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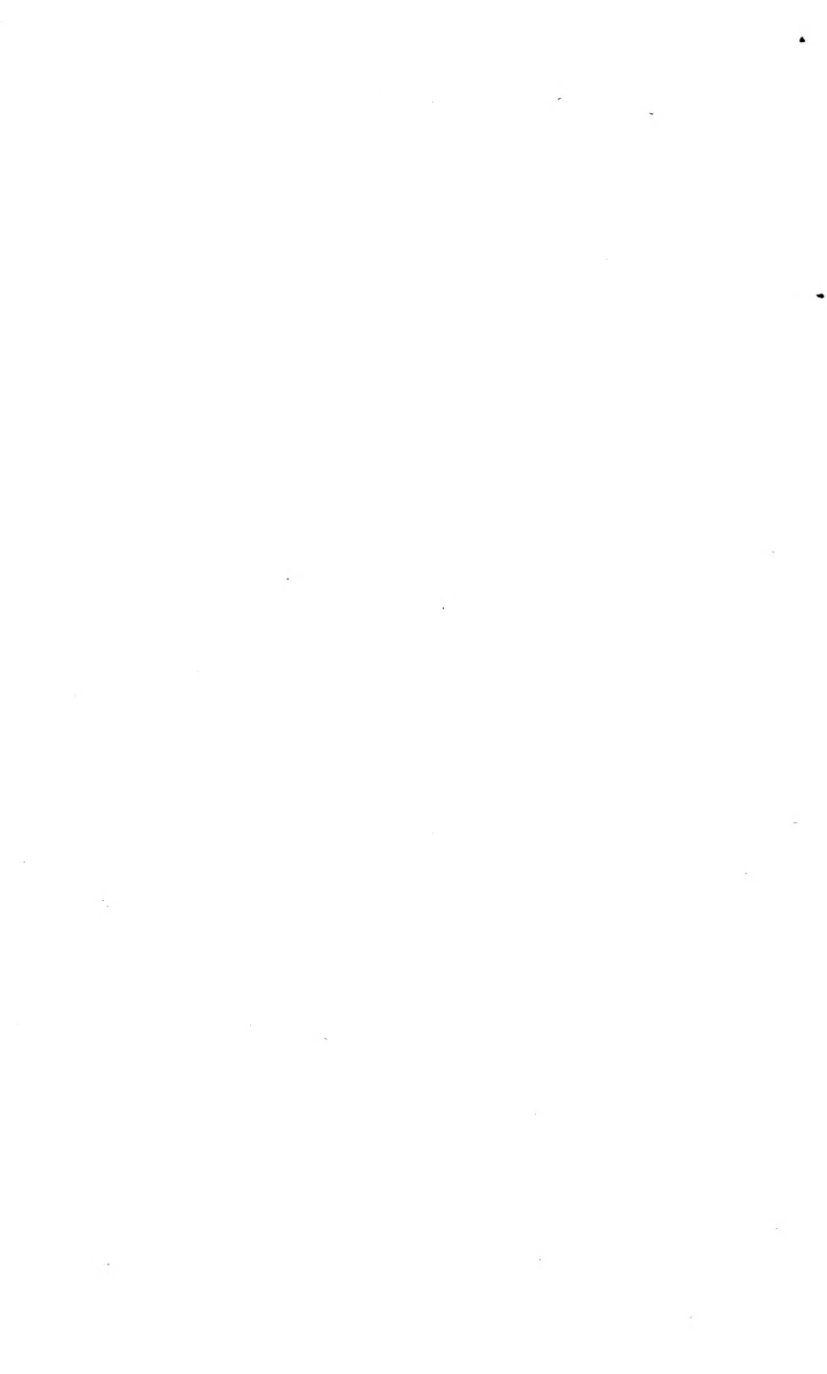
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Forty Five
S E R M O N S
O N
Several Subjects.

In Three Volumes.

By ANDREW SNAPE, D. D.
late Provost of *King's-College* in *Cambridge*.

