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Establishment. (i. e. at the Rebellion.) 1726

I



Stebbing, an opponent of ...

# DISCOURSES

UPON

*Several* SUBJECTS;

VIZ.

REGENERATION, or  
*the* NEW BIRTH;  
*In Two Parts.*

JUSTIFYING or SAV-  
ING FAITH.

GOSPEL HOLINESS, or  
SANCTIFICATION.

FERVENCY *in* Prayer,  
*and the Assistance of the*  
*Spirit in relation to it.*

INTENDED

AS a SUPPLEMENT to the *Abridge-*  
*ment* of Dr. CLAGET's Discourse concerning  
*The Operations of the Holy Spirit.*

---

By HENRY STEBBING, M. A.  
*Rector of Rickinghall in Suffolk, and late*  
*Fellow of S. Katherine's Hall, in Cambridge.*

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L O N D O N :

Printed for JONAH BOWYER, at the *Rose*  
*in St. Paul's Church-Yard.* 1722.

AC 911.1722.574

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TO HIS GRACE

WILLIAM

Lord ARCH-BISHOP of

CANTERBURY.

*May it Please Your GRACE,*

OUR GRACE'S Fa-  
vourable Reception  
of Part of this Work  
published some time ago, hath  
embolden'd me to put the  
Whole under Your *Protection*.

The Subject here under Con-

A 2 sider-

## *The Dedication.*

sideration, is of the greatest Importance to Religion. To know that we are under the Influence of *God's Holy Spirit*, is not only in It-self One Great Motive to True Piety, but is that which gives Life and Vigor to all the Rest. When this Great Article is cleared from the Corruptions of *Enthusiasm* on the one side, and from the Contempts of *Infidelity* on the other, we shall find it to be the best Foundation of a *Reasonable Service* to God. This, my LORD, is the Truth

## *The Dedication.*

I would promote in the following Papers ; and by placing **YOUR GRACE'S** Name in the Front of them, the Doctrine will come recommended to the World by Example as well as Precept ; and Men may learn, That Natural Reason and Understanding are never in greater Perfection, than when they are improved by the Grace of the Gospel, and that the Spirit which we have received, is, to use the Words of *St. Paul*, *The Spirit of a Sound Mind.*

## *The Dedication.*

YOUR GRACE'S long Acquaintance with the late Excellent Dr. *CLAGET*, and Your great and just Esteem for him, make it unnecessary for me to say any thing of this Work, as far as it is His. My own Part in it, may, I am sensible, stand in need of many favourable Allowances; and yet it comes with some Confidence to YOUR GRACE, relying on this Experienced Truth, That the most Polite and Just Writers, who have no Reason to fear the severest Judges, are  
al-

# *The Dedication.*

always themselves the tenderest, and most ready to overlook the Imperfections of others. I am,

*My LORD,*

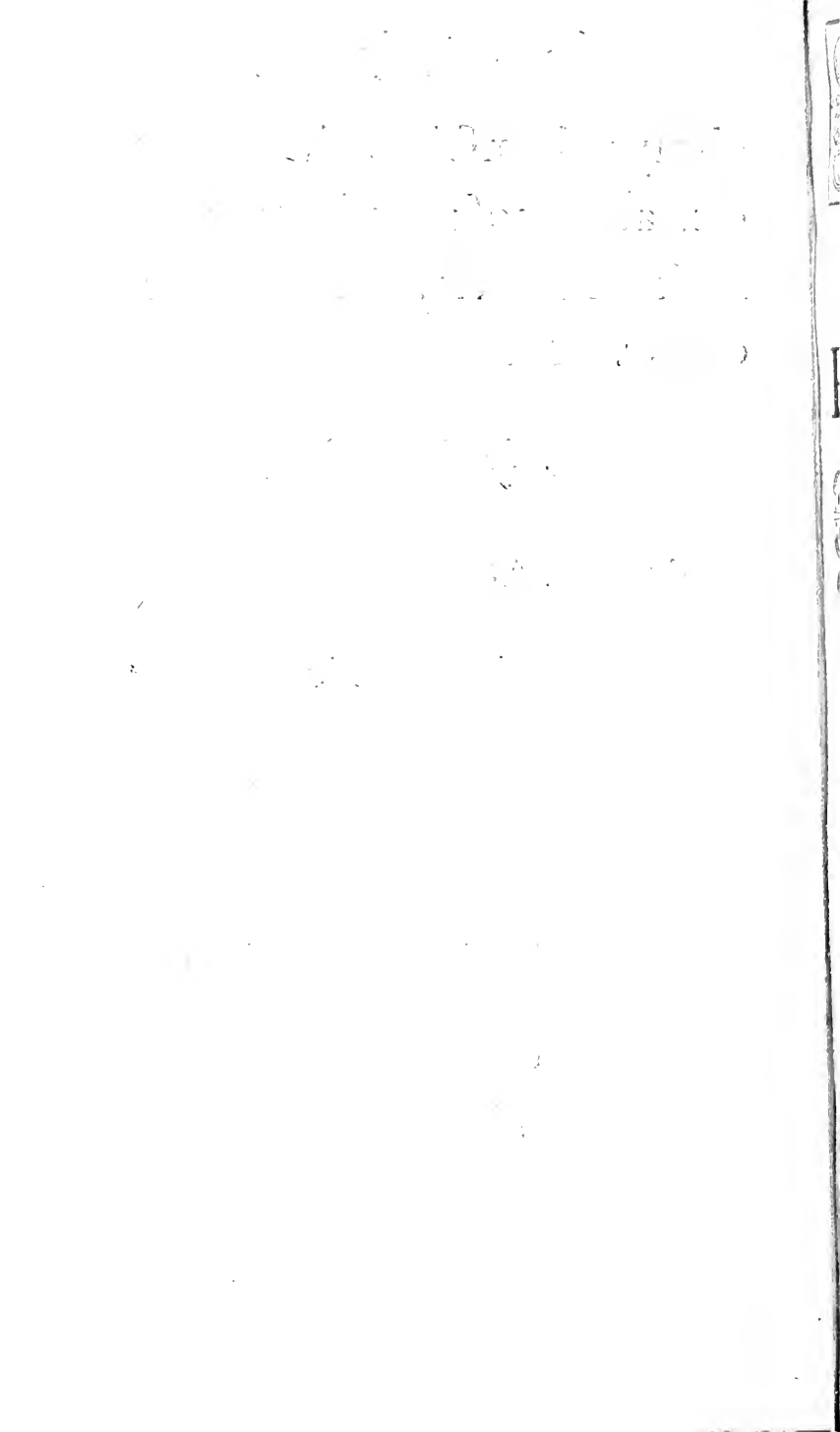
*Your GRACE's most Dutiful*

*and most Obedient Son*

*and Servant,*

HENRY STEBBING.







T H E  
P R E F A C E.

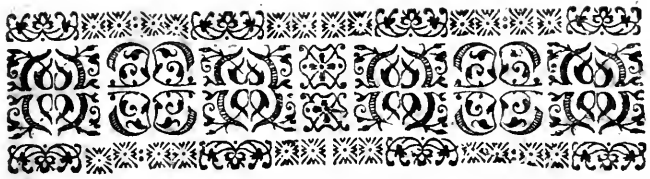
**I**N Performance of my Promise, I now offer to the Publick, the ensuing Tracts, which thro' the Affinity of the Subject, I thought necessary towards making the Treatise concerning the Operations of the Holy Spirit, compleat. I have nothing to acquaint the Reader with, but this; That the first Part of the Discourse concerning Regeneration, and that concerning Gospel-Holiness, are the only Pieces in which I have had any Help from Dr. Claget. The rest I must be answerable for my-self; tho' I ought not so far to claim that concerning  
Justi-

## The P R E F A C E.

Justification, *as my own, as not to acknowledge my-self greatly indebted to the late Learned and Excellent Bishop Bull, whose Notion I have mainly followed. I now submit the Whole to the Reader's Judgment; and if what I have done may be of any Use to Young Beginners, towards leading them, by a short and easy Way, to judge rightly of some important and (as they have been made) not less difficult Points in Divinity, I shall think my Time and Pains well bestowed.*







T H E  
C O N T E N T S.

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DISCOURSE I.  
Concerning R E G E N E R A T I O N , O F  
the N E W - B I R T H .

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P A R T I .

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Qualification for Eternal  
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## DISCOURSE I.

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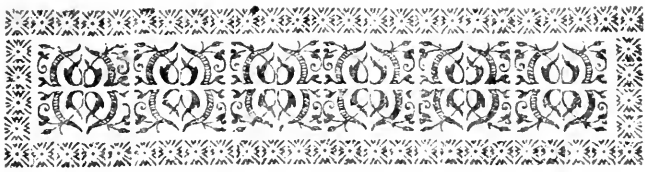
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DISCOURSE I.

Concerning REGENERATION,

O R,

The NEW BIRTH.

PART I.

Wherein is shewn, What the SCRIPTURE means by being REGENERATE.

§. I. **W**HAT we are Regenerated by the *Clagett*,  
 "Operations of the Holy Spirit;" Part I.  
 "T and that it is necessary that we P. 94, 95.  
 should be so, in order to our be-  
 ing qualified for the Kingdom of  
 Heaven; is a Thing not to be doubted of among  
 Christians. "For our Saviour saith, That *except*  
 "a Man be BORN AGAIN, (or *from Above*) he *||* *ἀναγεννησῆται*  
 "cannot see the Kingdom of God, John iii. 3. And this  
 "Regeneration he likewise ascribeth to the Opera-  
 "tion of the Holy Spirit; *Except a Man be born of*  
 "—the SPIRIT, he cannot enter, &c." The Point  
 is, What it is to be regenerated, or born again;

B

And

And this I shall now endeavour to determine; *First*, By shewing what the *Scripture* means by being *Regenerate*: And, *Secondly*, By refuting what some Modern Divines have taught concerning this Matter.

p 95, 100,  
101.

§. II. *First*, I am to shew, What the *Scripture* means by being *Regenerate*: But before I enter upon this, it will be proper for me to remove one Mistake which lies in my Way (and which, probably, has been one great Occasion of those many wild and extravagant Notions which have been brought into this Subject); *viz.* “ That these Expressions, *To be Born again, To be a New Creature*, and the like; do *properly* and *literally* signify that which is intended by them.” The Vanity of this Pretence will very sufficiently appear from this (a) one Observation; *viz.* That whereas “ all do confess, that these Expressions are used to denote *one* and the *same* Thing; *properly* and *literally* they do not denote *one* and the *same* Thing, but *divers* Things. That they *properly* denote *divers* Things, is plain, For, *to be born* is one Thing, and *to be created* another. *Adam* by being *created*, could not *properly* be said to be *born*; nor when an *Infant* is *born*, can it *properly* be said to be *created*. Therefore, *to create* and *regenerate*, and *to be created* and *regenerated* “ cannot *properly* be understood, when they are used to express *the same* Thing; for this were to say, That *the same* Thing is to be understood by them, and not *the same*; which is absurd. This will farther appear, if we consider what other Expressions the *Scripture* useth to denote our being

---

(a) To this Reason our Author adds several more: But, I think, he has over-labour'd the Point; and, therefore, I omit them.



“ regenerated and created anew. It is called (b)  
 “ our being *awakened*; our being *raised from the*  
 “ *Dead*; our having a *new Heart*, and a *new Spi-*  
 “ *rit*. Now, by the same Reason that being *re-*  
 “ *generated* and *created* must be *properly* under-  
 “ *stood*; by the same Reason, I say, all those  
 “ other Expressions must be *properly* understood  
 “ too; and then, what monstrous Absurdities do  
 “ we run into! No Man can *properly* be *raised*  
 “ *from the Dead*, that was not *created before*. How  
 “ then can it *properly* be said, that a Man is *raised*  
 “ *from the Dead*, and *created* by the same Act?  
 “ No Man can *properly* be said to be *awakened*, who  
 “ is not *alive*. How then is it possible, that to  
 “ *give Life* and *awaken*, should be the *same Thing*  
 “ in the *literal* Sense of the Words? \* Or, What †  
 “ can be more absurd, than to suppose, that in *Rege-*  
 “ *neration* a Man has *literally* a *New Heart*, and a  
 “ *New Spirit*? †

§. III. These Expressions, therefore, are to be un- p. 101.  
 derstood, not *literally* and *properly*, but, *figuratively*  
 and *metaphorically*. And as such, they may all of  
 them, without any Absurdity at all, be used to ex-  
 press a *Regenerate State*. \* For there is (as will be \*  
 shewn hereafter) *some* Resemblance between every  
 one of the Things *properly signified* by these Expre-  
 and a *Regenerate State*; and it is by no means  
 necessary, in order to justify a *figurative* Use of any  
 Word or Phrase, that the *Comparison* should ex-  
 actly hold in *every Particular*. † Thus much, †  
 therefore, being premised, I come now directly to

---

(b) It must be taken Notice, That these Expressions do not any of them, nor were they supposed by our Author to, reach the *Whole* of what is meant by being *Regenerate*. But if they express *any Part* of it (as most certainly they do), the Argument will be just the same.

p. 117. shew, What the Scripture means by being *Regenerate* or *Born again* : And I say in general, That,  
 “ in its utmost Meaning, it signifies, *to become a*  
 “ *sincere Profelyte or Disciple of our Lord Jesus.*  
 “ I shall first briefly shew, What is meant by being  
 “ a *sincere Disciple* of Jesus Christ ; and then prove  
 “ That to be the Meaning of a *Regenerate State.*

p. 113,  
 119.

§. IV. “ To be a *sincere Profelyte or Disciple* of  
 “ Jesus Christ, consists then in these Two Things ;  
 “ *viz.* 1. In being *baptized* as our Saviour requires.  
 “ And, 2. In making good the *Profession* of *Bap-*  
 “ *tism* ; which is, To *believe* in Christ, and *obey*  
 “ his *Commandments*. This is clearly answerable  
 “ to that Rule which our blessed Lord gave to his  
 “ Apostles, according to which they were to make  
 “ Men his Disciples. *Go ye, therefore, and teach*  
 “ *all Nations, baptizing them in the Name of the*  
 “ *Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost ;*  
 “ *i. e.* admitting them by Baptism into the Church,  
 “ and thereby ingaging them to believe, and pro-  
 “ fess their Faith in, the Father, Son, and Holy  
 “ Ghost, and of that Doctrine to which they have  
 “ born Record. *Teaching them to observe all things*  
 “ *whatsoever I have commanded you ; i. e.* and by  
 “ the same Baptism ingaging them to obey my  
 “ Commands. That, therefore, which makes us  
 “ sincere Disciples of Jesus Christ, is thus to *be-*  
 “ *lieve* and *obey*, as we are by Baptism ingaged.  
 “ Now because to *obey* the Commands of Christ,  
 “ whatever we lose or suffer by it, is the clearest  
 “ Proof we can give to our-selves or others, that  
 “ we do, in good Earnest, own him to be our  
 “ *Lord* and *Master*, and that we do heartily be-  
 “ lieve him to be the *Son of God* ; therefore, we  
 “ find, that our Saviour speaks of this Obedience  
 “ to him, as if it were the *only* Thing in which  
 “ our being his Disciples did consist. For thus  
*John*

“ *John xv. 8. Herein is my Father glorified, that ye*  
 “ *bear much Fruit ; i. e. That ye be fruitful in*  
 “ *Piety and Good Works ; so shall ye be my Disci-*  
 “ *ples. The same Thing is affirmed of Obedience*  
 “ *to one, but that a very remarkable, Precept of*  
 “ *our Saviour, John xiii. 34. A new Commandment*  
 “ *I give unto you, That ye love one another as I have*  
 “ *loved you. By this shall all Men know that ye are*  
 “ *my Disciples, &c. Now we are not to think,*  
 “ *that this last Saying of our Saviour concerning*  
 “ *that one Instance of Obedience to him ; or that*  
 “ *the former concerning Obedience in general ; do*  
 “ *exclude either the one, Obedience to the rest of*  
 “ *his Laws, or the other, believing him to be the*  
 “ *Son of God, from being necessary to make us his*  
 “ *true Disciples : But that, by such an high Act of*  
 “ *Vertue as to love our Brethren as Christ loved*  
 “ *us, it may strongly be concluded, that we will*  
 “ *not stick at any thing he requires of us ; and*  
 “ *that our yielding a sincere Obedience to all his*  
 “ *Commands, does clearly suppose, that we be-*  
 “ *lieve him to be the Son of God, and all his Pro-*  
 “ *misses to be true. Hence our Saviour does not*  
 “ *admit that we can be his Disciples, if we do not*  
 “ *intirely submit our-selves to him. If any Man*  
 “ *(says he) come to me, and hate not his Father and*  
 “ *Mother, yea, and his own Life also, he cannot be*  
 “ *my Disciple ; i. e. Unless he loves God, and*  
 “ *Truth, and Goodness so much more than all his*  
 “ *worldly Interests, even his Life it-self, that he*  
 “ *may be said to hate these Things, when his Love*  
 “ *to them is compared with his Love to Christ, he*  
 “ *cannot be a Disciple of Christ ; i. e. He cannot*  
 “ *be a true Disciple of Christ ; he cannot answer*  
 “ *the Profession of Baptism whilst it is thus with*  
 “ *him. For, if ye continue in my Word ; i. e. To*  
 “ *do according to it, whatever befalls you for so*  
 “ *doing in this World ; then are ye my Disci-*  
 “ *ples*

“ples INDEED, as our Lord tells us, *John*  
“viii. 31.

P. 119,  
120.

§. V. “The best Notion then that we can frame  
“of a *true Disciple of Christ*, and that to which  
“we are guided by *Christ* himself, is, That he is  
“one who so firmly believes that *Jesus* to be the  
“*Son of God*, and that all his Promises are true,  
“as to be led thereby to love him above all  
“Things”; to yield himself up to him by *Bap-*  
“*tism*, and thence-forward to pay “an hearty Obe-  
“dience to all his Commandments. I am now to  
“prove, That the State of *Regeneration* means no  
“more, than to become *such a Disciple of Christ* as  
“I have described.” And this, I think, may be  
very plainly argued from this general Observation;  
*vis.* “That *unless* we be *regenerate*, we cannot  
“see the Kingdom of God; and withal, that *if we*  
“*be regenerate*, we have all that is *necessary* to  
“qualify us for that Kingdom.” This is granted  
on all hands: “And it *is*,” or *must* also be “ac-  
“knowledged, that it is equally *necessary* and *suf-*  
“*ficient* for this End, that we be the *true Disciples*  
“of *Jesus Christ*. For *he that BELIEVETH, and*  
“*is BAPTIZED, shall be saved*. And *Christ is*  
“*the Author of eternal Salvation to them that*  
“OBEY *him*. Now from hence, I say, it follows,  
“by undeniable Consequence, That *Regeneration*,”  
and whatever other *Metaphorical* Expressions are  
equivalent to it, “do signify nothing else but a  
“Man’s being” a *true Disciple of Jesus Christ*.  
“For if *Regeneration* signifies any *other State*, then,  
“*ist*.” To be a *true Disciple of Jesus Christ*, “is  
“not a *sufficient* Qualification for Pardon of Sin  
“and eternal Happiness, contrary to those clear  
“Texts now mentioned. For, besides this, that  
“*other State* supposed to be meant by *Regeneration*,  
“would be *necessary*. And, 2. (which is equally  
“con-

“contrary to the Scripture)” To be a *true Disciple* of Jesus Christ, “would not so much as be *necessary* to qualify us for Salvation; since that *other State*, supposed to be meant by *Regeneration*, would be *sufficient* without it.”

§. VI. \* But to come to Particulars. There will be little room to doubt what is meant by being *Regenerate*, when we have seen how our Saviour himself has explained that Phrase. After having told *Nicodemus*, *John* iii. 3. That *except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God*; he adds, *Ver. 5. Verily, verily I say unto thee, Except a Man be born of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.* This latter Verse, you see, sets forth the (c) *Particulars* of that *New Birth*, which in the *former* our Saviour had spoken of under *general Terms*. So that if these *Particulars* do constitute *the Whole* of what is meant by being a *true Disciple* of Jesus Christ, and no more; it will follow (Christ himself being his own Interpreter) that to be *Regenerate*, signifies no more, than being a *true Disciple* of Jesus Christ. And that this is the Truth of the Case, I shall now endeavour to make appear, by shewing, *First*, That *to be born of Water*, signifies, the being *received* or *admitted* as *Profelytes* to Christ by *Baptism*. And, *Secondly*, That *to be born of the Spirit*, denotes, that *Love* and *Submission* to Christ wrought in us by the Spirit, which leads to *Obedience* to all his *Commandments*. †

§. VII. *First* then, I say; *To be born of Water*, signifies, the being *received* or *admitted* as a *Profelyte*

---

(c) *Exponit* jam qualem Nativitatem intelligat; ne *Nicodemus* diutius Allegoricæ locutionis Ignorantiâ fallatur, *Gror.*

P 136,  
137.

to Christ by *Baptism*. Some, I know, there are,  
 “ of whom *Grotius* is one, who conceive, that by  
 “ an ἐν δὲ δυνάμει, these Words signify, The *sanctify-*  
 “ *ing or cleansing Spirit of God.*” Our Saviour, he  
 tells us, (d) doth not here speak of *Baptism*, but  
 only alludes to it: “ Just as he supposeth him to  
 “ allude to the *Eucharist* in those Words, *Except ye*  
 “ *eat the Flesh of the Son of Man, and drink his*  
 “ *Blood, ye have no Life in you,* John vi. 53.”  
 \* But, besides that this Interpretation is intirely  
 † (e) new, † there are these Two Reasons to be given  
 why it ought not to be admitted of; viz. 1. That  
 “ *Baptism* was a *Ceremony of Profelytism* among  
 “ the *Jews*, which our Saviour borrowed from  
 \* “ them.” \* Or, whether he borrowed it from the  
*Jews* or not, 'tis certain, that he appointed this *Ce-*  
 † *remony* to be used in the receiving or admitting  
 † *Profelytes* to his Religion †. “ Now the *Jews*  
 “ called their *Profelytes* (f) *Recens Nati*, New-  
 “ born Men; and, as such, counted them to have  
 “ quitted their Relation to their former Country,  
 “ Kindred and Parents. Wherefore, we may well  
 “ conceive, that by being born of *Water*, our Savi-  
 “ our meant, becoming a *Profelyte* to him by *Bap-*  
 “ *tism*; and otherwise, it would not have been so  
 “ strange a Thing, that *Nicodemus*, tho' a *Master*  
 “ of *Israel*, should not have understood” what he  
 was speaking about. “ 2. *St. Paul* expressly calls  
 “ *Baptism* λουτρὸν παλιγγενεσίας, the *Washing*, or rather,  
 “ the *Laver of Regeneration*; which what it signi-

---

(d) Non loquitur de *Baptismo*, sed locutiones sunt alludentes ad *Baptismum*, *Grot.*

(e) That the Ancients universally understood this Text to speak of *Baptism*, any one will be convinced, who will read the learned Mr. *Wall's* History of *Infant-Baptism*.

(f) See Dr. *Hammond.* Not. in *John* iii. a. See also Mr. *Wall's* Hist. Inf. Bapt. Introd. § 6.

“fies, but a *Means whereby* we are regenerated, “or whereby we become the *Disciples* of Christ, I “cannot understand.” According to the Apostle therefore, to be made a *Disciple* to Christ by *Baptism*, is to be *born of Water*. “Now where there “is not only no Necessity to find a *Figure* in Scri- “pture-Phrases, but the *proper* Sense also contains “a Truth very (*g*) pertinent to the Subject spoken “of; *there*, in all Reason, the *proper* Sense (and, “consequently, *here* of the Word *Water*) ought to “be followed. And then, being *born of Water*, “will signify our being *admitted* into the Church “as *Disciples* to Christ, and engaged to be so for “the future by *Baptism*.” \* In Truth, there is in every respect so exact a Resemblance between the Words of St. Paul, and those of our Saviour, that we cannot doubt, but that he had them in View, and that the one was intended as an Explanation of the other. Our Saviour says, That *except a Man be born of Water and of the Spirit, he cannot, &c.* St. Paul tells us, That we are *saved by the Laver of Regeneration, and Renewing of the Holy Ghost*. Where, as the *Renewing of the Holy Ghost* directly answers to the being *born of the Spirit*; so the *Laver of Regeneration* as directly answers to the being *born of Water*. †

§. VIII. By being *born of Water*, then, our Saviour most certainly meant, the being *admitted* as *Profelytes* to him by *Baptism*; And no less evident it is, that by being *born of the Spirit*, is to be understood, the being endued with that *Love* and

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(*g*) How pertinent it was for our Saviour to tell *Nicodemus*, That a Man must become a *Profelyte* to him by *Baptism*, the Reader will perceive by-and-by, when he comes to our Author's *Paraphrase* upon this whole Discourse.

*Sub-*

Submission to Christ, which leads to Obedience to all  
 his Commandments. \* For, to be *born of the Spirit*,  
 and to be *born of God*, are Phrases denoting  
 one and the same Thing. Now the Effects of this  
 † *latter* are thus described by the Apostle †: 1 John  
 p. 121, v 4, 5. “ *Whatsoever is born of God overcometh*  
 122. “ *the World; and this is the Victory that overcometh*  
 “ *the World, even our Earth. Who is he that*  
 “ *overcometh the World, but he that believeth that*  
 “ *Jesus is the Son of God?* Here we have the full  
 “ Character of one that is *born of God*. He is one  
 “ who *so* believeth that *Jesus is the Son of God*,  
 “ that his Faith prevails against all Worldly Tem-  
 “ ptations, and who, therefore, keeps the Com-  
 “ mandments of God.” And to the same Pur-  
 pose, Chap. iii. Ver. 9. “ *Whosoever is born of God,*  
 “ *doth not commit Sin; for his Seed remaineth in*  
 “ *him, and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.*  
 “ That is, Such is the State and Temper of his  
 “ Mind; such is the Disposition of his *Will* and  
 “ *Affections*, that he doth not sin; but his Life is  
 “ agreeable to the Laws of God: *For his Seed re-*  
 “ *maineth in him; i. e. The Word of God, that*  
 “ *Divine Seed*, (as it is called *Mat. xiii. 19. 1 Pet.*  
 “ *i. 23.*) hath wrought its due and proper Effect  
 “ upon his Soul, and is become an effectual Prin-  
 “ ciple of Obedience and a Holy Life; which it  
 “ always will be, where it is received into an ho-  
 “ nest and a good Heart. Therefore, the Apostle  
 “ adds, *And he cannot sin*; by which he means  
 “ not that it is *absolutely*, but that it is *morally*  
 “ impossible for him to sin; it being directly con-  
 “ trary to the *Sense* and *Genius* of his Soul, to the  
 “ Frame and Temper of his Mind, so to do. It  
 “ is not the Consideration of Worldly Interest; it  
 “ is not the Want of Temptation and Opportu-  
 “ nity, that keeps him at any time from offend-  
 “ ing God; so much as the Sense of his Duty, his  
 “ Love



“ Love of Vertue, and the Conformity of his  
 “ Mind to the Laws of God. Such is the State of  
 “ him who is *born of God*; ” Now as every one that  
 is *born of God*, SO *believeth* in Jesus Christ, as to  
*overcome the World* and all its Temptations; So it  
 is also true, that every one THUS *believing* in  
 Christ, and *overcoming the World*, is *born of God*.  
 For says the same Apostle, “ *Whoever believeth*  
 “ *that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God*; i. e.  
 “ *Whoever believes with Such a Faith as implies*  
 “ *Obedience, which is afterward expressly added in*  
 “ *those Terms of keeping God’s Commandments,*  
 “ *and overcoming the World, 1 John v. 1, 2, 3.*  
 “ *And again, Chap. ii. ver. 29. If ye know that he*  
 “ *is righteous, ye know that every one that doth*  
 “ *Righteousness, is BORN OF HIM.* ” From all  
 this, I think, it is very evident, that to be *born*  
 of God or to be *born of the Spirit*, denotes Such a  
 Faith in Jesus Christ, as begets a Conformity of Mind  
 to his Laws and Commandments. \* Which will  
 appear yet farther, from the Words of St. Paul,  
 Gal. vi. 15. In Christ Jesus, says he, *neither Cir-*  
*cumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision, but*  
 a NEW-CREATURE. Now thus he expresseth the  
 same thing in different Places. In Jesus Christ  
*neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor Uncir-*  
*cumcision, but FAITH, WHICH WORKETH BY LOVE,*  
 Gal. v. 6. And; *Circumcision is nothing, and Un-*  
*circumcision is nothing, but the KEEPING THE COM-*  
 MANDMENTS OF GOD, 1 Cor. vii. 19. Who sees not  
 here that this *New Creature*, this *Spiritual Birth*, is  
 equivalent to that *Faith which worketh by Love*, to  
 the *keeping the Commandments of God*? †

\*

†

§. IX. You see now what is the the true and full  
 Import of being *Regenerate* or *Born again*; viz.  
 That it implies, 1. A State of *Profelytism* to Christ  
 by *Baptism*. And, 2. A State of *Conformity* to his  
 Doctrine

Doctrines and Precepts, which is that which our \* *Baptism* engages us to. \* Now, tho' this is the only *complete* and *adequate* Notion of *Regeneration*, yet you cannot but have observed in going along, that *to be Regenerate* and those other Phrases equivalent to it, are frequently used in a more *confined* Sense, and have a *Peculiar*, or at least a *more principal* Relation, sometimes to the *one* of the above-mentioned *Particulars*, and sometimes to the *other*. In the Texts cited in the foregoing Paragraph, to be *born of God*, and to be a *New Creature*, do certainly denote that *Submission* or *Subjection* to the Will of Christ, which the *Spirit* works in the Heart of every true Disciple. For this is *that*, and that *only*, which both enables us to *overcome the World*, and makes it *impossible* for us (so long as it lasts) to be *overcome by it*. But when St. Paul speaks of the *Laver of Regeneration*, Tit. iii. 5. there the Word *Regeneration* peculiarly signifies, that State which we are admitted to by our *Baptism*; *i. e.* The State of *Profelytism* or *Discipleship*, which is here expressly distinguished from the ἀνακαίνωσις Πνεύματος ἁγίου, the *Renewing of the Holy Ghost*, or that *inward Change of Mind* which leads us to Obedience. And thus I understand those Words of the same Apostle, 2 Cor. v. 17. *If any Man be in Christ, he (b) is a New Creature.* The *New Creature*, I say, in this Place, denotes that *Relative State* we are in towards Christ, as his *Disciples* by *Baptism*; as will appear by considering the Context. For

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(b) \*Εἰ τις ἐν Χριστῷ, καὶνὴ κτίσις. The Sentence is *Elliptical*, and may be supplied either by ὅτι or ἔστω. It may be read either *he is a New Creature*, or *let him be a New Creature*. If there were no other Reason for it, it would be enough to determine me in favour of the vulgar Translation; *viz.* That the following part of the Verse runs all in the *Indicative Mood*. τὰ εἰρηναία παρῆλθεν, ἰδὲ γέρονε καὶνὰ τὰ πάντα.

at the 14th Verse (speaking of himself as an Apostle) St. Paul says; *The Love of Christ, constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they which live, should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.* That is, The Love of Christ towards us, is a very strong and prevailing Motive with us, his Ministers, to do his Will. For thus we argue, That if Christ died for all, then were all dead; and that Christ died for all, that those who now live through him, should not henceforward live after their own Lusts and Desires, but in Obedience to the Commandments of him who died and rose again for them. *Wherefore* (adds he, *verse 16.*) *henceforth know we no Man after the Flesh; i. e.* We regard or consider no Man according to the Flesh. We look upon all Worldly Relations to be as nothing, in Comparison to that near and intimate Relation we stand in towards Christ; *Yea, though we have [or rather (i) had] known Christ after the Flesh, yet now henceforth know we him [so] no more; i. e.* Tho' we were of the Number of those who personally knew Christ, and were his near Friends and Relations; yet should we consider him not according to that Relation, but according to that *much higher Relation* which he bears towards us as our King and Redeemer. And this he observes (*verse 17.*) is the Case not of the Ministers of Christ only, but of all who have given up themselves unto him by *Baptism.* For *if any Man be in Christ (i. e. be a (k) Disciple of Christ) he is a New Creature; i. e.* He

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(i) Ἐνώματες. Hic est Indicativus pro Subjunctivis, more Hebræo. Grot.

(k) To be *in Christ*, and to *put on Christ*, are Phrases of the same Import. Now the Apostle tells us, *Gal. iii. 27.* That *as many as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ.*

is to be considered as one who has, in a manner, *quitted* his *Relation* to the *Men* and *Things* of this *World*; As one who is brought into a *New State*, under *New Capacities* and *New Obligations* : For *Old Things* are [now] *passed away*; *behold*, *all Things* are *become New*. †

†

P. 139,  
to 141.

§. X. From the whole, then, As we clearly perceive what is meant by being *Regenerate*, so we may, also, as clearly understand the *Reasons* why the Scripture useth this *Metaphor*; which, by way of *Illustration*, it may not be amiss briefly to set down. When we speak of being *Regenerate* or *Born again*, we refer to something which we *now are*, and which we *were not before*. Now, whoever considers the *Difference* that there is between the *State* of a *Regenerate* and of an *Unregenerate Man*, either as a *Regenerate State* denotes our *Relation* to *God*, by being the *Disciples* of *Jesus Christ*; or as it signifies that *inward Temper* and *Disposition*, which is wrought in us by the *Operations* of the *Spirit*; whoever, I say, compares these two different *States* together, in either of these respects; will find so great a *Change* made by our *removing* from the *one* to the *other*, as may well justify the expressing it by the *Similitude* of the *Natural Birth*. For, 1. As to that *Relative State* which we stand in towards *God*, by being the *Disciples* of *Jesus Christ*, the *Comparison* is obvious; and has, in part, been already hinted at. \* From the *Natural Birth* results a *peculiar Relation* between the *Child* and the *Parent*, which is the *Foundation* of several *Obligations* and *Claims* to and from each other reciprocally. The *Child* owes a *Duty* to its *Parent*, which it does not owe to any other of its *Fellow-Creatures*; and the *Parent* stands indebted to the *Child* in certain *Benefits* or *Privileges*, which cannot be challenged where this *Relation* doth not intervene. Now thus it is in our *Spiritual Birth*. By  
becoming

\*

becoming the *Disciples* of Jesus Christ, we contract a more *near* and *intimate Relation* to God the Father, whose *adopted Children* we are, who hereby acquires a *peculiar additional Right* to our Services, and from whom, in virtue of our *Obedience*, we may claim *Spiritual and Peculiar Favours*, even that *Promise* which he has promised us, **ETERNAL LIFE**, 1 *John* ii. 25. We were (says the Apostle, *Eph.* ii. 3.) by *Nature the Children of Wrath*, having no *Hope*, as being *Strangers from the Covenants of Promise*, verse 12. But now, in *Christ Jesus*, we, who before were *afar off*, are made *nigh* by the *Blood of Christ*, who hath *reconciled us unto God*, and *through whom*, we have an *Access unto the Father*. So that we are no more *Strangers and Foreigners*, but *Fellow-Citizens with the Saints*, and of the *Household of God*, verse 13, to 20. † 2dly, †

The Comparison will be no less visible, if we consider *Regeneration* as it denotes that *inward Temper and Disposition* of Mind, which is wrought in us by the *Operations* of the *Spirit*. For hereby “our *Understandings* are informed with the *Knowledge* of those *Truths* concerning God, Our Selves, and a *Life to come*, which we are most of all concerned to know; which is the *Excellency of the Knowledge of Christ Jesus*.” \* He who knoweth not Christ, *knoweth nothing*; i. e. he knoweth nothing to any good End and Purpose. And accordingly, this *Ignorance* is every where in Scripture represented as a State of *Blindness, Darknes, &c.* and the *Gospel* is called, The *Key of Knowledge*, The *Light of the World*, The *Truth*, The *Knowledge of God*; as if it were the *only Truth*, and the *only Knowledge*. He, therefore, who removes out of a State of *Ignorance*, or rather out of a State of *Insensibility*, into a State of *Knowledge*, may very well be represented as being *born again* †. †

“*intrinsic Alteration* which seems to afford the *clearest*

*What the Scripture means by*

“ clearest Similitude, regards that *Sense* of *Good*  
 “ and *Evil* which is proper to a *true Christian*. We  
 “ know, that all living *Creatures* have such a *Sense*  
 “ of Things *hurtful* and *destructive* to them, that  
 “ thereby they are generally prompted to avoid  
 “ them. ’Tis thus, I say, in the *Natural Life*,  
 “ that we readily apprehend what is contrary to  
 “ it; and, therefore, we do not run into the *Fire*,  
 “ nor venture down *Precipices*, because these things  
 “ are *destructive* to our *Natures*. And this is a  
 “ very fit *Emblem* of the State of a *true Christian*.  
 “ For, by reason of that *Divine Temper* of *Soul*  
 “ which is wrought in him by the *Holy Spirit*, he  
 “ hath such a like *Sense* of *Good* and *Evil*, with re-  
 “ gard to his *Mind* and *Conscience*, as all living  
 “ *Creatures* have with respect to their *Natures*.  
 “ He, therefore, who is a *true Christian*, is said to  
 “ be *born again*, and to become a *New Creature* ;  
 “ because he hath a *New Sense* of things : He hath  
 “ other *Apprehensions* of *Sin*, than *Sensual* and  
 “ *Worldly Men* have ; he looks not upon any *Im-*  
 “ *morality* as an *harmless* Thing ; but apprehends  
 “ all kinds of *Wickedness* to be (what they really  
 “ are) *pernicious* and *detestable*. And this is the  
 “ Reason (as I have already observed) of what  
 “ *S. John* saith ; *He that is born of God, sinneth not,*  
 “ *and he cannot sin, because, he is born of God.* ”  
 For by this *Sense* of *Good* and *Evil*, “ is produced  
 “ a proportionable Change in *Mens Wills* and *Affe-*  
 “ *tions*, which, from being addicted to *Sensuality*  
 “ and *Worldliness*, are come to be strongly incli-  
 “ ned to *Holiness* and *Vertue*. This likewise pro-  
 “ duceth a suitable Change in their *Lives* ; which  
 “ are now led not according to the *Lusts* of the *Flesh*,  
 “ and the *Examples* of *evil Men* ; but according  
 “ to the *Laws* of *God*, and the *Example* of *Christ*.  
 “ And thus they come to the true *Use* of all their  
 “ *Faculties* ; as an *Infant*, after it is *born*, falls in-  
 “ to

“ to those *natural Motions*, which before were ob-  
 “ structed by its Imprisonment in the Womb.”

