverty and Reproach, that thou mightest be filled with all the Riches and Dignities of the Son of God!

Most gladly therefore, O my Soul! will I go to the Temple of the Lord, to pay my Vows which I made in my Baptism, to be his faithful Soldier and Servant, and to ratify that Covenant which he hath sealed with his most precious Blood. Most thankfully will I receive these Pledges of his Love, and offer him the

(a) *Psalms* iv. 4.

lively Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving for the same.

Quicken me therefore, O Lord! and inflame my Heart with a Zeal worthy of these Benefits. And as thou hast given us thy well-beloved Son to reconcile us to thyself, so likewise grant us thy holy Spirit to sanctify our Souls and Bodies for thy Service. Then we who of ourselves have not sufficient Strength to come unto thine Altar, will, by the Assistance of thy all-powerful Grace, never faint in running the Ways of thy Commandments.

At the Time of Receiving the *Holy Sacrament*, the Minister calls upon us to *lift up our Hearts*, intimating, That then we should be more-especially intent upon heavenly Things. We must then remember, how the Body of our Lord *Jesus Christ* was broken, and his Blood shed for us. We must consider that our Sins were the Thorns which struck into his Temples, and the Nails which fastened his Hands and Feet to the Cross; and thence imagine how loathsome Sin is in the Sight of God, who spared not his only beloved Son for it, when he appeared in our stead; and took our Burden and Debt upon himself: And how much the Guilt of it is aggravated to us Christians, since we do, as the Apostle speaks, thereby *crucify the Son of God afresh, and put him to open Shame.*

Consider the inestimable Benefits we receive by a due Participation of this *Holy Sacrament*. We spiritually eat the Flesh of Christ, and drink his Blood: We are made one with him, and he with us. Our sinful Bodies are made clean by his Body, and our Souls washed through his most precious Blood. We are incorporated in his mystical Body, which is the blessed Company of all faithful People: We obtain Peace with God, Remission of our Sins, the Graces and Comforts of the holy Spirit, the Promises of a joyfut Resurrection, and Inheritance with Christ in everlasting Glory. Let us then take the Cup of Salvation, and call upon the Name of the Lord. It is a principal Part of our Duty at this Time, to abound
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in Praises and Thanksgivings to him who hath paid so infinite a Ransom for us. What unspeakable Goodness and Love is this! What a sure Pledge of the divine Benignity and Regard to us? *He that spared not his own Son, but gave him up for us; how shall he not with him give us all Things freely to enjoy?*

I might have been excused, if I had (as I had almost) forgot to mention *Alms* and *Oblations*, which by the most early Practice of the Church, accompany the Celebration of the *Lord's Supper*. The Passages of holy Scripture appointed to be read while the Collection is making, are so very pathetic and well-suited to Persons of all Circumstances, that they must needs touch the Hearts of those who are not quite past feeling. If there be any Thing in them of the Bowels and Compassions of Jesus Christ, which they are now about to commemorate, these Scriptures will not fail to draw them forth towards his poor distressed Members, whom he hath appointed to be his Receivers on these Occasions.

When you have received the BREAD, offer up this, or some such short Ejaculation :

Merciful LORD! Grant that by the Sufferings of my dear Saviour, who was crucified for me, I may escape eternal Sufferings, and be made Partaker of everlasting Life.

After the CUP, lift up your Heart in these, or the like Words :

O Gracious GOD! Grant that by the shedding of the Blood of thy dear Son, I may be washed from the Guilt of all my Sins.

When the *Communion* is ended, and you are returned home, do not presently let your Thoughts run upon other Matters, but enter into your Closet, and offer up your private Sacrifice of Praise to God for vouchsafing to admit you to this spiritual Feast of his Son; beseeching him to grant, that you may have Grace faithfully to fulfil whatever you have piously resolved; and especially to withstand those Temptations to which you

are most exposed, either by the Circumstances of your Life, or your natural Propensity.