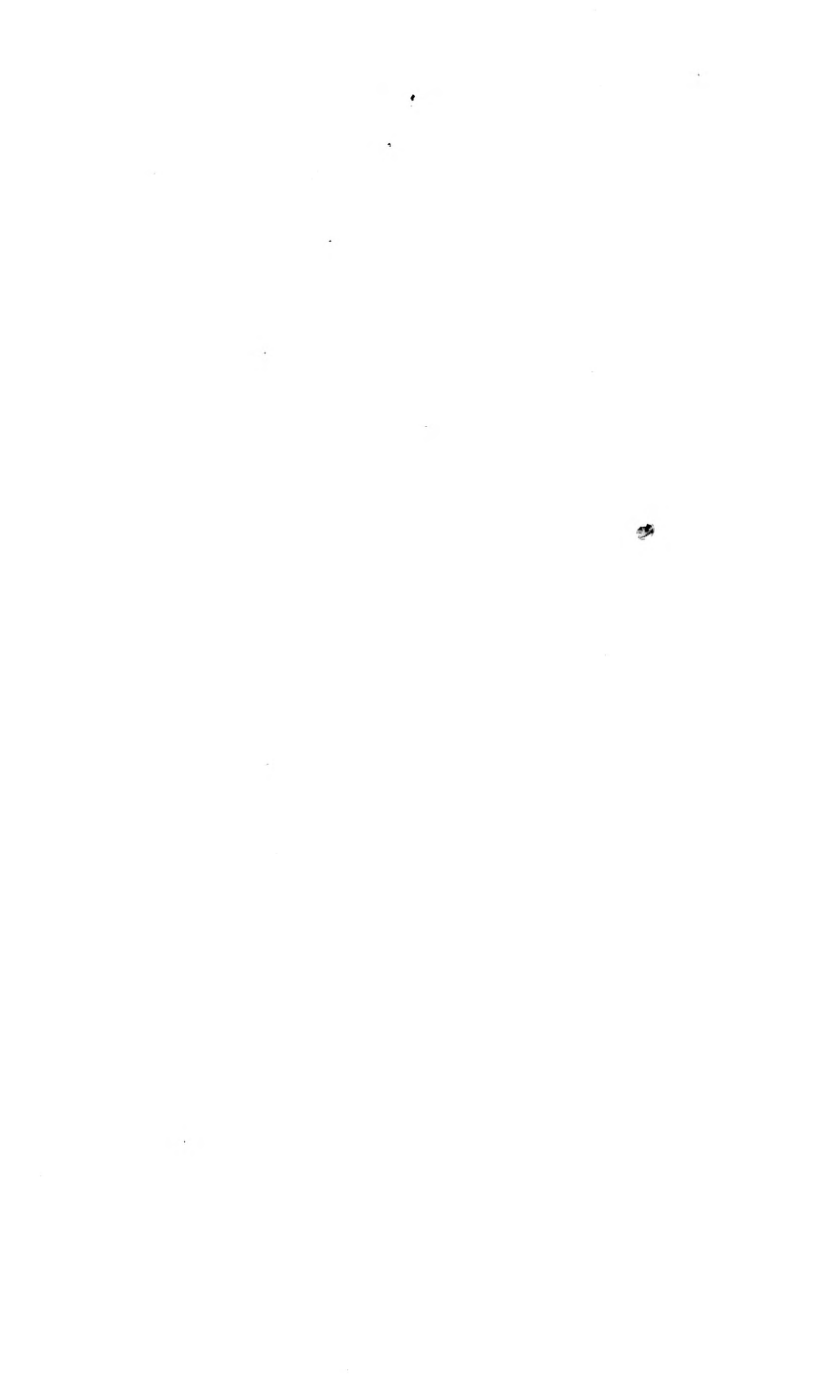
Prepared for the Press by the AUTHOR, and now
first published from his Original Manuscripts,
(except Ten that were printed in his Life-time.)

B Y
JOHN CHAPMAN, D. D. Chaplain to his
Grace the Lord Archbishop of *Canterbury*. And,
WILLIAM BERRIMAN, D. D. Fellow of
Eton-College.

VOL. I.

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T O

Her Royal HIGHNESS

S O P H I A,

Electress and Duchefs Dowager
of H A N O V E R,
©c. ©c. ©c.

MADAM,



*HATEVER Imperfections I
am conscious of in this Per-
formance, since the great Can-
dor of Your Royal Highness,
and Your Willingness to think well of any
Thing that is English, has enclined You to*

VOL. I.