§. XI. “ Lay all these Things together, and no- P. 141,  
 “ thing will be more evident to you, than that so <sup>142.</sup>  
 “ great a *Change* of our State is implied, in our be-  
 “ ing the *true Disciples* of Christ, that we are, as  
 “ it were, *other Men* by being so, and so may  
 “ fitly be said to be *born again*, when we become  
 “ such Persons.” And this *Change* of our State  
 being so much for the *better*, and making us “ *more*  
 “ *excellent* Persons than we were before,” this sug-  
 “ gests to us “ another Reason for the Choice of this  
 “ *Metaphor*; *viz.* The great *Advantages* we gain  
 “ by it. We have, as it were, a *new Being* given  
 “ us, when we truly believe in Jesus Christ, and  
 “ conform our-selves to his Doctrines and Example:  
 “ We are *so much* alter’d for the better, as if we had  
 “ never lived *’till then*; and we have infinitely  
 “ more Reason to think of *this Alteration* in our  
 “ State, than to remember the *Day* of our *Birth*  
 “ with Joy and Gladness. Hence we find, that  
 “ the Scriptures not only have represented the *Ad-*  
 “ *vantages* we gain by the Gospel of our Saviour,  
 “ by *Metaphors* taken from Things most *grateful*  
 “ to our *natural Appetites*, as *Liberty*, *Life* and  
 “ *Light*; but withal have assured us, That the *Good*  
 “ implied in those Things, does, in a more emi-  
 “ nent manner, belong to the *true Disciples* of  
 “ Jesus Christ. *If the Son shall make you free, then*  
 “ *are you free* INDEED, *John* viii. 36. Now,  
 “ what this *Freedom* is, we are told *Verse* 32. *The*  
 “ TRUTH shall make you free; and *Verse* 34. *He*  
 “ *that committeth Sin, is the SERVANT* of *Sin*.  
 “ So that this *Freedom* consisteth in the *Knowledge*  
 “ of the *Truth*, and in *Obedience* to the *Laws* of  
 “ God, which is that very State, that the Scri-  
 “ pture

“pture elsewhere calls *Light and Life*, and being  
 “*born again, and created anew.*”

p. 142,  
 143.

§. XII. Upon all these Accounts, then, it appears, that the Phrases, *To be born again*, and *To be a New Creature*, are very apt *Metaphors* whereby to express our being the *true Disciples* of Jesus Christ. I need not observe to you, That “since  
 “it is by the *Operations* of the Spirit, that we become *true Believers* and *good Men*, our being  
 “then said to be *born of God*, or of *the Spirit*, does  
 “fitly express the *Concurrence* of that *Divine Power*, by which this *Change* is effected in us.  
 “As to those *other Metaphors* which the Scripture  
 “useth to express our being *regenerate*, the Use  
 “and Meaning of them all, is easily discernable,  
 “tho’ none of them seem to be so *full and significant*  
 “as these.” *Converting or turning*; *Taking away the Heart of Stone*, and *giving the Heart of Flesh*; *Making a new Heart*, and *a new Spirit*, do all of them signify “that *Change* which is wrought in  
 “the Dispositions of our Minds: *Purifying, Cleansing and Purgings*, express the *Excellency* of this  
 “*Change*, and how much our Natures are *better’d*  
 “by it.” But these Phrases, *To be born again*, *To be a new Creature* (and those other which convey the same Idea, as *Quickening* and *Raising from the Dead*) “contain all those *Similitudes* which are  
 “severally discernable in the rest, and express all  
 “the *Advantages* we gain by the *Faith and Obedience* of the Gospel, whether *inherent* or *relative*.  
 “As *this*, probably, is the Reason why they are  
 “more frequently used in Scripture than the rest  
 “are, so *that*, also, may be the Reason why it  
 “hath obtained amongst Christian Writers, to treat  
 “of the *Conditions* of *Eternal Life* more frequently  
 “under the Name of *Regeneration* and the *New*  
 “*Creature*,



“ Creature, than any other Phrases whereby they  
 “ are *Metaphorically* expressed. And, possibly, also,  
 “ this *common Use* of these Expressions, may have  
 “ been an Occasion to some unwary Men, of ima-  
 “ gining, that they are to be understood *properly*.  
 “ But the Reader, I hope, will acknowledge, that  
 “ I have given a plain and reasonable Account of  
 “ the Use of these *Metaphors*, by shewing, where  
 “ the *Similitude* lies between the *proper* and *figura-*  
 “ *tive* Significations of them;” and by this any  
 reasonable Person may also see, how far we may  
 safely argue from them. “ If any Man can go far-  
 “ ther, and find out *more* Similitudes between the  
 “ *Metaphors*, and that which is meant by them, I  
 “ shall not be his Adversary, provided he keeps  
 “ himself within the Bounds of Sense and Reason.  
 “ But to argue (as some have done) from the *pro-*  
 “ *per* Signification of any one, or all of these *Me-*  
 “ *taphors*, so as to conclude something Parallel in  
 “ the State of a *Believer* to *every thing* which can  
 “ *properly* be affirmed of them, (is, as has (1) else-  
 “ where been shewn at large) to run upon such  
 “ wild and absurd Consequences, as any wise Man  
 “ would be ashamed to own, and any good Man  
 “ would be afraid to fasten upon the Scriptures.”

§. XIII. And now, “ though I have, as I con- p 144,  
 “ ceive, sufficiently proved, That to be *born again*,<sup>to 149.</sup>  
 “ is to become a true Disciple of Jesus Christ, yet,  
 “ for farther Confirmation, and because it may be  
 “ of Use to the Ordinary Reader, I shall make it  
 “ plain, that this Notion is agreeable to the Scope  
 “ and Design of our Saviour’s Discourse to *Nicodem-*  
 “ *mus*. It is one of the best ways of interpreting  
 “ any difficult Passage in Divine or Humane Au-  
 “ thors, to observe the *Design* of that whole Dis-

(1) Discourse concerning the Operations of the Holy Spirit.  
 Chap. 11. §. 3.

*What the Scripture means by*

“ course to which it belongs; and then to fix such  
 “ a Meaning upon that Passage, as is apparently  
 “ suitable to the *Scope* of the Author, if the Words  
 “ will bear that Meaning. Now, that the Phrase  
 “ of being *Regenerate* or *Born again*, will bear that  
 “ Sense which I have assigned to it, I have shewn;  
 “ and that it is the *true Sense* of it in *other* Places  
 “ of Scripture, I have also proved: Wherefore, if  
 “ I shew also, that *this Sense* of the Phrase is con-  
 “ sonant to the plain *Scope* of our *Saviour* in *this*  
 “ Discourse, nothing can be further desired to de-  
 “ monstrate, that it is indeed the *true meaning* of  
 “ it *here*.” Our Saviour, then, in this Discourse  
 with *Nicodemus*, seems to have intended these Two  
 Things, *viz.* “ *First*, To shew, That *Faith* in, and  
 “ *Obedience* to him, were the means by which God  
 “ had appointed to bring Men to eternal Happiness.  
 “ And, *Secondly*, to shew, The Unreasonableness  
 “ of the *Jews*, who would not believe in him.  
 “ The former we find *Verse 16*. *For God so loved*  
 “ *the World*, *that he gave his only begotten Son*,  
 “ *that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish,*  
 “ *but have everlasting Life*. That is, This is the  
 “ way by which God hath determined to save Man-  
 “ kind, even by *Faith* in his *only begotten Son*:  
 “ And this was so great a Demonstration of God’s  
 “ Love to Man, thus to give his *only begotten Son*,  
 “ that no Man could hope to escape the Anger of  
 “ God, who should refuse the Benefit of this *Sacri-*  
 “ *fice*. For the *Son of God* was to be *lifted up upon*  
 “ the *Cross*, *as Moses lifted up the Serpent in the*  
 “ *Wilderness* (a rude savage Place, and so fit to be  
 “ the Figure of that *corrupted State* of the *World*  
 “ in which Christ came to dye for us) *that whosoever*  
 “ *believeth in him, should not perish, &c. verses 14,*  
 “ *15*. Wherefore, though indeed God sent not  
 “ his *Son* into the *World* to condemn the *World*, but  
 “ that the *World* through him might be saved;  
 “ (verse

“ (verse 17.) yet he that believeth not, is condemned  
 “ already; i. e. He is in a State to which Condem-  
 “ nation belongs, because he hath not believed in  
 “ the Name of the only begotten Son of God; i. e.  
 “ for refusing so gracious an Opportunity of Sal-  
 “ vation as was now offered, Verse 18. Secondly,  
 “ Our Saviour shews the *Unreasonableness* of those  
 “ Men that believe not; and that by noting, 1.  
 “ The *Evidence* of that Truth which they disbelie-  
 “ ved. And, 2. The true *Cause* of their Unbelief.  
 “ The former he admonished *Nicodemus* of in these  
 “ Words, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak*  
 “ *that we do know, and testify that we have seen,*  
 “ *and ye receive not our Testimony,* verse 11. i. e.  
 “ You believe not my Doctrine concerning the  
 “ Way by which you must come to see the Kingdom  
 “ of God, although it be evidently true. For this  
 “ is that very Message which I bring you from  
 “ God; This is that Counsel and Decree of God  
 “ which I come from him to testify unto you; *viz.*  
 “ That there is no other way but that. Now,  
 “ this you acknowledge, that *I am a Teacher sent*  
 “ *from God, because (as you confess) no Man can do*  
 “ *those Miracles which I do, except God be with him,*  
 “ verse 2.; How strangely incredulous therefore  
 “ are you, that you will not believe me delivering  
 “ that Doctrine, which by these Testimonies of  
 “ my coming from God, I confirm? 2. Christ as-  
 “ signeth the true *Cause* of this Unbelief. *This is*  
 “ *the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World,*  
 “ *and Men loved Darkness rather than Light, because*  
 “ *their Deeds are evil,* verse 19. That is, The  
 “ Cause why Men believe not my Doctrine, is not  
 “ because they want Reason and Argument to in-  
 “ duce them to it; but because their *Deeds are evil,*  
 “ because my Doctrine is so contrary to their *Lusts*  
 “ and *Vices*, that they are not willing it should be true,  
 “ and so do not attend to the *Evidence* of its Truth;

“ and, therefore, greater shall be their Condem-  
 “ nation. *Every one that doth evil, hateth the*  
 “ *Light, neither cometh to the Light, lest his Deeds*  
 “ *should be reprov'd. But he that doth the Truth;*  
 “ i. e. He who is sincerely disposed to do whatever  
 “ is the Will of God; *cometh to the Light, that his*  
 “ *Deeds may be manifest, that they are wrought in*  
 “ *God; i. e. He is not unwilling to have his Actions*  
 “ *prov'd whether they be according to the Will of*  
 “ *God or not. This is the Scope of our Saviour's*  
 “ *Discourse, and, therefore, it is plain, that sup-*  
 “ *posing the true Disciple of Christ is to be under-*  
 “ *stood by the Regenerate Man, the Beginning of*  
 “ *our Saviour's Discourse, concerning the Necessity*  
 “ *of Regeneration, is consonant to his evident*  
 “ *Design, which was, to shew why we must be his*  
 “ *Disciples, and how inexcusable we are are if we*  
 “ *be not. But that the Connexion of the Whole*  
 “ *may be more clearly seen; I shall here subjoyn*  
 “ *a Paraphrase of this Discourse, so far as it con-*  
 “ *cerns the Matter in hand, proceeding upon that*  
 “ *Notion of Regeneration which has already been*  
 “ *laid down.*

P. 149,  
 to 157.

§. XIV. “ It is probable (as *Grotius* observes)  
 “ That after *Nicodemus* had acknowledged our  
 “ Saviour to be sent from God, he asked him,  
 “ *What Qualifications a Man must have to see the*  
 “ *Kingdom of God?* To which Question our Savi-  
 “ our's Answer was,

Verse 3. *Except a Man be born again, he cannot*  
*see the Kingdom of God; i. e. “ No Man can enter*  
 “ into the Kingdom of God, except he become my  
 “ Disciple, which you seem unwilling to be, because  
 “ you come secretly to me for fear of the *Jews*.  
 “ But, I tell you, it is not sufficient for you to  
 “ acknowledge to Me, that I am a Teacher sent  
 “ from God, but, withal, you must become one  
 “ of

“ of my Disciples, and own your-self so to be,  
 “ though you forfeit thereby the Honour you have  
 “ in the *Jewish State* ; for you must forsake  
 “ All to follow me.” *Nicodemus* not understand-  
 ing this to be our Saviour’s Meaning, \* or dis-  
 sembling, perhaps, what he well enough under-  
 stood, † replies as if it were required that a Man  
 should be born again in the *literal* and *proper* Sense  
 of the Words. For,

Verse 4. *Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a  
 Man be born when he is old? Can he enter the Se-  
 cond Time into his Mother’s Womb, and be born?*

Verse 5. *Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say un-  
 to thee, Except a Man be born of Water and of the  
 Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God;*  
 i. e. “ It is not such a Birth that I mean. You  
 “ must be *born* of *Water* i. e. You must by *Bap-  
 tism* become a professed *Disciple* of mine. And  
 “ you must be *born* of *the Spirit* ; i. e. It is equally  
 “ necessary, that by the Operations of the Holy  
 “ Spirit (the Promise whereof is part of my Do-  
 “ ctrine) you become obedient in Heart and Life  
 “ to those Laws which I deliver.

Verse 6. *That which is born of the Flesh, is Flesh ;  
 and that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit ; i. e.  
 “ That which is born in the literal Sense, as when  
 “ an Infant is born of his Mother, is discernable  
 “ to your Eyes ; and the Change made thereby, is  
 “ evident to your grosser Senses. It is not this  
 “ Change which I mean ; but a *Spiritual Change* ;  
 “ a Change of the *Dispositions* of Mens *Hearts*,  
 “ and the *Manner* of their *Lives* ; which Change,  
 “ together with those *Operations* of the Spirit where-  
 “ by it is produced, is not discernable the same way  
 “ in which the *Natural Birth* is. (m)*

C 4

Verse

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(m) Some (not improbably) understand this Verse as assigning  
 the *Reason* why it is necessary that a Man should be *born* of *the  
 Spirit*,

*What the Scripture means by*

Verse 7. *Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.*

Verse 8. *The Wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the Sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth; So is every one that is born of the Spirit: i. e. " And let it not surprize you, that this Birth which I speak of, is not discernable to the Eye of Sense: For as the Wind, which bloweth hither and thither, is not discernable to the Eye; and though we see it not, yet we are assured there is such a thing, because we bear it; so the Operations of the Spirit, though you cannot feel them, yet you may be assured that they are, by those Effects or Alterations in you that are caused by them."*

Verse 9. *Nicodemus answered and said unto him, How can these Things be?*

Verse 10. *Jesus answered and said unto him: Art thou a Master of Israel, and knowest not these Things? i. e. " Art thou one of the great Council, a Learned Jew, and yet ignorant of these Matters? Do you not perceive that I speak to you of the Necessity of becoming my Disciple, in such Language, as any Man who is versed in your Customs, and the Writings of the Prophets, may easily understand? Is not being born again, that very Phrase whereby you express the making of a Profelyte? Is not Washing, one of the Ceremonies whereby a Profelyte is made among you? And therefore, when I tell you, That a Man must*

*Spirit, and paraphrase it more briefly thus; That which is born of the Flesh, i. e. Human Nature unassisted by the Holy Spirit, is Flesh, i. e. Lives after the Motions of the Flesh. But that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit, i. e. Lives according to the Motions or Directions of the Spirit.*

“ be *born* of Water, what should you think I mean,  
 “ but that he must *become my Disciple by Baptism*?  
 “ I have also told you, That he must be *born of the*  
 “ *Spirit* too; and can you be ignorant, that those  
 “ Prophecies which speak of the Days of the  
 “ *Messiah*, do mention the *Operations* of the *Holy*  
 “ *Spirit* upon the Hearts of Men, which shall then  
 “ be liberally bestowed upon the Subjects of his  
 “ Kingdom, to make them Good and Holy? ”

Verse 11. *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen, and ye receive not our Witness*; i. e. Now, I am that  
 “ *Messiah*; but how credible soever that Testi-  
 “ mony is which is given hereof, ye regard it  
 “ not. ”

Verse 12. *If I have told you Earthly Things, and ye believe not, how shall you believe if I tell you of Heavenly Things?* i. e. “ If I have proved by these  
 “ Miracles (which you acknowledge) that I am the  
 “ *Messiah*, and yet you will not believe me, and  
 “ become my Disciple; how much more unlikely  
 “ is it, that you will believe me, when I tell you,  
 “ that I, who am the *Messiah*, must be *lifted up* upon  
 “ a Cross, and *die* for the Sins of the World (n)?  
 “ And

(n) I conceive, that by *Heavenly Things* here, may probably be meant, such revealed Doctrines, as were most contrary to the worldly and sensual Expectations of the *Jews* (who had long cherished in themselves the Notion of a *Messiah*, who should fight their Battels, as their other *Saviours* and *Deliverers* had done) viz. That *Christ* should be delivered into the Hands of Men, and be crucified for the Sins of the World. And so, consequently, by *Earthly Things* may be understood, those Truths which were not so contrary to these Expectations; as, That *Jesus* was the *Christ*; and, That all Men were to be his *Disciples*; which the *Jews* would have been much more willing to be, had it not been for the Meanness of his outward Appearance, and his ignominious Death afterwards. Divers Reasons concur to support this Interpretation; as, 1. That after our Saviour had made way for it,  
 by

“ And yet this is the Purpose of God for the Sal-  
 “ vation of Mankind ; which, how Strange a thing  
 “ foever it may appear to you, you have, yet, all  
 “ the Reason in the World to believe upon my  
 “ Testimony. ” For,

Verse 13. *No Man hath ascended up to Heaven, but he that came down from Heaven, even the Son of Man which is in Heaven ; i. e. “ No Man hath (o) known the Secret Purpose of God concerning the way of saving Mankind by the Death of his Son. No Man hath thus ascended into Heaven, but he that is come from Heaven, whom “ God*

by telling *Nicodemus* (verse 13.) that he only *ascended up into Heaven*, i. e. knew the secret Purposes of God concerning the way of Salvation, he immediately falls upon the Mention of that *Death* which he was to undergo for the Sins of the World: *And as Moses lifted up the Serpent in the Wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up*, verse 14. 2. The Cross of Christ was that which made the *Jews* most of all offended, that his Disciples should still pretend him to be *the Christ*. It was to the *Jews* a *Stumbling-block*, and to the *Greeks Foolishness*; and, therefore, it is probable, that *this* was the Thing which the *Jews* would hardly believe; viz. That God would *save Mankind* by the Death of his Son. 3. When *St. Peter* rebuked our Saviour foretelling his own Passion, he said unto him, *Get thee behind me, Satan; for thou savourest not the Things that be of God, or Heavenly Things*; i. e. The Wisdom of God's Way to save the World; but the Things that be of Man. Thou speakest according to the Imaginations of the *Jews*, who persuade themselves, that the Kingdom of the *Messiah* will be of *this World*. After all; The Opinion of *Grotius* that the *ἐπίσημα* are the *Similitudes* of the *Natural Birth*, and the *Wind*, which our Saviour used; And the *ἐπουράνια*, *Divine Things* spoken without this Condescension by the use of *Metaphors*; And that of *Dr. Hammond*, who supposes the *ἐπίσημα* to be Things ordinary in the *Jewish Law*; want not their Probabilities. But the Notion which I have laid down, does, I think, better agree with the Context, *Clag.* p. 154, 155.

(o) I take this to be a more probable Interpretation of this difficult Place, than that which supposeth our Saviour to speak here of his *local Ascension* into Heaven afterwards. For, 1. The Words themselves seem not well able to bear the Notion of a *future Ascension*.



“ God hath sent to reveal this to you; even he  
 “ who now speaketh to you, *who am in Heaven*,  
 “ who know the Purposes and Intentions of my  
 “ Father; concerning the way of Salvation. ”

§. XV. “ I shall now leave the Reader to judge,  
 “ whether the *Paraphrase* which I have here given  
 “ of the former part of our Saviour’s Discourse  
 “ to *Nicodemus*, does not make the Connexion be-  
 “ tween all the Parts of it very clear; and also,  
 “ whether our understanding the *Regenerate Man*  
 “ to be a *true Disciple of Christ* (which is the Notion  
 “ upon which this *Paraphrase* proceeds), does not  
 “ agree with the Scope of our Saviour’s Discourse in  
 “ this Place. ” In the mean while, I conclude,  
 That, “ *this is THAT Regeneration*, which is neces-  
 “ sary to *Adult Persons*, as *Nicodemus* was. ” \* I  
 say, to *Adult Persons*; For it is to be noted, that  
 we have all this while, been speaking of *Regenera-  
 tion*, with a *View* only to *such*, and it is under *this  
 View* that it is most commonly treated of in Scrip-  
 ture. The first Preachers of the Gospel were prin-  
 cipally concerned with those who were to be brought  
 over from *Judaism*, or *Heathenism*, to the *Faith* of  
 the *Gospel*. When, therefore, they speak of *Rege-  
 nation*, they speak of it generally *as it relates* to  
*such*. But there is a *Sense of Regeneration*, in  
 which it is common to *all Baptized Persons*, *Infants*

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*sion*. 2. As *Grotius* hath observed, the Phrase of *Ascending into  
 Heaven*, is, in other Places of Scripture, to be taken in the for-  
 mer Sense; *viz.* of *gaining Knowledge from God*. And, 3. If it is  
 thus understood in this Place, then what our Saviour saith here,  
 hath a clear Connexion with *ver. 11.* where he rebuketh the *Jews*  
 for not believing his Revelations, taxing them with Unreasonableness  
 for it, since he delivered nothing but what he had *seen* and  
*known* from God; and also with the precedent Verse, where, by  
 the *Heavenly Things*, all agree those Doctrines are meant, which  
 were to be known by Revelation, *Id.* p. 147.

as well as *Adult*; as well as a Sense in which it is peculiar to the *Adult* only. The *Adult* only can be said to be *Regenerate*, as that Word implies under it, a *Change of Mind* from *Evil* to *Good*; or a *Conformity of the Will and Affections* to the *Commandments* of Christ (p). But the Word *Regenerate* (as has been shewn) is in Scripture sometimes used to denote that *Relative State* which a Man stands in towards God as the *Disciple* of Jesus Christ; and, consequently, *thus far*, or *in this Sense*, every *Disciple* of Jesus Christ, i. e. every Person who has been received as a Member of Christ's Church by *Baptism*, is *Regenerate*. †

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(p) To be *Regenerate*, or *Born again*, (as that Phrase denotes the State or Condition of the Mind) seems, indeed, to have a peculiar Reference, not only to *Adult* Persons, but also to *such* *Adult* Persons, as have been brought over from *Infidelity* to *Christianity*. For *Regeneration* (as has before been observed) refers back to some *precedent State*, *different* from that which we are in at present. When, therefore, we apply the Word to the *Conformity* of the *Will* to the *Commandments* of Christ, without any regard to such a *Change*, the *Propriety* of the *Metaphor* is, indeed, lost; but the thing signified or intended by it, continues to be the very same.



## DISCOURSE I.

Concerning REGENERATION,

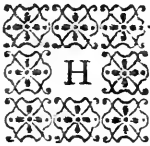
O R,

*The* NEW BIRTH.

PART II.

Wherein the Notions of some Modern Divines

*upon this Subject, are examined and refuted.*

§. I. \* AVING shewn you in the foregoing Part of this Discourse, what the Scripture means by being *Regenerate* or *Born anew*; I now proceed to examine those Notions concerning it, which have been entertained by some Modern Divines. And this I am the more willing to do, because I persuade my self, that when once the Reader comes to perceive what Extravagancies have been introduced upon this Subject; he will be the more readily disposed to acquiesce in that easy and familiar Idea of *Regeneration*, which has already been laid before him.

Some

\*

Some have fancied, that the *New Creature* is (q) a certain Principle of New Life infused by the Spirit of God, which Principle has a Being and Subsistence of its own in the Soul, and is super-induced to the essential Faculties of it; that is, (for this they must mean, if they mean any thing) that the *New Creature* is not any Property or Quality belonging to the Soul, or the Soul endued with new Properties and Qualities; but that it is a real Substance distinct or different from the Soul. Now, it being evident, that there is nothing either in Reason or Scripture which has any Tendency to shew, that there is in Man any real Substance besides Soul and Body, this Notion appears, at first sight, to be a pure Dream of *Enthusiasm*; and, therefore, I shall have no farther regard to it, than as to what falls in in common with that other which I am now going to mention, viz. That *Regeneration* consists in the having (r) *supernatural Habits* (of Holiness) infused into the Soul by the Operations of the Spirit; which supposes (what, indeed, they seem also plainly enough to (s) assert) that the *New Birth* is not a real Substance, but a certain Affection or Disposition of the Soul, by which it becomes better than it was before. This Account, as it might be explained, I could very readily agree to; not, indeed, as setting forth the *Whole* of what the Scripture means by being *born again*. For, you must

(q) Dr. Owen and his Followers. See Dr. Claget, Par. 1. Chap. 3. Sect. 1.

(r) *Conversio Habitualis seu passiva fit per habituum supernaturalium infusionem a Spiritu Sancto* — Illa REGENERATIO dicitur, quia se habet ad modum novæ Nativitatis quæ Homo reformatur ad Imaginem Creatoris sui. Turretin, Loc. 15. Quæst. 4. Sect. 13.

(s) *Novam Civ* dicitur fieri in nobis non *Physicè* sed *Ethicè*; quia eadem substantia qua infecta fuit peccato debet restaurari per gratiam. Id. Loc. 9. Quæst. 11. Sect. 5.

observe, that this goes no farther than to define what *Regeneration* is considered as an *internal Effect* of the Spirit's Operations; whereas (as I have shewn) the intire Scripture Notion of it, besides that *inward* Change which is wrought in us by the Spirit, includes also that Change in our *Relative State* to God, which is the Consequence of our being Baptized. But omitting this, I say, the Words will bear a very sound Sense; forasmuch as that *Change* of Mind, which is signified by the Word *Regeneration*, as it denotes an *internal Effect*, may well enough be expressed by the *Infusion* of *supernatural Habits*. But, as near as this Account seems to come to the Truth, it is, nevertheless, widely distant from it, both with respect to the *Nature* of the Thing defined, and also with regard to the *Way* or *Manner* according to which it is supposed to be effected. This I shall now make appear, by shewing, 1. What they teach concerning these *supernatural Habits*, in the receiving of which *Regeneration* is by them supposed to consist. 2. What they mean when they say, that these *Habits* are *infused*.

§. II. First, then, I am to inquire, What these Divines teach concerning those *supernatural Habits*, in the receiving of which *Regeneration* is by them supposed to consist; whereby I do not propose to give you a precise Account of what they *mean* by these *supernatural Habits*: For this is absolutely impossible, unless it be possible to assign *their* Sense of a Word, who, by the manner in which they apply it, do plainly shew, that they do not understand what they would have themselves. That which a reasonable Man would understand by a *Habit*, I conceive is this: That it is a prevailing *Bent* or *Inclination* of the Soul, by which a Man (supposing him to have the free Use of his rational Faculties) is either *always*, or *for the most part*, determined

terminated to one particular way or manner of Acting. In this latter Case, *i. e.* when a Man is for the most part only determined to any one particular way or manner of Acting, the *Habit* is imperfect; but it is perfect, when this Determination is even and uninterrupted: In which Sense, therefore, a Man may be said to have attained to a *Habit* of *Holiness*, when he is under such a constant and regular Inclination to Vertue, that he will not, upon any Occasion, when he has Time to reflect and consider upon what he is about, deviate from the Rule or Measure of his Duty. And who will say, that a Christian thus disposed, is not in a *Regenerate* State? But this is not what these Divines would have. For those *supernatural Habits*, by the *Infusion* of which (as they suppose) a Man becomes *Regenerate*, are such *Habits* as a Man may be possessed of, and yet not shew forth the *Fruit* or *Effect* of them in his Life and Conversation; such *Habits* as are so far from leaving him under a constant and regular Inclination to Vertue, that they are consistent with a State of the most heinous and deliberate *Wickedness*; yea, (what is more) such as the most heinous and deliberate *Wickedness* cannot possibly extinguish (1). What sort of *Habits* these must be, it is, I say, not very easy to understand, nor, withal, is it material to inquire. That which I would observe, as sufficient for my present Purpose, is this: That to say that *Rege-*

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(1) *Actus* quidem peccaminosi non possunt subsidere cum actibus *Justitiæ* oppositis, v. q. *Actus Adulterii* cum *Actu Castitatis*; *Actus Incredulitatis* cum *Actu Fidei*; *Actus Odii* cum *Actu Amicitie*; sed non possunt tamen *Itatum* ipsum excutere. Ita nihil obstat *Fidem* & *Charitatem* manere in *Homine peccante*. Sed quoad *semen* non quoad *Fructum*; quoad *Habitum*, sed languentem & imminutum, non quoad *exercitium* & *operationes*, *Id. Loc. 15. Quæst. 16. Sect. 43.*

*neration* consists in the receiving of something, notwithstanding which a Man may be in a State of *deliberate Wickedness*, is to suppose, that a Man may be in a State of *deliberate Wickedness* and yet all the while be *Regenerate*. And this is what these Divines do very plainly assert: For they tell us, That (*u*) notwithstanding the Saints when they fall into heinous Sins, deserve to be shut out from the Kingdom of Heaven, yet, through the Mercy of God, they do not lose their Right to that Kingdom, nor do they cease to be in a State of REGENERATION. For the Grace of REGENERATION flows from the Spirit, who when he hath once implanted the quickning Seed in our Hearts, stamps upon it a Heavenly and Incorruptible Energy, &c. The Case, you see, is evidently this, that according to them, the Grace

(*u*) Licet sancti per gravia in quæ incidunt peccata mereantur exclusionem à regno cœlorum — fit tamen Dei Misericordiâ ut propterea nec jus ad regnum cœlorum tollatur — nec status REGENERATIONIS aboleatur effectivè. Quia — Gratia *Regenerationis* fluit à Spiritu, qui ut semen vivificum, semel in cordibus nostris implantavit, ita illi imprimi vim cœlestem & incorruptibilem, eandemque perpetuò fovet & tuetur, *Id. Ibid.* §. 41. *This Passage is borrowed from Act. Synod. Dord. Par. 2. p. 251. where we have these Words: Regenti* quandoque suo vitio incidunt in atrocia peccata atque hinc — reatum damnabilem contrahunt; præsentem ad regnum cœlorum ingrediendum aptitudinem amittunt — Dei enim immota ordinatio postulat ut fidelis sic exorbitans per renovatum fidei & pœnitentiæ actum prius redeat in viam, quam ad viæ metam; *i. e.* ad regnum cœleste perducere possit — In illo [itaque] interstitio quod est inter contractum ex gravi peccato reatum, & fidei ac pœnitentiæ actum renovatum, stat talis peccator suo merito damnandus — [Interim vero] jus ad regnum cœlorum non tollitur; justificatio universalis non irrita redditur; status adoptionis manet immobilis — Semen *Regenerationis* unà cum omnibus fundamentibus donis, sine quibus hominis *Regenerati* status non consistit, facta testâ conservatur — Spiritus [enim] Sanctus, qui hoc semen cordibus renatorum infundit, eidem semini vim imprimi cœlestem eandemque perpetuò fovet & custodit.

of Regeneration is (w) *Incorruptible*; inſomuch, that he who is *once Regenerate*, muſt always be Regenerate. Yet they grant, that he who is *once Regenerate*, may fall into ſuch *actual Transgreſſions*, as render him *unfit* for the Kingdom of Heaven, and for which, if he were to dye in them, he would certainly be *damm'd*; from whence it follows, that to be *Regenerate*, and to be in a State of *wilful Diſobedience*, are conſiſtent Things. To qualify the Matter a little, they do indeed tell us, That the Sins which are committed by the *Regenerate* (x), are committed only through *Impotency and Infirmity*; and there can be no doubt but that Sins of *Infirmity* (thoſe I mean; which are *truly and properly* ſuch) are conſiſtent with a *Regenerate* State. But if you imagine, that they ſpeak of Sins of *Infirmity*, as oppoſed to *wilful, deliberate* Sins, you will find yourſelf miſtaken; for, beſides that theſe are none of thoſe Sins which will ſhut a Man out from the Kingdom of Heaven; they tell us plainly, that a *Regenerate* Man may be (y) *under the Dominion of Sin, as to the Act, and as to ſome par-*

(w) Orthodoxi — *Habitum fidei ſemel electis indultum poſſe quidem interdum intendi vel remitti cenſent* — pro ratione peccatorum intercurrentium; ſed ita ut nunquam penitus & finaliter deleatur et amittatur, nec gratia *Regenerationis* ſemel homini collata penitus ab eo auferatur. *Id. lb. §. 7.*

(x) Fideles non tam ex malitia & pleno voluntatis conſenſu peccant, quam ex *Infirmitate* & *affectuum Impotentia*. *Id. lb. §. 34.*

(y) Non negamus fidelem poſſe ſubelle nonnunquam regno peccati partiali; i. e. Quoad actum, & quoad certa peccata quibus *involget*; ſed negamus ſubelle regno peccati univerſali quoad ſtatum, ut absolute in ejus poteſtatem veniat, & ſine ullo *renſa* & *reluctantia* in illo dominetur. *Turretin. Ibid. §. 46.*



*ticular Sins which he INDULGES; that he may (z) concupiscentiis suis libere turpiterque parere, live under a willing, filthy or shameful Subjection to his Fleshly Appetites; that he may follow them with servile or a slavish Indulgence against the Motions of Grace, and the Dictates of his own Conscience. Accordingly, there is not a Sin you can name (nor scarce any of the most aggravating Circumstances of it) which they do not allow to be consistent with a Regenerate State. Not the (a) Incontinency and Idolatry of Solomon; not the Adultery and Murder of David, which he committed, say they, (b) pessimâ & deliberatâ Machinatione, by a most wicked and deliberate Contrivance: In a Word, Not all those (c) Works of the Flesh which are mentioned Gal. v. 19, 20, 21. and of which the Apostle says, That they who do such Things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God. But what, then, do they mean, when they say, That the Regenerate sin only through Impotency and Infirmitiy? Why, only, That they*

(z) Non deest quidem in nobis (sc. Regenitis) per totum vitæ cursum motus & ductus Spiritus divini, ita tamen ut gratiæ deesse possumus, imo ut nimis sæpè desimus, ac subinde concupiscentiis nostris libere turpiterque peccamus. Hinc illa Gal. v. 17. Spiritu ambulate & desideria carnis non perficietis, & Eph. iv. 20. Nolite contristare Spiritum, &c. Spiritum enim contristare dicuntur, qui ejus ductui resistunt, & servili quadam libertate concupiscentiis suis contra gratiæ motum & conscientiæ dictamen indulgent. Act. Syn. Dor. Par. 2. p. 172.

(a) See Mr. Turretin. Loc. xv. Quæst. 16. §. 29. ad finem.

(b) Act. Synod. Dor. Ibid. p. 175.

(c) De Renatis afferendum est [quod]—cum labuntur potuerant gratiæ vi & subsidio, per voluntatem liberam—concupiscentiis suis restitisse & vitasse opera illa carnis manifesta quæ Gal. i. 19. recensentur fornicationem, immunditiam, &c. Ibid.

do not sin (*d*) maliciously, on purpose, as it were, for sinning sake, with a high Hand, without Reluctancy before, or Remorse afterward. So that, according to them, let a Man be guilty of as much Wickedness as he pleases, yet, if he does not wage open War with Heaven, and brave the Almighty to his Face, *i. e.* If he be not altogether as bad as the Devil himself, he may, nevertheless, be said to be Regenerate.