When you return to your worldly Affairs, put your late Resolutions in Practice; apply them to the Government of your Words and Actions; let it appear, that you profit by the Means of Grace, and that the Spirit of Christ inspires you, and rules your Heart. Consider what a melancholy Thing it is for you to observe in others, that after *frequent Communions* and renewed Vows, there is no visible Amendment in them, but they are still as carnally minded, and as much under the Dominion of Sin, as they were at first. Consider, that by your Unfruitfulness, you frustrate the Grace of God, you do what in you lies to bring his *Sacraments* into Contempt; you give Occasion to the Enemies of Christ to blaspheme his holy Name, and speak Evil of the Mystery of Redemption; and to prefer *Jews, Turks, and Infidels* before *Christians*, as is too commonly, and I hope unjustly done. Instead of reconciling God, you incense him against you, by breaking the Covenant you made with him, taking part with his Enemies which you have renounced, and so proving a spiritual Traytor and Rebel. You wound yourself, that is, your own Conscience, which can have no Peace while the most sacred and religious Vows are broken. You are the strongest Evidence against your own Soul, that you did not worthily *eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his Blood*, because you have no Life in you; you are not ingrafted in his Body, because you bring forth no Fruit. Remember all this, when you are assaulted by any Temptation; and then you cannot but esteem it as most pernicious, depriving you, if complied with, of the Favour of God, the Peace of your Conscience, and the Hopes of Salvation. Then sure it will appear as dangerous to your Soul, as a Draught of deadly Poison to your Body, or a Thief in your House to your Money and Goods. *Be not deceived, God is not mocked.* He heard all your Vows, and observes what Care you take to pay them; which if it be none, he will appoint
you

your Portion among Hypocrites, which cry, *Lord, Lord,* but do not the Things which he commands.

This Care of performing our Vows, must not last only for some few Days, and then be laid aside ; it must constantly be kept up. For if we can be regular for some Time, this shews the Possibility of being so at any Time, and proves our subsequent Transgressions not to proceed from Infirmity, but Perverseness. Besides, the accustoming ourselves to a religious Course, must needs render it more easy to us ; since it is difficult at first only from a contrary Habit. And therefore, if after you have reconciled your Mind to any strict Course, and have made it familiar to you, you should start aside and give it over ; this makes you most inexcusable. *If after Men have escaped the Pollutions of the World, saith St. Peter, (a) through the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein and overcome, the latter End is worse with them than the Beginning. For it had been better for them not to have known the Way of Righteousness, than after they have known it, to turn from the holy Commandment delivered unto them.*

And to the End our Vows may be ratified, and every Grace and Virtue confirmed in us ; we must take all Opportunities that are offered us, to receive this *holy Sacrament* ; this being not only agreeable to the Institution of our Lord, and the Practice of the primitive Christians, but a certain Means of conveying Grace to us, a Means of strengthening and refreshing our Souls by the Body and Blood of *Christ*, as our Bodies are by the Bread and Wine. Let us but observe how often we must eat and drink for the Sustenance of our natural Bodies, and then, if we have any true Concern for the Health of our Souls, we shall be frequent Communicants at the Table of our LORD.

(a) 2 Pet. ii. 20.

 Of P R A Y E R.

P R A Y E R ought ever to be looked upon, as the most immediate and essential Part of *divine Worship*, implying a Sense and Acknowledgment of all the excellent Attributes of God. For, whenever we *Pray* to God, we do at the same Time believe his Omnipresence, as being near us wherever we are; his Omniscience, as knowing all our Wants: and his Omnipotence, as being able to supply them. Nay more, we believe he not only hears the Words of our Lips, but the secret Language of our inmost Thoughts, and sees not only our Necessities, but our Sins too. And therefore,

In the *first* Place, we must dutifully recognize and adore the infinite Majesty of God, acknowledging him to be our Sovereign Lord and Judge, who is able both to save and to destroy, to reward and to punish every Man, from the Highest to the Lowest, according to his Works. *Thence* we must proceed to render him propitious to us, by an humble and impartial Confession of our Sins; the Particulars whereof we are (in private) to specify, so far as we can recover the Memory of them; and where that is lost, to say with holy *David*, *who can tell how oft he offendeth? O, cleanse thou me from my secret Faults.* In the *third* Place, we make our humble Request for his merciful Forgiveness through the Merits and Mediation of *Jesus Christ*, and for the Grace of his holy Spirit to assist us, in our Obedience for the Time to come, particularly in such Respects, wherein we have formerly experienced our Weakness and Infirmary. And then we descend to the Care of the Body, to ask those Things which are needful and convenient for us, in such Proportions as his Wisdom sees fit, and with such entire Resignation, as our blessed Lord hath taught us to profess in all the Concerns of this Life, *Not mine, but thy Will be done.* *Fourthly*, We are in our *Prayers* to intercede for all Orders and Degrees of Men, for those
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that are allied to us, either by the Bonds of natural or civil Obligation; for those who have in any Circumstance of Life been our Friends and Benefactors. Nay, even for those who have done us ill Turns; praying, as we have *Christ* upon the Cross for our Pattern, that our heavenly Father would not lay such Sins to their Charge. *Fifthly*, We are to praise and bless God for all his Mercies, whether spiritual or temporal, to ourselves, and those more immediately related to us, or to the Church and Nation whereof we are Members, or yet more generally to all Mankind.