B

accept

DEDICATION.

accept and reward it, and to afford it Your Protection; You have made the Publication of it a Debt, which I cannot withhold on any Pretence; and I must rather let the World see how little I have done to deserve Your Favour, than incur the Forfeiture of it by a Want of Gratitude and Justice.

IF Truth were not the same in all Places, or if Your Royal Highness were not an acknowledg'd Judge, as well in Speculative and Controversial, as in Practical Points; I could not so well excuse the entertaining You with a Discourse that might otherwise be thought improperly directed: Or at least which has nothing that appears peculiarly adapted to the Place and Auditory.

SUCH as it is, as Your Royal Highness did then vouchsafe to bear it with a favourable Attention; so it is now most humbly offered to Your favourable Perusal:
And

DEDICATION.

And ventures abroad with better Assurance, under the Patronage of so great a Princess; whose large and comprehensive Knowledge of Persons and Things, of Sciences and Languages; whose Delicacy of Wit, Strength of Judgment and Reason, Justness of Thought, and Politeness of Expression; whose Evenness of Mind, Sweetness of Temper, Condescending Affability, and Easiness of Access; and, to crown the rest, whose unaffected Piety and Universal Charity, have long attracted the Praise and Admiration of Europe.

THESE, Madam, are a few of those Amiable and Princely Qualities, which, as they are eminently conspicuous in Your Royal Highness; so, by Your pious Care and auspicious Influence, they have diffused themselves thro' every Branch of the most Serene House of Hanover; and yield a reasonable Prospect, that, to whatever Generation thereof, the Imperial Diadem of these King-

doms may hereafter descend; Your Royal Highness will reign, at least, in a glorious Posterity, and England will bless Your successful Endeavours, in fashioning its future Sovereign for the Good of Mankind.

I CANNOT but add, as a farther Instance of Your Goodness, the great Value You express, on all Occasions, for the several Parts of our Constitution; and, in particular, Your Just Esteem and Affection for Our most Gracious QUEEN: The Blessings of whose Reign, I can boast of the Honour to have heard Your Royal Highness commemorate, with a pleasing Admiration; even before the late astonishing Successes were known to have increased the Number of them.

You will forgive me, Madam, if I bring to your Remembrance the Substance, if not the Words of one Saying, which seems to have had something ominous and
pre-

D E D I C A T I O N.

v

presaging; since You spoke it, (as I am convinced after a careful Recollection) on the very Day that the Glorious Victory at Ramillies was obtained: That England had already acquir'd more Glory, since Her Majesty's Accession to the Throne, than in all the long and celebrated Reign of Queen Elizabeth.

I BEG Leave to conclude with expressing my grateful Sense of those signal Marks of Your Royal Highness's Princely Favour and Munificence, with which I have been honoured: And with my earnest Prayers to Almighty God for Your Prosperity, and a long Enjoyment of that unimpaired Vigour of Mind and Body, wherewith You are so remarkably blessed: That the most Serene House may flourish, and happily rejoice in that double Encrease, which Heaven now seems to promise it. In a Word, that all the Blessings of this and the other World,

DEDICATION.

*may attend Your Royal Highness, shall be
the constant Prayer of,*

MADAM,

Your Royal Highness's

Most humble,

Most thankful,

and

Most devoted Servant,

A. SNAPE.

S E R-



S E R M O N I.

The Just Prerogative of Human Nature. Preach'd at *Hanover*, before the Princess *Sophia*, May $\frac{1}{27}$, 1706.



HEB. ii. 7.

Thou madest him a little lower than the Angels.



THESE Words are a part of S E R M O N the viiith *Pfalm*, and from I. thence cited by our Apostle; not by way of bare Accommodation only, but as a direct Prediction relating to our Blessed Saviour; in Admiration of whose condescending Love, in

SERMON. vouchsafing to take on Him our frail and
 I. despicable Form; the Royal Psalmist long
 before, and now again the inspired Author
 of this Epistle, breaks out into that just Ac-
 knowledgment of the Greatness of the
 Divine Mercy, and the Smallness of our
 Deserts, which immediately precedes the
 Words of the Text; *Lord, what is Man,*
that thou art mindful of him? Or the Son
of Man, that thou visitest him? i. e. how
 mean and contemptible a Creature is he in
 himself, and yet how highly favoured by
 the Almighty? How naked and destitute of
 any Thing he can call his own, and yet
 how richly adorned by God? So fallen by
 Nature, and so exalted by Grace, that we
 can hardly imagine it to be one and the
 same Being, in whom such opposite Cha-
 racters are united.