§. III. This then, is the Point which I now fix upon; to wit, That in the Account of these Divines, wilful, deliberate Sin, is consistent with a State of Regeneration; a Proposition as contrary to the Word of God, as Light is to Darkness. For, First, It contradicts those Words of St. John, *Whosoever is born of God, doth not commit sin; for his Seed remaineth in him, and he cannot sin because he is*

† Par. 1.  
p. 123.

born of God.† “How should this be a Reason why  
“ a Man cannot sin, *viz.* That the Seed of God  
“ remains in him, that he is born of God, if he may  
“ be guilty of notorious and wilful Sins, and yet  
“ that Seed remain, and he be regenerate still?”

\* It is pretended, I know, that when the Apostle says of the Regenerate Man, that he cannot sin, his Meaning is not, that he cannot wilfully sin, but that he cannot habitually live or continue in Sin: And to this purpose, it is observed, that in the

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(*d*) Qui opera carnis plenâ voluntate & datâ operâ patrant — rectè dicuntur à fide penitus deficere. Sed hoc sensu fideles non possunt peccare; quia non tam ex malitiâ & pleno voluntatis consensu sine reluctantiâ peccant quam ex infirmitate, &c. Licet vero peccata illa non raro fiant ex prævia aliqua deliberatione & contra conscientiam, quia tamen *προαίρεσις* illa non tam oritur ex habitu quam ex vehementi affectuum perturbatione in quibus est semper vel antecedens *lucta*, vel subsequens dolor, hinc patet non posse vocari peccata *requitiâ* & *superbiâ*, quæ fiunt *elata manu* & gratiam omnem ex corde excutiant. Turretin, Loc. sup. cit. §. 34.

foregoing part of the Verse, (e) He doth not say, *Whosoever is born of God, doth not sin, but who-so-ever*

(e) Non dicit simpliciter non peccare natum ex Deo, i. e. verum fidelem, sed peccatum non facere, i. e. ita ut peccatum illi dominetur quo totus in diaboli potestatem regrediatur, eo modo quo peccant irregenerati cum studio & habitu peccandi, peccato regnante. Ut justitiam facere dicitur non qui quodlibet et opus justitiæ facit, sed qui illi dat operam per continuum ejus exercitium; ut medicinam facere dicitur qui eam profitetur, & in ejus praxi versatur, mercaturam facere, artem facere, qui eam exercet. Thus Mr. Turretin (*loc. cit.* §. 23.) whose Interpretation is somewhat countenanced by our Learned Dr. Hammond in his Note upon the Word Ἐπιλωπόναι (Matt. v. 9.) where he observes, that the Word ποιεῖν, to do or work, in sacred Dialect, doth oft signify the Habit or Bent of the Mind, with the consequent Actions. So, (says he) ἀμαρτίαν ποιεῖν, to commit or live indulgently in Sin; and ποιεῖν δικαιοσύνην, to have a sincere Inclination or Resolution of Mind towards Righteousness, &c. That which the 1<sup>o</sup> or means, is, not that the Word ποιεῖν enforces or specifies a Habit for then it could signify nothing else; but that it is often used where a Habit must necessarily be understood, which is very certain. But whereas he saith particularly, that ἀμαρτίαν ποιεῖν, in the Language of the Scripture, signifies, To live indulgently in Sin, I know not for what Reason he says it. He produces no Authority, nor, indeed, do I find that the Phrase is so much as once used in this Sense throughout the whole New Testament. The Phrase occurs but Seven Times; once 2 Cor. xii. 7. Ἡ ἀμαρτίαν ἐποίησα; Have I committed an Offence? i. e. Have I done an ill Thing, in abusing myself, &c? Where it plainly denotes an Act, and not a Habit. Again Jam. v. 15. And the Prayer of Faith shall save the Sick — Καὶ ἀμαρτίας ἢ πεποιηκώς, And if he have committed Sins, they shall be forgiven him; where the Phrase is used indefinitely, and signifies precisely neither an Act nor a Habit; for it is just as if the Apostle had said, If he be a Sinner, he shall be forgiven. Once more 1 Pet. ii. 22. Ὁς ἀμαρτίαν ἐκ ἐποίησε. Who did no Sin, neither was Guile found in his Mouth; which Words being spoken of our Lord, signify, that he had committed no Act of Wickedness. The remaining Places are John viii. 34. 1 John iii. 4, 8, 9. which I shall consider above, and shew, that they carry no such Meaning. So that, upon the whole, I must look upon this as a Mistake of the Learned Doctor; and that which seems to have led him (and I may add Mr. Turretin also) into it, is, that ποιεῖν δικαιοσύνην, implies a Habit. but is not the Reason visible? To do Righteousness must needs imply a Habit, because Righteousness as a Habit; i. e. that which dominates

ever is born of God, doth not COMMIT Sin, i. e. He doth not *habituate himself* to Sin; he doth not make Sin his Trade or Employment; and he cannot sin, i. e. (say they) he cannot *thus* sin, because he is born of God. But that this is the full Sense of the Place, can never be argued merely from the Force of the Words themselves. For tho' I do not deny that the Word *ποῖόν* (upon which the main Stress of this Interpretation lies) is often used where a *Habit* must necessarily be understood; yet neither can it be denied, that it is as frequently, if not more frequently, used where *single Acts* are also spoken of. The Truth is, that this Word of *itself* denotes precisely neither an *Act* nor a *Habit*, but is *indifferently* applied to *either*; and, by Consequence, whenever a *Habit* is to be understood, this must appear not from the *Word*, but either from the *Nature* of the *Thing* spoken of, or from the *Circumstances* of the *Place* where the Word is used. To the first of these, i. e. to the *Nature* of the *Thing*, we cannot now appeal on either side;

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a Man righteous, is not one single Act of Righteousness, but the constant Course and Tenor of his Life. But tho' one single Act of Righteousness is not enough to denominate a Man Righteous; yet, one single Act of Wickedness is enough to denominate him a Sinner. But the Doctor hath taken care to set this Matter right in his Note upon the Text of St. John, now under Consideration; where he observes, that *ἀμαρτανῶν* and *ἀμαρτανῶν ποῖόν*, appear to be directly the same. And having put the Question, Whether these Phrases are to be interpreted only of an Habit of deliberate Sin, or belong to one single Act of it? he resolves it thus; That tho' he that lives impenitently in any Habit of known Sin, be most eminently said to sin, and to commit Sin, yet he that is guilty of any one deliberate Act, is here primarily meant by these Phrases. The Reasons he offers for this, are convincing, and shall be considered by and by. In the mean while it is evident, that in Dr. Hammond's Opinion one single Act of wilful, deliberate Sin, is inconsistent with a Repentant State. And, in this Point, he agrees with Grotius, and some other Learned Commentators.

because,

because, *what this is*, is the Point under Consideration; we must therefore be determined by the *Circumstances* of the Place: And what is there, in the Words either going before, or following after, which has any Tendency to shew, that the Apostle intended to exclude *habitual* and *desperately hardened* Sinners only, from a *Regenerate* State? Why here (so far as I can perceive) these Divines have little to say: But Dr. *Whitby* hath taken care to supply this Defect. He writes, indeed, in such a Manner, as 'tis scarce possible to know which side of the Question he is of: However, he has given it us in very plain Terms, "That he (*f*) cannot assent  
 " to that Exposition which saith, *A Child of God*  
 " (*i. e.* a Regenerate Man) *cannot be guilty of any*  
 " *great or deliberate Crime;*" and, accordingly, (with the Disciples of *Calvin*) he explains the Phrase  $\delta \pi \omega \nu \tau \omega \nu \alpha \mu \alpha \rho \tau \iota \alpha \nu$ , as signifying *one who lives or goes on in a way of Sin*. For this Interpretation, he has offered Three several Reasons; which I will now examine in their Order.

§. IV. And, *First*, the Doctor argues "from the same Phrase used in St. *John's* Gospel, *Chap. 8. Verse 34.*  $\Pi \alpha \varsigma \delta \pi \omega \nu \tau \omega \nu \alpha \mu \alpha \rho \tau \iota \alpha \nu$ , *Whosoever committeth Sin, is the Servant of Sin*. Now (says he) to be *the Servant of Sin*, is plainly to *continue and live in Sin*." But had not the Doctor so plainly told us what it is that he was going to prove, I should verily have concluded, from his Way of Reasoning, that it had been the direct contrary. To be *the Servant of Sin*, he tells us (in the Words of St. *Paul*, *Rom. vi.*) "is to *yield Obedience to it in the Lustings of it*, (*Verse 12.*) for " then *Sin reigns in our mortal Bodies*, and we are

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(f) Annot. on 1 *J. hn* iii. 8.

“ Slaves and Subjects to it ; then doth it *κυριδεῖν*  
 “ *Lord it over us*, and we are *δούλοι ἕως ὑπακοῆς* *Ser-*  
 “ *vants to yield Obedience to it* (Verses 14, 16.)  
 “ Tho’ the Conscience may boggle at it, our Rea-  
 “ son may condemn it, our Will be somewhat  
 “ averse to it ; so that in obeying it, we *do the*  
 “ *Evil we would not* : yet, if *ἐμπλάκετες ἠτρώμεθα*,  
 “ *we are so intangled as to be overcome by it*, we  
 “ *are Servants to Corruption* ; for of what a Man  
 “ *is overcome, to that is he brought in Bondage*,  
 “ 2 Pet. ii. 19 20. If the Law of our Members  
 “ *leads us Captive to the Law of Sin* (Rom. vii. 23.)  
 “ *so that we yield our Members Instruments of Un-*  
 “ *righteousness to Sin* ; we so commit Sin, as to be  
 “ *the Servants of Sin.*” In these Words it is di-  
 rectly asserted, That every one is *the Servant of*  
*Sin* (and, consequently, does *ποιεῖν ἀμαρτίαν*, *commit*  
*Sin*) who yields Obedience to it in the Lustings of it ;  
 who is *so intangled as to be overcome by it* ; who  
 yields his Members the Instruments of Unrighteous-  
 ness. And is not this true of every wilful, delibe-  
 rate Sinner ? Certainly it is ! For he who to gra-  
 tify the Lustings of the Flesh, consents to do what  
 he knows he ought not to do, does thereby yield  
 Obedience to the Lustings of the Flesh. He in whom  
 the Motions of Sin do at any Time prevail above  
 the Sense of Duty, is *so intangled*, as to be *overcome*  
 by Sin ; and he who at any time consents to *act*  
*unrighteously*, does hereby yield his Members the In-  
 struments of Unrighteousness. These Characters,  
 indeed, do most eminently belong to *habitual Sin-*  
*ners*, but they belong also to every *wilful* Sinner,  
 tho’ in a lower Degree. And what do we think  
 was the Meaning of the Sacred Writers in those  
 Passages, where we are exhorted, not to *yield Obe-*  
*dience to Sin* ; not to be *overcome by it*, and the  
 like ? Was it *merely* to guard against *evil Habits*,  
 and not also against every *wilful Transgression* ?

Or who would imagine, that even the Doctor himself was here describing the State of *habitual Sinners*, when he speaks of them as those *whose Consciences boggle at Sin*; whose *Reason condemns* them, and who, by obeying Sin, *do the Evil that they would not*? The Doctor, therefore, so far as I can perceive, is arguing all this while against his own Interpretation; which he does (if it be possible) yet more plainly in the following Words. For thus he proceeds; "He that is *born of God*,  
 " CANNOT *thus sin*; because, by that *New*  
 " Birth, he is *made free from* (the Service of) *Sin*,  
 " John viii. 36. and become a *Servant to Righte-*  
 " *ousness*, Rom. vi. 18. He hath that *Seed* with-  
 " in him which *alienates* his Mind and Affections  
 " from Sin, and that Spirit which causes him to  
 " *mortify the Deeds of the Flesh*, Rom. viii. 13. to  
 " *die to Sin*, and to *live unto God*, Rom. vi. 10."

It would have been impossible for the Doctor to have said any thing more full to the Purpose, had he intended to shew, that all *wilful Sin* is inconsistent with a *regenerate State*. For with what Face of Truth can it be said, That he who *wilfully and deliberately* transgresses the Law of God, is *made free from the Service of Sin*, and become a *Servant to Righteousness*; that his *Mind and Affections* are *alienated* from Sin; that he is *dead unto Sin*, and *alive unto God*? He who *obeys Sin* (as every *wilful Transgressor* doth) is *the Servant* of Sin: For (as the Apostle speaks in this very Chapter, ver. 16.) *Know ye not that to whom ye yield yourselves Servants to obey, his Servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of Sin unto Death, or of Obedience unto Righteousness*? Such a one, by *consenting* to sin, shews, that his *Mind and Affections* are not *alienated* from Sin; at least, not *so far* alienated, as that he may be said to be *dead to Sin*, and *alive unto God*. For (to use the Words of the

Apostle once more upon this Occasion) *How shall we, that are dead to Sin, live any longer therein* (Verse 2.)? Or as it is *ver. 1.* *How shall we continue in Sin?* The Meaning of which is not (as the Doctor seems to fancy) that he who is *dead to Sin*, cannot *habitually* sin, but that he must forthwith *cease* to sin, as a Man who is *naturally* dead, ceases from all *natural* Actions. But the Doctor's next Reason is still more extraordinary; For, *Secondly*, he argues "from those Words, *Neither can sin;*" upon which he is pleased to observe, That "this doth not imply that a good (or *regenerate*) Man cannot be *overtaken* with a *Fault*," *i. e.* (for thus he explains himself) so as that "he shall not be obnoxious to some *Infirmities* and *Wandrings* out of the *Way*" (which is nothing to the Purpose;) "But the true Import of that Phrase (says he) is this; That he hath such an inward Frame of Heart, such a Disposition of Spirit, as renders Sin *exceeding odious* and *hateful* to him: So that he cannot entertain the Thoughts of doing it, or a Temptation to commit it, without the *utmost Detestation*, and the *greatest Horror*, and so (pray mind it) can very rarely, and ONLY through Surprise, or WANT of *due DELIBERATION*, or thro' such violent Temptations as PREVENT or HINDER his CONSIDERATION, be obnoxious to Sin." — I will proceed no farther; such broad Contradictions are not every Day to be met with. The Doctor's Business was to prove, that *ποτέν ἀμαρτάν, to commit Sin*, signifies only to *live* or *go on* in a *Way* or *Course* of Sin, in Consequence of his Principle, That a Man may be guilty of a *deliberate* Crime, and yet be *Regenerate*; and he proves it by such a Reason, as shews, even in his own Opinion, that if a *regenerate* Man does sin, it can *only* be FOR WANT of *Deliberation*! If there were any such thing



thing as taking the Doctor at his Word, now is the Time that I would do it; and then we should have no farther Controversy upon this Point: For it would be agreed between us, that a *Regenerate Man*, whilst *such*, cannot be guilty of a *deliberate Crime*. But the next Reason sets us quite asunder again. For, *Thirdly* and *Lastly*, he argues "from the Phrase, *He that committeth Sin* (*ὁ πεισὼν τῷ ἀμαρτίῳ*) *is of the Devil*," Upon which the Doctor observes, with the same Pertinency as before, That "'tis not he who committeth *one or more Sins of Infirmity*," that *is of the Devil*; and adds, "Nor he who committeth *one great*," *i. e.* (for so the Opposition requires that it should be understood) *one deliberate Sin*, through the Power of a strong Temptation, of which he bitterly repents, and from which he returns to his Obedience." But why doth the Doctor confound Things which ought to be distinguished? Would he say, that a *wilful Sinner* is not a *Child of the Devil*, after he has repented and returned to his Obedience? 'Tis granted; for then he ceases to be a *wilful Sinner*. But if he means, that a *wilful Sinner* is not a *Child of the Devil*, even whilst he continues to be such, *i. e.* before he has repented him of his Sin (which he seems to me to mean, and which he must mean if he would speak to the Point) this is what I shall demand of him to prove: And he proves it from hence, that "*David* and *St. Peter* did thus" (*i. e.* committed great Sins through the Power of a strong Temptation) "and yet (saith he) were not then the Children of the Devil." Not then the Children of the Devil! What, not whilst they were in a State of *wilful Disobedience*! What, not before they had repented them of their Sins! Where did the Doctor learn this? Why, no-where that I can see; nor doth he believe one Word of what he says himself: For he tells us in the

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the very same Breath, that *They* are the Children of the Devil, "who comply with the Lusts of Satan, and will do them." Either then it must be shewn, that *wilful Sinners* do not comply with the Lusts of Satan, which is palpably absurd; or else the Doctor here bears Witness against himself, that *David* and *St. Peter*, whom he supposes (whether rightly, or not rightly, it matters not to inquire) to have been both *wilful Sinners*, were, *whilst such*, or *before they repented*, Children of the Devil. For ought I can perceive, therefore, the Doctor, even in Virtue of his own Reasoning, must be obliged to admit *that* as the *true* Sense of this Passage, which he hath rejected as a *false* one, *viz.* That *he that is born of God sinneth not*, quamdiu renatus est, *whilst he is born of God*, because *he ceaseth to be a Child of God when he sins*. The Examples of *David* and *St. Peter*, whose Faith (says he) failed not under that great Miscarriage, will not help him. For he knows very well, that *Faith without Works*, i. e. *Obedience*, is not enough to make a Man a *Child of God*. If therefore a Man fails in his *Obedience*, i. e. *wilfully* transgresses the Law of God; if he *complies* with the Lusts of the Devil, and *will do them*; we have the Doctor's own Word for it, that be he *David*, or be he *Peter*, he is at that Time *not* a *Child of God*, but a *Child of the Devil*. But the Doctor farther endeavours to confute himself by "the Words of the  
 "Apostle, 1 Joh. ii. 1. *Little Children, if we sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous, and he is the Propitiation for our Sins.*" From hence he would infer, that a Man *may sin*, i. e. (for this is the Point, and thus it follows in the very next Words) *be guilty of a great and deliberate Crime*, and yet at the same Time be a *Child of God*. For, saith he, Christ "is only the *Advocate* for the *Sons of God.*" And does

does then the Doctor believe in good earnest, that Jesus Christ is an *Advocate* for wilful and deliberate Sinners, *whilst they are such*? If not, what becomes of his Argument? And if he does, I call Heaven and Earth to record against him; the Word of God, and the Reason of Man; which both of them assure us, that he neither is, nor can be, an *Advocate* for any but the *truly Penitent*, i. e. those who thro' the Assistance of the Divine Grace, have recovered themselves from a *State of Sin*, to a *State of Obedience*. I shall conclude with one Passage more, in which the Doctor hath decided the whole Point against himself, as plainly as one could wish. "That Man (says he) who, after some Contest in his Soul, yields to the Commission of Sin, is more strongly inclined to Sin, than to the avoiding it, and so, IS NOT RENEWED." Here now is a very plain Confession: 1. That no Man is renewed (i. e. regenerate) who is more strongly inclined to sin, than to the avoiding it. 2. That this is the Case of every one who yields to the Commission of Sin after some Contest in his Soul, i. e. after Deliberation; which, if it does not amount to a plain Confession that ALL deliberate Sins are inconsistent with a regenerate State, I must for Ever despair of knowing what does.

§. V. It appears, I suppose, by this Time, that the Doctor hath sufficiently puzzled the Cause which he undertook to clear. Let us now see what Light the Apostle himself affords us towards understanding his own Meaning; and for this, we need go no farther back, than to the Beginning of the Chapter, of which these Words are a part. At the 1st Verse, he puts us in mind of the great Love of God the Father towards us, in the Redemption which he hath wrought for us by his Son Jesus Christ; *Behold what manner of Love the*  
*Father*

*Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God. Beloved, now are we the Sons of God. In the following Words, he shews us, the great Benefit and Advantage of this Sonship, which is the blessed Vision and Enjoyment of God; It doth not appear what we shall be: but we know that when he shall appear, we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is, (verse 2.) After this, the Apostle observes the Effect which this Consideration will have upon the Lives and Conversations of those who are disposed earnestly and seriously to lay it to Heart. And every Man that hath this Hope, who lives under a constant Expectation of this Enjoyment of God, purifieth himself; and that, so far as the Condition and Circumstances of Human Nature will permit, even as he is pure, (verse 3.) Then he shews us wherein this Purity doth consist, viz. in an universal Obedience to the Commandments of God, or in the abstaining from all manner of Sin. For whosoever committeth Sin, transgresseth the Law; for Sin is the Transgression of the Law, (verse 4.) which whosoever is guilty of, he contradicts the End and Design of our Saviour's Coming: For, ye know, that he was manifested, or appeared in the Flesh, to take away our Sins, i. e. (as it is verse 8.) to destroy the Works of the Devil, that in us there might be no Sin, even as in him is no Sin, (verse 5.) Whosoever, therefore, abideth in him, i. e. whosoever is a true Disciple of Jesus Christ, and, as such, maketh his Law the Rule of his Conversation, sinneth not; whosoever sinneth, hath not seen him, neither known him, i. e. not to any Effect or good Purpose, (verse 6.) All which, that it might leave the more strong and lasting Impression upon our Minds, is inculcated with some Earnestness, vers. 7. Little Children, let no Man deceive you: He that doth Righteousness, he, and he only, is righteous.*

It is not *Faith*, or any thing else, that can make us *Righteous* before God, nor justify the Character of our being his *Children*, without *Obedience* to his *Commandments*. For, as it follows, *vers.* 8, 9. *He that committeth Sin, is not born of God, is not a Child of God, but a Child of the Devil.* Thus stands the Context : From the Whole of which, it appears, That the Apostle was all the while exhorting Christians to *abstain* from *Sin*, to the Intent that hereby they might approve themselves the *Children of God*, and intitle themselves to the *Hope of Everlasting Life*. The Point now is, of *what Sin* the Apostle speaks ; whether of *habitual* Wickedness only, or of *actual* and *deliberate* Transgressions also : And this is so easy a Question, that 'tis impossible, one would think, that there should be any Mistakes about it. It is of *Actual Sin* that he speaks, *verse* 4. where he saith, That *Sin is the Transgression of the Law*. It is of *Actual Sin* that he speaks also, *verse* 5. where he saith, That *Christ was manifested to take away our Sins* : For, as *Dr. Hammond* notes, “ He came to take away our *Acts*, as well as our *Habits*, and there was no *Act* as well as no *Habit* of Sin in him.” From whence he very rightly infers, That “ in all that follows, *vers.* 6, 8, 9, &c. one *Act* of Sin is contrary to *abiding in Christ, i. e.* to adhering to him ; to *seeing and knowing him, i. e.* to obeying him. One *Act* is *of* or *from* the *Devil* ; one *Act* is contrary to that *Seed*, that *Purity*, that *Principle of Filiation* that is in him that is *born of God*, and not only an *Habit* of it.” There is not the least Sign that the Apostle any where changes the Sense of his Terms ; and how absurd is it to suppose, that in dissuading Men from every *Actual Sin*, he should have recourse to an Argument which concludes only against *Habitual* ? But, I must farther and particularly observe, that the  
Apostle

Apostle says not only *negatively*, that he that is born of God, doth not commit Sin; but also *positively*, that he doth Righteousness. For thus, *verse 10.* In this the Children of God are manifested, and the Children of the Devil; i. e. This is that by which the Children of God are distinguished from the Children of the Devil; Whosoever doth not Righteousness, is not of God. And on the other Hand (Chap. 2. Verse 29.) Every one that doth Righteousness is born of him. To do Righteousness, therefore, (*ποιεῖν δικαιοσύνην*) in the Apostle's Account, is the essential, specific Character of a regenerate Man. And what is it to do Righteousness? Why those shall answer for me who say that *ποιεῖν ἀμαρτίαν* signifies to sin habitually; that it is to do good, or to keep the Commandments of God habitually. But if none are Regenerate but those who are habitually good, how can it be true that none are Unregenerate but those who are habitually evil? Is there no Medium between these two Extremes? Or, is a Man as soon as he removes from a Habit of Vice, immediately settled in a Habit of Vertue? The Mind of the Apostle is certainly clear to those who are willing to understand him. According to him, none are Regenerate, but those who are under such a constant Sense of their Duty, such lively and vigorous Inclinations to Holiness, as that they cannot at any Time knowingly and wittingly offend. These only are those who can be said to do Righteousness, even those who have gained an intire Victory over the World and all its Temptations: For this is another Character which the Apostle hath given us of the Regenerate Man, Chap. v. 4. *Whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the World.* What does he mean by this? Is it no more than that the Regenerate Man is got above the Predominancy of evil Habits? Surely, not! For these Words are given as a Reason for what

what went before, *viz.* That *the Commandments of God are not grievous.* This, says he, *is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandments, and his Commandments are not grievous.* For *whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the World*: As if he had said, “It is no hard or difficult Thing for those who are born of God, to keep his Commandments, because such have overcome the World.” Now, by *keeping God’s Commandments*, the Apostle undoubtedly meant, the abstaining from all *actual and wilful Violations* of God’s Commandments; and what Propriety is there, in order to shew, that it is no hard Matter for a Man to do this, to alledge *only*, that he is under such a *Temper or Disposition* of Mind, as will not permit him to break God’s Laws *habitually*? He that ventures upon any one Act of *wilful Sin*, does thereby shew, that the *Commandments of God are grievous*; so that if, nevertheless, he may be said to have *overcome the World*, it must be said likewise, That altho’ a Man has *overcome the World*, yet *the keeping of God’s Commandments* may be grievous, which is contrary to the Apostle’s Supposition, and takes away the Force of the whole Argument. The Inference, therefore, to make it just, must be thus; That it is no hard Matter for one that is *born of God* to keep God’s *Commandments*, because such a one hath got the *Mastery* over *that which alone* can at any Time *prevail* upon a Man to do a wicked Thing. He hath such a sincere *Love and Affection* towards God; such *Hopes* of his *Mercy*; such *Fears* of his *Vengeance*; and, in Consequence hereof, such an *inward Conformity* to the *Divine Will*; as will incite him *more strongly* to *Obedience*, than either the *Pleasures* or the *Troubles* of this World can to the contrary. To such a one as this, the *Commandments of God* will not indeed be *grievous*; *i. e.* comparatively, and with respect to *Sin*, which

under any Circumstances, will to *him* be much more grievous. Of such a one it may truly be said, That *he cannot Sin*; *i. e.* He cannot with Knowledge and Deliberation consent to any *one Act* of Sin; for he who doth thus, doth thereby shew, that his *inward Disposition to Obedience*, is *less powerful*, than the *Temptations* of this World, *i. e.* That he hath *not* overcome the World, but is overcome by it.

§. VI. I will now leave it to any Reasonable Man to determine, whether that Doctrine which supposeth *wilful Sin* to be consistent with a *Regenerate State*, doth not contradict the Account which St. *John* has given us of the *New Birth*; and will add, *Secondly*, That it also contradicts all those Places of Scripture, which speak of *Regeneration* as that which *qualifies* us for the *Kingdom of Heaven*. Our Saviour tells us, that *except a Man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God*; which implies, That to be *born again*, is not only *necessary*, but *sufficient* also, to qualify us for the Kingdom of God. St. *Paul* tells us, That we are *saved by the washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost*; *i. e.* (as has been already shewn) by *Baptism*, and that *inward Change* from *Evil to Good*, which is wrought in us by the *Operations* of the *Holy Ghost*; and St. *John* speaks of the *being Born of God*, or the *Children of God*, as the *Foundation* of the *Hope* that we shall hereafter be admitted to the *Vision of God*. How then can *Regeneration* be consistent with *wilful, deliberate Sin*, which so long as it remains unrepented of, every one knows, *unqualifies* us for the *Kingdom of Heaven*? Or how do they not contradict the Scriptures, who tell us, That a Man may be *unfit* for the *Kingdom of Heaven*, and yet be *Regenerate*? Now this is what these Divines do expressly teach. For, they tell us, That when the *Regene-*  
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*rate* fall into *heinous* or *deliberate* Sins, they do (g) *presentem ad Regnum Cælorum ingrediendum apititudinem amittere*; i. e. That for the present, or until they have done away these Sins by Repentance, they are *unfit to be admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven*; that they do *mereri exclusionem*, deserve to be excluded, or shut out from it; that they stand *suo merito damnandi*, which, in plain English, is, That they are in a *damnable State*. But, what! Could our Saviour undertake to shew us the *Way to Heaven*, and yet prescribe such a *Method*, as might leave those who should pursue it, in a *damnable State*? Does a Man *deserve to be excluded* from the Kingdom of Heaven who has *that* by which, as St. Paul says, he is saved? Or, can he be *unfit* for the Kingdom of Heaven, who, as the Words of St. *John* do manifestly imply, hath a just Foundation whereupon to build the *Hope of Eternal Life*? I know they tell us, That notwithstanding the *Regenerate*, on the Account of those heinous Sins which they are supposed to be under, are unfit for the Kingdom of Heaven, and in a *damnable State*, yet they have, all this while, a *Right* to the Kingdom of Heaven. But that a Man's having a *Right* to the Kingdom of Heaven, should be consistent with his being in a *damnable State*, is to me absolutely unintelligible. To say, that a Man is in a *damnable State*, is to say, that in *Justice*, or according to *Right*, he may and ought to be condemned; and to say, that a Man has a *Right* to the Kingdom of Heaven, is to say, that in *Justice*, or according to *Right*, he ought to be admitted into the Kingdom of Heaven; which Propositions being directly contradictory, cannot therefore be truly affirmed of the same Person, at the same Time. To have a *Right* to the Kingdom

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(g) See the Citation above [u]

of Heaven, and to be *fit* for the Kingdom of Heaven, are equivalent Expressions: For, we have a *Right* to the Kingdom of Heaven no otherwise than in Virtue of the *Promise* of God in *Jesus Christ*: This *Right*, therefore; must necessarily suppose a *Performance* of the *Conditions* upon which the *Promise* is made. Now, the *Performance* of these *Conditions*, is that which *qualifies* or *fits* us for the Kingdom of Heaven; and, consequently, he who is not *qualified* for the Kingdom of Heaven, has no *Right* to the Kingdom of Heaven. This (if they would attend to it) they would find to be true, even upon their own Principles. For tho' they tell us, that a *Right* to the Kingdom of Heaven is not founded upon the (b) *Actions*, i. e. the *Qualifications* of Men, but upon God's *free Adoption*, i. e. upon his *Absolute Decree*; yet, they do not suppose this *Absolute Decree* to be of such a Sort, as that God hath *determined* thereby to save *this* or *that* particular Person, whether *penitent* or *impenitent* (upon which Principle, 'tis plain, that as the *Regenerate*, whom they suppose universally to be God's *adopted Children*, would not lose their *Right to the Kingdom of Heaven* by *wilful Transgression*; so neither would they be in a *damnable State*). But their Notion is this, That God, who hath *decreed* them *absolutely* to *Salvation*, hath also *absolutely* decreed them to that (i) *Obedience*, without which he hath determined not to *bestow*

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(b) Jus nostrum ad regnum Cœleste non in *actionibus* nostris, sed in *gratuita Adoptione* — Situm est. *Act. Syn. Dord. Par. 2. p. 273.*

(i) Dei immota ordinatio postulat ut fidelis exorbitans. Per renovatum fidei ac pœnitentiæ actum prius redeat in viam quam ad regnum cœleste perducî possit — Impossibile est ut *David* electus pereat; Impossibile est ut simul *David* adulter & homicida, si mors illum oppresserit impœnitentem, non pereat. Sed hunc

*bestow* Salvation. Supposing then, I say, that our *Right* to the Kingdom of Heaven was founded upon such a *Decree* as this, yet since, according to this *Decree*, Salvation is not to be had without *Obedience*, 'tis evident, that so long as a Man remains in a State of *Disobedience*, he can have no *Right* to Salvation *in Virtue* of this *Decree*. It may be said, indeed, that God has determined, that he *shall have a Right*? but it cannot truly be said, that he actually has it, unless you will say, that a Man may have a *Right* to a Thing which he cannot *claim* according to the *Nature* and *Constitution* of the *Decree*, upon which this *Right* is supposed to be founded: If those Divines, therefore, would be consistent with themselves, they should say plainly, That a *Man* may be *Regenerate* or born of God, and yet have *no Right* to the Kingdom of Heaven: But this is too shocking a Proposition, and therefore, this Method has been thought of to soften it. But to little Purpose, as, I hope, I have now shewn you: And give me leave to add, That if there were any Ground for this subtile Distinction, it would not, in the least, help them. For the Scriptures either say nothing, or they speak of *Regeneration* as that which fits or qualifies us for Eternal Life. Suppose our Saviour had said in the Affirmative, *If a Man be born again, he shall enter into the Kingdom of God*; would not any Mortal have understood him as setting down those *Qualifications* which God requires on *our Parts*, in order to our Admittance into the *Kingdom of Heaven*? And does not his *Negative* way of speaking, in common Construction, amount to the

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hunc nodum Divina Providentia & Misericordia facile solvit curando, ut nemo electorum ex eo statu moriatur, in quo á vita æterna juxta aliquam Divinæ Voluntatis ordinationem excluderetur, *Ibid.* p. 252.

same thing? What think you of St. Paul, when he says, that according to his Mercy, he saved us by the washing of Regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost? Doth he not here very plainly set forth the Mercy of God as the Ground of our Salvation; and Regeneration, both External and Internal, as Qualifications by which we become fit and proper Objects of that Mercy? — But, why do I urge? The Thing is plain enough of itself; and if Men be not over-run with Prejudices, they will need only common Sense to enable them to see it.

§. VII. By this Time, I think, it pretty plainly appears, that the Notion which these Divines have framed to themselves concerning *Regeneration*, is widely distant from that which the Scripture teaches. For, whereas they tell us, That a Man may be guilty of the most heinous and deliberate Sins, and yet, at the same Time, be *Regenerate*; the Scripture describes the *Regenerate Man*, as one who cannot sin, *i. e.* who cannot, with Knowledge and Deliberation, consent to do a wicked Thing, having overcome the World; *i. e.* all those Temptations by which Men are led to commit Sin. And this Point must be carried so far as to say, That unless a Man has gained such an Ascendant over his Passions, as to be willing, when God calls him to it, to part with every thing for the sake of Christ and his Gospel, he is yet *unregenerate*. For says our Lord, *If any Man come unto me, and hate not his Father and Mother, and Wife and Children, and Brethren and Sisters, yea, and his own Life also, he cannot be my Disciple; i. e.* Unless he be ready to forego every Blessing or Advantage of this World, when the Use or Enjoyment of it comes to stand in Competition with Obedience to my Word, he cannot, &c. For he that loveth Father or Mother more than me,

*is not worthy of me. And he that loveth Son or Daughter more than me, is not worthy of me. And he that taketh not his Cross, and followeth me, cannot be my Disciple; i. e.* He cannot be my true Disciple: He cannot be one whom I shall approve and reward, *Luke. xiv. 26, 27. Mat. x. 37, 38.* Such Perfection doth the State of *Regeneration* imply! And so far is it from being true to say, that to *do wickedly*, and to be *Regenerate*, are consistent Things! Let it only be observed, (and it deserves well to be taken notice of) That as this *Denial* of Ourselves, this *Resignation* of *Life*, and the most valuable *Treasures* of it, is not a *Duty ordinarily* incumbent upon Christians, but (as has been said) upon those only whom God shall call to it; so to be *absolutely*, and in every respect, *qualified* for it, is not *ordinarily* necessary to a *Regenerate State*. A Man ought, indeed, to be always in as good a Preparation as he can, because he knows not how soon he may be called to Sufferings; and by how much the nearer he is come to such a compleat Victory over the World, by so much the more *perfect*, without doubt, the *Regenerate State* must be. But we must not make it *essential* to a *Regenerate State*, to be at all Times *absolutely prepared* against the *greatest Sufferings*; for, besides that upon this Foot it would be a very difficult Thing to assure ourselves that we are in a *Regenerate State*, it being so hard to know how such Sufferings will affect us before we feel them; besides this, I say 'tis evident, that the Gospel requires no such Qualification. The Promise of *Eternal Life* is made to those who *love God*, and *keep his Commandments*, which must certainly be extended to all who serve him *faithfully* in the *Station* they are in: For, to suppose that God hath made our Salvation to depend not upon what Men *actually*

do under those Circumstances in which he had placed them, but upon something which they *might* or *would* do under those Circumstances in which he hath not placed them, is to make him a much more hard and severe Master than any of Ourselves. If a Man behaves himself as a good *Civil Subject*, and it were *known* that he might be tempted to transgress by the Offer of a Sum of Money; tho' we should upon this Account value him so much the less, yet, I conceive, we should not think it right, so long as he doth his Duty, that he should be *hanged*, or even debarred from the common *Privileges* of *Civil Society*. And thus much we may say of God, with much greater Reason, as he is infinitely more just and righteous in his Dealings, than Man, that he will, indeed, look upon us so much the *less perfect*, and *reward* us the *less*, by how much the less able we are to indure Afflictions for his sake; but he will exclude none from Heaven, much less consign them to Punishment, merely because they are not qualified to indure those Afflictions which he doth not think fit to lay upon them. This will be farther evident, if it be considered, that our *Ability* to *resist* Temptations, is not *merely* from *Ourselves*, but from the *Grace* of God assisting and supporting us under them; and that God doth not give to *all* the *same* Abilities, nor yet to the *same* Man at *different* Times; but proportions those *Temptations*, which, in the Course of his Providence, he suffers Men to fall under, to their *different* Abilities. This seems to be hinted at in those Words of the Apostle, 1 Cor. x. 13. *God is faithful, and will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, &c.* But it is incontestably clear from that Method which our Saviour made use of in training up his Disciples, which was always to *accommodate* himself to their *Weaknesses*; and lest by being over-

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burdened, they should fall away, to take great Care not to lay any more upon them, than that *Degree* or *Measure* of *Proficiency* which they had made under him, inabled them to *bear*; as you may observe from *Mark* iv. 33. *John* xvi. 12. *Matt.* ix. 17. Now, if we are therefore *unqualified* to *resist* Temptations, because we want *that Strength* which God alone is able to give, and which he doth not think fit to give, we cannot so long be *obliged* to be qualified; but we must be *acceptable* to God (tho' not *equally*) under every *Degree* of *Perfection*, *i. e.* when we make a due *Use* of that *Measure* of *Grace* which he affords us, by doing that which is *proper* to the *Station* we are in. I will beg leave to say farther, That we shall entertain no unworthy Apprehensions of God, nor indeed any but what the Scriptures themselves do seem to warrant, if we suppose, that when Men are *eminently good* and *vertuous*, but labour under some notable *natural Infirmary*, it pleases him, out of his mere *Mercy* and *Goodness*, to secure them from the *Assaults* of those *Temptations*, under which (tho' it may not be impossible for them to resist them, yet) he foresees they will be very apt *finally* to miscarry; and, I think, verily, that a Christian would not pray amiss, nor, perhaps, contrary to the Intention of our Saviour, who should offer up that Petition in the Lord's Prayer, *Lead us not into Temptation, &c.* in this Sense, that God would both enable him by his Grace to resist those Temptations, which it shall please him to lay upon him, and also *prevent* him, by his good Providence, from *falling under* those by which, thro' the Prevalency of some peculiar Infirmary in himself, he might be disposed to make an ill Use of his Grace, *i. e.* to be *intangled* and *overcome*. Farther, what better Sense can you put upon these Words of our  
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Lord to St. Peter, Simon, Simon, *behold Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as Wheat ; but I have prayed for thee, &c.* than by supposing them to imply, that Christ by his Prayers had obtained, that the Devil might not have Liberty to try his *full Strength* upon that *truly good*, but, as yet, *weak and unstable* Man, lest hereby, his *Faith* might have failed, as his *Courage* and *Constancy* did very quickly after? Now, if God doth thus provide against the *Infirmities* of his Servants, it must be supposed, that those on the Behalf of whom he thus provides, notwithstanding they are not in a Condition to indure the *greatest* Sufferings, are, so long as they do their Duties in the Station they are in, in a State of Acceptance. For, to say, that they are not, is to destroy the very Notion of that *Mercy* and *Goodness* which the Case supposes, and to make God to act a very unaccountable Part, in *protecting* those by his good Providence here, for a Reason, upon which he will *reject* them hereafter. To conclude, we are strictly charged and commanded in the Gospel, not to lay *Stumbling-blocks*, *i. e.* the *Occasions* of, or the *Temptations* to, *Sin* in one another's *Way*; and that *for the Sake* of those *weak* Men, who by such *Occasions*, may be led aside from their Duty, and fall into *Condemnation*. A very plain Argument, that a Man may be in a State of *Acceptance*, although he be so disposed, as that under *certain Circumstances*, he would certainly *transgress*. For surely, there can be little Reason why I should be commanded not to be unto my *weak Brother*, an *Occasion of falling*, if his very *Weakness* were his *Crime*, *i. e.* if he were under God's *Displeasure*, even *before* an *Occasion of Falling* be ministred unto him. Here then I rest the whole Matter: Let every Man consider how he behaves himself in that Station of Life which God has assigned him.