Considering the Frailty of our Nature, not only in being subject to Sin, but likewise to continual Dangers, Diseases, and sudden, unexpected Death; we need not many Words to excite us to frequency of *Prayer*, and to as frequent Returns of *Thanksgiving* for that divine Protection, which continually watches over us, and that incessant Current of heavenly Blessings which flow in upon us. *Morning* and *Evening*, are Seasons indispensably to be dedicated to this Act of Homage and Worship; it being absolutely necessary, that we should begin and end all our Works, with that God *in whom we live, and move, and have our Being*. Men eminent for Sanctity and Devotion, particularly *David* and *Daniel*, added the Noon-Day to their Morning and Evening Sacrifice of *Prayer*. And indeed from the many sublime Compositions of the former, we may conclude, that Frequency in this Duty, begets Fervency of Spirit and Delight in it.

P R A Y E R S for several Occasions.

For the M O R N I N G.

O MOST holy and merciful Lord God, the Creator, Governor and Preserver of all Things both in Heaven and Earth; be pleased graciously to look upon me thy Servant, who come before thee to offer unfeigned Thanks and Praise for thy manifold Mercies, particularly for thy gracious Protection of me

me the Night past. And since thou hast brought me to the Light of another Day, keep and protect me in the same, I humbly beseech thee, by thy good Providence; watch over and defend me from Sin, and from all the Temptations to it. O Lord, who dwellest in the Heavens, yet humblest thyself to regard the Children of Men, thou hast been graciously pleased to reveal thy Will to me in the Gospel of thy dear Son, who hath brought Life and Immortality to Light. For whose Merits and Mediation alone, I humbly implore thy Pardon for my many and grievous Sins committed against thy divine Majesty. In a deep Sense of which I prostrate myself, and repent in Dust and Ashes for having offended so glorious and good a God. I beseech thee, give me Grace to spend the Remainder of my Days in a righteous, sober, and godly Course of Life. Enable me to keep a continual Watch against the Assaults of the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, and to make daily Proficiency in every good and virtuous Way. In all the Affairs of this uncertain Life, let me evermore depend upon thy fatherly Care and Providence, having a greater Regard to thy Glory, than to my own worldly Interest. O God, enlighten the dark Corners of the Earth with the bright Beams of thy Holy Gospel. Influence the Hearts of all Kings and Princes, especially his whom thou hast set over us, with the Wisdom which is from above, that they may before all Things seek thy Honour and Glory: Endue all our spiritual Pastors with the right Understanding of thy holy Word, and Grace to live agreeably to the same, that we may both by their Doctrine and Example be guided in the Paths of true Religion and Virtue. And to all subordinate Magistrates give thy heavenly Grace, that they may be a *Terror to Evil-doers, and a Praise to those that do well.* And, O, thou Father of Mercies! who hearest the Sighs and Groans of the Afflicted, comfort and succour all those who are distressed in Mind, Body, or Estate. Lift up the Light of thy Countenance upon them, sanctify thy

thy Corrections to the Welfare of their Souls, and give them a happy Issue out of all their Afflictions. Vouchsafe the Continuance of thy Favour towards me thy unworthy Servant, and to all my Relations, Friends and Benefactors. Bless my Enemies with the Grace of Repentance and Remission of their Sins. Fill me with such a Sense of thy undeserved Goodness, that I may be more ready to do good to those who are in Misery, and by a sober and moderate Use of thy Blessings, be prepared to bear any worse Condition (if thou shalt see fit to order it) with a patient and contented Spirit.

And now, O Lord, accept I beseech thee, of my humble and hearty Thanks for all the Instances of thy Goodness and loving Kindness, from the Day of my Birth, to this present Moment. For my Creation, Preservation, and all the Blessings of this Life. But above all, I laud and magnify thy glorious Name, for sending the Son of thy Love to be the Saviour and Redeemer of the World, and making me Partaker of the unspeakable Mercy of that Redemption. Give me Grace to walk worthy of this high and holy Calling, that so at the End of my Days I may be numbered with thy Saints in Glory Everlasting, through his Merits who sitteth at thy right Hand to make Intercession for me. In whose most prevailing Words I sum up all my Wants: *Our Father, &c.*

A P R A Y E R for the EVENING.