Now these two very different Appea-
 rances of Human Nature, have occasioned
 so many Mistakes concerning it, and caused
 such various Representations to be made of
 it, that it may not be improper, if, in dis-
 coursing on this Subject, I take occasion to
 pursue the Enquiry here started, and give
 you

you an Answer to that seemingly inconfi-
 derable, but, in reality, important Problem, SERM.
I.
What is Man?

AND here I might consider him under his Natural, Moral, or Religious Capacity: As he is invested with such Properties, capable of producing such Operations, obliged to the Exercise of such Duties, in Conformity to the Will of that God that made him. But what I now chiefly design, is, to take him in a Relative and Tactical Consideration, with regard to that Station or Degree, which God has assigned him in the Order of Beings, and in what Position he stands with regard to his Fellow-Creatures; to the intent, that by comparing him with those of a higher Order, and showing wherein he falls short of their Perfections; as also with those of an inferior Rank, and making it appear how remarkably he surpasses them, and what a signal Pre-eminence he has above them: He may learn from hence to keep himself within his due Bounds, that he may neither aim at Things which are too high for him, and aspire after such a Degree of Excellency,

SERM. cellency, as God and Nature have never
 I. designed him for; nor yet debase and sink
 himself beneath his just Value, by forgetting the Dignity of his Nature, and bringing himself down to a Level with the Irrational and Senseless Parts of the Creation. In pursuance therefore of this Design, I shall endeavour,

I. *First*, To settle the just Prerogative of Human Nature, and declare what Order of Preference is due to Us, which, as Men, we both may, and ought to challenge, and to more than which we cannot pretend, without the highest Arrogance and Presumption. And,

II. *Secondly*, To shew how unreasonably those Men act, who either extend this Prerogative beyond its due Limits, or else depreciate and undervalue it, by wilfully disclaiming their Birth-right, and receding from their just Inheritance.

IN speaking to the former of these Points, I shall endeavour to make good both Parts of the Assertion in my Text, and show that Man is *lower*, indeed, *than the Angels*; but yet that, comparatively speaking, he is but * *a little lower* than * ἑλαχύ τ. they.

FIRST THEN, let us consider him under his Character of Diminution, as inferior to the Angels.

BUT here I do not intend to engage in a Subject rather curious than useful, concerning the State and Oeconomy of the Invisible World. I shall not presume to present you with an exact Catalogue of the several Ranks and Qualities of Angels, of which the heavenly Hierarchy is composed: What Privileges are peculiar to each Order; what Degrees of Subordination there are between the highest Arch-Angel, and him that is least in the Kingdom of Heaven; what sway they bear in their respective Provinces, and how one Spirit acts upon another. The Scripture, which is our only Guide in these

SERM. these Matters, having revealed no more
 I. concerning them, than what is of immediate Use to us, without any Design of gratifying our Curiosity.

THUS much however we may with good Authority affirm of them all in general, that they are the chief and noblest Part of the Creation; that they are pure abstracted Minds, immortal and unbodied, not clogged with Matter, nor tied up to the Laws of Mechanic Agency; formed of the most refined and Ethereal Substance; fitted for more heavenly Delights, and divine Joys, than those of Sense; of large and capacious Faculties; of exquisite Quickness to contrive, and Dexterity to execute, who live in Regions of Light and Glory, whilst we Mortals are groveling in the Dark; who gaze on those Mysteries, which are the Objects of our Faith, and enjoy that Blessedness for which we hope. Heaven, which is ours in Reversion only, and that but upon Conditions too, the Reward of our Constancy, and the Prize of our Victory, is theirs in actual Possession, without the Labour of acquiring; where free from
 Care,

Care, and secure from Want, they spend a S E R M. long Eternity in the Presence of that God, I.
at whose Right-hand there are Pleasures for evermore.