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If he finds himself unable to bear up against those Temptations which such a Station does *naturally* and *ordinarily* expose him to, the Case is but too plain, that he is yet *Unregenerate*. But if, on the other hand, the Sense of his Duty to God, and the Motives of a Life to come, do operate so strongly upon his Mind, that he is become *superior* to every sinful Lust and Affection; if he is assured of this by repeated Tryals; and, more especially, if he observes that he now proceeds *easily* and *cheerfully* in his Duty, amidst all those Assaults by which he was formerly wont to be overcome, let him give God the Praise, and not doubt but that the Spirit hath wrought that good Work in him, which both for the present renders him acceptable to his Heavenly Father, and which, if he perseveres in unto the End, shall finally be rewarded. I say, if he *perseveres*: For this is the only Point now to be taken care of, even that he *loseth not the Things whereunto he hath attained*; a Thing which is, alas! more than possible. For that which has already been said, only shews, that *so long* as a Man is in a *Regenerate* State, *i. e.* so long as he is *so disposed* as to love God, and Truth, and Heaven, above all Things, he cannot *wilfully sin*; it has not the least Tendency to shew, that he who is *once* Regenerate, must *always* be Regenerate. This is the Doctrine of those whose Principles I am now considering; but which utterly contradicts both Reason and Revelation. If, indeed, *Regeneration* were what they would have it to be, it might, for ought I can tell, be an *indelible* Quality, because I know not what Quality that is which they call *Regeneration*. But if it be such a *vertuous Disposition* of Mind as I have been describing, Reason tells us plainly enough, that for lack of *Care* and *Watchfulness* over a Man's self, it is capable of being *lost*; and I will add (by  
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the Grace of God) capable also of being *regained*. As for what is offered upon this Head from Holy Scripture, I need not now consider it, having so largely pursued this Point upon another Occasion (k).

§. VIII. Wherefore, to proceed. The Difference between the Scripture Notion of *Regeneration*, and that which is taught by these Divines, will still be more visible, if it be considered, That as on the one Hand they tell us that a Man may be in a State of *wilful, deliberate Sin*, and yet be *regenerate*: so, on the other Hand, they suppose, that he may live *conformably to all the Laws of the Gospel*, and yet be *unregenerate*. The Words of Dr. Owen are very full to this Purpose; and, therefore, I shall here set them down. (l) REGENERATION, says he, *doth not consist in a Moral Reformation of Life and Conversation: For, let us suppose such a Reformation to be extended to ALL known Instances. Suppose a Man to be changed from Sensuality unto Temperance; from Rapine to Righteousness; from Pride, and the Dominion of irregular Passions, unto Humility and Moderation, with ALL Instances of the like Nature which we can imagine, or are prescribed in the Rules of the strictest Moralists: Suppose this Change to be laboured, exact, and accurate, and so of great Use in the World. Suppose also, that a Man hath been persuaded and brought to it thro' the preaching of the Gospel; so escaping the Pollutions of the World thro' Lust, even by the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, or the Directions*

(k) Operations of the Spirit, Chap. 15.

(l) See Dr. Clager, Part I. Page 127, 128.

*of his Doctrine delivered in the Gospel; yet, I say, ALL THIS added unto Baptism, accompanied with a Profession of Faith and Repentance, IS NOT REGENERATION, nor do they comprife it in them.* These are strange Words! And I cite them not because they are Dr. Owen's (to whom I determined, when I first undertook this Subject, not to pay any particular Regard) but because, so far as I can perceive, they express the Sense of the whole Party. Those of our *English* Divines, who sat at the *Synod of Dort*, seem plainly to have been of the (m) same Opinion; for *they* say likewise of the *Unregenerate*, That they may *escape the Pollution that is in the World, by the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour*; that they may demean themselves *so*, as that *in Charity they ought to be looked upon as justified and sanctified*. Farther, that this *Change of Manners* may be *heartly and sincere*; insomuch, that the true Reason why they are not *finally justified*, is not because they *pretend* to those *good Qualities* which they have *not*, but because they do not *persevere* in those that they *have*. What better Description than this can you have of a truly *honest and vertuous Christian*? Or what greater Opposition can you conceive, than that which this Account of the *Unregenerate* bears to those Words of the Apostle before-mentioned, *Whosoever doth Righteousness, is born of God?* He who keeps *all the Commandments of God*, *i. e.* he who in *every Instance* conforms himself to the *Gospel Rule*, not upon a Principle of *Policy and Worldly Interest*, but from a Sense of his *Duty*, and upon the *Motives* of a *Life to come*, to the *Belief and Expectancy*. whereof he is won over by the *Power of God's Word*; such a One, I

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(m) *Vide Act. Synod. Dord. Part II. p. 246, to 250.*

say, may, undoubtedly, in the Apostle's Sense, be said to *do Righteousness*. Now all this, it seems, an *unregenerate* Man may do, and, by Consequence, the *Contradictory* of the aforefaid Proposition, must necessarily be true; *Whosoever doeth Righteousness, is NOT Regenerate or Born of God*. Nor is this Account less contradictory to the Words of our Saviour, than to those of the Apostle. For, let us suppose a Man to be in such a State as is now described, and then I demand *What lacketh he yet to qualify him for the Kingdom of Heaven?* Without tarrying for an Answer, I shall venture to maintain, that he lacketh *nothing*; and they themselves confess as much: For they say, that he lacketh nothing but *Perseverance*. But he who lacketh nothing but *Perseverance*, doth indeed lack *nothing*: For *Perseverance*, in the very Notion of it, implies not an *Addition* of any *new* Vertues to the *old*, but only the *Preservation* of, or *Continuance* in, those to which a Man has already attained; and he that is in such a State as that, if he shall *persevere* therein, he will obtain Salvation, is undoubtedly at present, and so long as he remains in that State, *qualified* for Salvation. To say, therefore, of such a Man, that he is *unregenerate*, is to say, in Effect, that a Man may be *qualified* for the Kingdom of Heaven, and yet be *unregenerate*; which directly contradicts our Saviour's Assertion, *Except a Man be born again, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*. So wide of the Truth is this Notion of Regeneration, in what View soever you consider it! After all, I must not dissemble, that this Account which they give us of the *Unregenerate*, is, at other Times, very frequently contradicted by themselves. And no marvel; For what but *Contradiction* can be the *Effect* of *Contradiction*? Or how is it possible, that those should talk *consistently*, who take upon

upon themselves to defend Doctrines which are *inconsistent*. The Case, in short, is this: Their Notion is, that the *Elect* (who, in their Account, are *alone* the *Regenerate* or *Children of God*) cannot *finally* fail, or die in *Impenitency*. Yet, they do not deny, but that it is possible, that those, who *know the Way of Righteousness*, and do *from the Heart obey the Form of sound Doctrine*, may, thro' the Subtlety of the Devil, and the Want of Care and Watchfulness over themselves, afterwards *depart from the Holy Commandment delivered unto them*. This, I say, they do not deny; because, if they should deny it, they would have Reason, Scripture, and the sad Experience of the World against them. What then shall we say of such? Are they, even whilst they are in the *Way of Righteousness*, in a *regenerate* State also? No, by no Means; for then it would be plain, that a *regenerate* Man may possibly fail or die in *Impenitency*. But how can those *not* be in a *Regenerate* State, who sincerely and heartily *keep God's Commandments*, and whom the Scripture every where speaks of as the *Children of God*, and *Heirs of Everlasting Happiness*? Why, here lies the Difficulty, which is indeed insuperable; and, therefore, when they come to speak home to the Matter, and to shew how the *falling away* of such is consistent with their Doctrine of the Saints *Indefeasibility*, then these *unregenerate* Men (as they call them) are set forth in another Light; then they are represented as (*n*) mere *Hypocrites*, as those

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(*n*) Certum quidem est etiam non Regenitos quædam honesta & laude digna in rebus civilibus præstare — quæ tamen ex Fide & bona Conscientia non procedunt, *Ibeol. Palasin.* in Act. Syn. Dor. Par. II. p. 177. See also Mr. Turretin, Loc. 10. *Quest.* 5. §. 2. Loc. 15. *Quest.* 15. §. 9. Loc. 10. *Quest.* 4. §. 28.

whose (o) *Affections* are *enslaved* to this *World*; as hardened, impenitent, and the like. In a Word, they speak as if it were impossible that there should ever have been any such thing as *real Vertue* or *Holiness*, unless it be in those whose Holiness is made *complete* and *perfect*, by a *final Perseverance*. Thus they go to Work; affirming and denying the same thing, as it were, in the same Breath; which is a plain Argument to me, that they themselves do feel the Weight of their own Burden: And how hard a thing it is to stand it out against the Evidence of Scripture, that he, who by the *Power of God's Word*, and the *Assistance* of his *Grace*, is led to pay a *Religious* Observance to *all* his *Commandments*, may yet be *Unregenerate*; which, in Effect, is to say, That tho' a Man has *all* those *good Dispositions* which the Gospel requires. Yet, he may all the while be never the *nearer* to the *Kingdom of Heaven*.

§. IX. I have now shewn you the Falshood of this Notion concerning *Regeneration*, with respect to the *Nature* of the *Thing defined*, or with respect to those *Habits* wherein *Regeneration* is supposed to consist. I come now to consider, what the same Divines do teach concerning the *Way* or *Manner* by which these *Habits* are conveyed into the Soul, or by which a Man *becomes* Regenerate. Now, as to this, they say, 1. That *Regeneration* is an *infused Habit*, i. e. it is put into the Soul *all at once*. And, 2. That this is done by the *immediate* Operation of the *Holy Ghost*, without any *Concurrence* or *Co-operation* on the Part of Man. 'Tis true, they tell us, That there are several

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(o) *Theol. Britan. Act. Syn. Decr. Par. II. p. 249.*

Things (p) necessary to be done on our Part, in order to our being *Regenerate*; and that God does not (ordinarily, at least) effect the *New Birth* in us all at once, by *violent Snatches* and *Enthusiastic Motions*, but *gradually*, and in a manner agreeable to our *Natures*. But if the Reader supposes them hereby to mean, that *Regeneration it self* is a *gradual Work*, or that *Man* is in any Degree or Measure the *efficient Cause* of his own *Regeneration*, he will find himself mistaken. For that which they ascribe to *Man*, as the *efficient Cause*, and that which they suppose, that God, by way of *Co-operation*, effects in *Man*, not *all at once*, but by *Degrees*, is only something by which the *Soul* may be *disposed* or *fitted* for the Reception of *Supernatural Habits*; i. e. it is not the *New Birth it self*, but something which is necessary by way of *Preparation* for it. That a *Man* may be *Regenerated*, say they, it is necessary that he attends

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(p) Non quæritur an ullæ *necessariæ* sint *dispositiones* in homine quibus ad conversionem *preparatur*. Fratremur enim in *Spirituâli* generatione non minus ac in *naturali* per multas *precedentes operationes* ad *Spirituâlem* *nativitatem* perveniri; & Deum (qui opus istud non per raptos violentos vel motus *enthusiasticos* vult peragere, sed modo nostræ naturæ convenienti, & qui non *uno momento*, sed *successive* & *gradatim* illud promovet) uti variis *dispositionibus* quibus homo paulatim *preparatur* ad gratiam salutarem recipiendam; saltem in vocatione ordinaria. Ita ut varii sunt actus antecedanei & quasi gradus *ad rem* antequam ad statum *Regenerationis* perducatur, vel *externi* qui ab homine fieri possunt, quales sunt *templum adire*, *verbum audire*, & similia; vel *interni* qui a gratia etiam in cordibus nondum conversorum excitantur, quales sunt *verbi propositi receptio*, *notitia voluntatis Divinæ*, *sensus aliqualis peccati*, *timor pænæ*, & *desiderium aliquale liberationis*. Sed quæritur an in ipso conversionis *momento*, & quoad gradus *rei* homo habeat aliquid ex se quo cooperetur gratiæ effici. — Nos legamus cum *Orthodoxis*, qui nullam causam *efficientem* propriè sic dictam agnoscunt quam *Deum ipsum* regenerantem. *Turrein. Loc. 15. Quæst. 5.*

upon the *Public Worship* of God ; that he *bears his Word*, and the like. It is necessary likewise, that he *receives* the Word of God, *knows* his Will, has some *Sense* of his own *sinful Estate*, some *Fear of Punishment*, and some *Desire of Deliverance* ; which Dispositions they ascribe to the *Operations* of the *Holy Ghost*. But all this is not *Regeneration* ; no, nor any *Part* of it : For, according to them, when all this is done, a Man is every whit as much *unregenerated* as he was before. The Matter is plainly this : Those Dispositions which they call *Preparatory*, are not supposed to be the *Beginning* ; and the subsequent ones, the *Growth* and *Perfection* of a *Regenerate State* ; for this were to make *Regeneration* a *progressive Work*, carried on by *various Acts*, both on the Part of *Man*, and on the Part of *God*. Whereas, according to them, *Regeneration* is *one simple undivided Act* of *God alone* ; an *Act*, which being *once supposed*, the *Man*, who was wholly *unregenerate* before, (q) *may immediately and presently be affirmed to be born of God*. So that the *New Birth*, in this Account, differs as much from those *Preparatory Dispositions*, as the *Form of an Image* differs from those *Accidents* or *Qualities* in *Wax* or *Clay*, by *Virtue* whereof those *Bodies* become susceptible of such a *Modification* ; and a *Man* contributes to his own *Regeneration*, just about as much as he who *cuts* and *prepares Wood* for the making of a *Vessel*, does to the *filling* it with *Water* afterwards. But these *Mistakes* will easily be set right by the help of

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(q) Per *Regenerationem* intelligimus non *quemvis* actum *Spiritus Sancti*, ad *Regenerationem* prævium vel tendentem ; sed *illum actum* quo posito statim rectè affirmetur, *Hic homo jam natus est ex Deo*. *Theol. Britan. Act. Syn. Dor. Par. II. P. 159.*



what has been already said. For if a *Regenerate* State consists in the being endued with all Christian Graces, and implies an *universal* and *sincere* Obedience to all the Commandments of Christ, as has been proved, it will then be plain, “ That  
 “ † *Regeneration* doth, *in part*, consist of those † *Claz.*  
 “ *Graces* which are *preparatory* thereunto;” be *Fact II.*  
 cause these *Graces* are a *Part* of that *universal* *P. 90.*  
*Obedience*. By being *Regenerate*, a Man acquires many good Dispositions, which he had not whilst he was in a State of *Preparation* only; but he loseth none of those which he had: The *Regenerate* State implies both the *old* and the *new*; and, consequently, differs “ from mere *Preparedness*,  
 “ no otherwise than as the *Whole* differs from a  
 “ *Part*; and the *prepared* Mind becomes *Regene-*  
 “ *rate*, not by a *total Change* of its present State,  
 “ but by an *Addition* of something that was  
 “ wanting before. Farther, since *Grace* and *Ver-*  
 “ *tue* increase by Exercise; and since the several  
 “ *Vertues* of a Christian do mutually assist each  
 “ other; it may be said, That those good Quali-  
 “ *fications* which the *Regenerate* Man was endued  
 “ with in his *prepared* State, are now *improved* to  
 “ greater *Perfection*; *Meekness* and *Humility*, v. g.  
 “ are more deeply rooted in his Temper, and  
 “ more conspicuous in his Behaviour: In his Con-  
 “ cern for *Heaven*, he is more *zealous*; as having  
 “ had some Experience of the Heavenly Life, and  
 “ being more sensible of the Vanity of Worldly  
 “ *Things*. In his *Prayers*, he is more *devout* and  
 “ *frequent*; in good *Meditations*, more *attentive*  
 “ and *permanent*; in holy *Resolutions*, more *jatis-*  
 “ *fied* and *inflexible*; and in his whole Conversa-  
 “ *tion*, more *vigilant* and *circumspect*.” There  
 are, indeed, some good Properties belonging to  
 a State of *Preparation*, which, instead of rising  
 higher, do fall lower, when Men come to be  
 F 2 thoroughly

thoroughly Regenerate. For Instance; "Sorrow  
 " for *Sin*, although it be necessary to a good  
 " Beginning, and, in some Degree, inseparable  
 " from the best State of a good Christian in this  
 " Life; yet, it cannot be increased, but will af-  
 " furedly be abated by a thorough Conversion  
 " from *Sin* unto *God*. In Like manner, that *Fear*  
 " of *Hell*, as it is distinguished from the *Hope* of  
 " *Heaven*, must, in Reason, be less troublesome  
 " to a true Convert, than it was at first: For, as  
 " his Hopes grow bigger, his Fears must of Ne-  
 " cessity be less." \* But the Reason of this, is,  
 because the *Goodness* of these *Affections* or *Proper-*  
*ties*, does gradually lessen, as Men come nearer  
 and nearer to *Perfection* in the *Regenerate* State.  
 To be sorry for *Sin*, and afraid of *Hell*, whilst we  
 are yet under the Guilt of *Sin*, and, consequently,  
 in the State of those to whom *Vengeance* belongeth,  
 are, doubtless, good Properties, as they are very  
 prevailing Motives to such a *Change* of *Life* and  
*Manners*, as may intitle us to *Mercy* and *Forgive-*  
*ness*. But when that *Change* is once wrought; tho'  
 even then we have reason to be angry with Our-  
 selves, that we have ever offended *God*; yet, the  
 Sense of it cannot lie so heavy upon us, or be  
 so afflicting to us, because we have not the same  
 Reasons to be afflicted. Our Consciences may,  
 and certainly will, whenever we reflect upon our  
 past Sins, reproach us as *ungrateful*; but our  
*Fears* cannot, or at least, ought not, to terrify us  
 as *lost* and *miserable*. We ought, indeed, to be  
 always under such an *Awe* of the *Divine Vengeance*,  
 as will make us careful not to offend. But, to be  
 afraid of *Hell* in any other Sense, whilst we are in  
 a *reconciled* State, i. e. in that State which *God*  
 hath promised *Forgiveness*, betrays either great  
 Ignorance of our own Condition, or a Diffidence  
 and Distrust of that *Justice* and *Goodness*, by  
 which

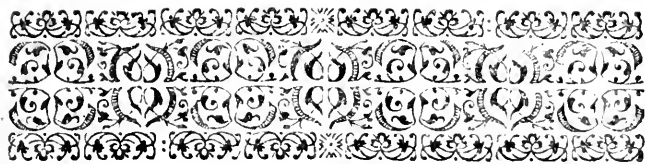
which we have been led to Repentance †. The Case, in a few Words, then, is this; That such preparatory Graces as are good *in themselves*, and equally useful in *all* Conditions, will be improved in those who are truly Regenerate; whereas those which are good *accidentally* only, or with respect to the *different Circumstances* of our State, must either *rise* or *fall*, grow *higher* or *lower*, as our Condition towards God is *worse* or *better*, more *dangerous* or more *safe*. “But, admitting this Exception, we may, by what has been said, discern what is the Difference between the Prepared and the Regenerate, *viz.* That the latter is endued with *all* those Christian Graces which the other *wants*, which is the *principal* Difference; and he is also arrived to greater *Perfection* in those which are *common* to both.” \* So that now, I think, we may safely conclude against these Divines, That Regeneration is neither an *instantaneous* Work; nor is it effected by the Spirit, as the *sole* efficient Cause. For that those Graces or *Dispositions* which they call *Preparatory*, are *gradually* wrought, is certain, and they allow. They grant also, what is no less certain, that in Order to the Attainment of these *Dispositions*, MAN must *concur* by the Use of *external Means*, *i. e.* by the Use of *his own* Endeavours. *Min*, therefore, is plainly, *in part*, the *efficient* Cause of these *Preparatory Graces*. Now, if these *Preparatory Graces* do differ from *Regeneration* no otherwise, than as a *Part* differs from the *Whole*, he must, of Consequence, be, *in part*, the *efficient* Cause of *Regeneration*; and *Regeneration* will be a *progressive* Work, carried on by various *Acts* and *Operations* both of *Min*, and of the *Spirit* which dwelleth in him. The very first *Dawnings* of Grace in our Hearts; the most early and languid *Motions* towards *Godliness*, must be considered as

the *Beginnings* of this *New Birth*; as the *Embryo* of the *Spiritual Man*, who will receive Growth and Increase by every *new Improvement*, 'till, at last, he becomes *perfectly formed*, by a total Subduction of the *Flesh*, and an utter Abolition of the whole *Body of Sin*.

§. X. This Idea of *Regeneration* is so natural and easy, that 'tis wonderful to me how any one should ever dream of *infused Habits*, especially, since there is so little Countenance for it to be met with in the Holy Scriptures. For the most that I can find alledged, in order to support this Conceit, is, the Use of certain *Metaphorical Expressions*, by which *Regeneration* (which, indeed, it self, is a *Metaphorical Expression*) is described; and between which, and the Thing described, they fondly imagine there must be a *proper Resemblance* in every Particular. Thus, because *Creation* in a literal Sense is an *instantaneous Production*; therefore, they conclude, that *Regeneration* is so too, because *Regeneration* is called the *New Creature*. But why would not my Argument be as good, if I should say, that because the *Natural Birth* is not effected *all at once*, but is *gradual* and *progressive*; therefore, *Regeneration*, or the *Spiritual Birth*, is *progressive* also? Much after the same manner it is, that they go about to prove that *Man* is not in any Degree the *efficient Cause* of his own *Regeneration* — But these Arguments have already been considered in my former Treatise, concerning the *Operations* of the *Holy Spirit*, to which referring those who desire farther Satisfaction, I conclude with observing to my Reader, That the unkindly Aspect which these odd and whimsical Notions about *Regeneration* have upon true Christian *Piety*, is the great Reason why I have bestowed thus much Pains in refuting them.

them. If *Regeneration* be an *infused Habit*, of such a Sort, as that *wicked Men* may *have* it, and *good Men* may be *without* it; 'tis plain, that we have then no Rule by which we can, with any manner of Certainty, satisfy our selves whether we be in a *Regenerate State*, or not. For how shall we know whether we *have* these *infused Habits*? Not from the *Scriptures*; for these no-where speak of any *infused Habits*, nor have they left us any other Rule whereby to discern the *inward Operations* of the Holy Ghost, than the *State and Condition* of our own Hearts, with respect to *Vertue and Piety*. To describe *Regeneration*, therefore, in such a Manner, as that a *vertuous* and a *holy Life* shall be no sure *Sign* that a Man *has* it, nor *Wickedness* that he has it *not*, what is it but to take Men off from the *Word of God*, as the *Touch-stone* by which to try and examine the *State and Condition* of their Souls, and to send them to the *Suggestions* of the *Devil*, or the *Delusions* of their own foolish or wicked *Imaginations*? 'Tis, certainly, too great an Encouragement to *Vice*, to be told, that tho' a Man be in a State of *wilful, deliberate Sin*, he may yet be a *Child of God*; and a no less Discouragement to *Vertue*, to be taught, that tho' he has all those good *Dispositions*, which the Gospel recommends, he may be *unregenerate*; more-especially, when it is said withal, that a Man becomes *Regenerate*, as it were, by a *sudden and violent Snatch*, which is supposed to be the *Effect* of a *Power* with which he himself does not in the least *co-operate*, and which is absolutely *irresistible*. What Encouragement can He have to *labour to mortify the Deeds of the Body*, who believes, that his Sins, how great soever they be, cannot destroy his *Sonship*, nor cancel his *Right* to the Kingdom of Heaven? Who, if he can be so absurd as to *separate* his having a *Right* to the

Kingdom of Heaven, from his being *qualified* for the Kingdom of Heaven, is yet so consistent with himself, as to be persuaded, that that *inward Principle* which his Wickedness cannot *extinguish*, and which is inseparable from a *Right* to the Kingdom of Heaven, will, at some Time or other, *qualify* him for the Kingdom of Heaven, *effectually*, and in spite of all *Opposition*? When they have made the most of it they can, it will, I fear, comparatively, be but very small: But, assuredly, those Principles take away all *Comfort* from the *Good Man*, who may not be disposed to presume more confidently in Favour of himself, than the Sense of his own *Integrity* and *Uprightness* will carry him. Such a one as this, can never know that he is in a *Regenerate State*; and with how much the more *Evenness*, *Constancy*, and *Regularity*, he hath gone on in a Course of *Vertue* and *Piety*, by so much the less likely will he be to know it, since he must be by so much the less sensible of any *sudden* and *violent Change* that hath happened at any Time within himself. And, as he cannot know that he is *now* *Regenerate*, so neither can he tell, that it will *ever* be *possible* for him to be so, because it is not possible that he should be so, but by an *irresistible Operation* of the *Spirit*, to which some Persons are immutably *elected*, and from which all the rest (without any Regard had to their Qualifications) are immutably *reprobated*. And so much for the Point of *Regeneration*.




## DISCOURSE II.

### *Of* SAVING,

OR

### JUSTIFYING FAITH.

§. I.  HE Doctrine of *Regeneration* being now, as I think, very clearly and fully stated; it will be proper to proceed to some other Questions which have a near Relation to it: the first and Principal whereof, is that concerning JUSTIFICATION. And there being (as is allowed on all Hands) so close a Connexion between these Two, that whosoever is *Regenerate*, is also *Justified*, and whosoever is *Justified*, is also *Regenerate*; there arises to us this Advantage, That as by determining the first Point, we must necessarily have gone a great way in determining the latter; so the latter also being rightly resolved, it must very much confirm and strengthen what has been advanced upon the former. This Question, indeed, could

could have required no distinct Consideration (or, at least, there would have needed very little to have been said about it) were it not for those Obscurities which have been cast about it by *Calvin* and his Followers. For, if he who is *Regenerate*, is also *Justified*, 'tis plain, that, if once I understand what that is by which, or in virtue whereof, I become *Regenerate*, I must, at the same time, understand what it is by which I am *Justified*. And this hath already been shewn to be *Faith* in *Christ*, and *Obedience* to his *Commandments*. But that which hath created so much Difficulty upon the Subject, is this, That *St. Paul* has somewhere taught us, That a Man is justified by *Faith*, without the *Works of the Law*; and that, by the *Works of the Law*, no *Flesh shall be justified*; which Assertions these Divines have so understood, as intirely to exclude *Obedience* from having any thing to do in the Business of *Justification*. And because the Sacred Writers, and even *St. Paul* himself, at other times, do speak of *Faith* as a Qualification which of itself, or alone, is of little Value in the Sight of God; this hath put them upon contriving Distinctions, and forced them to have Recourse to certain unintelligible *Internal Acts*, as Marks whereby to discriminate that *Faith* which justifies, from that *Faith* which does not justify. And thus, instead of plain and solid Instructions upon so necessary a Point, we are treated with the Froth and Jargon of the *Schools*; and the Dreams of Men have been obtruded upon us as Articles of our Faith. It is a Point, therefore, of no small Consequence, to know, whether *St. Paul* be rightly interpreted, or not; and though I cannot promise the Reader, that I have any thing new to offer upon the Subject, this Dispute having already exercised the Pens of many great Divines of our Church, and particularly of the late Learned Bishop *Bull*,

by



by whom it is very largely and very excellently handled; yet, perhaps, it may not be displeasing to those who have not the Opportunity of going to these larger Treatises, to see the Controversy, in its material Branches, reduced to a narrow Compass.

§. II. In order hereto, it will be necessary, first of all, to state the Notion of *Justification*. And concerning this, not to trouble you with the different Senses in which the Word may be found, it will be sufficient to take notice, that to *justify*, is, generally, throughout the whole New Testament, and constantly by *St. Paul* in his Discourses upon this Subject, used in a Judicial Sense; denoting, when applied to *God* as the Person *justifying* that *Act*, *Sentence*, or *Declaration*, whereby he as our Judge *determines* or *pronounces* us *just* or *righteous*; and when applied to *Man* as the Person *justified*, that *State* or *Condition* towards *God* for or on the *Account* of which he is now *adjudged* Righteous, and will be so *pronounced* at the last Day. The Places which shew this to be the true Sense of the Word, are too numerous to be here distinctly noted, and therefore I shall select only a few of them. As for Instance, *Rom. viii. 33. Who shall lay any thing to the Charge of God's Elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth?* In which Words, τὸ δικαιεῖν, to *justify*, being manifestly opposed to τὸ ἐγκαλεῖν, to *accuse*, and also to τὸ κατακρίνειν, to *condemn*, can signify nothing else than to *acquit* or *pronounce Righteous*. So *Ch. iii. 4. Let God be true, and every Man a Liar, as it is written, that thou mayst be justified in thy Saying, and clear when thou art judged;* where the δικαιώσαι, to be *justified*, is explained by νικᾶν ἐν τῷ κρινεσθαι, the *overcoming* in *Judgment*. Again, *Chap. vi. 18. Therefore, as by the Offence of one, Judgment came upon all Men to Condemnation,*

tion, even so by the Righteousness of one, the free Gift came upon all Men to Justification; where, by way of *Antithesis*, the Word *Justification* in the latter part of the Verse, answers to the Word *Condemnation* in the former. I shall name but one Place more, which is alone sufficient to decide this Matter; and that we meet with *Chap. iii. ver. 20.* Therefore, by the Deeds of the Law, there shall no Flesh be justified in his Sight; the Meaning of which Words must necessarily be this, That if God should judge Men by or according to the Works of the Law, no Man could appear righteous before him, or, which is the same thing, he could *adjudge* or *determine* no Man *righteous*. Now the same *Justification* which the Apostle *denies* to Works, the same he every where *ascribes* to Faith; which being *Judicial* in the one Case, in the other it must therefore be so also. This may suffice to shew the Sense of the Word *Justify*, especially considering that this Sense is not only allowed, but earnestly contended for by (r) those with whom I am now principally concerned. Hence therefore give me leave to observe the Mistake of those who have treated of *Justification* as if it consisted in the *Forgiveness* of Sin. That the *Justification* of a Man before God, *supposes* or *implies* *Forgiveness* of Sin, must indeed needs be true, because *all are Sinners*; But so far is it from being true, that to *justify* and to *forgive* are *one* and the *same thing*, that they are not so much as *consistent* together, with respect to one and the same Law; or (which comes to as much) they are not

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(r) Nos licet non negemus non unam esse istius vocis (sc. justificationis) significationem — — — — — pretendimus tan en — — — — — semper quoties Scriptura de Justificatione nostra ex professo loquitur, & tanquam in sua sede, forensi ratione esse exponendam, *Turretin*, Loc. 16. Quæst. 1. §. 5.

consistent with respect to the same Law, but under *different Qualifications*. He who *forgives* Sins committed against any Law, does, in that very Act, declare him whom he forgives, to have *sinned* against that Law. Now if a Man be declared a *Sinner* against any Law, he cannot also be *justified* or declared *righteous* according to that Law. This Point will be more fully explained afterwards; I shall now only add, that there being an inseparable Connexion between *Righteousness* and the Reward of *Righteousness*, *Justification* must therefore imply our *Acceptance* to *eternal Life*. Which, if it needed any other Proof, is very tully asserted by St. Paul, Rom. v. 8, 9, 10. *God commendeth his Love towards us, in that while we were Sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being now justified by his Blood, we shall be saved from the Wrath through him. For if when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God, by the Death of his Son, much more being reconciled, shall we be saved by his Life.* And verse 17. *If by one Man's Offence Death reigned — much more they which receive — the Gift of Righteousness, shall reign in Life.* Accordingly, in the following Verse, he calls *Justification δικαιωσις ζωής*. *Justification of Life*; and very frequently speaks of *Justification* and our *Acceptance* to its Reward, as equivalent Terms. Thus Rom. iv. *μισθον λογιζεσθαι*, to *impute the Reward*, in ver. 4. is the same with *δικαιοσύνην λογιζεσθαι*, *imputing Righteousness*, in ver. 3. And Chap. i. 17. *ἐκ πίστεως ζῆν*, to *live by Faith*, is the same thing with being *justified* by Faith. So that the full and adequate Notion of *Justification*, is this, viz. *That Act of God by which we are adjudged or declared Righteous before him, and as such accepted to the Reward of Eternal Life.*

§. III. Having thus stated the Notion of *Justification*, I shall, as Preliminaries to the whole, lay down Two Propositions, which being duly attended to, that which is to follow, will, I conceive, be exceeding plain and obvious. The First is, That *none are or can be justified, but those who have fulfilled the Law, by which they are to be judged.* The Reason is plain from what has been said: For those who are *not* Righteous, God cannot *adjudge* or *declare* to be Righteous; For *the Judgment of God is according to Truth*, as the Apostle speaks *Rom. ii. 2.* He cannot therefore *adjudge* or *declare* those to be *Righteous*, who have not fulfilled the Law by which they are judged, because the having *fulfilled* that Law by which a Man is judged, is the very Notion of *Righteousness*. And this is what St. Paul expressly tells us, *Verse 13.* of the same Chapter, *Not the Hearers of the Law are justified before God, but the Doers of the Law shall be justified*; i. e. No Man can be *justified* by any Law which he hath not *fulfilled*. And upon this very Foot it is, that he all along argues against the Possibility of our being *justified* by the *Law of Works*, even because we are *Transgressors* against that Law. For thus he speaks *Chap. iii. 9.* *We have before proved both Jews and Gentiles that they are all under Sin.* Now the Consequence of this you have *Verse 20.* *Therefore, by the Deeds of the Law there shall no Flesh be justified.* If then we cannot be *justified* by the *Law of Works*, because we have not *fulfilled* that Law, neither can we be *justified* by the *Law of Faith*, unless we fulfil that Law; for the Reason is in all Cases the same. The Reader, without doubt, will readily understand, that when I speak of our *fulfilling* the *Law*, by which we are to be judged, as necessary to our *Justification*, I mean *fulfilling* it *in our own Persons*; which I remark on purpose to remind him of the Conceit of some Modern

Modern Divines, who tell us, That we are not justified by *our own inherent* Righteousness, but by the Righteousness of *Christ imputed to us*. They are sensible, that without *Righteousness*, there can be no *Justification*; but then they say, that the *Righteousness* is in *Christ* only, and that *his* Righteousness by *Faith* becomes *our* Righteousness. Properly ours, inasmuch that *we* may be truly said to be *Righteous* in Virtue or on the Account of the *Righteousness* of *Christ*. The Absurdity of this Notion must appear, at the very first View, to any one who will duly attend it; it being inconceivable, in the Nature of the Thing, that *Christ's* Righteousness should be *ours*, in any other than an *improper* Sense, *viz.* Either, 1<sup>st</sup>. As God is pleased to accept us as Righteous, for the Sake of the Righteousness of *Christ*. Or, 2<sup>dly</sup>, As the Example of *Christ's* Righteousness, is a prevailing and effectual Motive with us to be Righteous also. Wherefore I proceed to my Second general Proposition, which is this: That although, in order to *Justification*, our own *Righteousness*, with respect to that *Law* by which we are to be judged, is necessary, yet *we must not ascribe so much to our own Righteousness, but that our being justified ought, nevertheless, to be esteemed a Matter not of Debt, but of Grace*. For *St. Paul*, at the same time that he tells us that we are justified by *Faith*, tells us also, that we are justified *freely by Grace*; as you may see, *Rom. iii. 24.* and in several other Places. Whatever, therefore, it be which the Apostle means by *Faith*, *i. e.* whatever it be in *ourselves* for the sake, or on the account of which, God *adjudges* or *pronounces* us *Righteous*; we must take especial care not to make it the *Cause* of our *Justification* in any Sense, but what is consistent with supposing and acknowledging, that it is through his *free Mercy* and *Goodness* that we are *accepted* or *justified*. How these Things are reconcilable, will

will be shewn in the Sequel of this Discourse. I now apply my self directly to the Point in hand, and because the Apostle's Assert. on consists of Two Parts, the one the *Affirmative*, viz. That *we are justified by Faith*: And the other *Negative*, viz. That *we are not justified by Works*: I shall therefore proceed with a distinct Regard to them both; Shewing, 1. What that is to which he *ascribes* Justification under the Name of *Faith*; And, 2. What that is to which he *denies* Justification under the Name of *Works*.