O Most blessed Lord, Father of Mercies, and God of all Comfort, mercifully incline thine Ear to the Prayers which I thy unworthy Servant am about to offer up. I give thee most humble and hearty Thanks for all thy Goodness and loving Kindness to me and to all Men: Thou art the Maker and Preserver of all Things, on whom all Creatures depend for Life and Breath, and whatever they enjoy. Day by Day we have fresh Instances of thy Fatherly Goodness to us. And though we have been Apostates, and fell from thee, yet thou hast been pleased, of thy own free Grace and Mercy, to give us thine own Son from Heaven, to
advance

advance us above an earthly Paradise, even to thine own Presence in thy glorious Kingdom. What are we, wretched Sinners, O merciful Lord ! that thou shouldest condescend to manifest such infinite Compassions towards us ! But thou art good to all, and thy tender Mercies are over all thy Works. O then let me for ever praise and magnify thy holy Name ! O lift up my Heart to those Things above, that my utmost Longings may be after that Kingdom which Christ hath opened to all Believers ; that thy Service may be the main-Business of my Life, and that it may be my Meat and Drink to do thy Will in every Thing. Accept my Thanks for the Mercies of this Day, and my hearty Repentance for whatever I have done amiss. I humbly acknowledge, I have offended in Thought, Word, and Deed, by secret and open Sins. Thou who searchest the Heart, and triest the Reins, knowest that mine Iniquities are more than I am able to express, and my Guilt heavier than I can bear. It is of thine infinite Mercy that I am not cast into outer Darkness, where there is Weeping and Gnashing of Teeth. Make me therefore a thankful Monument of thy Patience, and Forbearance, and Long-suffering to sinful Man. Let this thy Goodness lead me to Repentance and Newness of Life. Neither pray I for myself alone, but for all Ranks and Conditions of Men ; that every one may discharge their respective Duties so well, that we may all lead a peaceable and godly Life. Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive from me and all Men Blessing, and Glory, and Honour ; for thou art Great, and thy Praise above Heaven and Earth. Thou art righteous in all thy Ways, and holy in all thy Works : The Earth is thine, and the Fullness thereof ; the World, and they that dwell therein. O Lord, how manifold are thy Works ! in Wisdom hast thou made them all : the Earth is full of thy Riches. Into thy Hands I commend myself in the Faith of thy watchful Providence, who givest thy Angels Charge over us. Grant that I may often think of that long Night of Death, when I shall be laid in my Grave, and
sleep

sleep in the Dust; out of which I beseech thee mercifully to awake me, and raise me up with a joyful Resurrection; for his Merits, who died, and was buried, and rose again for us, thy Son *Jesus Christ* our Lord: To whom with thee, O Father, and God the Holy Ghost, be all Honour and Glory World without End. *Amen.*

Our Father, &c.

N. B. *Those who pray in Families, may by changing I, me, and mine, into we, us, and ours, accommodate the same Prayers to general Use.*

A shorter P R A Y E R for the M O R N I N G.

O Lord our heavenly Father, almighty and everlasting God, who hast safely brought me to the Beginning of this Day, defend me in the same with thy mighty Power; and grant that this Day I fall into no Sin, neither run into any Kind of Danger; but that all my Doings may be ordered by thy Governance, and that I may be righteous in thy Sight, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord; who hath taught us to call upon thee in that most excellent Form of Words:

Our Father, &c.

For the E V E N I N G.

O GOD from whom all holy Desires, all good Counsels, and all just Works do proceed, give unto me thy Servant, that Peace which the World cannot give; that both my Heart may be set to obey thy Commandments, and also that by thee I being defended from the Fear of my Enemies, may pass my Time in Rest and Quietness. Lighten my Darkness, I beseech thee, O Lord! and by thy great Mercy defend me from all Perils and Dangers of this Night, for the Love of thy only Son our Saviour *Jesus Christ*: In whose Name and Words, I beg Leave farther to call upon thee:

Our Father, &c.

For S U N D A Y Morning.

O Lord, give unto the Minister of thy Word a Door of Utterance, that he may effectually publish the great Mysteries of the Gospel, and speak Words of Health and Salvation to my Soul. Do thou banish out
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of my Mind all worldly and wandering Thoughts. Give me Attention to hearken, and Understanding to conceive aright, and Memory to retain, and Grace to practise what I hear; that so thy Word may be to me a Saviour of Life unto Life, and not of Death unto Death. Grant this for the Sake of *Jesus Christ* our Lord; in whose Name and Words, I farther pray:

Our Father, &c.