AND what is: Man now that he should stand in Competition with these glorious and exalted Beings? Whose noblest Part, and wherein he most resembles them, is imprisoned in Walls of Flesh, and retarded in its Operations by the Renitency and Indisposition of that Matter on which it acts, which oftentimes proves too stubborn or too weak an Instrument to execute all its great Contrivances and Machinations. The unequal Principles of which he is composed, have much ado to maintain a peaceable Correspondence, and to perform their respective Offices. Sometimes, when the Soul is most vigorous and active, fired with a brave and laudable Ambition; some Infirmary of Body, or Decay of Constitution, puts a stop to the Proceedings, suppresses the growing Flame, and will not suffer him to do any Thing that is great and generous. At other whiles, when the Organs are rightly disposed, the Body strong and healthy,

SERM. healthy, and capable of undergoing the
 I. most difficult Atchievements; the soul it-
 self grows listless and drooping, vitious and
 depraved; so that, instead of commanding
 the corporeal Faculties, and employing
 them to its own Purposes, it self becomes
 Ministerial to them, and acts in Subser-
 viency to the Sensitive Appetite; or even
 when they are both combined, a thousand
 Letts and Impediments we meet with from
 external Objects.

THERE are indeed very great and excel-
 lent Endowments to be met with in Hu-
 man Nature; there are Accomplishments
 both Natural and Moral, which are highly
 to be valued. But then, alas! these good
 Qualities are diffused and dispersed Abroad,
 divided into Lots, and shared by different
 Proprietors; they are to be found either
 single and alone, or very few of them to-
 gether. A small Number of these (as the
 World goes) is esteemed a very fair and
 considerable Portion; and we should look
 upon him, as somewhat more than Man,
 if we could meet with any One, in whom
 all, even Human Perfections, were united.

Now

Now altho' this Disjunction of those S E R M. Gifts and Graces that are attainable by I. mere Man, and their not concurring in the same Person, is no Reflexion on Human Nature; nor does in the least derogate from the Dignity of the Species, which still retains all its Excellencies, wherever they are scatter'd and divided; yet is it a mighty lessening of the Individuals, to consider, that the very best among them is defective in somewhat which was compatible to his Nature; and that there is no one of them compleatly finished, and perfect in his kind.

NAY, tho' we do meet with some, who have a far more than ordinary share of these Accomplishments; yet 'tis great Odds (tho' we are sometimes blest with Instances to the contrary) if a mixture of some disagreeable Quality, such as Pride and Arrogance in some, Ill-Nature and Censoriousness in others; but some remarkable Vice and Immorality in most, does not tarnish and eclipse the Lustre of all their good ones. What I would infer from hence, is the Imperfection of Human Nature, when

com-

SERM. compared with that of Angels, whose Excellencies and Graces do all agree in a pleasing Harmony, without any Allay, or ungrateful Tincture to spoil the goodly Composition.

I NEED not mention the more notorious Disadvantages which are most incident to Humanity; such as our being exposed to Poverty and Want, to Pain and Sicknes, to Ignominy and Disgrace, the Shortness and Uncertainty of Life, and the weak Contexture of our Frame: Our Obligation to toil for our daily Sustenance; and when we have provided, and might enjoy it, how a vexatious Concern for To-morrow deprives us of the Use and Benefit of it, and our present Enjoyment is palled by a needless Apprehension of future Indigence. I need not tell you how often we are mocked with delusive Hopes, and disquieted with imaginary Fears; how we boil with irregular Heats, and are rack'd with tumultuous Passions; how we are involved in Ignorance, and lost in Error; whilst instead of keeping in the beaten Road, and walking by that Rule that is prescrib'd us, we seek out By-

By-ways, and follow the wild Caprices of our vain Imaginations. SERM.
I.

THESE Inconveniencies are too plain and obvious not be discerned; most of which are indeed originally chargeable on our Nature itself, but are mightily enhanced by our own mismanagement and folly.

I MIGHT insist on many other Particulars, but I have said enough already in diminution of my own Species; wherein, that I may not be mis-interpreted, I think it necessary to subjoin this Caution; that, tho' there are these and many other weak places in our Nature; yet this is no Reflection on the Wisdom or Goodness of Him that made us, whom we are obliged to praise and thank for giving us those Qualifications we do enjoy, but have no Reason to blame him for denying those we still fall short of.