§. IV. *First*, then, I am to shew, What that is to which the Apostle *ascribes* Justification under the Name of *Faith*. Now, forasmuch as I have shewn, that we can be justified no otherwise, than by a *Completion* of that *Law* by which we are to be *judged*; and forasmuch as the *Law* by which we are to be *judged*, is the *Evangelical* or *Gospel Law*, i. e. that *Law* which was *promulged* or *established* by *Jesus Christ*; the Answer to this Question must therefore necessarily be this, viz. That the *Completion* of the *Evangelical Law*, is that to which the Apostle here *ascribes* *Justification*. Allowing, I say, the Truth of the Premises (which I hope have been sufficiently made good) the Inference is undeniable. For it will then rest only upon Something which the Question supposes, and which no Christian will deny, viz. That the Apostle has here given us a *true* Account of *Justification*. What then, I ask, is the *Completion* of the *Evangelical Law*? Or, what is that by which the *Law* of the *Gospel* is *fulfilled*? Why, plainly, Not *Faith* ALONE, *strictly* or *properly* so called; Not a *mere* *Belief* in *Jesus Christ*; Not a *bare* *Assent* to the *Gospel Revelation*; nor any *Act* of the *Understanding* *relative* to such a *Belief*: For the *Evangelical Law* not only proposes *Truths* to be *embraced*, but

*Duties*

Duties also to be *performed*; It is a Law of Practice, as well as a Law of Faith; Yea, it is much more a Law of Practice, *than* a Law of Faith; the *End* of our *Believing* what God has *revealed*, being that we may *do* what he has *commanded*. What, then, can be more evident, than that the Word *Faith*, in this Place, must not be *understood* in a *strict* and *proper* (*i. e.*) abstracted Sense, but *loosely* and *figuratively*, as denoting the *Complex* or *whole* Body of Christian *Vertue*, *i. e.* as denoting both *Faith*, strictly so called, and that *Obedience* also to which our *Faith* directs and ingages us?

§. V. We have brought this Point, you see, to a very short Issue; but I shall not leave it to rest here, intending presently to confirm this Sense by those Interpretations which St. Paul himself has given us of his own Meaning, and the concurrent Testimonies of the rest of the sacred Writers. But there is an Objection, which, because it will otherwise be apt to lye as a constant Burthen upon the Reader's Mind, it will be proper first of all to remove; and that is this, *viz.* That if it be necessary, in Order to *Justification*, that we *fulfil* the *Evangelical Law*, it must then be said, that no Man can be *justified*, who hath not paid a *punctual* Obedience to whatever the Gospel commands, in such a Sense as *never* to have *offended*; which (since *all* have *offended*) is to *exclude* all from *Justification*. Now, to this I answer; That though the *Law* of the *Gospel*, consider'd as the *Law* or *Rule* of *Life*, is, (as all Laws are and must be whilst they are such) *always* Obligatory, and, consequently, in this respect, no Man can be said to have *fulfilled* it, who hath not performed a *strict* and *punctual* Obedience; yet it must be observed, that consider'd as the *Law* or *Rule* by or according to which God will *judge* us; this Law

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will be fulfilled by our *final* Obedience only, *i. e.* (for this is what I mean by *final*) by our being at any Time found in a State of Obedience, and, especially at the last Day. The Reason is plain, *viz.* because the Gospel Law admits of Repentance, *i. e.* it promiseth, that at what Time soever a Sinner returns to Obedience, he shall be accepted. The Evangelical Law, therefore, is the Law of Judgment, only with respect to our *final* Condition; and, consequently, it must, *as such*, be fulfilled by our *final* Obedience: For he who repents, *i. e.* finally turns to God, has done all that the Law under this View requires from him. Now this is what I maintain, *viz.* That in Order to Justification, it is necessary, that we fulfil not the Law of Life, but the Law of Judgment, which are very different Things; for, to speak properly, it is one Law by which we are to live, and another Law by which we are to be judged. This will be plain, if we consider, that the Diversity of Laws ariseth either from the Diversity of the Matter or Things enjoyned, or the Diversity of the Circumstances under which the same Things are enjoyned. Thus, for instance, If a King enjoins two of his Subjects to pay each of them an hundred Pounds, for the publick Use. Here is then one and the same Law to them both. But there will be different Laws if either, 1st, one should be commanded to pay more than another; or, 2dly, if the same Sum being required of both, one should be commanded to pay it in the Space of One Month, and the other in the Space of Ten. Now it is in this respect only in which I say, that the Law of Life is one Law, and the Law of Judgment another. For, as to the Matter of them, they are indeed the very same, the same Duties being enjoyned by both; but then, as to the Circumstances under which the same Duties are enjoyned, they are manifestly distinct: For, whereas the one requires



a *constant* and *perpetual* Obedience, the other requires, (as has been said) only a *final* Obedience. Nor let it shock the Reader, to hear (what, indeed, is somewhat different from the common way of speaking) that the *Law* according to which Men are to *live*, and the *Law* according to which they shall be *judged*, are *different* Laws. For, there is not the least Difficulty in apprehending the Thing; but, only, in case these *Laws* be supposed to be *materially* different. If the *Law* only forbids *Treason*, it would be absurd to hang a Man for *Theft* or *Perjury*: But there is no Absurdity in saying, that a Man is under *one Law* constantly prohibiting *Treason*, and shall be *judged* by *another Law*, which declares a *Pardon*, in case the Offender returns to his Loyalty.

§. VI. The Sum is this; That he who is truly *Penitent*, has fulfilled the *Evangelical Law* of *Judgment*, though he has not fulfilled the *Evangelical Law* of *Life*; and the Obedience which I speak of, as *necessary* to *Justification*, is such an Obedience only, as is consistent with, or supposes the *Benefit* of *Repentance*; that such an Obedience as this, is, indeed, *necessary* to *Justification*, or that *Faith* exclusive of such an Obedience, will not *justify*, I have already proved, and hence I have inferred, that *St. Paul*, under the Word *Faith*, must be supposed to *include* Obedience, when he ascribes *Justification* to *Faith* only. I am now, according to my Promise, farther to make good this Point from those Interpretations, which the Apostle himself has given us of his own Meaning, and from what we are elsewhere taught in Scripture concerning this Matter; which way of Arguing rests upon these plain and uncontested Principles, *viz.* That forasmuch as the Sacred

Writers, in declaring to us the *Terms* of our *Acceptance* with God, were all directed by *the same Spirit*, therefore they are always upon this Point consistent with *themselves* and with *one another*; and, consequently, whatever it be to which *Justification* is ascribed in *one Place*, that must be *supposed* in *all the rest*, where the *Means* of *Justification* are spoken of, how great a *Variety* soever there may be found in the *Words* or *Expressions* by which these *Means* are signified or represented to us. Now, that *St. Paul* has ascribed our *Justification* to *Obedience*, as well as to *Faith*, is evident from *Gal. v. 6.* *In Christ Jesus neither Circumcision availeth any Thing, nor Uncircumcision, but Faith, which worketh by Love.* By *availing* here, the *Apostle* plainly means *availing* (*i. e.* being of any *Virtue* or *Efficacy*) with respect to *Justification*; for he was now arguing against the *Jews*, who expected to be *justified* by the *Law* of *Moses*. These *Words*, then do very clearly set forth to us, that we are not *justified* by *Faith alone*, but by *Faith in Conjunction* with its *proper Effects*. For, by *Love* here, we are to understand the *Love* of *God*; and to say that *Faith* then only *availeth*, when it *worketh by Love*, is exactly the same thing as to say, that what will avail, or stand us in any stead, is *Faith* and *those Works of Love*, *i. e.* of *Obedience*, to which our *Faith* doth lead and direct us. I say, of *Obedience*; for *this is the Love of God, that we keep his Commandments*. This Sense will be farther evident from what follows, *Chap. vi. Verse 15.* *In Christ Jesus neither Circumcision availeth any Thing, nor Uncircumcision, but a NEW CREATURE.* In these *Words*, the *Apostle* says the same Thing of *Circumcision*, that he had said before, *viz.* that it *availeth* not; And what he denies of *Circumcision*, he here affirms of the *New Creature*, as he

he *did of that Faith which worketh by Love* in the other Place; which shews, that the *Faith which worketh by Love*, and the *New Creature*, are Phrases importing one and the same Thing. Now forasmuch as the *New Creature* implies both *Faith* and *Obedience*, as has been already proved, the Consequence is undeniable, that by the *Faith which worketh by Love*, he means *Faith* and *Obedience*. Once more, The Apostle has ascribed *Justification* to *Obedience* in express Terms, as you may see, I. Cor. vii. 19. *Circumcision is nothing, and Uncircumcision is nothing, but KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD.* These Words are exactly parallel to those which I have already mentioned, and there is no possible Way of making St. Paul speak consistently with himself, than by saying, that as the *Obedience* he here mentions, necessarily supposes or includes *Faith*, so that *Faith*, when he speaks of it as the *only Means* of our *Justification*, does also suppose or include *Obedience*. I might farther have insisted upon that Saying of the same Apostle, Rom. vi. 16. *Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves Servants to obey, his Servants ye are to whom ye obey, whether of Sin unto Death, or of Obedience? it is designated unto (r) Justification; where, as Death is ascribed to Sin, so Justification is also ascribed to Obedience.* I might likewise have taken Notice, that at Rom. x. 16. he explains the Word *πιστεύω*, to *believe*, by *ὑπακούω ἐν ἀγγέλιῳ*, *obeying the Gospel*; and that what he sometimes calls simply *πίστις*, *Faith*, he at other Times calls, *ὑπακούω*

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(r) Our Translation renders it, *Of Obedience unto Righteousness.* But St. Paul frequently uses *δικαιοσύνη* for *δικαιώσις*; and so it is used here, for it is opposed to *ἐλευθερία*, Lull. Harm. Apost. Dissert. 2. Chap. iv. §. 9.

*πίστεως*, the Obedience of Faith, i. e. the Obedience which arises or proceeds from Faith, as you may see Rom. i. 5, 16, 26. But that which I have already offered, is, I think, abundantly sufficient for my Purpose; I shall therefore only add, That when I say, that St. Paul uses the Word *Faith*, as including *Obedience*, I mean no more, than that it is so used in all those Places where he ascribes *Justification* to Faith only. At other Times, I am well aware, that he speaks in a more confined Sense; having already shewn you one Place where *Faith* is plainly distinguished from its Effects; and you may observe the same Thing, 1. Cor. xiii. where he states the Comparison in Point of Excellency, between *Faith*, *Hope* and *Charity*. But, then, you must also observe at the same Time, as a Confirmation of what has been said, that whenever the Apostle does thus distinguish *Faith* from its Effects, he is so far from telling us, that we are justified by Faith only, that he speaks of it comparatively as a mean and low Qualification, which is particularly remarkable in the Place just now refer'd to: *If, says he, I have all Faith, so that I could remove Mountains, and have not Charity, I am nothing. If I have all Faith, i. e. If I have (s) all kinds of Faith, even that Sort of Faith by which I should be enabled to work the greatest of Miracles, all this would avail me nothing; it would not render me acceptable in the Sight of God; nor, consequently, justify me, except I had also Charity.*

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(s) For this is the meaning of *πάνου πίστεως*. So *πάνου γνώσεως*, is all Kinds of Knowledge; *πάνου θλίψεως*, every Sort or every kind of Tribulation. 2. Cor. i. 4. Id. Ibid. §. 6.

§. VII. Thus plainly has St. Paul asserted the *Co-efficiency* of *Obedience* in the Work of *Justification*; as if it had been on purpose to advertise us, that whatever high and lofty Encomiums he has elsewhere bestowed upon Faith, they must be understood of *Faith* in conjunction with *Obedience*. Let us now hear what the Holy Scriptures have in other Places taught us concerning this Matter; and who can desire a stronger Proof than those Words of our blessed Lord, recorded by St. *Matt.* Ch. xii. Ver. 37. *For by thy Words thou shalt be justified, and by thy Words thou shalt be condemned?* Or than those *Luke* xviii. 14. where our Saviour stating the Comparison between the *Pharisee* and the *Publican*, who went up to the Temple to pray, and observing the *Humility* and *Contrition* of the one, and the *Pride* and *Self-sufficiency* of the other, says, *I tell you, that this Man went home to his House justified, rather than the other?* Justified? How? Why, certainly, by his good *Behaviour*, or not at all: For, this was what our Saviour was speaking about. And does not this very plainly imply, that our *Obedience* is that whereby we must be *justified*? But the Words of St. *James* are of all others most full to the Purpose, *Chap.* ii. *Verse* 24. where having professedly treated upon the Subject, he lays down this Conclusion, (in Words, indeed, differing from, but in Sense, as I hope to shew, agreeing with, that of St. Paul) *Ye see then, how that by Works a Man is justified, and not by Faith only.* What the Apostle means by *Faith*, it is by no means hard to understand, nor, if it were, is it at all material to inquire. For the main Stress of the Argument lies upon this, that *Justification* is here, in Part, expressly ascribed to *Works*, i. e. to *Obedience*. But of what *Justification* does the Apostle speak? Why, say some, not of our *Justification before God*, but of our *Justification before Man*; i. e. of

the Declaration of our Faith before Man, which being an *internal*, and, consequently, an *invisible* Act, can, therefore, be known by others no otherwise than by a suitable *Behaviour*: This vain Conceit they endeavour to support principally by these two Reasons, *viz.* 1st, From the Words of the Apostle, *verse 18. Shew me thy Faith without thy Works, and I will shew thee my Faith by my Works.* And, 2dly, From hence, that *Abraham* is said to have been *justified* by the *Sacrifice* of his *Son*, whereas, say they, in the *Sight of God* he was *justified long before.* But, without tarrying to give an Answer to such Arguments as these, which every one, who has Sense, must see, are too frivolous to deserve an Answer, I shall lay down some plain Reasons to shew, that this Interpretation cannot be admitted of; and they are these that follow, *viz.* 1st, The Apostle does manifestly *in part* ascribe our *Justification* to *Faith*; for he saith, that a *Man is justified by Works, and not by Faith ONLY*; which implies, that *Faith*, tho' it be not indeed the *sole*, is yet the *partial* Cause of our *Justification.* But a *Man's Faith*, is declared or made known by *Works only*, because, as I said just now, it is an *internal Act*; and, consequently, in this Sense *Faith* cannot be so much as *in part* the Cause of our *Justification.* 2d, To suppose, that by *Justification* the Apostle means the Declaration of our *Faith*, is to make him talk palpable Nonsense. For, the Declaration of *Faith* being substituted in the Room of *Justification*, the Sentence must run thus; *Ye see then, that a Man's Faith, is declared by Works, and not by Faith only*, than which, nothing can be more absurd. 3d, That when the Apostle says of *Abraham*, that he was *justified by Works*, his Meaning is, that he was *justified before God*, is evident from *verse 23.* For by this (*i. e.* the *Obedience of Abraham* per-

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fecting his Faith) the Scripture, says he, was fulfilled, which saith, Abraham believed in God, and it was imputed unto him for Righteousness, and he was called the Friend of God. Now, in the same Sense in which he declares, that Abraham was justified by Works, in the same Sense he declares, that we are justified by Works also. 4. All this will be still more evident from *verse 14.* where the Apostle entering upon this Discourse, says, that Faith, i. e. Faith alone, or without Works, cannot save us. This was the Point he undertook to prove, and therefore, to this must his Conclusion relate, viz. That a Man is justified by Works, and not by Faith only.

§. VIII. I had not taken any notice of this Objection (which appears, I think, at first sight, to have no weight in it) but that I was unwilling to leave so material a Passage as this, liable to the least Doubt or Scruple. But, in truth, to mention Particulars under this Head, is an endless Work, for to this Purpose belong all those Places of Scripture (which, that I may just note it by the way, do no where more frequently occur, than in the Writings of St. Paul) where Obedience is insisted upon, as necessary to qualify us for Eternal Salvation. These Places, I say, do afford an incontestable Evidence of the Truth of what I am now advancing, and it would make a Man even sick, to see by what pitiful Subterfuges those who place Justification in Faith, exclusive of Obedience, endeavour to evade it. In general, they tell us, that (t) though we cannot be saved without

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(t) Aliud est opera--requiri in persona quæ justificatur, quod concedimus; aliud in actu ipso seu causalitate justificationis, quod negamus. Nec si requiruntur opera ut concomitantia fidem ideo statuuntur esse causa justificationis cum fide. Turretin. *Lec. 16. Quest. 8. § 13.*

Obedience, it may, nevertheless, be true, that we are not *justified by*, or *in Virtue of* Obedience. That it is one Thing to say, that *Good Works* are *required* as the *Concomitants* of *Faith*, and another Thing to say, that they are the *Cause* of *Justification together with Faith*. But the Reason of this subtle Distinction is to me utterly incomprehensible. For, 1. Whatever is the *Cause* of *Salvation*, is also the *Cause* of *Justification*; for these Two Things are inseparable; and the *immediate Ground* or *Reason* upon which we are *saved*, is that we are *justified*, as has been shewn. Give me leave then to argue in this manner: I am therefore *saved* because I am *justified*; I am therefore *saved* because I *believe* in Christ, and *keep his Commandments*. Therefore to *believe* in Christ, and *keep his Commandments*, is that by which I am *justified*. The *first* Proposition in this Argument is not to be disputed; and supposing the Truth of the *Second*, the *Conclusion* will be undeniable, so far, I mean, as to prove, that both *Faith* and *Obedience*, are, *in some Sense*, jointly the *Cause* of our *Justification*, i. e. in the *same Sense* in which they are jointly the *Cause* of our *Salvation*. Now then, 2. The Point is this, *viz.* Whether *Obedience* be not the *Cause* of our *Salvation*, in the *same Sense* in which *Faith* is the *Cause* of our *Salvation*? And that it *is*, is manifest: For *Faith* can be said to be the *Cause* of our *Salvation*, in no other Sense, than as it is a *Condition*, upon the Performance of which, *Salvation* is promised, and in this Sense 'tis notorious, that *Obedience* is the *Cause* of *Salvation*, as well as *Faith*. Either then it is true, that *Obedience*, together with *Faith*, is the *Cause* of our *Salvation*, or else it is not true, that even *Faith* is the *Cause* of our *Salvation*. But the Truth is, that they are *both* together the *Cause* of our *Salvation*, as they do both together constitute that



that to which, in Virtue of the *Promise* of God, *Salvation* is *inseparably* annexed. As to what is here commonly pretended, *viz.* That (*u*) *Good Works* are required only as a *Sign* or *Declaration* of *Faith*, it is neither Sense, nor, if it were, is it any thing to the Purpose. For, *Obedience* has a Tendency to *signify* or *declare* our *Faith* upon no other Account, than because our *Faith* *leads us to Obedience*, i. e. shews us something, which, in Virtue of the Divine Authority, we are bound to perform. The *Necessity* of *Obedience*, therefore, must be supposed *antecedently* to its being a *Sign* of *Faith*; and how then is it possible, that the *signifying* or *declaring* our *Faith*, should be the *Reason* why it is required? Furthermore, St. *James* tells us, that *Obedience* is the *Perfection* of *Faith*; for, *by Works*, says he, *is Faith made perfect*. If then *Obedience* be the *Perfection* of *Faith*, it cannot be required *merely* as a *Sign* of *Faith*, for the *Sign* has no relation to the *Perfection* of the Thing *signified*.  
 —But I am ashamed to tarry any longer upon such manifest Trifles. Be it so, that *Obedience* is required only as a *Sign* or *Declaration* of *Faith*; yet still you grant, that it is required; and I say, that God hath made it a *Condition* of our *Salvation*, that we give, if you will so call it, this *Sign* or *Declaration* of our *Faith*. Shew me then, I say, if you can, how *Faith* *itself* is the *Cause* of our *Salvation*, any otherwise than under the Notion of a *Condition*, or confess your own Absurdity in excluding *Obedience* (which is also a *Condition*) from being, together with *Faith*, the *Cause* of our *Justification*.

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(u) *Opera*—requiruntur tanquam *effecta* & *signa* fidei quibus ejus veritas declaritur. Nam ut *fides* justificat *hominem*; ita *opera* justificant *fidem*. *Id. Ib.* §. 3.

§. IX. Either my Reason very much deceives me, or this Argument is unanswerable. But answered it must be; and how do they do it? Why, by such Cobweb Distinctions as you have already seen, which, if they had so much Sense in them as to bear Examination, I might, perhaps, have taken notice of. But instead of pursuing these Divines through their own endless Labyrinths, it will be more to the Purpose, somewhat more distinctly to explain what I mean by a *Condition of Salvation*, by which it will still be more evident, that *Faith* and *Obedience* have the *same Relation* to *Eternal Life*; and, consequently, that *one* is as truly the *Cause* of our *Justification*, as the *other*. A *Condition of Salvation*, then, as I said just now, is that upon the *Performance* of which God hath promised *Salvation*; and thus far the Thing is not capable of being made clearer. What I have now to add, is this, That forasmuch as it is the Nature of *all Promises*, to convey a certain Right to the Person to whom the *Promise* is made, every one therefore must be understood to have a *Right* to *Eternal Life*, who has performed the Conditions, upon the Performance of which *Eternal Life* is *promised*; and when God, in consequence of his *Promise*, bestows *Eternal Life*, the *Performance* of these *Conditions* must be considered as the immediate *Reason* or *Motive* with God, why he bestows it. The *Performance*, therefore, of the *Conditions* upon which *Eternal Life* is promised, is in this Sense the *Cause* of our *Salvation*, viz. As it is that in ourselves, for the sake or on the account of which, God bestows *Salvation*; and in this sense, I say, or under this Notion, it is, that *Faith* saves us. For he who requires me to *believe*, and *promises*, withal, that if I do believe, I shall be *saved* (which is manifestly the Case) does thereby very plainly declare, that

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he will *save* me, *for the sake* or *on the Account* of my *Faith*. But then, if *Faith* be not the *only* Thing required; if the same God who commands me to *believe*, commands me also to *obey*, and *promises* *Eternal Life* as the *Reward* of my *Obedience*, (which is likewise the *Case*) it is then plain, that both *Faith* and *Obedience* must be considered, as *co-ordinate* Means to one and the same End, *i. e.* that they do *both* of them *together* constitute that for the *sake* of, or *on the Account* of which, God will *bestow* upon us the *Privilege* of *Eternal Life*.

§. X. This Point, which almost every Page of the Gospel confirms, being duly attended to, it will be easy enough to see to the Bottom of all that Sophistry and Chicane, by which this Subject has been so much perplexed; and the Consequence which has before been laid down, will remain firm and undeniable, *viz.* That *Faith* and *Obedience* having the *same Relation* to *Eternal Life*, must therefore have the *same Relation* to *Justification*, which is the immediate *Reason* or *Motive* with God, why he *bestows* *Eternal Life*. And this will be further confirmed, by considering, in what sort God will proceed with us at the Day of Judgment: For the last Judgment will be nothing else than a Publick and Solemn *Declaration* of Christ our *Judge*, who are *Righteous*, and who are not *Righteous*; and, in Consequence of this *Declaration*, an *Assignment* of them to a State of *Happiness*, or a State of *Misery*. What then, I ask, is that *Rule* or *Measure* according to which this *Declaration* shall be made? I hope you will not say, our *Faith* only: For how often do the Scriptures tell us, that God will *judge every Man according to his Works*? And how plain is it, that the very *Reason* of our being called to appear before the *Judgment Seat* of Christ, is, that every *Man* may receive the Things  
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done in his Body, according to that he hath done, whether it be Good or Bad? If then we are to be judged according to our Works, as well as according to our Faith, must not then our Works, as well as our Faith, be the Ground or Reason, upon which we shall be justified or declared righteous? Why, look at *Matt. xxv. 34.* and you will see; *Then shall the King say unto them on his Right-hand, Come, ye Blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you.* The Reason follows in the next Words; *For I was an hungred, and ye gave me Meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me Drink, &c.* These are the Premisses; and I leave any Man, who has Sense, to draw the Conclusion.

§. XI. Upon the whole, then, I think, it plainly appears, that whether you interpret St. Paul by himself, or by what we learn from the rest of the sacred Writers, he must be supposed, under the Word Faith, to include Obedience, in all those Places where he ascribes Justification to Faith only. A Thing which there would need very little arguing about, if those who deny it, would duly attend to what, at the same Time, is very freely acknowledged by them. For, do they not tell us, that (w) Faith alone, i. e. separated from all other Christian Virtues, will not justify, because in this Case it is not a True Faith? Where then I pray is the Difference? Why, make the most of it you can, and it will amount to no more than a *quâ* or a

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(w) Non quæritur an fides solitaria, i. e. separata à cæteris virtutibus justificet, quod sic i non posse facile concedimus, cum ne quidem sit vera & viva fides; sed an sola concurrat ad adum justificationis—Non an fides quæ justificat sit operosa—Sed an *quâ* justificat—sub tali *quæ* spectanda sit.—Sola fides non justificat, sed fides justificat sola, *Id. Ibid. §. 6.*

*quatenus*, i. e. it will come to no more than this, *viz.* That, though that *Faith* which *justifies*, must be attended with all other Virtues, yet it does not justify, *considered as attended* with those Virtues. Vain and Foolish Contention! Was it, think you, the Business of an Apostle of Jesus Christ, and of that Apostle too who every where expresses so great a *Contempt of Human Wisdom and Philosophy*, to teach such *Metaphysicks* as this! For my own part, I have other (and I think much more worthy) Notions of the first Preachers of the Gospel. I consider them as plain Men speaking to plain Men; and, therefore, when I hear them telling me in so many Words, that *Faith without Works, is dead being alone*, I presently conclude, that I must be justified by my *Works*, as well as by my *Faith*, because I can think of no other Reason by which a plain Man can be made to understand, why a *true, lively, or justifying Faith*, must be attended with *Good Works*, than this, that we must be *justified* by the *one*, as well as by the *other*. As to those Distinctions which Men of *subtle* Heads may fancy they espy, I should envy no Man the Pleasure of them, who would be contented to be wise and happy by himself. But 'tis intolerable to have such *Conceits* obtruded upon us, as if they were of the very (x) *Essence* of Christianity;

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(x) It may, perhaps, be not unworthy the Reader's Observation, to see how magnificently Mr. Turretin has set forth the Necessity of believing (in Virtue of the foregoing Distinction) that Good Works are not so much as in part the Cause of our Justification. His Words are these. — Facile colligitur meram hic non esse Logomachiam, ut nonnulli perperam sibi fingunt: sed controversiam MAXIME REALEM & quidem TANTI MOMENTI ut in ea de PRÆCIPUO salutis nostræ agatur FUNDAMENTO quo subruo vel labefactato OMNEM FIDUCIAM & CONSOLATIONEM nostram, & in vita & in morte PERIRE necesse est, *Loc. 16. Quest. 2. §. 6.*

especially considering how much danger there is, that those who think in the Common Road, and have not a *Taste* adapted to *Delicacies* of this sort, should (which, alas! has too frequently been the Case) when they are told, that they are not justified by good Works, lay hold of this ready and natural Inference, that therefore they may be justified and saved *without* them, and hereupon throw off all Manner of Care and Endeavour after Righteousness.

§. XII. But to proceed. If you would know the Reason why St. Paul has used the Word *Faith*, to express the Performance of *all* the *Conditions* of the *Evangelical Covenant*, it would be no hard matter to assign several not improbable ones; but the Chief I take to be this, *viz.* That *Faith* is the *Source* and *Principle* of *Evangelical Righteousness*; a Qualification *without* which, no Christian Grace can possibly subsist, and which being once *supposed*, all other Virtues will naturally follow. *Without Faith it is impossible to please God*, as the Apostle speaks *Heb. xi. 6.* For *Faith* is, as it were, the *Door* which *opens* to us the *Way* how to serve God acceptably. And supposing that a Man wisely considers, and lays to Heart what it is that he believes, it may as truly be said on the other side, that *with Faith it is impossible not to please God*; for he who believes, that *Jesus* came from God, receives his *Doctrines* as the *Law of Life*, and is under a firm Persuasion, that *Eternal Life* will be the *Reward* of his *Obedience*, and *Eternal Death* the *Punishment* of his *Disobedience*; Such a one, I say, cannot, unless he be very careless and inconsiderate, but earnestly set himself to the Performance of whatever he knows will render him acceptable to God, and as industriously avoid every Thing by which he knows He will be displeased. There being then so close a Connexion be-

between *Faith* and *Obedience*, the one is not unfitly described by the other; and it may not be improper to observe, that for the very same Reason, the Word *Knowledge* is in Scripture made use of, to denote the *whole* of that *Piety* which we owe to God, and which is necessary to our everlasting Salvation; as you may see *John* xvii. 13. and in many other Places. So that there is in both these Cases a *Metonymy* of the *Antecedent* for the *Consequent*, or rather of the *Cause* for the *Effect*, by which something is affirmed of the *former*, only which, in Strictness of Propriety in Speech, belongs to *both* taken together. This is a way of speaking common in all Authors, and in our ordinary Discourses one with another. For thus we say of any Person, That his *Life* might probably have been prolonged, if he had *consulted* some able and experienced *Physician*; or his *Estate* saved, if he had advised with some learned and skilful *Lawyer*; not that the bare *Advice* in either Case would have done the Work, but because it is *supposed*, that he who goes to a *Physician* for the Recovery of his *Health*, or to a *Lawyer* for the saving of his *Estate*, will, in those Cases, *pursue* such *Methods* as the Person with whom he advises, shall judge to be expedient. And thus it is, that *Faith* is said to *justify* us; not as if *Faith alone* were sufficient, but because it is *supposed*, that he who *believes* in Jesus Christ, will be led by his *Faith* to *keep his Commandments*.

§. XIII. I take this to be a clear Account of the Use of the Phrase. I have now but one Objection to answer before I dismiss this Point; and that is this, *viz.* That if it be true, that we are justified by *Faith* and *Obedience*, i. e. by a *Completion* of the *Evangelical Law*; it must then be said, that *Justification* is a matter of *Debt*, and not of *Grace*,

as the Apostle affirms; because it is a *Debt* due to those who are *Righteous*, to be *adjudged* or *declared* Righteous. Now to this I reply, that tho' because God is *just* and *true*, he cannot but *adjudge* or *declare* Men to be what they *really* are, yet *Justification* will still be a *Matter of Grace*, and not of *Debt*; and that because, 1. It is intirely thro' the *Mercy* and *Goodness* of God in *Jesus Christ*, that he hath appointed that *Law of Judgment*, without which we could never have pleaded *Righteousness* before him. Were God to judge us by the *Law of Unsinning Obedience* (which he might if he had so pleased) 'tis certain, that *no Flesh* could be *justified in his sight*, because it is certain, that there are *none* by whom that *Law* hath not been *violated*. But forasmuch as he will not judge us by that *Law*, but, as has been said, by *another Law*, to wit, the *Law of Repentance*, that we are *justified* must needs be a *Matter of Grace*; for the *Law itself* being founded in *Grace*, the *Righteousness* pleaded by or according to that *Law*, must be founded in *Grace*; and if it be *through Grace* that we are *righteous*, it must also be *through Grace* that we are *justified* or *declared righteous*. This will be farther evident, if it be considered, 2. That *Justification*, as has been shewn, consists not *merely* in our being *adjudged* or *declared righteous* before God, but implies also our being *accepted* to the *Reward of Eternal Life*; which *Reward* being infinitely more than what we could *claim*, even in virtue of the *strictest* and most *punctual* Obedience, *Justification* therefore, must upon this Account, be a *Matter of Grace*, although it were true, that our *Righteousness* is *not* a *Matter of Grace*. But indeed this Consideration does more effectually shew, that our *Righteousness* is a *Matter of Grace*; for the *Reward of Eternal Life* is the great *Motive* or *Inducement* which leads us to



*Obedience*; and, surely, it is enough to cut off all Pretence of *boasting*, if not only we have done *very little*, in comparison to what God might have required, but we have been invited to do even *that little* by so rich and so gracious a *Promise*. After all, it must be acknowledged, that *Justification* is in *this Sense* a Matter of *Debt*, as it becomes (if I may so speak) our *Due* in Consequence of our having performed those *Conditions*, upon which God has *declared* that he will *accept* us. But as this Objection is not to be avoided upon any Hypothesis (since whatever it be which *justifies* us; it can *justify* no otherwise than in virtue of the *Divine Promise*) it can therefore be of no Weight against this. The Truth is, that though the Scripture tells us, we are justified *freely by God's Grace*, yet it no where makes *Justification* to be an *absolute Act of Grace*, so as that *none* of the Praise of it belongs to us; for this is utterly inconsistent with its being made to depend upon any *Condition*, and, consequently, destroys the very *Notion* of *Justification*, which, in the very Nature of it, must *suppose* a *Condition*, i. e. the *fulfilling* of *that Law* with respect to which we are said to be *justified*.

§. XIV. But there is the less need to insist upon these Things now, seeing that to this Point may so easily be applied, what has been spoken at large upon (s) another Occasion. Wherefore having (as I hope) cleared the *first* Branch of the Apostle's Assertion, by shewing you, what it is to which he *ascribes* Justification under the Name of *Faith*, I proceed to inquire, in the next Place, what it is to which he *denies* Justification, under the Name of *Works*, or (for thus he here, and else-

(s) Operations of the Spirit, Chap. 13.

where, very frequently expresse the Thing) *Deeds*. or *Works of the Law*. This Inquiry is so much the more necessary, because here indeed lies the greatest Difficulty; and if it be true what has too often been supposed, that by *Works* the Apostle means *Works of Evangelical Righteousness*, it must either be concluded, that some great Mistake has been committed in stating the foregoing Point, or else, that he has flatly contradicted himself. There are Two Things then which ought to be distinctly considered, *vis.* 1. What that *Law* is whose *Works* or *Deeds* the Apostle excludes from Justification? And, 2. In *what Sense* the *Works* or *Deeds* of the *Law* are excluded from Justification? Which Questions will be best resolved, by taking a View of the whole Dispute, as it lies in *St. Paul* himself, carefully observing the *Persons* concerning whom he speaks, and the *Reasons* upon which his Assertion is founded. To this Purpose a good deal has been already said, in a (1) former Treatise. But this being not so full as the present Occasion seems to require, and because this Work may possibly fall into the Hands of some who have not the other by them; I here propose to give you an intire Paraphrase of the first Four Chapters of this Epistle, which are the Ground-work of all that the Apostle has elsewhere advanced upon this Subject. And from hence I doubt not but I shall be able to make such Observations, as will shew, that the *former* part of the Assertion, as above explained, is so far from being *overthrown*, that it is *confirmed* and *established* by the *latter*. If the Reader then will be pleased to lay the Original before him, and go along with me from *Chap. i. Verse 16.* which is the Place

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(1) Appeal to the Word of God, &c. Chap. iv. p. 49.

where St. Paul first enters upon the Dispute, he will, I conceive, find him arguing to this Purpose, *viz.*

§. XV. “ I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Christ; For, it is the Method which God hath appointed for the Salvation of Men. It is the Way of Salvation, *first* indeed to the *Jews* [who, by God’s own Appointment, were vouchsafed the Privilege of being *first* called to it, *Acts* iii. 26. and *Chap.* xiii. 46.] But it is the Way of Salvation to *every one* that *believeth*, whether he be *Jew* or *Gentile*; forasmuch as the Purpose of God to justify *all* without Distinction, by their Faith (*u*) who shall embrace the Faith, is herein very plainly revealed, in conformity to what was heretofore spoken by the Prophet, *The Just shall live by Faith*, *Verf.* 16, 17. [And as the Purpose of God, to justify those who believe, is revealed in the Gospel, so also] is his Wrath revealed against all Ungodliness and Unrighteousness of Men; (*w*) through whose wilful

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(*u*) That *εις πιστην*, might here be put for *εις τας πσευδοντας*, I before propounded, as my conjecture (*Appeal* p. 50.) of which I can now no longer doubt. That *Substantives* are frequently used instead of *Adjectives*, or *Participles*, every one knows. Thus *η εκλογη* for *οι εκλεκτοι*, *Rom.* xi. 7. *περιτομη* for *περιτετημενοι*, *Rom.* iii. 30. and the like. But that which confirms me in this Sense, is this, that in *Verse* 22. of the Chapter last quoted, the Apostle speaks expressly in this manner, calling the *Righteousness* or *Justification* of God, *δικαιοσυνη θεου δια πιστεως εις παντας τας πσευδοντας*. The Expression is very emphatical, and the Design of it is to shew, not only that Justification belongs to those who believe, but that their believing is the Reason, and the only Reason, why they are justified.