A PRAYER before the HOLY COMMUNION.

MOST Gracious Father, thou inviteest me, a vile Sinner, unworthy of the least of thy Mercies, to a spiritual Banquet, a Feast of divine Love. O help me so to be prepared, that I may approach those venerable Mysteries with due Fear and Reverence, with profound Humility and ardent Devotion; with a Heart full of Faith and Love; sensible of thy infinite Goodness in sending thy Son to die for me, and of his inexpressible Love and Condescension, in undertaking and accomplishing the Work of my Redemption; truly sorry for my manifold Sins, and thoroughly resolved to withstand all future Temptations to them. And grant, Holy Father, that by this *Sacrament*, thy Grace may be confirmed, and Dominion of Sin destroyed in me; that I may serve thee sincerely and acceptably all the Days of this mortal Life, and at the End of it, attain thy everlasting Kingdom; through the Merits and Mediation of him, whose Body and Blood I am now about to receive, thy Son *Jesus Christ*, &c.

After RECEIVING.

BLESSED be thy Name, O Lord, for admitting me to be a Guest at thy Table, who am not worthy to gather up the Crumbs under it. O give me a just Sense of thy unparalleled Love and Favour towards me! Thou hast vouchsafed me this special Opportunity to reflect upon the heinous Guilt of my Sins, and the Punishment which thy Justice awards for the same. All Glory and Praise be given to thee, O Father, for accepting a Propitiation for me thy disobedient Servant; for exhibiting thy Grace and Love, and shewing me

me the Light of thy Countenance. I for ever love and adore thy blessed Son, my dear Saviour, for his meritorious Death and Passion, by which he hath satisfied thy Justice, and made me one of thy adopted Children. Help me, O Lord, to abound more and more in Acts of devout Praise and filial Love, and to be so diligent and sincere in the Performance of that reasonable Service thou requirest of me, that finally I may come to that eternal Kingdom which thou hast promised by Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

In Time of S I C K N E S S.

O Merciful and Gracious Lord, look down from Heaven, behold, visit and relieve me thy Servant. Look upon me with the Eyes of thy Mercy. Give me Comfort and sure Confidence in thee. Defend me from the Danger of the Enemy, and keep me in perpetual Peace and Safety. Hear me, almighty and most merciful God and Saviour! Extend thy accustomed Goodness to me thy Servant grieved with Sicknes. Sanctify, I beseech thee, this thy fatherly Correction to me, that the Sense of my Weakness may add Strength to my Faith, and Seriousness to my Repentance. And do thou be pleased to direct those who advise and prescribe the Means of my Restoration; that if it shall be thy good Pleasure to restore me to my former Health, I may lead the Residue of my Life in thy Fear and to thy Glory. Or else give me Grace so to take thy Visitation, that after this painful Life is ended, I may dwell with thee in Life Everlasting, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord. *Amen.*

After R E C O V E R Y.

Blessed be thy Name, O merciful God, for that thou hast considered my Trouble, and known my Soul in Adversity; relieving my Pain, and raising me up from the Bed of Sicknes. Grant that I may never forget this signal Instance of Mercy, nor the Vows which I made when I was in Trouble; but chearfully and faithfully perform them, and give Thanks to thee, O my God, for ever, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord. *Amen.*

G R A C E S

 GRACES *before and after* Meat.

GRACE before MEAT.

BLESS, O Lord, we beseech thee, these thy Creatures to the Nourishment of our Bodies ; pardon all our Sins, and endue our Souls with the Grace of thy Spirit, that it may be our Meat and Drink to do thy Will, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord.

Or this,

GRANT we beseech thee, O Lord, that in the Strength of these thy Creatures, we may bring forth the Fruits of good Living, to the Honour and Praise of thy Name, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord.

GRACE after MEAT.

WE return thee, O Lord, our hearty Thanks, for these thy good Gifts, and all other thy Blessings bestowed upon us. Grant that we may constantly dedicate our Souls and Bodies to thy Service, that at the End of our Days, we may attain everlasting Life, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord.

Or this,

GOD's Holy Name be blessed and praised for these and all other his Benefits spiritual and temporal, through *Jesus Christ* our Lord.

The . E N D.