(*w*) The Greek is *την αληθειαν εν αδικια κατεχοιτων*, which, as I have also observed, may be rendered either (ac-

“ful Corruption and Depravity it hath happened;  
 “that those Evidences which God from Time to  
 “Time hath given of himself, and his True Religi-  
 “on, have been obstructed and made ineffectual,  
 “*verse 18.* [That this is the Case with respect  
 “to the *Gentiles* is undeniable;] For God hath  
 “sufficiently manifested himself to them; the  
 “Works of the Creation being a Visible Demon-  
 “stration of his Invisible and Eternal Power and  
 “Godhead. In this, therefore, they are inex-

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cording to our Translation) of those who hold the Truth in Un-  
 righteousness, i. e. who are unrighteous under the Sense or  
 Knowledge of the Truth; or of those who hinder, or suppress  
 the Truth through Unrighteousness, for the Word *κατέχευ* bears  
 both Senses, as you may see, *2 Thess. ii. 6, 7. 1 Cor. xi. 2.* Now  
 that which determined me to the latter Sense, in this Place, is  
 this, *viz.* That otherwise the Words will have no Connexion  
 with what follows, nor can they be applied to the *Heathens*;  
 (who yet, it is certain, were the Persons, if not principally, at  
 least partly, aimed at;) For the *Heathens* were unrighteous, not  
 under the Knowledge of the Truth, but, under a gross Ignorance  
 of the Truth; and this is what the Apostle directly charges  
 them with *Verse 21.* where he says, That *their Hearts were*  
*darkened*; and that *professing themselves wise, they became fools.*  
 The Case, therefore, was this; That the *Heathens* had that Evi-  
 dence, which, if they had duly attended to it, would have led  
 them to the Knowledge of God; on which account *St. Paul* (by  
 an Idiom of Speech, familiar with the sacred Writers) says,  
 that they *knew God.* For, *in fact,* they had not the Knowledge of  
 God, (as he expressly observes, *Verse 23.*) but fell into the most  
 Wicked and Superstitious Idolatry (for which he severely re-  
 proves them, *Vers. 22, 23.*) Now all this happening not thro'  
 want of the Means of Knowledge, but through an Abuse of those  
 Means, they are therefore said, *through their Unrighteousness,*  
*κατέχευ τὴν ἀλήθειαν,* to obstruct or hinder the Truth, i. e.  
 those Evidences which God had given of himself, and his true  
 Religion. This was in some sort true of the *Jews*, who, as our  
 Saviour told them, had set aside the Commandments of God through  
 their Traditions. But it was not remarkably true of them, after  
 the Promulgation of the Gospel, which the Hardness of their  
 Hearts would not suffer them to accept of. Accordingly, the  
 Apostle continues the same Charge against them, as you will  
 find in the next Chapter.

cupable,

“ cufable, that having fuch Evidences of God, yet  
 “ they glorified him not as God, neither were  
 “ thankful; but became wicked in their Imagi-  
 “ nations: that amidft all this Light, they were  
 “ yet in Darknefs; and became Fools, under the  
 “ higheft Pretentions to Wifdom; changing the  
 “ Glory of the incorruptible God, into an Image  
 “ made like to corruptible Man, and to Birds,  
 “ and fourfooted Beasts, and creeping Things,  
 “ *Ver. 19—23.* Wherefore God alfo gave them  
 “ up to Uncleanness, thro’ the Lufts of their own  
 “ Hearts, to difhonour their own Bodies between  
 “ themfelves; who had changed the Truth of  
 “ God into a Lye; and worfhipped and ferved the  
 “ Creature, to the Difhonour of the Creator, who  
 “ is blessed for ever, &c.” What follows in this  
 Chapter, is only a farther Account of thofe Abo-  
 minations which God fuffered the Gentile World  
 to fall into, as a Punifhment for their Idolatry;  
 which carrying no difficulty with it, needs not  
 therefore to be explained. Now it is to be obferv-  
 ed, that this Accufation, feems to have been laid  
 againft the *Gentiles*, chiefly with a Design to in-  
 troduce, with lefs Offence, a like Charge againft  
 the *Jews*, who, ’tis certain, were the Perfons  
 againft whom the Design of this Epiftle was *princi-  
 pally* levelled. To thefe, therefore, he applies him-  
 felf, *Chap. ii.* “ Therefore thou art inexcufable, O  
 “ Man, whofoever thou art that judgef; for where-  
 “ in thou judgef another, thou condemneft thy felf;  
 “ feeing thou that judgef, doft the fame Things,  
 “ *Verfe. 1.* As for ourfelves we are affured,  
 “ that the Judgment of God is according to  
 “ the Rules of Truth and Equity, and confe-  
 “ quently, lies equally againft all, who commit  
 “ fuch Things [whether they be *Jews*, or whe-  
 “ ther they be *Gentiles*;] And art *thou*, who art  
 “ fo forward to judge others, fo vain as to

“ believe, that whilst thou art guilty of the same  
 “ Things thyself, thou shalt escape the Judgment  
 “ of God? Or, despisest thou the Riches of  
 “ his Goodness, and Forbearance, and Long-  
 “ suffering, and (not considering that the Good-  
 “ ness of God leadeth thee to Repentance) after  
 “ the Hardness and Impenitency of thine own  
 “ Heart, treasurest up to thyself Wrath against  
 “ the Day of Wrath, and Revelation of the  
 “ righteous Judgment of God? [I say, the righte-  
 “ ous Judgment of God; for, this, assure your-  
 “ selves that] (x) in the Day, when God, accord-  
 “ ing to the Tenor and Purport of that Gospel  
 “ which I preach, shall judge the Secrets of Men  
 “ by Jesus Christ, he will render to every Man  
 “ according to his Deeds; to them, who [having  
 “ (y) laid hold of the Means of Salvation now of-  
 “ fered

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(x) That the Apostle's Discourse from *verse 11*, to *verse 17*. is *Parentetical*, in divers Places, any one must observe, who will carefully read it over; though in stating the Connexion, there may, perhaps, be some Difficulty. To me, the Sense seems to be most clear, by joining *verse 16*, to *verse 10*. which is the Method I have followed in the Paraphrase above.

(y) That the Persons here spoken of, as those upon whom God would bestow *Eternal Life*, are those who should *believe and obey the Gospel*, I have already noted in my *Appeal* p. 54, 56. & seq. and, in this, I have some good Commentators on my Side. The main Reason I go upon (as you may there see) is to this Effect, *viz.* That both *Jew* and *Gentile*, without the Gospel, are by the Apostle declared to be in a State of *Sin* and *Condemnation*: The Promise of *Eternal Life*, cannot here be supposed to be annexed to a mere *Nullity*, but, if it be made to those, who *patiently continued in well-doing* under the *Moral Law* (or indeed under the *Law of Moses*, without the Grace of the Gospel) it is then, in the Apostle's Account, annexed to a mere *Nullity*, because in his Account there were *no such Persons*. Nor can the Consideration of *Repentance* have here any Place, because, (as you will see more fully by and-by,) the Gospel is the *only Method* propounded, by which *Remission of Sins*, which is the *Benefit* of *Repentance*, was to be obtained. The Thing, therefore, *directly* intended by the  
 Apostle,

“fered by the Gospel, shall] by patient Continu-  
 “ance in well-doing, seek for Glory and Honour, and  
 “Immortality, Eternal Life ; But to them who,  
 “being led on by a Spirit of Strife and Contention,  
 “in Obedience to their fleshly Appetites, shall  
 “reject these Overtures of Mercy, Indignation and  
 “Wrath, Tribulation and Anguish ; [I say, In-  
 “dignation and Wrath, Tribulation and An-  
 “guish] upon every Soul, that doth Evil, of the  
 “*Jew* first, and also of the *Gentile*, *Ver. 2, to 10.*  
 “For, there is no Respect of Persons with God.  
 “Whoever he be that sinneth, to him the Wrath  
 “of God is due ; and therefore, (2) as many as  
 “ have

‘Apostle, must be this, *viz.* That God would give *eternal Life*  
 to those, who, in consequence of their having embraced the  
*Promise* of God, offering *Pardon* and *Reconciliation* by *Jesus*  
*Christ*, should, by *patient continuance*, in *well-doing* ; seek for  
*Glory*, &c. And, in a Sense correspondent to this, must the  
*Threatning* be interpreted, as I have also observed. Give me  
 leave only thus far to explain myself, as to say, That though  
 this was what the *Apostle* *directly* and *primarily* intend-d in this  
 Place, yet neither must the *Promise*, nor the *Threatning*, be so  
 limited to those to whom the Gospel of *Christ* was or should  
 be offered, as not to be supposed *virtually* to include the *one* ; all  
 those *good Men* in every Age, who have (like *Abraham*) accept-  
 ed of the *Overtures* of *Mercy* propounded by God (which, as will  
 hereafter be explained, is, in a *general Sense* to embrace the  
*Gospel*) ; and the *other*, all those who have either *rejected* these  
*Overtures*, or without them, have lived in a Neglect of, or an  
 Opposition to that *Light* which God has given them. For  
 the *Threatning* is extended to *every Soul that doth Evil* ; which  
 must be understood in a Latitude proportionable to that which  
 the *Apostle* had before said *Chap. i. Verse 18. viz.* That the  
*Wrath* of God is revealed against all *Ungodliness* and *Unrighteous-*  
*ness* of Men. In which Place, it is plain, that the *Gentiles* are con-  
 sidered not as under the *Overtures* of *Grace*, but as under the  
*Light* of *Nature*.

(2) It may be proper for those who are now-a-days so fond of  
 believing, that at the Day of Judgment every Man shall be  
 tryed by the Law under which he has lived, and all alike either  
 saved or condemned according as they shall be found to have  
 behaved

“ have sinned without the Law of *Moses*, shall  
 “ perish without the Law ; and as many as have  
 “ sinned under the Law, shall be condemned by  
 “ the Law: [The *Jews* will certainly have nothing  
 “ to plead from their having had the Law] For,  
 “ it is not barely the Hearing of the Law, but  
 “ the Doing of the Law that must justify. [Nor  
 “ will the *Gentiles* have any Thing to plead from  
 “ their *not* having had the Law ; ] For, though  
 “ they have not the Law, they have that within  
 “ themselves which supplies the Place of the Law  
 “ [so far, I mean, as is enough to make them  
 “ inexcusable] those same Duties which the *Jews*  
 “ are taught by their Law, being (a) taught  
 “ them

behaved themselves with respect to that Law, *i. e.* that the Law  
 under which every Man has lived, shall be to him as well the  
 Law of *Salvation*, as the Law of *Condemnation* ; It may be proper,  
 I say, for such, to attend carefully to the Force of these Words,  
 as what will shew, that their Notion receives no Countenance  
 from this Place. For the Apostle doth not say, that as many as  
 have *obeyed* or *repented*, either without or under the Law, shall be  
*acquitted* either by or without the Law (which, without doubt, he  
 would have said, if he had intended to teach any such Doctrine)  
 but only this, That as many as have *sinned*, either with or without  
 the Law, shall be *condemned* with or without the Law ; and this  
 with a manifest Design to shew, that all having *sinned*, all therefore  
 had need to come to Christ for Justification. This brings the Apo-  
 stle's Discourse to a due Coherency, and makes him argue like him-  
 self. But 'tis making him a very sorry Reasoner indeed, to sup-  
 pose, that in an Argument which was intended to shew that Justifi-  
 cation was to be had only by *Faith* in Christ, he should lay it down  
 as one Part of the Premises from whence he was to draw his Conclu-  
 sion, that all Laws are in themselves *alike* with respect to Salvati-  
 on, and, consequently, that those who never heard of the Gospel,  
 might, at the last Day, as well be justified *without* it.

(a) The Greek is *ὅταν γὰρ ἔθνη—οὔσαι τὰ τῷ νόμῳ ποιῶν* ;  
 And the Remark which I have heretofore made upon it, I think,  
 is just, *viz.* That by this the Apostle did not mean to assert, that  
 the *Gentiles* had any of them *fulfilled* the *Moral Law* (because  
 this contradicts what he has asserted over and over, *viz.* that *all*

were



“ them by the *Light of Nature* ; and their  
 “ Consciences, reprovng them when they do amifs,  
 “ and acquitting them when they do well, being  
 “ as faithful and fure a Guide as any written  
 “ Law can be, *Ver. 11, to 16.* But as to you  
 “ Jews in particular, You, of all others, have the  
 “ leaft Reason to place any Confidence in your  
 “ Law: You fay yourselves, that being instructed  
 “ out of the Law, you perfectly well understand  
 “ the Will of God, and are able alfo to teach  
 “ it to others ; and this is what you are very  
 “ proud of. [But do you not fee that this Boast-  
 “ ing is your Reproach ? What !] Art thou who  
 “ art qualified to teach others, not able to teach  
 “ thyfelf ? Thou that preacheft, A Man fhould not  
 “ steal, doft thou steal ? Thou that fayft, A Man  
 “ fhould not commit Adultery, doft thou commit  
 “ Adultery ? Thou that abhorreft Idols, doft  
 “ thou commit Sacrilege ? Are not thefe and  
 “ fuch like notorious Violations of that very  
 “ Law upon which ye fo much value yourselves,  
 “ both a Shame to yourselves, and a Dishonour to  
 “ God, whose Name, by this Means, is blas-  
 “ phemed among the Gentiles ? *Ver. 17, to 24.*  
 “ [Nor will it avail to fay, that you are *circumcised*,  
 “ and obferve the *Rites* and *Ceremonies* of the  
 “ Law] Circumcifion indeed profiteth, if thou  
 “ keep the Law ; but if thou be a Transgressor  
 “ of the Law, it will be the fame Thing in Effect,  
 “ and as to your State and Condition before God,  
 “ as if you were not circumcised. Yea, fo little is  
 “ there in this Pretence, that the very *Gentiles*

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were *Sinners*) but only, that the *Moral Duties* of the Law were understood and practifed among the *Gentiles*, as, indeed, they were, though all had transgressed in many Instances.

“ [whom

“ [whom ye so much despise] would, upon Suppo-  
 “ sition that they had fulfilled the *natural Law*,  
 “ be accepted of God *without Circumcision*, whilst  
 “ you, who are under the *written Law*, and are  
 “ *Sinners* against that Law, shall stand condemn-  
 “ ed *with Circumcision*. For the End of the out-  
 “ ward Circumcision in the *Flesh*, was, to lead  
 “ Men to the inward Circumcision of the *Heart* ;  
 “ and therefore, he who is without the latter,  
 “ cannot be a true *Jew* ; he cannot be one of those  
 “ to whom the Promises belong, merely in Virtue  
 “ of the former, *Verse 25, to the End of the*  
 “ *Chapter*. But if this be the Case, you will say,  
 “ what Advantage then hath the *Jew*? or, what is  
 “ the Benefit of Circumcision? *Chap. iii. Verse 1.*”  
 This Objection the Apostle considers under two  
 distinct Views, 1st. With respect to the *Means*  
 and *Opportunities*, which God had vouchsafed the  
*Jews* above the *Gentiles*; And, 2. With respect to  
 the present *State* or *Condition* of both, as to their  
*Justification* before God. To the Question under  
 the *first* of these Views, he answers, that the Ad-  
 vantage which the *Jews* had above the *Gentiles*,  
 was “ much every way; chiefly (says he) be-  
 “ cause that unto them were committed the Ora-  
 “ cles of God; they lived under a clear and ex-  
 “ press Revelation of the Divine Will, and there-  
 “ by enjoy’d those Degrees of Light, which the  
 “ *Gentiles* had not, *verse 2*. [And although the  
 “ *Jews* did not make a right Use of these Means,  
 “ yet were not these Advantages therefore the less.]  
 “ For what if some did not believe? shall their  
 “ Unbelief make the Faith of God without effect?  
 “ God forbid; yea, let God be true, and every  
 “ Man a Lyar, as it is written, that thou might-  
 “ est be justified in thy Saying, and clear when  
 “ thou art judged. The Gift of God to them was  
 “ the very same, how small soever the Effect of  
 “ it

“ it was through their Unbelief; For their Unbelief could not disannul the Promises of God. But, on the other Hand, their Unbelief, when compared with the Means they were under, would render them inexcusable, and justify the Righteousness of God in his Dealings with them, *ver.* 3, 4.” This Reasoning suggested an Objection to the Apostle’s Mind, which he stops a little to answer; and then comes to consider the Question under the *Second* View before mentioned, *viz.* Whether the Jews had made such an Use of the Advantages, which they had above the Gentiles, as to be really in a better State, with respect to Justification, than the Gentiles were; as to which he again declares, that there was no Difference between them, all of them being Sinners. For thus he proceeds, *ver.* 9. “ What then? Are we better than they? Are the Jews in a more hopeful State before God, than the Gentiles are? No, in no wise; for we have before proved against both, that they are all under Sin. As it is written, *There is none Righteous, no, not one;*” which are the Words of the Psalmist, whereby he continues the Description of the Sinful Estate of the *Jews* (as he had before that of the *Gentiles*) to *ver.* 19. where he closes the whole with this general Conclusion, *viz.* “ That every Mouth was stopped, and all the World become guilty before God.” What now is the Inference which he draws from hence? Why, you have it in the next Verse, “ Therefore by the Deeds of the Law, there shall no Flesh be justified in his Sight. For, by the Law is the Knowledge of Sin.” That is to say, By the Law all stand convicted of Sin, and therefore by the Law none can be justified. But from this wretched and miserable Condition, God was now pleased to offer a Releasement; for thus he proceeds; “ But now God’s Method of Justification,

" fication, without that Obedience to the Law  
 " [which all have failed in;] of which Method  
 " both the Law and the Prophets have born Wit-  
 " nefs; [This Method, I say] is now made mani-  
 " fest, to wit, the Justification which is by *Faith* in  
 " *Jesus Christ*, unto all, and upon all that believe.  
 " [I say, unto *all* and upon *all*] For there is no  
 " manner of Difference in this respect between *Jew*  
 " and *Gentile*; *all* have sinned, and come short of  
 " the Glory of God; and, therefore, *all* must be  
 " justified freely by the Grace of God, through  
 " the Redemption which is by *Jesus Christ*; whom  
 " God (who is patient and long suffering towards  
 " us) hath now set forth to be a Propitiation for  
 " *all*, through *Faith* in his Blood, to declare his  
 " own way of bringing us to Justification by the  
 " Forgiveness of our past Sins, that he might be  
 " just [in fulfilling what he hath promised] and  
 " the Justifier of him that believeth in *Jesus*. Thus  
 " then all Foundation of Boasting is intirely re-  
 " moved; not indeed by the Law of *Works*" (ac-  
 " cording to which, as the Apostle by-and-by ob-  
 " serves, whoever is justified, hath *whereof to glory*.)  
 " But by the Law of *Faith*, ver. 21, to 26."  
 And now we are got to that Passage, which is  
 the Subject of the present Dispute, and which I  
 shall e'er long very fully explain; " Therefore we  
 " conclude, that a Man is justified by *Faith*, with-  
 " out the Deeds of the Law." The *Jews* were to  
 be justified by *Faith* in *Christ*; and thus, the Apo-  
 stle again inculcates, should the *Gentiles* be justi-  
 fied as well as they; For, " Is God the God of the  
 " *Jews* only? Is he not also of the *Gentiles*? Yes,  
 " of the *Gentiles* also. Seeing it is one God who  
 " shall justify the *Circumcision* by *Faith*, and the  
 " *Uncircumcision* through *Faith*. Nor let it be said,  
 " that we make void the Law through *Faith*; for,  
 " in

“ in Truth, we establish the Law, *verse 21. to the*  
 “ *End of the Chapter.* ”

The Substance of the Apostle's Reasonings, then, is thus far unquestionably clear, *viz.* That both *Jews* and *Gentiles* being *Sinners*, the *latter* against the Law of *Nature*, and the *former* against the Law of *Moses*, there was therefore a Necessity upon both, to lay hold of God's Offer of *Pardon* and *Reconciliation* by *Jesus Christ*; of which, *Faith* in *Christ*, was now made the *only* Condition. And this comes fully up to the Sense of the Proposition at first laid down, and which was to be proved; to wit, That *the Gospel is the Power of God unto Salvation, to every one that believeth.* The Point, therefore, being now made good, he proceeds, in the next Place, to illustrate it by the Example of *Abraham*, which was a very proper way of arguing against the *Jews*, who owning him to be the *Head* from whom they derived all their *Privileges*, could therefore in reason expect to be justified no otherwise, than as he was justified. Concerning *Abraham*, then, the Apostle thus puts the Question, *Chap. 4.* “ What shall we say then, “ that *Abraham* our Father, hath found according “ to the *Flesh*? How, I pray, stood the Case “ with him? Was he justified by *Works*, or was “ he not? *Verse 1.* If he *was*, it must be owned, “ that he had whereof to glory; but it is plain, “ that before God, he had nothing whereof to “ glory, nor was he therefore justified by *Works*. “ For what saith the Scripture? *Abraham believed* “ *God, and it was accounted to him for Righteous-* “ *ness.* [Does not this make good what I say? Cer- “ tainly it does.] For to him that *worketh*, i. e. “ to him who *fulfilleth* the Law, and so justifieth “ himself by his *Works*, to him, indeed, the be- “ stowing the *Reward* annexed to *Justification*, “ becomes a Matter of *Debt*, and not of *Grace*; “ [And,

“ [And, therefore, had this been the Case of  
 “ *Abraham*, he would, as I said just now, have  
 “ had *whereof to glory*. But his Case was plain-  
 “ ly otherwise; his *Faith*, you see, was counted to  
 “ him for *Righteousness*, which supposeth, that he  
 “ had not fulfilled the Law] For then only is *Faith*  
 “ counted for *Righteousness*, when he who hath  
 “ not fulfilled the Law, is accepted on the Ac-  
 “ count of his *believing* the Promises of God, justi-  
 “ fying him whilst he is a Transgressor of the Law,  
 “ *ver. 2 — 5*. Accordingly, *David* describing to us  
 “ the *Blessedness* of the Righteous Man, speaks of  
 “ him, not as of one who had fulfilled the Law, but as  
 “ of one who was justified by the free *Mercy* of  
 “ God, through the *Forgiveness* of Sins. Saying,  
 “ *Blessed are they whose Iniquities are forgiven, and*  
 “ *whose Sins are covered; Blessed is the Man to*  
 “ *whom the Lord will not impute Sin, ver. 6 — 8*.  
 “ I ask then, Cometh this *Blessedness* upon  
 “ the *Circumcision* only, or upon the *Uncircum-*  
 “ *cision* also? [Since it is so plain, that all who  
 “ have heretofore been justified, were justified, not  
 “ by their *Works*, but by their *Faith* in the Pro-  
 “ mises of God, offering Pardon and Reconciliation;  
 “ do you not think, that the *Gentiles*, if they ac-  
 “ cept of the Overtures of God’s *Mercy* made  
 “ by *Jesus Christ*, shall be justified, (i) as well  
 “ as you? Why, in this Point also, the Case of

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(i) There were two Things, chiefly, which prejudiced the  
*Jews* against the Gospel. The one was, that it was a Charge of  
 Insufficiency against their Law, which they held in so great  
 Esteem, as to expect Justification by it; and the other, that  
 it set the *Gentiles* upon the same Foot with themselves, to  
 whom they thought the Promises of God were absolutely con-  
 fined. These two Points, tho’ very distinct in themselves, the  
 Apostle (who, seldom observes Strictness of Method) frequently  
 intermixes in this Dispute, as any attentive Reader will easily  
 perceive.

“ *Abraham,*

“ *Abraham*, will give you Satisfaction;] For we  
 “ say, that *Faith*, was reckoned unto *Abraham* for  
 “ Righteousness. How then was it reckoned?  
 “ When he was in *Circumcision*, or, when he was  
 “ in *Uncircumcision*? Was it before he was circum-  
 “ cised, that he was justified by his Faith? or was it  
 “ after? ’Tis plain that it was *before*; and that he  
 “ received the Sign of *Circumcision*, as the Seal or  
 “ Evidence of his being justified, in virtue of that  
 “ Faith, which he had yet being *Uncircumcised*.  
 “ [To be justified by *Faith*, therefore, is not a Pri-  
 “ vilege annexed peculiarly to *Circumcision*; for  
 “ if it were, *Abraham*, could not have been justi-  
 “ fied, before he was *circumcised*. But you see,  
 “ that *Abraham* was justified, before he was *cir-  
 “ cumcised*;] and in this he is a Pattern and Ex-  
 “ ample to *all* that believe, who shall be justified,  
 “ tho’ they be *not* circumcised; and a Pattern also  
 “ to those who *are* circumcised, who shall be justi-  
 “ fied, likewise, if they are not *only* circumcised,  
 “ but walk also, in the Steps of that *Faith* of our  
 “ Father *Abraham*, which he had being yet uncir-  
 “ cumcised; [that is, if, according to his Example,  
 “ they embrace the Promises of God, and conse-  
 “ quently, do accept of those Offers, which are now  
 “ made by the Gospel.] *Ver. 9—12.* For the  
 “ Promise, that he should be the Heir of the World,  
 “ was not made to *Abraham*, or his Seed, through  
 “ Obedience to the Law (which was not then in  
 “ being, nor was given ’till above Four hundred  
 “ Years after, *Gal. iii. 17.*) but through the Right-  
 “ eousness which was by *Faith*; which it will  
 “ be absurd to say, if they, and they only, who  
 “ are of the Law, be Heirs. Yea, upon this Foot  
 “ the Promise itself will be of none effect [because  
 “ none will have any claim to it;] For the Law  
 “ worketh Wrath [*i. e.* by or thro’ the Law all  
 “ are become subject to Wrath; and, therefore, by  
 “ the

“ the Law, there can be no Right to the Promise.  
 “ He who claims a Promise, by the Law, can  
 “ claim it no otherwise, than in virtue of a *Legal*  
 “ *Obedience*; but *Legal Obedience* there is none,  
 “ for, as I said before, all have sinned. So far,  
 “ therefore, is it, from being true, that the In-  
 “ heritance is to be obtained by the Law, that  
 “ the Law is, (k) accidentally become the Means  
 “ of setting us at the greater distance from it, as  
 “ having been the Occasion of involving us under  
 “ that Guilt, which we could never have incurred,  
 “ if the Law had never been given. Sinners in-  
 “ deed we should have been, but we could not have  
 “ been Sinners against the Law;] for where there  
 “ is no Law, there is no Transgression, *ver.* 1.—  
 “ 15. But therefore hath God appointed that the  
 “ Inheritance should be of Faith, that we might  
 “ have no Merit to plead, but that it might, as I  
 “ said before, be the free Gift of his Grace; and  
 “ to the Intent also, that the Promise might be  
 “ sure to all the Seed of *Abraham*; not to that  
 “ only which is of the Law, but to that also,  
 “ which follows the Faith of *Abraham*, who, ac-  
 “ cording to what is written of him (*viz.* That  
 “ he should be *the Father of many Nations*, and not  
 “ of one Nation only] is the Father of us all;  
 “ even of all who believe, whether they be of the  
 “ Law, or not of the Law; in like manner as the  
 “ God in whom he believed, is the Father of all  
 “ *Gentiles*, as well as *Jews*, *ver.* 16, 17. It was  
 “ that signal and eminent Faith of his, by which  
 “ without the least doubt or hesitation, not only  
 “ without, but against all the Grounds of Human  
 “ Expectation, he embraced the Promises of God,  
 “ which was imputed to him for Righteousness.

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(k) Compare these Verses with *Chap.* 7. *ver.* 7, to 12.



“ And it was not written for his Sake only, that  
 “ it was imputed, but for ours also, to whom  
 “ Faith shall likewise be imputed, for Righteous-  
 “ ness, if we believe in Him, who raised up our  
 “ Lord Jesus from the Dead, who was delivered  
 “ for our Offences, and was raised again for our  
 “ Justification,” *Ver. 18. to the End.*

§. XVI. And here the Apostle's Argument receives its final Conclusion; in explaining which, if I have not (and I dare not be positive that I have) hit upon the exact Meaning of every particular Passage, I am confident, that I have not erred from the main Scope and Design of the whole, which (as I before said) was to shew, that both *Jews* and *Gentiles*, being *all* Sinners, they had, therefore, *all* need to come to *Christ* for *Justification*; and that if they did, the *one* should be justified, as well as the *other*. Let us now see whether the Questions above propounded, will not, from what has been said, admit of satisfactory Answers. And, *First*, If it be inquired, *What that Law is*, whose *Works* or *Deeds* the Apostle excludes from *Justification*; I answer, That the *Jewish Law*, or *Law of Moses*, is directly and primarily intended; For *the Law* is not so much as once mentioned, 'till we come to *Chap. ii. ver. 12.* where the Apostle is arguing against the *Jews*, who were *under the Law*, in contra-distinction to the *Gentiles*, who, he says, were *without the Law*. In what follows, he is speaking still to the same Persons, and of the same *Law*, and (that I may just take notice of it by the Way) whenever  $\delta\ \nu\omicron\mu\circ\varsigma$ , *the Law*, is indefinitely used, the Word, in *St. Paul's* Language especially, has a peculiar Emphasis, to denote the *Law of Moses*, as every one must have observed, who has read his Epistles with an ordinary Care. But forasmuch as the *Law of Moses* was partly *Moral*, and partly *Ceremonial*;

it may, therefore, be farther asked, Whether the Apostle's Meaning was to exclude, *absolutely*, the *whole* Law, from Justification, or, so much only of it, as was *Ceremonial*; which I so much the rather mention, because some Writers, who have treated upon this Subject, have supposed, that the latter only was intended. And this, it must be owned (were it true) would be a very short and easy way of ending the Dispute, there being not the least Appearance of a Contradiction, in affirming, that we are *justified* by the *Works* of *Evangelical Righteousness*, and denying, that we are *justified* by an *Observance* of the *Rites* and *Ceremonies* of the *Mosaic Law*. But this Notion I can by no means agree to; not only because the Apostle speaks of the Law, *absolutely*, and without any distinction, but because the whole drift of his Reasoning shews, that it was his Design to exclude the *Moral*, as well as the *Ceremonial* Law from Justification. The Reason why the Apostle excludes the *Law* from *Justification*, is (as I have often said, and as you very plainly see) because *all were Sinners* against it. Now this Reason extends itself to the *whole* Law, both *Moral* and *Ceremonial*; yea, it was principally true with respect to the *Moral*; for the *Jews* were more apt to be backward in *Moral* Duties than they were in *External* and *Ritual* Performances. I observe farther, that all the *Transgressions* mentioned *chap. iii.* from *ver. 10.* to *ver. 19.* and on the account of which, the *Law* is excluded from *Justification*, are Breaches of the *Moral* Law; from whence it follows, that the *Moral* Law must be intended; And, of what *Law* can the Apostle be understood to speak, *ver. 31.* where he asks, *Do we then make void the Law through Faith?* (i. e. by ascribing, that *Justification* to *Faith*, which we deny to the *Law*) *Yea, we establish the Law.* Does the *Preaching* of *Faith*, think you, establish the

*Ritual*

*Ritual Law of Moses* ? Finally, the Apostle, by one and the same Argument, excludes the *Gentiles* as well as the *Jews* from Justification. But the *Gentiles* were only under the *Moral Law*, and, therefore, the *Moral Law*, as well as the *Ceremonial*, must be excluded from *Justification*. Now then,

§. XVII. *Secondly* ; If you ask, *In what Sense* the Apostle excludes the *Works* of the *Law* from *Justification* ? I answer, That they are excluded no otherwise, than consider'd as *abstracted* from *Evangelical Grace*, i. e. from the *Grace* or *Mercy* of God, freely declaring, or promising Acceptance through the *Forgiveness* of *Sin*. Concerning *Works* performed *under* and *in consequence* of this *Grace*, (of which Sort, are the *Works* of *Christian Obedience* ; concerning this Sort of *Works*, I say) the Apostle says not one Word ; yea, the very Nature of the Argument, shuts them out of the Assertion : For a Man's having *sinned* against a *Law*, can be no Reason why he cannot be *justified* by that *Law*, any otherwise than as that *Law* is supposed to require a *strict* and *punctual* Obedience ; or (which is the same thing) any otherwise than it is supposed not to admit of *Forgiveness*. For in case a *Law* does *not* require a *strict* and *punctual* Obedience, 'tis plain, that a Man may be *justified* by it, though he be a *Transgressor*. By the *Law of Works*, then, the Apostle plainly meant, the *Law of perfect Obedience*, and by the *Law of Faith*, that *Law* by which we are accepted through or on Condition of *Faith*, *without* a *perfect Obedience*. And when he said, that by the *Deeds of the Law* *no Flesh* should be *justified*, or, (which is all one) that a *Man* is *justified* *without* the *Deeds of the Law*, his Design was only to teach the *Jews*, that none of them could be *justified* by any thing

that could be pleaded by, or according to the Law, *antecedently* to the Grace of God, freely imputing Righteousness to them, through the Forgiveness of their Sins. He considers the Law as the Rule of Life, enjoining or commanding certain Duties to be performed ; and he shews them that they were all *Sinners* against this Law, to shew them, that they had all Need of *Mercy* ; and all this with a Design to lead them to that Gospel, by which *Mercy* was now freely offer'd to them.

§. XVIII. This is the Sense to which the Nature of the Apostle's Argument unavoidably carries us. Now there were two gross and capital Errors which prevailed among the *Jews* at that Time, and which made this Way of Arguing both proper and necessary. The first (for which they were severely reprov'd by our Saviour, *Matt.* xxiii. 23. and in several other Places) was, that it was (1) of little or no consequence, whether they observed the *Moral* Precepts of the Law, provided they stuck close to the *Ritual* ; the other, that whatever Sins were committed against the Law, they were to be fully expiated by those *Sacrifices* which the Law appointed : So that, upon the whole, the *Jews* were as well ignorant of the *sinful State* and *Condition* they were under, as of the *true Means* of procuring a *Releasement* from it. But the Apostle endeavours to convince them of both ; setting before them, in the first Place, their heinous Violations of the Eternal Law of Righteousness, in Consequence of which they were become obnoxious to *Wrath* and *Condemnation*, and

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(1) See this Point spoken to at large, *Bull. Harm. Dissert.* Post. Cap. 16. 17.

more inexcusable, even than the Gentiles themselves; and then, in the next Place, directing them to the *Blood of Jesus Christ*, the great *Propitiatory Sacrifice*, by which, and by which *only*, those who *believed* in him, should obtain Remission. This sending them, I say, to Christ, as the only true *Propitiation*, was a very manifest, though tacit, Charge of *Insufficiency* against the *Legal Sacrifices* to put away Sin; which is what the Apostle very plainly told the *Jews* of upon another Occasion: *Be it known unto you, Men and Brethren*, says he, *that through this Man* (Jesus Christ) *is preached unto you the Forgiveness of Sins, and by Him, all that believe are justified from all Things* (i. e. from Transgressions) *from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses*; i. e. (for so with the learned Doctor Hammond, I understand the Place) of which those several Ways of *Expiation* appointed by the Law, could procure no Remission, *Acts* xiii. 38. I must here observe, that when I speak of *Remission*, I mean, a *perfect* or *plenary* Remission, i. e. a Remission which reaches the *Conscience* of the Offender, and clears him from the Imputation of Guilt; for some Sort of *Remission* must be allowed to the *Legal Sacrifices*. But of what sort was it? Why, it was a *Temporal* Remission, or a *Release-ment* from certain *Temporal Punishments*, which were threatned to the Transgressors of the Law: This, I say, was all that the *Legal Sacrifices* could procure; and this, (by the way) they did only in certain Cases; for *some* Transgressions there were, which were not at all to be expiated by *Sacrifice*. But farther than this, they had no Effect in any Case: For tho' the Punishment was remitted, the *Guilt* of the *Sin* still remained not to be done away, otherwise than in virtue of the one great *Sacrifice*, which was to be offered up *at the End of the World*, of which the *Sacrifices* under the *Law*, were but *Types*

and *Shadows*. And thus the Author to the *Hebrews* (who is generally supposed to have been St. Paul himself) states the Case: *For the Law* (says he) *having a Shadow of good Things to come, and not the very Image of the Things, can never, with those Sacrifices which they offered Year by Year, continually make the Comers thereunto perfect* — *For it is not possible that the Blood of Bulls and Goats should take away Sin*, Chap. x. 1, 4. *It sanctified indeed* (as he tells us, Chap. ix. 9, 13.) *to the purifying of the Flesh*; but it could not make him that did the Service perfect, as pertaining to the Conscience. This he ascribes only to the *Blood of Christ* (verse 14.) who having offered himself as a *Sacrifice for Sin*, by that one Offering, for ever perfected them that are sanctified. But was there then, you'll ask, no perfect Remission to be had under the Law? Yes, most certainly; For he who is justified before God, must have this Remission: Now *Abraham*, you see, was justified, and the Apostle tells us, that in virtue of the *Covenant* made with him, and his *Seed after him*, of which *Circumcision* was the *Sign, or Seal*, ALL of the *Circumcision* who walked in the Steps of their Father *Abraham*, were justified as well as he. And this is the very thing which he is all this while aiming at, even to convince and satisfy the *Jews*, by what Method *Abraham* was, and all after him, were, and must be, justified; which being the very Method propounded by the Gospel, they would, when once they understood it, instantly perceive the Vanity of trusting to *Legal Performances*, and the Necessity they were under of coming to the Gospel. How, then, was *Abraham* justified? Why, not by his Works; Not because he was not a *Sinner*; but, by his humble and ready Submission to the Will of God, offering him, upon those Terms, *Favour and Reconciliation*. And how were his *Children* under the

the Law justified? Why, not because they were not *Sinners* neither; nor yet by the *Legal Sacrifices*, which could not *take away Sin*; but by submitting themselves also to the Will of God, and trusting to his *Promises*, according to the Example of *Abraham*. Now this, I say, is the very Method which was propounded by the Gospel. For what is the Gospel, but a Declaration of the *Promises* of God, in and through *Jesus Christ*, now *made manifest* (when the *Fulness of Time was come*) to be the *Author of eternal Salvation*? If then they would be justified with faithful *Abraham*, they must follow the *Faith of Abraham*, and laying aside all Confidence either in their own Innocency, or in any other Method of Reconciliation; obey God's *Call* and *embrace* his *Promises*, as *Abraham* did.

§. XIX. Upon this Foot, the Apostle's Reasoning is plain and conclusive; upon any other, it is past my Skill to make it so. For, on the one Hand, whatever it concludes *against* the *Jews*, in Case they accepted *not* the Gospel, the same it more strongly concludes *against* the *Gentiles*; and, on the other Hand, whatever it concludes *in Favour* of the *Jews*, in case they *did* accept the Gospel, the same also it concludes *in Favour* of the *Gentiles*; and the Conclusion, with respect to both, is, that which the Apostle undertook to prove, to wit, that the Gospel is the *only Method of Salvation*. To come now, therefore, to the Point; Since it appears, that the Apostle, when he says, that we are *not justified by Works*, excludes *Works* from *Justification*, no otherwise than consider'd as *antecedent* to, or *abstracted* from, the *Grace of God* promising Acceptance through the *Forgiveness of Sin*; 'tis plain, that this Assertion leaves us under the utmost Liberty to suppose, that

that *under*, or *in conjunction with*, this *Grace*, *Works*, may be *necessary to Justification*. For, there is no Inconsistency, in saying, that we cannot be justified by *Works without* the merciful *Forgiveness* of God, and in affirming, that *Works* are, in a certain Degree, the *Condition* upon which that *Forgiveness* is offer'd. Now this is manifestly our Case; For, we acknowledge, that we are all of us *Sinners*, and consequently, that we cannot be *justified without* that *Pardon* which is freely offer'd us by and through *Jesus Christ*: But then we say, that this *Pardon* is offer'd us no otherwise than upon *Condition* of our *Obedience*, i. e. our *future* or *final* *Obedience*, and in this Sense it is, that we affirm, that *Works* are necessary to our *Justification*: We ascribe *Justification* to *Works*, therefore, not consider'd as *abstracted* from *Evangelical Grace*, but consider'd as *under* or *in Conjunction with* it. In which Account we shall agree with *St. Paul*, as *St. Paul* will also agree with himself, when he says, that we are *justified by Faith*, if under the Word *Faith* he includes *Works* of *Evangelical Obedience*. Now, that he *does*, has been already shewn, and will yet more fully appear by the Case of *Abraham*. For, let us consider what it was by which he was justified; Was it his *Faith, alone*? Was it a *mere Belief* in the *Promises* of God, consider'd as *distinct* from its proper and genuine *Effects*? Or, was it his *Faith in conjunction with* that *Obedience* to the *Divine Will*, which he was directed to by his *Faith*? Why, common Sense might sufficiently convince any Man, that it was the *latter*. But if you would know how the *Holy Ghost* has resolved this Question, the Author to the *Hebrews* will inform you; who having observed (*Chap. x. Verse 38.*) that the *Just shall live by Faith*, goes on *Chap. xi.*) to exemplify it in this Manner. By *Faith* *Abel offer'd unto God, a more excellent Sacrifice than*



than Cain, by which he obtained Witness that he was Righteous; God testifying of his Gifts — By Faith, Noah being warned of God of Things not seen as yet, moved with Fear, prepared an Ark, to the Saving of his House, by the which he — became Heir of the Righteousness which is by Faith. By Faith, Abraham, when he was called to go out into a Place which he should after receive for an Inheritance, obeyed — sojourned in the Land of Promise, as in a strange Country — offered up his only begotten Son, of whom it was said, That in Isaac shall thy Seed be called. Thus the Apostle: And now, pray, ask yourself; What was it by which Abel obtained Witness that he was Righteous? Why, you are expressly told, that it was his Offering (through Faith) a more excellent Sacrifice than Cain. Again, What was it by which Noah became Heir of the Righteousness which is by Faith? Why, you are also expressly told, that it was his preparing (through Faith) an Ark to the saving of his House. So that neither of these were justified merely by their Faith, but by their Faith in conjunction with their Obedience. And was not the Case of Abraham the same? Must it not be said of him likewise, that he was justified not merely by his Faith, but by his Obedience to the Divine Call? If you can yet doubt, hear St. James, Was not Abraham our Father justified by Works, when he had offered Isaac his Son upon the Altar? He answers himself, in the very next Words, *βλέπεις*, Thou seest how the Case stands; His Faith wrought with his Works, and by Works was his Faith made perfect; and the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for Righteousness, Jam. ii. 21, 22, 23.

§. XX. But concerning the Doctrine of St. James, enough has been said in the foregoing Part  
of

of this Discourse; It was my Business now to shew, that *St. Paul* teaches the same Thing, which I hope I have done, and which I do not well see how it can be done, if the Method I have pursued be not admitted of. There are, besides this, but Three Ways, by which a Reconciliation between these Two Apostles has ever been attempted. The *First* supposes, that *St. Paul* speaks of our Justification *before God*, and *St. James* of our Justification *before Man*, which has already been refuted. The *Second*, That whereas *St. Paul* speaks of a *True Faith*, *St. James* speaks of a *False and Hypocritical Faith*. But against this there lie these unanswerable Objections, *vis.* That the *Faith* which *St. James* speaks of, is a *Faith* of which he *approves*, and which wants nothing but *Works* correspondent to it, to make it *effectual* towards Justification. *Thou believest*, says he, *that there is one God; Thou dost well*, Verse 19. And Verse 24. *Ye see then, that by Works a Man is justified, and not by Faith only*; which implies, as has before been observed, that *Faith*, though it be not the *Sole*, is yet a *partial* Cause of Justification. Now these Things cannot be affirmed of a *False* or *Hypocritical Faith*, which in Truth is no *Faith* at all: For neither does it deserve Praise, nor does it contribute any Thing to our Justification. Furthermore, the *Faith* of which *St. James* speaks, is such a *Faith* as *Abraham* had; and who will say, that the *Faith* of *Abraham* was *False* and *Hypocritical*? This way, therefore, of solving the Difficulty, can by no means stand. Nor will they succeed better, who say, *Thirdly*, that whereas *St. Paul* speaks of our *First* Justification, *i. e.* of our first Admittance to the Grace and Favour of God, *St. James* speaks of our *Second* and *Final* Justification; and, in consequence of this Distinction, would have us believe, that with respect to the one, *Faith alone* is sufficient, but that  
 both

both *Faith* and *Obedience* are necessary to the other; For the Notion of *Justification* is the same, whatever State or Condition a Man is under, to wit, his being accounted or adjudged *Righteous* before God; and there is no more Reason to say, that we are *at first* accounted *Righteous* merely in virtue of our *Faith*, than there is to say, that we are so accounted merely in virtue of our *Faith*, at any Time *afterwards*. The *First* Justification of a Christian, is that which he receives when he is first made a Christian, *i. e.* when he is made a *Member* of *Christ* by *Baptism*. Now *Baptism* is an Act of *Obedience*, and that *Repentance* which is necessary to qualify us for *Baptism*, is likewise an Act of *Obedience*; there is, therefore, the same Relation between *Obedience* and this *First* Justification, that there is between *Obedience* and the *Second* or *Final* Justification. True it is, that *more* Duties are required of a Man *under* the Covenant, than are necessary to this Admission *into* the Covenant; so that in this respect there is indeed a Difference between that which justifies us *at first*, and that which justifies us *afterwards*. But the Point is not merely, whether there is a Difference, but whether the Difference lies precisely in this, that whereas *Faith* and *Obedience* are *both* necessary, as to the *Second* Justification, *Faith alone* is sufficient as to the *First*; and it is plain, that it doth *not*, because *Obedience* is alike required in order to *both*. The particular Acts of *Obedience* may not indeed be the same in both Cases, because the *Measure* of *Obedience* is not the same. But *Faith* cannot be *alone* in either, but must be attended with such an *Obedience*, as is proper to the State or Condition we are under.

§. XXI. It is then a very fair Presumption (to say no more of it) that the foregoing Method of reconciling St. *Paul* and St. *James* is the true one, that

that no other rational Method can be thought of. And now having shewn what is the Scriptural Notion of *Saving* or *Justifying* Faith, it may be expected, perhaps, that I should proceed to consider the Opinions of those who have explained it otherwise. Now this I should be ready enough to do, if there were any one general Notion, that I could fix upon. But Error has no certain and standing Rule; and so it is, that those Divines who have contradicted the Truth in this particular, do not more differ from it, than they do from one another; not to say even from themselves. But how widely distant soever they are, as to some particular Circumstances, yet they all meet at the last (and so it must needs be) in one common Road of Darkness; and I must say, with the learned Bishop Bull, that it requires (m) ὑπερβαλλον μέθεθ' ἀσχινοίας, a superlative measure of Acuteness and Sagacity, to be able clearly to explain and reconcile what they say upon this Subject. (n) To hunger and thirst after Righteousness; to fly, to lay hold of, embrace, lean, rest, roll upon, cleave unto God or Christ, these are the Phrases by which the Formality of justifying Faith is set forth differently, by different Writers; by which, if their Meaning were to describe to us the Temper of a Man, under an intire Submission to the Will of God, they would say as we say, viz. That we are justified not by Faith alone, but by Faith in conjunction with Obedience. But since this is what they do not intend, it can signify nothing to inquire what they do; 1. Because upon this foot the Words can have no sound Meaning at all; and, 2. Because whatever it be that they are supposed to signify, we may be very sure, from

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(m) Ibid. Dissert. prior Cap. 4. §. 4.

(n) Vid. Ludov. Le Blanc Theol. de Fid. Justif. Nat. & Essentia.

what has been said, that it is not that by which we are justified. But there is one Notion which I very clearly understand, and which it may be proper just to mention by Way of Caution; and that is, that *justifying Faith* consists in a Man's being under an *absolute Assurance*, that he is in a *State of Salvation*, or, which is all one, that he is *already justified*. This Notion, which, to the great Shame and Scandal of the Reformation, hath been maintained by many, even of our own Divines, appears, at the very first sight, to be both absurd and dangerous. The Danger of it appears from hence, that it makes the *Justification* and *Salvation* of Men, to depend not upon the Judgment of *God* concerning them, but upon *their own* Judgment concerning themselves; so, that let a Man, on the one Hand, be never so wicked, he will yet be *justified*, if he can but have the Confidence to think that he is so; and, on the other Hand, let him be never so upright, he may yet *not* be justified, through some pitiable Mistake, which his Weakness may lead him into, and to which by how much the less apt he is to think highly of himself, he will always be by so much the more exposed. But what Sense is there in saying, that a Man is *Justified* by *believing* that he is *justified*? To me the Thing is utterly incomprehensible. For if God hath made our *Justification* to depend upon any *Conditions*, as undoubtedly he has, these *Conditions* must be performed; and, consequently, a Man must be *actually justified*, before he can in reason *believe* that he is *justified*; upon which foot it is plain, that this *Belief* cannot be the *Cause*, but the *Effect* or *Consequent* of *Justification*. And if a Man be so unreasonable as to believe, that he hath performed these *Conditions*, when he hath not performed them, 'tis monstrous to imagine, that such an unreasonable *Belief* shall *justify* him. It would be no hard mat-

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ter to pursue this Point more at large; but I think it would be an Abuse of my Reader's Patience, to dwell upon a Mistake which is in itself too gross not to be taken notice of. I shall, therefore, add Two general Observations from the whole; and with these put an end to this Discourse.

§. XXII. And, *First*, from what has been said, we may be able to give a clear and satisfactory Answer to a Question which has caused much Trouble to some Divines, *viz.* What is the *Difference* between that *Faith* which *justifies*, and that *Faith* which doth *not* justify. For if the Meaning of this Question be this, What is the Difference between that *Faith* which *alone* justifies, and that which *alone* doth not justify? the Answer is obvious, That there is just the same Difference between the one and the other, as there is between a Thing which *is*, and a Thing which is *not*; for there is, as has been shewn, no *Faith* which *alone* justifies. But if the Meaning of the Question be, What is the Difference between that *Faith* which *leads to* or *effects Obedience* (for this upon the present foot is the only Sense in which *Faith* can be said to *justify*) and that *Faith* which doth *not*? I answer, That there is no *essential* Difference between them. For *Faith* is a *firm* and *undoubted Assent* to the *Gospel Revelation*, which, therefore, must be supposed in every one that is said to believe; Now, *Assent* is a simple Act of the Mind, and admits of no other Difference, than what relates to its *Permanency* or *Constancy* of *Continuance*; and in this Circumstance it is, that the *Faith* which works *Obedience*, differs from that which doth *not*. The one is ready at hand upon all Occasions, and both reminds us of our Duty and of our everlasting Interest, when we have most need to be awakened into a just Sense of them. The other is flitting and uncertain; hovers about

us in our easy and pleasant Hours, but is driven away when once the Storm of Temptation ariseth. Now this Difference being founded in the State or Disposition of the *Will*, by which the Mind applies itself, more or less, attentively to consider the Object of our Faith; we may from hence, *Secondly*, discover the Vanity of our modern *Enthusiasts*, who will sometimes ascribe a *Saving Faith*, or a *Saving Knowledge*, to such a Power as is proper to affect the *Understanding* only. Thus, for instance; some will tell us, That (o) *without an effectual powerful Work of the Holy Spirit, creating, and, by his Almighty Power, inducing, a New saving Light into the Minds of Men; they are not able to discern, receive, understand, or believe savingly, Spiritual Truths, or cannot receive Spiritual Things in a Spiritual Manner.* Others, That (p) *no Man can spiritually or savingly understand and believe the Truths of the Gospel, without an inward immediate Revelation of the Spirit, shining in upon the Heart, and enlightening and opening the Understanding.* And yet, at the same Time, these Men will grant, that a Man may *literally, speculatively, and historically* understand and believe these Things, without the help of this *New Light* or *Revelation*, (whatever it be) even by a proper use of his natural Faculties. Now this is such gross and palpable Nonsense, that were it not for the Pomp of Words with which it is disguised, it must be obvious to the most ordinary Understanding. For if by understanding the Truths of the Gospel *literally*,

(o) See Dr. Clagett Introd. to Par. 1.

(p) *Barclay Apol. Prop. 2.*

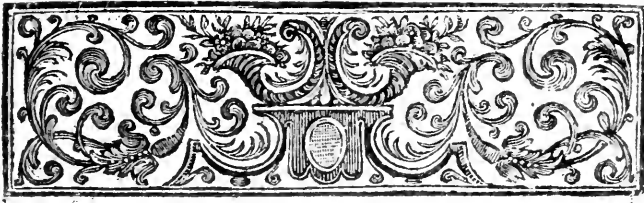
*speculatively*, and *historically*, they mean understanding and believing them as they really are, but not reducing them to Practice (which is the only sound Sense, that can be put upon these Words) 'tis ridiculous to say, that a Man may do this without a *New Light* or *Revelation*, and yet at the same Time, to pretend, that he wants this *New Light* to enable him to believe or understand them *savingly*. For, when once a Man rightly apprehends, and firmly believes the Truths of the Gospel, the *Understanding* has done all, that it is proper and possible for it to do; And if after this he does not understand, or believe them *spiritually* and *savingly*, the Fault lies wholly in the *Will*, which doth not apply itself to consider of, and to conform itself to, what the *Understanding* judges to be fit and reasonable. To speak Sense, therefore, it should be said either, 1. That no Man can understand or believe the Truths of the Gospel *at all*, without this *New Light* or *Revelation*: Or, 2. If they grant, that a Man may understand or believe these Things, and only alledge, that he cannot do it *savingly*, the Case supposed should be, not that he wants any *New Light* or *Revelation* (for this is proper only to affect the *Understanding*, which is supposed already to be sufficiently informed) but, that he wants some Assistance of another sort (distinct from mere *natural Abilities*) which is proper to influence the *Executive Powers*. This latter is true, but then it doth not suit with their Purpose; For the great Use which they make of this Principle, is, not to reform Mens Practices, but to impose upon their Understandings; It is not to shew what is necessary to make them act consistently with their Faith, but to lead them to believe, as *they* believe, in contradiction to the clearest Evidences of Common Sense and Reason. Do but under-



dertake to argue against their Principles, and they will answer your Objections by telling you, they are *carnal Reasoning*. “ And when they have run themselves upon manifest Absurdities, they will come off by pretending, that these are Mysteries not to be understood without the *Illumination* of the *Spirit*, and, therefore, *Natural Men*, as you are, cannot understand them. ’Tis true, they make Use of Scripture very often, and pretend, that they believe nothing, but what they are able to prove from thence; but then, if you make it never so plain, that they argue weakly; and alledge Scripture impertinently, this will not serve your Turn; for you will be told, That you have not as yet received, that *new saving Light* which can only make you understand Spiritual Things Spiritually.” Thus they deceive the Ignorant and Unwary! But how could they deceive, if they would speak so as to be understood? Should they take upon them to say absolutely, That though the Scriptures are a Compleat and Perfect Revelation of God’s Will, yet they are not to be understood and believed without another Revelation; who would believe them? or how could they believe themselves? Again, should they say, That after a Man, by the Use of the Scriptures, has got a right Faith, he cannot live a Holy and a Christian Life, without a *new Light* or *Revelation*; the Impertinency of the Assertion, with respect to such as want to be satisfied about the Truth of their Doctrines, would be as visible as the Falseness of it. One way, therefore, was only left, *viz.* To turn the Whole into a most Sublime and Mysterious Piece of Nonsense, and thereby to seem to say something, when in Truth they say nothing at all. But they do not more impose upon others, than (if they be in earnest) they have imposed upon themselves.

felves. And the great Misfortune is, that when once Men have habituated themselves to this way of Thinking, or rather *Talking*, they have intirely removed themselves out of the reach of Conviction. For when once a Man comes to have renounced his Reason, which is the Case of all who flee to this *New Light*, 'tis ridiculous to suppose, that there is any good to be done with him in the Way of Reason.






## DISCOURSE III.

CONCERNING

G O S P E L H O L I N E S S ;

O R

## S A N C T I F I C A T I O N .

§. I. \*  WITH the foregoing Points con-  
 cerning *Regeneration* and *Justi-* Par. 2.  
*fication*, that concerning SANC- Chap. 6.  
 TIFICATION has a very close Sect. 1.  
 Connexion. That *Holiness* P. 241.  
 is an indispensable Condition of  
 Salvation, no Man can deny; and for this Reason,  
 one would hope it should be no hard matter to  
 understand what it is; † But some Men will tell  
 us, That it is, “in the Nature of it, *abstruse* and  
 “*mysterious, undiscernable to the Eye of carnal*  
 “*Reason;*” and under this Pretence, several things  
 have been advanced concerning it, not only false,  
 but dangerous, “tending both to betray the Com-  
 “fort of the Good, and (which is worse) to hinder  
 “the Repentance of the Wicked. I make no que-  
 “stion, but that the Pure in Heart, know the ex-  
 “cellent *Advantages* of Holiness, better than the  
 “*Carnal*”

“ *Carnal Mind*, so continuing, can know them ;  
 “ for Experience instructeth and convinceth more  
 “ effectually than dry Argument. And I believe,  
 “ no Man can describe the *Joys* of the *Holy Ghost* .  
 “ in that manner, that one who is *alienated from*  
 “ *the Life of God*, may thereby attain such an un-  
 “ derstanding of them, as the Godly Man has, by  
 “ the Sense and Feeling of them.” But as to the  
*Nature* of Holiness, I am far from believing it to  
 be a hard matter, to make even a wicked Man un-  
 derstand what it is, as I now hope to shew in a  
 very few Words.

p. 245.

§. II. The Word *Holiness*, is diversely made use  
 of, both by Sacred and Profane Writers. Some-  
 times it signifies a bare *Relation*, whereby those  
*Persons* and *Things* are said to be *holy*, which are  
 devoted to some Religious Use ; at other times, it im-  
 ports some particular *Actions* or *Qualities*, proper  
 to intelligent and rational Beings. Now it is in this  
 latter Sense, in which we are to understand the  
 Word *Holiness*, in this Dispute ; for we are inqui-  
 ring, What that *Holiness* is, by which one Christian  
 is distinguished from another ? Whereas in the for-  
 mer Sense, the Term is applicable to all Christians in  
 general ; for all Christians are, by their Profession,  
 dedicated to God, and in this Sense, consequently,  
 are all holy. \* This being premised, I say, in ge-  
 neral, That the Word *Holiness*, denotes such a *Be-  
 haviour*, as is *suitable* to a *Reasonable Creature*. Now  
 forasmuch as this *Suitableness* of *Behaviour*, hath re-  
 ference to some *Law*, which a *Reasonable Creature*,  
 as such, is supposed to be under, and since the *Law*,  
 which every *Christian* is under, is the *Gospel Law*,  
 or the *Law of Jesus Christ* ; the living in conform-  
 ity to *this Law*, must therefore be what is meant  
 by *Gospel Holiness*, or the *Holiness* of a *Christian* ;  
 i. e. it is such a *regularity* and *fitness* of *Behaviour*,

as the *Gospel* directs and engages us to. This is so plainly the Notion of *Gospel Holiness*, that it would be an idle, and a foolish thing, to go about to prove it, and in this there is nothing, but what is very easy to be understood. † But some, not satisfied with this plain and easy Notion, have, indeed, † made it, “ a very *abstruse* and *mysterious*, and, to † say the Truth, an *unintelligible* Thing,” as you will easily grant, I suppose, when once you come to hear, what they have said about it. Now there are two ways, by which the Notion of *Holiness*, has been corrupted, *viz.* “ 1. By *adding* something “ to its *Nature*, which doth *not* belong to it;” and, 2. By *taking away* from it that which *does*. To each of these Particulars, I shall, therefore, say something, as briefly as I can.

§. III. As to the former of these ways, by which the Notion of *Holiness* has been corrupted, we are told, “ 1. That it must be *the Fruit of electing* p. 266. “ *Love*, i. e. of a Man's being *absolutely* elected to “ eternal Salvation:” \* Which, were it true, seems † very impertinently offer'd, in order to explain what † Holiness is. For I am never the nearer, understanding the *Nature* of Holiness, by being told, that the *Elect* only are, or can be Holy. If, indeed, a Man's being *elected*, could be considered as a *part* of Holiness, this would go some way towards shewing what it means. † But this is impossible: For the *Antecedent Cause*, cannot enter into the † Notion of any thing which *Election* must necessarily be, with respect to Holiness, if Holiness be (as they say it is) the *Fruit of Election*. To say, that a Man's being *elected*, is an *essential part* of Holiness, is in other Words to say, “ That if a Man *not* elected, p. 267. “ attains to the *same Vertue* and *Piety* which is in “ one of the *Elect*, it is *not* Holiness in the *former*, “ though it *is* so in the *latter*.” \* Now this is pla- † cing

cing Holiness, in *part*, at least, not upon the inherent Qualifications of Men, but in the Decree of God, concerning their future Condition; which is just as good Sense, as if in the Definition of the Nature of *Loyalty*, you should include the *Favour* of the *Prince*, and say, that if a Subject be never so faithful in his Service, and zealous for his Honour, yet he is not *loyal*, unless he has the Assurance of a *Post* of a Thousand Pounds a Year. It were a low Task, to expose Men merely for talking out of the Way; but the Notion is dangerous, as well as absurd. For, next to the actual Enjoyment of God, in a Life to come, our greatest Happiness consists in having comfortable Expectations of it in this; and these must always bear a Proportion to the Assurance we have of our having attained to that *Holiness*, without which no Man shall see the Lord †.

But what Comfort can a good Man find from such Principles as these? Let us suppose him to be careful to please God in every Instance of his Duty; that he hath escaped the Pollutions that are in the World, thro' the Knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; in a Word, let us suppose him (so far as human Frailty will allow) to be every way perfect; yet all this is not *Holiness*, unless, also he be of the Number of the *Elect*. And how shall he know, that he is *elect*? By the Integrity of his *Obedience*? Not so; for this is often found, for a Time at least, even in those who are *not* elected. There is therefore (so far as I can perceive) no way left, but God's *inspiring* into a Man the Knowledge of his *Election*; And what is this, but to make "a *new* Revelation necessary to the Comfort of good Men;" \* which if any Man has so much Sense, as not to expect, there is plainly no Comfort for him, or if he weakly believes, that God doth ordinarily vouchsafe Revelations of this sort, he may easily be imposed upon, by the *Delusions* of his own *Imagination* (as too many,

I fear, have been) and so fancy himself to be an *holy Person*, when, indeed, he is in the very *Bond of Iniquity* †. This Notion therefore, not only de- †  
 stroyes the Comfort of good Men, but hinders (as I †  
 said) the Repentance of the Wicked : \* And this is \*  
 the Natural Consequence of the Doctrine of *absolute Election*, under what View soever you consider it.  
 But having, as I hope, effectually overthrown this  
 Foundation, in my Treatise concerning the *Holy Spirit's Operation*, there will be the less need for me to  
 take any farther Pains to remove this Superstructure.  
 For, plain it is, that if Men are not *absolutely Ele-  
 cted* to Salvation, their being thus *Elected*, cannot be  
*Holiness* or any Part of it †. Wherefore, †

§. IV. Secondly, I proceed to another Notion, which is, that Holiness must be an *infused Habit*, p. 261,  
 \* which I could readily agree to, might I have to 266.  
 the Liberty of explaining the Phrase. But as you \*  
 have seen under the Head of *Regeneration*, by these *infused Habits*, they do not mean a regular  
*Bent* or *Disposition* of Mind to Vertue, wrought in  
 us (indefinitely) by the *Holy Spirit* of God,  
 (which indeed, is that which constitutes the Nature  
 of Holiness) but certain Qualities, put into the  
 Soul all at once by an Almighty Operation. Now  
 this I say, That wheresoever there is in the Mind  
 a due Conformity to the Law of the Gospel, there  
 is true *Holiness*, whether there be any such *Habits*  
 as those Men speak of, or whether there be none †. †  
 But it is a very strong Presumption, that there are  
 no such *Habits*, because the Scripture speaks not one  
 Word about them; and it is very certain, that *Holi-  
 ness* doth not consist in such *Habits* as these,  
 because the Scripture *commandeth* us to be *holy*,  
 which would be a strange sort of Precept, if *Holi-  
 ness* were something which is *infused* into us by an  
*Almighty Operation* of the Spirit. I say, farther,  
 that

that where there is a due Conformity of Mind to the Law of the Gospel, there is *Holiness*, whether this Conformity hath been wrought by *Care* and *Exercise*, or whether it hath been effected (which rarely, if ever, happens) *all at once*. For the *Manner* in which a Thing is done, does not alter the Nature of it; and what can be more absurd than to imagine, “ That if *one Man* should by *Patience* “ *in well-doing*, gradually arrive to a good Dispo- “ sition, which is suddenly infused into *another* “ by the Miraculous Power of God; the *former* is “ *not holy*, though the *latter is*? If there were “ any need to confute so gross a Conceit as this; “ it may be done by the following Instances: The “ Apostles were by a *sudden Inspiration*, enabled to “ speak divers Languages; but if another Man “ should, by Study or Conversation, attain a like “ Skill, the *Effect* is plainly the *same*, though the “ *Causes* differ; the *Skill* is the *same*, though *in-* “ *fused* into the former, but *acquired* by the lat- “ ter. Again; When our Saviour turned *Water* “ into *Wine*, he added nothing, by the Miraculous “ Operation, to the *Nature* of Wine, which is still “ the same, whether it be produced by a *Miracle*, “ or by God’s ordinary Blessing upon natural Cau- “ ses.” In like manner, Whether the “ *good Dis-* “ *position* we are speaking of, be *instantaneous* or “ *gradual*,” whether it comes by an *irresisti-* “ *ble Power*, “ or by the *Assistance* of the Spirit “ *co-operating* with our Endeavours, the *Effect* is “ still the same.” And if it be *Holiness* in the one case; it must be *Holiness* in the other. Now the ill Consequences of this Notion are plainly the same with those of the Former: For, First, \* If the having certain *Qualities* infused or put into the Soul by an *irresistible Power*, be essential to *Holiness*, † “ It will be hard to offer a good Reason to any “ Man



“ Man that has a Mind to be excused, why he  
 “ should endeavour ” to be holy. “ For, I under-  
 “ stand not what can be reasonably said to excite  
 “ a Man to endeavour after that, which it is im-  
 “ possible, in the very Nature of the Thing, to  
 “ obtain, by endeavouring. ” \* Now this is  
 the Case, if this Doctrine be true ; for though good  
*Habits* may, indeed, be acquired by Exercise, as  
 that Phrase signifies a prevailing Inclination to do  
 the whole Will of God, yet, as it denotes *Super-*  
*natural Qualities*, infused by an *Almighty Power*,  
 (which is the Sense in which these Divines use it)  
 ’tis plain, that it *cannot*, as any one must see, but  
 those who are not willing to understand † .  
 Secondly, “ This Persuasion is equally dangerous to  
 “ the Comfort of good Men, who cannot upon  
 “ this Ground be reasonably satisfied of their own  
 “ good Estate. ” \* For how shall a Man know  
 that he has these *infused Habits* ? Either they are  
*sensible*, or they are *not* : If *not*, they can be  
 known no otherwise, than by a *private Revelation*,  
 and if they *are* sensible, they can be so no otherwise,  
 than by their proper *Effects*, i. e. by some *sudden*  
 and *violent Change*, which is perceived in the Mind.  
 But there are Thousands and Ten Thousands of  
 good Men in the World, who never perceived any  
 such sudden and violent Change in themselves † ;  
 and the more constantly and early a Man has been  
 trained up in Piety and Vertue, the less Sensible  
 must he be of any such Change ; and if, after an ill  
 Beginning, a Man has arrived to an habitual  
 Practice of his Duty, yet if he hath done it in the  
 Way of *Diligence* and *Industry* (which is most com-  
 monly, if not always, the Case) he has so much  
 the less Reason to ascribe it to a *sudden*, irresisti-  
 ble Operation. So far then, as I am able to  
 judge, “ the best Way that a Man can take to be  
 “ *sure* that he is *holy*, is never to endeavour in the  
 “ least

“ least to be so, but to live in an utter Neglect of  
 “ all the Means of Grace, and to be altogether  
 “ careless about mending his Life. For if, while  
 “ he is in this State, he finds himself, all on a sud-  
 “ den, to be an *Habitual* good Man (as the *Elect*  
 “ will sometime or other) he may be sure, that  
 “ *Spiritual Life* is *infused* into him, and that he is  
 “ therefore an *Holy Man*, because his Good Habit  
 “ could not be *acquired* by the Use of Means,  
 “ since he used no Means, to obtain it. ”

§. V. “ This is the plain Consequence of this  
 “ Opinion, ” which is alone sufficient to overthrow  
 it ; Wherefore, I now proceed to the other way,  
 by which, as I said before, the Notion of *Holiness*  
 has been corrupted ; and that is, by *taking* that  
 away from the *Nature* of *Holiness*, which does  
 indeed belong to it. Now this they do when they  
 separate from *Holiness* both *Moral Vertue*, \* and  
*Christian Obedience* ; which two things, why, and  
 how far, I distinguish, the Reader will presently  
 perceive. As to the first, they tell us plainly †,  
 That “ *Holiness differs essentially from all Moral*  
 “ *Habits of our Minds, however acquired or im-*  
 “ *proved, and they will not allow Moral Duties,*  
 “ *whatsoever they be, to be any Part of Gospel Obe-*  
 “ *dience.* ” Now, to shew the Falshood of this  
 Assertion, it will be proper, in the first Place, to  
 state the true Notion of *Moral Vertue*, and then to  
 compare it with the Notion of *Holiness*, as above  
 described ; for by doing this, we shall be able  
 clearly to see what Difference there is between  
 them. In general, then, *Moral Vertue* signifies,  
 “ *A prevailing Inclination of the Mind, to those*  
 “ *Manners, or to that Way of Life, which is best*  
 “ *for a Reasonable Creature. It is called Vertue,*  
 “ *because the proper Strength, Force and Vigour*  
 “ *of a reasonable Creature, consists in his Good-*  
 “ *ness,*

p. 247, †  
 248.

p. 249,  
 250.

ness, *i. e.* in a Temper of Mind, and Course  
 of Life, agreeable to right Reason. For, we do  
 then exert that *Fortitude*, which is proper  
 to the Excellency of our Nature, when the Man  
 governs the Beast; *i. e.* when Lust and all Bo-  
 dily Passion is subdued to the Law of our Mind.  
 It is called *Moral*, because it is conversant  
 about the *Manners*, *i. e.* the Customary Dis-  
 positions and Actions of Reasonable Crea-  
 tures as such; in Opposition to *Corporeal*  
 or *Physical*. Which expresseth that *Power* or  
*Energy in Natural Bodies*, "by which God governs  
 the rest of his Works. But there is besides this,  
 another Sense of the Word *Moral*, and that is,  
 When it is opposed to *Positive*. In this Sense  
*Laws* are said to be *Moral*, which are of *Natural*  
 and *Perpetual* Obligation; as, That *God is to be*  
*obeyed in all that he requires*; That we are to *do*  
*unto all Men as we would be done unto*; and the  
 like; \* and those are said to be *Positive*, which  
 we are bound to, not by any *intrinsic* Goodness  
 that there is in the Things commanded, but mere-  
 ly by the arbitrary Will and Imposition of the  
 Law-giver; of which sort were all the *Ceremonial*  
*Laws* amongst the *Jews*, and are the Institutions  
 of *Baptism* and the *Lord's Supper* now amongst us.  
 Agreeably to this Limitation of the Word *Moral*,  
 with respect to *Laws*, Custom has obtained to li-  
 mit the same Word when applied to *Human*  
*Actions*: That is, as those *Laws* only are said to  
 be *Moral* which are of *Eternal* and *Perpetual* Oblig-  
 ation; so, in like manner, those *Actions* only which  
 are done in conformity to such *Laws*, are said to  
 be *Moral Vertues*. Thus by a *Moral Man*, we  
 commonly mean no more, than one who lives up  
 to the Principles of *Natural Religion*, in contra-  
 distinction to those who observe not only these *Nat-*  
*ural Duties*, but also such *Positive Precepts* as are

enjoined by *Divine Revelation*. Thus, I say, Custom has obtained; but to say the Truth, I think it a very improper way of Speaking. For though the Distinction between *Moral* and *Positive* may be allowed, with respect to *Laws*, yet this does not seem to afford any Foundation for a proportionable Distinction, with respect to the *Actions* of *Men* conversant about those *Laws*. That is, though you may *absolutely* confine the Notion of a *Moral Law*, to such *Laws* as are of *natural* and *perpetual* Obligation; you cannot *absolutely* confine the Notion of a *Moral Man*, to him who obeys such *Laws* only. The Reason is plain, *viz.* That upon supposition, that *Positive Laws* are enjoined, Obedience to such *Laws* becomes a Part of *Morality*, as resulting from that general and universal Principle of *Morality*, which has just now been mentioned; to wit, That *God is to be obeyed in every Thing which he commands*. He therefore who refuses to obey even a *Positive Law*, is no *Moral Man*; but it is not worth contending about this. Let the Distinction be allowed, and the Matter will then be plainly thus, That *Moral Vertue* signifies either, 1st. A Conformity of Mind to the Duties of Religion both *Moral* and *Positive*; or, 2dly, A Conformity of Mind to such Duties only as are of *Eternal Obligation*.

p. 251,  
252.

†

\*

§. VI. Thus much being premised concerning the Nature of *Moral Vertue*, we may now easily judge, how far it differs from *Gospel Holiness* †; and plain it is, that in the first and general Sense of *Moral Vertue*, there is no Difference between them. \* For he that can distinguish between a *Conformity in Heart and Life to the Laws of Christ*, which is *Holiness*; and a *Conformity in Heart and Life to the Laws of RIGHT REASON*, which is *Moral*

*Moral Vertue* ; must give up his Christianity, *i. e.* he must be obliged to say, That the Laws of *Christ*, and the Laws of *Right Reason*, are not the *same* Laws ; or, in other Words, that Man is not bound, as a *Reasonable Creature*, to that Rule of Life which the Gospel proposes to him †. If the Phrase, *Moral Vertue*, be taken in the *Second* and more limited Sense, then indeed it is true, that *Moral Vertue* and *Gospel-Holiness* are not the same ; but even then the Difference will not be *essential*, as they say it is ; for *Moral Vertue* will still be a *Part* of *Holiness*, because all the Duties of *Morality* are enjoyned by the *Gospel*, and no Man can be a *good Christian*, who is not a *good Moral Man*. I will add, That the *main* of *Gospel-Holiness* does consist in *Moral Vertue* ; “ For the Discharge of those Duties which are in their own Nature indispenfible, is the most fundamental and most excellent Part of Religion, of primary Obligation, and the End of all other Religious Performances.” And for this we can desire no better Authority than that of our Saviour himself, in whose account “ the *loving the Lord our God with all our Hearts, and our Neighbour as ourselves, is the first and the great Commandment.*”

§. VII. \* And now, though I think I have made \* p. 256  
it as plain as possible, that *Moral Vertue*, in one <sup>to 259</sup> Sense, is a *Part* of *Gospel Holiness* ; and in the other, one and the same Thing † ; I will yet briefly take †  
notice of those *Objections*, which have been alledged <sup>v</sup> to shew the contrary ; \* The most principal of  
which is drawn from the *End* of *Human Actions*, *i. e.* from those *Reasons* or *Motives* upon which  
*Human Actions* are performed. Now it is very certain, that the *Reasons* or *Motives* upon which a  
Man acts, are that which constitutes the *Formality*,  
both of *Moral Vertue* and of *Gospel Holiness*, and  
there-

therefore, if these be *essentially* different, *Moral Vertue* and *Gospel Holiness* must be so too. But this is not the Case †; For the only Difference that is pretended, is, That in *Gospel Holiness* all Actions are performed, *with a special View, to the Glory of God in Jesus Christ*, which (say they) in *Moral Vertue* they are not. But this latter Part of the Assertion, is not universally true: The *Glory of God in Jesus Christ*, being, with respect to a *Christian*, an *End* as necessary to *Moral Vertue*, as it is to *Gospel Obedience*. \* Our Actions are then directed to the *Glory of God*, when they are done in *Obedience* to his *Authority*, and out of a *Sense*, that it is our *Duty* so to do; for then it is that we shew our *Reverence*, *Gratitude*, and *Filial Love*, and, consequently, give *Glory* to God. We also *glorify* God, when we are led to *Obedience* by a *Belief*, that he will finally *Reward* us; for this is an *Acknowledgment* both of his *Goodness* and *Sovereign Power*. Finally, Our Actions are then directed to the *Glory of God in Jesus Christ*, when, to all these Considerations, we add those *special Motives*, which arise from the *Redemption* purchased for us by *Jesus Christ*. This is the only sound *Sense* that can be put upon this Phrase †; and who doth not see, that he who acts not upon these Principles, falls as much short of *Moral Vertue*, as he doth of *Gospel Holiness*? \* *Reverence* and *Gratitude* to God, are undoubtedly *Moral Duties*, in which he is wanting, who doth not consider both the *general* and the *special Motives* he has to *Obedience* †. To *glorify God in Jesus Christ*, is, indeed; an *End* of *Obedience*, which *Nature* teaches not; but being once made known by *Revelation*, we are as much bound by the Principles of *Morality*, to regard this *End*, as we are those other *Ends* which *Reason* directs us to. \* Further; If you consider *Moral Vertue* as it subsists in those who are *not* under the *Light* of the *Gospel*;

spel, the *End* will indeed *differ*, but not *essentially*; because those *Motives* upon which a *Man* in this *Circumstance* obeys *God's Laws*, are not *set aside*, but *inforced* by the *Gospel*. A *Believer* has those *Motives to Obedience*, which a *Man* under the *Law of Nature* only, has not; but then he wants none of those which the other has. If a good *Heathen* follows the *Rule of Vertue*, in *Obedience* to the *Authority of God*, and in *Vertue* of those *Reasons* which arise from his *general Providence*, a good *Christian* does the same; which brings the *Matter* to what I said just now; to wit, That *Moral Vertue* differs in no *Sense* from *Gospel Holiness*, any otherwise than as a *part* differs from the *whole*; for the good *Heathen* doth *in part*, that which the good *Christian* doth, and he doth it too *in part* upon the *same Principles*. † As to the other *Objections*, they are taken from the *Efficient Cause*, which is supposed not to be the same in *Moral Vertue*, as in *Gospel Holiness*. But this must needs be an *inconclusive Way of Reasoning*, because different *Causes* do oft-times produce *Effects* of the same kind. We may, however, just mention the *Objections*, which are these, *viz.* 1. " That *Gospel Holiness* is wrought in us by the *especial Grace of God*, whereas *Moral Vertue* is a *Thing in our own Power*; to which it is sufficient to answer, That *Moral Vertue* is not *in our own Power*, but by the *Grace of God*. 2. They say, " That nothing can belong to the *Nature of Holiness*, which is not the *peculiar Fruit of Christ's Intercession*." \* But I understand not what can be meant by being the *Fruit of Christ's Intercession*, unless it be, being the *Effect of the Spirit*, which is procured for us by *Christ's Intercession*, and then the *Objection* has already received its *Answer*, for indeed it is the same *Objection* over again.

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\*

§. VIII. I think it not worth the while to tarry any longer upon this Subject, which, to those who understand what Notions these Divines have, of the *Nature of Moral Vertue*, may perhaps seem to be a Contention merely about Words. † For so indeed it is, that they speak of *Moral Vertue*, as if it consisted in “nothing else, but the (q) \* “Decency of *outward Behaviour* ;” \* Which, were it true, I should be ready enough to allow, that *Moral Vertue* is not *Gospel Holiness*, nor any part of it; because an *outward Decency of Behaviour*, abstracted from the *internal Rectitude of the Will*, hath indeed nothing in it that is truly good, or † praise-worthy †. But this, I may venture to say, is a Notion of *Vertue* peculiar to themselves; “much short of *Plato’s*, *Aristotle’s*, *Plutarch’s*, or “of any other Heathen Moralist who has written “well concerning Manners. Indeed there is no “one Thing, in the Notion whereof Men have “been more generally agreed, than in that of “*Moral Vertue*. What Variety soever there is “in their Expressions of it, they all concur in “this Sense, that it is (as I said before) a pre- “vailing Inclination of the Mind to those Man- “ners, or that Way of Life, which is best for a “Reasonable Creature; or an universal Goodness “of Manners, both in *Mind* and in *Practice*.” To affirm, therefore, that *Moral Vertue* doth not belong to the *Nature of Holiness*, will, I doubt,

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(q) Thus Dr. Owen, and thus also Mr. Turretin. *Moralia quibusdam dicuntur (opera) quæ quoad externam Disciplinam, seu actum externum, quam Substantiam vulgò vocant talia sunt* Loc. 17. Quæst. 4. §. 1. And he gives us a very broad Hint, that this was his own Notion, by denying universally, that the Vertues of the Heathens were good Works, for this Reason, because (as he pretends) they wanted the inward Obedience of the Heart.

found



found in the Ears of most Men, as if they might be good Christians without the Vertues, even, of a good Heathen. \* For which Reason (if there had been no other for it) it was proper to take this notice of it, and to shew the true Difference that is between them. But there is another Reason which made it still more necessary; and that is, that when you have set them right in the Notion of *Moral Vertue*, it will still be true according to their Principles, that it hath nothing to do with *Holiness*. Put the Case, if you please, of one who believes in Christ, loves and fears God, and in consequence hereof, yields a sincere and hearty Obedience to the Laws of the Gospel. This, I hope, is more than *outward Decency of Behaviour*. Now does such a Behaviour as this belong to the *Nature of Holiness*, or does it not? Why no, it doth *not*, if what they say be true; for according to their Notions, *Holiness* may subsist without it. You have already seen, that *Holiness*, in their account, consists in having certain *supernatural Habits* infused into the Soul, which *Habits*; as has afore been observed, are so far from implying a constant and regular Disposition of the Mind to vertuous Actions, that they may subsist under a State of the most heinous and deliberate *Wickedness*. This is farther plain from what they teach concerning the Connexion there is between *Holiness* and *Justification*, which they say (and very truly) cannot be separated the one from the other. But how do they explain this? By denying that *actual Wickedness* is consistent with a *justified State*? No such Matter, they tell us plainly, that (r) a *wicked Man*, whilst he is

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*such,*


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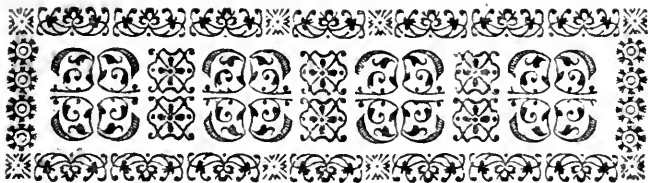
(r) Lice fidelis justificatus in varia incidat peccata ———  
 non sequitur sanctificationem ipsum divelli a justificatione;  
 quiz

*such*, may be *justified*; yet, say they, he is *holy*, because he hath remaining in him the *Habit* of Holiness. They separate *Holiness*, therefore, from *Moral Vertue* in its *true* and *largest* Sense, even when it becomes *Christian Obedience*; and the bottom of the whole is this, that let a Man live never so *wickedly*, he may yet be a *holy* Man. A Notion which doth so much confound the common Use of Words, and so flatly contradict what the Holy Scriptures every where teach, that I need not be at the pains to refute it. †

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quia si sanctificatio *actualis* tollatur non tamen *habitualis*—  
 qui peccat non sancti agit, sed potest tamen qui sanctitatis  
*actum* non exiit habere sanctitatis *habitum* in se manentem.  
 Id. *ibid.* *Quæst.* 1. §. 21.





\* DISCOURSE IV.

Of FERVENCY in PRAYER,  
and of the Work of the Spirit  
in Relation to it.

§. I.



**T**HAT it is through the Assistance of the *Spirit*, that we are enabled to pray acceptably, is a Point universally acknowledged by all Christians, those only excepted, who throwing the Work of his Grace intirely out of their Divinity, resolve every Thing into the mere natural Abilities of Men. And the Thing in general is not to be denied; For since the Efficacy of our Prayers depends upon those *Vertuous Dispositions*, which are required as necessary to *prepare* and *qualify* us for the right Performance of this Duty, and since these *Dispositions*, whatever they be, are all of them the Effect of the Divine Grace, that we pray acceptably, must needs be referred to the *Spirit*, as to the *prime* and *principal* Cause. But this Account, I conceive, does not reach the whole of what is commonly intended. For when they speak of the Assistance of the Spirit in Prayer, most Men seem to mean, not that Influence of the Holy Ghost,

by which, in the *general Course* of our Lives, we are disposed to Vertue, but some *peculiar Act* or *Operation* upon the Soul, which the *Spirit* is supposed to exert at the very *Instant* of Prayer. This is most remarkably true of those who pretend, that the *Matter*, and even the very *Words* of our Prayers, must be of the *Spirit's* inditing, which Conceit having been already refuted, there is no need for me to say any Thing to it here. But many, who do not run into this degree of Extravagancy, seem nevertheless to be of Opinion, that the Spirit does, by a *peculiar Act*, inspire into us that *Fervency* of *Mind*, in which the Life and Vigour of true Devotion doth consist. Now tho' this Notion hath nothing in it, which is in any wise unworthy of the Majesty of God, but carries with it rather a great Appearance of Piety; yet because it may be, and I am persuaded has been, the Occasion of dangerous Scruples in good Men, who have hereby been led to think a great deal worse of themselves, than they have deserved, I think it very proper to go to the Bottom of it, and see how much of it may be true, and how much is not so; And the Method which most readily offers itself to me, is this, *viz.* 1. To shew, What it is to pray *frequently*. 2. To inquire, *Whether* Fervency is necessary to render our Prayers acceptable; and what Degree of it will be sufficient. 3. To consider, How far we have reason to believe, that the *Spirit* excites us to *Fervency*, by any *Act* or *Operation* distinct from that Influence, which he vouchsafes in the ordinary Course of our Lives, to enable us to become good.

§. II. I begin with the first of these, What it is to pray *fervently*; and this is a Point which will require no long Discussion. For the Word *Fervency*, in its proper Original Import, signifies *Heat*

or *Warmth*, and when by a *Metaphor* it is applied to the *Mind*, denotes the *Briskness* or *Vehemency* of some of its *Passions*, which is very fitly and properly resembled to the Heat of Natural Bodies. To pray with *Fervency*, therefore, implies neither more nor less, than to pray with *Earnestness*, i. e. with a *vehement Desire* of obtaining what we ask for; which is a Thing so very plain and obvious, that 'tis surprizing to me, how any should be so far imposed upon, as to measure the *Fervency* either of their *own*, or of *others* Devotions, by what they *see* with their *Eyes*, or *hear* with their *Ears*; and that it should be thought a *Token* of the *Spirit*, when a Man *sighs* and *groans* out his Prayers, speaks *loud* and *dismal*, uses *warm* and *passionate Expressions*, and wrings his *Body* into various and uncommon *Postures*. The *Seat* of Prayer is the *Heart*, and there also is the *Seat* of *Fervency*. Now the *Heart* may be very *cold*, when the *Tongue* is most *warm* and *affectionate*; The *Desires* may be *low* and *groveling*, when the *Voice* is most *elevated*; and the *Affections* *indolent* and *unmoved*, when the *Body* is most of all in *Motion*. In short, as these, and such like *Circumstances*, are often present where true *Devotion* is not; so they are as often wanting where it is; They are Things, which *Art* can easily effect, and which *Nature* does not always produce. But wheresoever they are, and whence-soever they proceed, they are, with respect to Prayer, purely *accidental*, and, therefore, *indifferent*, so that what *St. Paul* hath said upon another *Occasion*, is also applicable here; *Bodily Exercise profiteth little, for neither if we use it, are we the better, nor if we use it not, are we the worse*. The same Thing may be said of *Weeping*, which though in some it may be the usual *Concomitant* of *inward Distress*, yet it is not so in *all*. For this depends in a great

measure upon *Constitution*, which is not in all Persons, nor in the same Person at all Times, disposed to be alike affected by the same degrees of Passion. As, therefore, we must not measure either the Greatness, or the Reality of any Worldly Sorrow, by the Number of our Tears, so neither must we, the Fervency of our Devotion; considering, that the Heart may swell and boil within, though the Sluices without be stopped up, and that Grief is not the less clamorous for being silent.

§. III. Thus much I thought it needful to observe, in order to guard against some common Mistakes. I now proceed to inquire, *Secondly*, Whether *Fervency* is necessary to render our Prayers acceptable; and what Degree of it will be sufficient. Now as to the first Branch of this Inquiry, *viz.* Whether *Fervency* be at all necessary; we cannot (I think) in the least doubt, which way it must be answered, when we consider those frequent Recommendations, which are given of it in Scripture. St. Paul desires the Romans, *συναγωνίζεσθε ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς*, that they would *strive or contend with him in their Prayers unto God*, Rom. xv. 30. Now we may be said to *strive* in Prayer, either with regard to one single Act of the Mind, or with regard to many. With regard to one single Act of the Mind, we may be said to *strive* in Prayer, when we desire a Thing with much *Passion* and *Earnestness*, or, which is all one, with *Fervency*; and thus our Translators have rendered the Phrase, *Colos. iv. 12.* Where we read of *Epaphras*, that he was *ἀγωνίζουσα ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς*, *labouring fervently in Prayers*. With respect to many Acts of the Mind, we may be said to *strive* in Prayer, when we desire a Thing, not only with *Earnestness* or *Fervency*, but *frequently*, i. e. with much

*Impor-*

*Importunity.* But though the Phrase, in a rational Construction, will bear this latter Interpretation, yet the Scripture Usage limits it particularly to the former, as seems plain from the Place in the *Colossians* above-cited, where we may observe, that the *Importunity* of *Epaphras* is expressed by a distinct Term. He was not only ἀγωνίζομενος, but he was πάντοτε ἀσπνίζομενος, where the ἀσπνίζομενος, denotes the *Fervency*, and the πάντοτε the *Frequency* of his Prayers, as it doth also *Luke* xviii. i. In truth, *Frequency* in Prayer is every where described in the Sacred Writings, by the Phrase of *praying always*, or some other Phrase equivalent to it, as προσεύχεσθαι ἐν πάντι καιρῷ, ἀδιαλείπτως, νυκτὸς καὶ ἡμέρας, and the like. However this be, thus much is certain, that ἀγωνίζεσθαι ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς, does at least imply *Fervency*, or an earnest *Desire* of obtaining what we ask for. For as a Man could not be said ἀγωνίζεσθαι, to *combat*, or *contend* with another, who should only lift up a Hand or a Finger, tho' he should do it never so frequently; so let a Man offer up never so many Prayers to God, he cannot be said ἐν ταῖς προσευχαῖς ἀγωνίζεσθαι, to *strive* or *contend* in Prayer, if he does it after a *cold*, *indifferent* Manner. The Word indeed carries with it the Idea of *Labour* and *Vebemency*; whence it is, that we say of those who are under any Excess of *Pain* or *Sorrow*, that they are ἐν ἀγωνίᾳ. *in an Agony*, because of that *Labour* and *Conflict* which the Soul feels upon those Occasions. There are a Variety of other Words, by which the same Thing is expressed; such as βοᾶν, to *cry aloud*, which is the property of those who desire to be heard; προσεύχεν ἐκτενῶς, to *pray intently*, which in the old Testament is called, the *pouring out of the Heart*, the *seeking God with the whole Heart*, or with the *whole Desire*. But it would be endless to mention Particulars, nor need we lay together the whole

Authority of Scripture, in a Case which is so plainly determined by the very Reason of the Thing. The Opposite to *Fervency*, is, as I just now hinted, *Coldness* and *Indifferency*; and surely, there can be little Reason for a Man to expect, that God should be ready to listen to those Prayers, which he himself is under no concern whether he will hear or not. To be *indifferent* in Prayer, is a sure Sign, that we are not under a just Sense, how much it is for our Interest, to have God for our Friend, because Men are naturally and unavoidably led to be solicitous after that which they judge to be of Consequence to the Happiness of their Condition. And whence can such a Temper as this proceed, but either from a *careless Stupidity*, which makes us unaffected with that which most nearly concerns us, or (what is worse) from a vain and wicked Conceit of our own *Self-sufficiency*, which causes us to attribute both what we have, and what we hope for, *less* to the *Providence of God*, than to *ourselves*. Take it under which View you please, and it will be plain, that a Person thus disposed, is a very improper Object of the Divine Favour; He hath no Merit at present; He giveth no Encouragement, by the Prospect of any good Use that he is like to make of it afterwards. The End which God proposes in dispensing his Blessings, is, that he may lead us to Obedience. He supplies our Wants, that he may ingage *our Gratitude* by *his Benificence*. But *Gratitude* always supposeth a *Sense* of the *Benefit* received; and the *Return* on the one side can never be *great*, where the *Merit* on the other is conceived to be but *little*. It would be easy for me to inlarge upon this Subject; but I content my self with these short Hints, and shall only add, That what I now say, I would have understood of those only, who are *habituated* to a *lazy, unaffectionate* manner of Praying. For,



as I am far from thinking, that every *wandering* in Devotion, implies so much Evil in its *Cause*, so I must not affirm it to be the same in its *Effects* and *Consequences*. The very best of Men do sometimes (and, God knows, too often) feel themselves interrupted in their most solemn *Addresses*; which arises not from any Slight that they put upon the Divine Favour, but from the *Weakness* of our common Nature, which will not permit us *constantly* to attend to those things with which *generally*, and *in the main*, we are most deeply affected. The *Pleasures*, the *Cares*, the *Business* of this Life, all of them claim one considerable Share of our Thoughts, and will surprize us now and then when they ought to be farthest from us. And therefore, let no Man be so rigid and severe with himself, nor think so hardly of God, as to conclude, upon every such Accident as this, that he wants the *Spirit*, and that he prays unworthily. For what we cannot help, God will certainly overlook, and the *Spirit* is given to *correct* our Infirmities indeed, but not to *extirpate* them. He makes us better *Men*, but he doth not change us from *Men* into *Angels*.

§. IV. Having shewn you in general, that *Fervency* is necessary to render our Prayers acceptable; I proceed, in the next Place, to consider what Degree of it will be sufficient: And here, not to descend to the lowest Degree of Sufficiency (which, perhaps, it may be a hard matter *exactly* to determine) I shall content myself with laying down this general Rule, *viz.* That *that* Degree of Earnestness will certainly be sufficient to render our Prayers acceptable, which is natural to the ordinary Temper and Disposition of a good Man, when he seriously considers of his own Wants; and

and that, therefore, we are not to infer, that we are destitute of the *Spirit*, because we are not carried away with sudden and violent *Raptures*, or because our Prayers are not attended with an *Accession* of *Vehemency* which we do not feel upon any other Occasion. The Scripture has no where determined the exact Measure of Devotion; it no where tells us, that our Prayers will not be heard, unless our Minds be wrought up into *extraordinary* and *uncommon* Emotions; And what Reason can possibly be assigned, from the Nature of the Thing, to shew, that God will not be ready to answer the Requests of those, who apply to him under a due Sense of their own Wants, and of the Dependency they have upon him? Give me leave to add, That Prayer being a standing and *ordinary* Duty, the *Essence* of it must therefore, be so defined, as that Men may be ordinarily *qualified* for the right Performance of it. But this they cannot be, upon Supposition that any *new* and *unusual* Vehemency be of absolute Necessity; For the *Desire* is not so far under the Power of the *Will*, as that we can raise it higher when we please; especially, when the Mind (as is now supposed) is already duly apprized of the Weight and Importance of the Thing desired. *Ecstasy* and *Transport*, has a very great Dependance upon the Bodily Dispositions of Men, to the exciting whereof, some peculiar external Circumstances may be necessary, which do not every Day occur; and consequently, can never be certain, either as to all Persons, or to the same Person at all Times, wherein it is yet very requisite and fitting, that he should pray. I am persuaded, I say no more upon this Point, than what all Christians do more or less find to be true, by their own Experience, which plainly enough shews, that an *Accession* of *Vehemency*, beyond what is natural to the *ordinary*

*Temper*

*Temper and Disposition* of a good Man, cannot be *essential to true Devotion*. But I will not go so far as to say, that *Devotion* is any thing at all the *worse* for it: I will not (as a certain \* eminent Writer has done of late) give it as a *Prescription*, that Prayer ought to be *calm and undisturb'd*; because, I can very easily understand, that what is not *essential* to any thing, may yet contribute towards the *Perfection* of it; and because I verily believe, that with how much the more *Earnestness* (or, if you please, *Heat and Flame*) a Man offers up his Prayers, upon Supposition, that all other Circumstances are as they ought to be, they will be answered so much the more effectually. I have not in general so bad an Opinion of the *Passions* of the Soul, as to think that they are either evil in themselves, or that they must needs cast a Blot and a Stain, whensoever they mix themselves in our religious Performances: Nature hath implanted them in us, for great and excellent Ends, and if they are fix'd upon a proper Object, they do, in Proportion to the *Intenseness* wherewith they are exercised, both argue an excellent Disposition, and lead to noble Attainments. Thus, in the Case now before us, greater *Earnestness* in Prayer, argues a quicker *Sense* of our *Wants*, and stronger and more lively Apprehensions of the *All-sufficiency* of that God to whom we apply ourselves for Relief; which Disposition of Mind, the more perfect it is, it must be so much the more *attractive* of the *Divine Compassion*: Our *Devotion*, therefore, must be by so much the more *perfect*, by how much it is the more *ardent* and *affectionate*; yet still I say, that the *lowest* Degree of *Earnestness*, which is consistent with the *Temper* of a good

Man, shall be accepted, though not with *the same* Success, yet with a Success *proportionable* to its Worth and Excellency : and to say otherwise, is in Effect to say, that a Man may be a good Man, and yet not fit to pray, which is a Contradiction both to the Word of God, and to the common Sense and Reason of Mankind.

§. V. This Foundation being laid, we need only to consider, with what Degree of *Earnestness* a Man ought *ordinarily* to desire the Supply of his Needs, in order to know more particularly with what Degree of Earnestness, it will be sufficient for us to pray ; and this Point will admit of a different Determination, according to the Diversity of *Objects* about which our Desires may be conversant : As Man is compounded of a *Soul* and a *Body* ; his Wants must have a Relation to both, and since God is the Sovereign Disposer of all good Things, both those which relate to this Life, and those which relate to a Life to come, 'tis plain, that the one as well as the other, ought to be the Subject of our Prayers. But then, since it is also plain, that the *Earnestness* wherewith we desire a thing, should be in some Measure at least *proportionable* to its *Value*, the Consequence is, that we must not desire *temporal* Things with the same Degree of Earnestness, wherewith we desire *Spiritual*, because the *latter* are infinitely more valuable than the *former*. With respect therefore to our Desire of *temporal* things, 'tis evident, that we may err in the Excess ; and in general, I believe ; it will be admitted as a true Rule, that by how much the *less* earnest we are about them, by so much the more *perfect* will our Condition be. Not that we are to be *absolutely indifferent* towards them, for this I take to be impossible ; and the Scripture supposes some sort of *Earnestness*, when

it teaches us to *pray* for them. But forasmuch as we know not, whether these Things will be profitable or hurtful to us, this *Earnestness* must always be *moderated* with Submission to the *Divine Will*, whether he will grant them or *not*; and the *more* it is thus *moderated*, *i. e.* the more firmly and cheerfully we repose ourselves upon his infinite Wisdom and Goodness, and the less we *lean to our own Understandings*, the more acceptable must we be in his Sight. And must not our *Earnestness* after *Spiritual Things*, be moderated also by a *Submission to the Divine Will*? I answer; Not for this Reason; Because we know not whether they will be *profitable* for us; for we are *sure* they *must* always be so; But then a great Difference must be made in this Case between Things *only Profitable*, and such as are *necessary* to qualify us for the Kingdom of Heaven. With respect to the latter, there is no room for this Distinction, because we are *sure* it is his *Will*, that all should be so qualified. But as to the *former*, since for wise Reasons he doth not bestow them to all alike, but in different *Degrees* and *Proportions* to different *Persons*, according to his *Good Will* and *Pleasure*, here also must be the same *Submission* to the *Will of God*, as with respect to *Temporal Things*. If I, who am already qualified for the Kingdom of Heaven, see another Man *better* qualified, *i. e.* under higher *Degrees of Improvement*, than my-self, I am not to infer, that God will enable me to attain to the same State of *Perfection*, if I labour after it. If I *desire* it, therefore, (as indeed I must, and ought to do) yet it must be under this Reserve, *If God in his Wisdom, shall see it proper* to grant it me. But the Case is not the same with respect to Things *necessary*; for these, I am sure, God is ready to grant; These, therefore, we cannot desire with too much *Importunity*. But the great Difficulty will be, to deter-

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mine what is *enough*, or to define what Degree of *Earnestness* after *Spiritual* Things, is essentially necessary to the *Temper* or *Disposition* of a good Man: Shall we say, that *Spiritual* Things ought to be desired by so much the more earnestly than *Temporal*, by how much they are of greater Value? I fear we must not. For then our Desires after *temporal* Things must bear *no Proportion* to our Desires after *Spiritual*, because there is *no Proportion* between the Excellency of the *one*, and the Excellency of the *other*. But where is that Saint now upon Earth, in whom the Love of God, and of a Life to come, burns with so pure a Flame? Who is there, that does not find his best Desires, allay'd by a considerable Intermixture of this World? Nay, who is there, that upon many Occasions, does not find his Affections so much clogg'd with the Weight of Sensual Appetite, that it is with some Difficulty that he can cast the Scale on the Side of Heaven? In Truth, to desire *Spiritual* Things, with an Earnestness justly *commensurate* to their intrinsic *Value*, is impossible, so long as we are in this frail and mortal Estate; because that *Spiritual Happiness* which we look for in another World, which is the End and Completion of all *Spiritual Attainments*, is not distinctly and experimentally known to us. We know, indeed, that it shall be very great, yea, infinitely greater than the most refined Happiness that this World affords; but *we walk by Faith, and not by Sight*: We have no *particular* and *sensible* Knowledge what it is, and therefore, cannot be proportionably so much affected with it, as we are by these *Earthly* Things which are near at Hand; which we see in all their Glory; which we taste and feel without Abatement. My Way of Thinking, therefore, in this Case, is plainly this, That such a Degree of Earnestness after *Spiritual* Things, as, with the

Divine Grace and Blessing, is sufficient to lead us to *Obedience* to the Will of God, is as much as is *ordinarily* and *necessarily* required from us; which I hope will not be disputed; because, if it be said, that any higher Degree is necessary; it must also be said, that *Obedience* to God's Will is not sufficient to qualify us for Salvation. The Kingdom of Heaven is proposed to us only as a *Motive to Obedience*; wherefore, if our Desires after this Kingdom, and the Things pertaining to it, be so great as effectually to lead us to the *keeping of God's Commandments*, this *Motive* has had its proper Effect; and, consequently, any farther Degrees, though they must always contribute to the *Perfection* of Holiness, cannot be of strict and absolute Necessity.

§. VI. Now, therefore, I think we may come to a full and plain Determination of the Point before us. For since, as has been shewn, that same Degree of *Earnestness*, which is natural to the ordinary Temper and Disposition of a good Man, will be sufficient to render his Prayers acceptable, and since every good Man must be supposed to desire *Temporal* Things under an intire Submission to the Divine Will, and *Spiritual* Things with such an *Earnestness*, as will effectually lead him to *Obedience*; 'tis evident, that he, who, thus disposed, shall address himself to God by Prayer, must pray with a true and acceptable *Devotion*: So that the great Criterion by which we are to judge of our Prayers, is, *The general Course of our Behaviour*; which will thus far be a certain Rule to us, that if we find ourselves able to overcome Sin, and follow after Righteousness, we need not doubt but that those Prayers which with Seriousness and Affection we

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have daily put up to the Throne of Grace, have found a gracious and a merciful Reception, and that the like Success will always attend upon the like Endeavours. But if, on the other Hand, we feel ourselves in no Condition to bear up against Temptation, but ready to yield and give way to the Force of every predominant Lust, 'tis as plain, that our Desires after Heaven, and Heavenly Things, want much of that *Warmth* and *Vigour*, which it is fitting and necessary for them to have, and, consequently, that whatever uncommon *Emotions* we may suffer whilst we are praying, they are the Effect of other Causes, and not of true *Devotion*. It is, therefore, absurd to suppose of a truly good Man, that he may want the *Spirit of Prayer*, or that *Grace* of the *Spirit* by which he is enabled to pray with sufficient *Fervency* of *Devotion*. Such a one, when he *prays*, i. e. when with Seriousness and Attention of Mind, he offers up his Requests to God; cannot be *without* true *Devotion*, nor, consequently, without that *Grace* of the *Spirit* which is *necessary* to true *Devotion*. I will beg leave to carry the *Point* somewhat farther; and to say, that an acceptable *Devotion* may subsist in those who at present fall short of that *Goodness* which is necessary to *qualify* them for the *Kingdom of Heaven*. For, *Prayer* is one of those *means* by which we must obtain that *Grace* which *qualifies* us for the *Kingdom of Heaven*; which supposes, that we may be qualified to *pray* acceptably, *antecedently* to our being qualified for the *Kingdom of Heaven*. And, therefore, I cannot in the least doubt, but that every Degree of *Earnestness* in Prayer, is acceptable to God, which is proportionable to the Advancement which a Man makes, when once he has made a good Beginning, and is daily going forward  
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in the Way of Righteousness. But this is a Point which I shall not any farther enter into; my main Business at present, being to administer some Comfort to those truly good, but weak Men; who though they have no wilful Miscarriage to charge upon themselves, are perpetually finding Fault with their *Prayers*, and filling themselves with endless and tormenting Scruples lest they should not have *the Spirit*, because (as I said before) at the *Instant* of Devotion, they do not find themselves *surprized* by *sudden* and *unusual Raptures*. A Man should never question the *Goodness* of his *Prayers*, at least, 'till he knows how to question the *Integrity* and *Uprightness* of his *Conduct*; If the *Matter* of them be but as it ought, the *Manner* of them can never be amiss, so long as it proceeds from an *honest* and a *good Heart*, of which, methinks, it should be enough to convince us, that we feel the good Effects of them in ourselves. But though I am desirous to remove all needless *Jealousies* on the one Hand, I would by no means lay a *Stumbling-Block* in the way to any good *Improvements* on the other: And, therefore, let me once more observe, That as with respect to *Spiritual Things*, every *Degree* of *Earnestness* (within those *Limitations* above set down) will add to the *Perfection* of our *general Estate*; so it will also to the *Perfection* of our *Devotions*. If, therefore, by daily *Meditation*, by *Fasting* and *Self-denial*, or by any other means, we can quicken our *Apprehensions* of the Excellency of a Life to come, and mortify our *Affections* more and more to this present World, we should not neglect to make the best use we are able of those *Advantages*. For, the *more earnest* are our *Desires*, the *greater* is our present *Distress*, and the *greater* our *Distress* is, the *more thankful* shall we be when our *Wants*

are relieved, which cannot fail of bringing down the most plentiful Supplies from that merciful Being, who is always compassionate to the Afflicted, and most liberally bestows his Favours upon those who will most thankfully receive them.

§. VII. One Point only now remains, which I hope will be dispatched in a very few Words, and that is to consider, *Thirdly*, How far we have Reason to believe, that the Spirit excites us to *Fervency of Devotion* by any Act or Operation *distinct* from that Influence which he vouchsafes in the ordinary Course of our Lives; concerning which Point, because the Scriptures are wholly silent, *i. e.* nowhere make any direct or express Mention of any such Operation, we must, therefore, proceed with the more Caution in the Resolution of it; and I think we shall not exceed our Measure, if we lay down the following Rules, *viz.* 1st, That as to that Degree of *Fervency* which is of *absolute Necessity* to render our Prayers acceptable to God, this being at most no greater than what is *natural* to the *Ordinary Temper* and *Disposition* of a good Man, we can have no Reason to ascribe this to any *Act* or *Operation* which the *Spirit* vouchsafes us at the *Instant of Prayer*. For the *Spirit* is given for such Ends and Purposes only as are *needful*, and it is plain, that no *new* Operation can be *needful* for the producing this Effect, because the *Spirit* hath *already* prepared us for it, by leading us to Goodness. 2dly, As to those *Transports*, which good Christians may sometimes feel in their *Devotions*, *above* what is *natural* to their *ordinary Disposition*, I do not think that we are presently to infer that even *these* are the Effect of any *new* Operation; and that because they

they may possibly be the Effect of other Causes. They may be excited by some sudden and natural Change in ourselves, or they may be occasion'd by some external accidental Circumstances, which work upon the Passions, and give us more lively Images and Apprehensions of Things; which is a Case; that, perhaps, may not rarely be observed by an Attentive Mind. But then, 3dly, I durst not take upon me to say, that the Holy Spirit doth never by any new or distinct Operation at the Instant of Prayer, excite us to greater Fervency, because the Possibility of its being the Effect of other Causes, doth not exclude this one, and because 'tis not unreasonable to suppose, that he may sometimes do it, though he hath no where particularly promised it. 'Tis very reasonable to believe, that the Spirit dispenses his Graces at such Times as Men are in the best Disposition to receive them; and, for ought that we can tell to the contrary, a Holy Motion may be able to make stronger and more lasting Impressions upon a Heart soften'd and made pliable by the Warmth of Devotion, than it could do under a natural and more equal Temperature. But in this, I will not venture to define peremptorily, because, I know not the Nature and Constitution of Man, nor the particular Manner of the Spirit's Operations; and, after all, 'tis possible, that the Spirit may no otherwise excite us to greater Degrees of Fervency, than antecedently, by a general and familiar Improvement of those Christian Graces which are the original Source and Fountain of true Devotion. If any one should believe this, I see not what Reason he would have to think the worse of his Prayers; but if he believes, that the Spirit comes upon him by sudden and violent Snatches, let him take care, that his Belief does not degenerate into a

dangerous *Enthusiasm*; which is the Case when Men are led to despise all *Evenness* and *Sedateness* in Prayer, and, especially, if, ascribing all *Heat* in Devotion to a *Divine Impulse*, they look upon it as a sure Evidence and Token of the *Divine Will*, and are thereby led (which I fear has sometimes happened) to pursue or engage themselves in such Methods, as otherwise, perhaps, they could not have consented to without Reluctancy.

*F I N I S.*





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