THE Apostle has well observed, that *1 Cor. xv. there is one kind of Flesh of Men, another^{39, 40.} Flesh of Beasts, another of Fishes, and another of Birds: That there are Celestial Bodies, and Bodies Terrestrial; but that the*

SERM. *Glory of the Celestial is one, and the Glory*

I. *of the Terrestrial is another.* The Almighty has created Beings of different Ranks and Sizes, and delights to be served by them all in their respective Stations; so that a Brute might as well be thought hardly dealt with, in his Want of an Intellectual Soul, as Man, in that he is void of Angelical Perfection.

HOWEVER, to make him some amends for what I have said in disparagement of Human Nature, by discovering its defective Side, and laying open its Frailties and Infirmities; 'tis time now that I turn the other End of the Perspective, and represent *Man* under his most advantageous Character, as he is but *a little lower than the Angels*.


By which is meant, that Man is next in Station to the Angels; and as far excels all Beings of an Inferior Denomination, as he himself is excelled by them; that he too, as well as they, has the Impress of Divinity stamped on him; that, like them, he carries about him an immortal and immaterial Part; no less refined in Substance, nor less extensive in its Duration, made to survive

survive these corruptible Elements, and capable of sustaining Everlasting Bliss: That, unworthy as he is, the Son of God himself vouchsafed to assume his Nature, in order to restore him from his Fall, and re-instate him in that Paradise he had lost; whilst he left the rebellious Angels without a Redeemer, to inherit the just Reward of their Disobedience; that as much beneath them as we are, even now we hold Communion with them, are ingrafted into the same Stock, and are Fellow-Members under the same Head. But that which will in a great measure lessen the mighty Distance that is between us, is this Consideration, That, though they are now our Superiors, they will one Day be our Equals: Our Saviour himself having assured us, that those who shall be accounted worthy to obtain the other World, and be made *the Children of the Resurrection*, shall be * equal to, or * ^{ἰσάγγελοι,} upon a level with, *the Angels*. In the ^{Luk. xx. 36.}

SERM. WE are told a little before my Text, *Are sent forth to minister to those that shall be Heirs of Salvation.*

THUS far is Man able to stand the Comparison, even with the Celestial Orders, without being found much inferior to them, though in other respects they vastly surpass him: How much more glorious then will he appear, when weighed in the Ballance against mere senseless Matter? Nay, to how great a degree will he be found to excel, not only the lumpish and inanimate, but even those moving and sensible Creatures, that are guided only by a blind Instinct, and acted by a Necessity of Nature; who implicitly obey the Impressions of a superior Agent, and are governed by a Reason that is none of theirs?

'TIS true, as to the Exercise of the Corporeal Faculties, and the Offices of Animal Life, the difference between Us and Brutes is very small: We both were originally formed by the same Divine Artificer, and are still kept going by the same Mechanic Nature; their Body is as wonderfully contrived, as curiously wrought, as variously organized

ganized as ours; the Beauty of the whole is S E R M.
as surprizing, and the Proportion of the I.
Parts as just; the Instruments of Sense and 
Motion, of Vegetation and Nutrition, are
alike to both; or if there be any difference,
'tis the Brute has the advantage, who has a
quicker Relish of the Pleasures of Sense,
and enjoys them with less interruption than
Man.


BUT these, which are the chief and ultimate Happiness of the one, are no more than subordinate Helps (and oh! that they were always such!) but subordinate Helps, I say, to the other, and occasional Refreshments at the best. 'Tis the active and immortal, the spiritual and discerning Part that gives Man the Pre-eminence above all other Animals, and in which his great Privilege consists.

By this he is enabled, if he would but make a right Use of his Faculties, not only to discern between Good and Evil, but also effectually to make choice of that which he judges to be most suitable to his Nature, and conducive to his Happiness. He knows how to distinguish between a real and an

SERM. apparent Good; how to abstain from a
 I. Pleasure which he has in his Power, to
 enjoy, and forego a present Advantage for
 the future Expectation of a greater. He
 is enabled to extend his Aims to distant and
 invisible Blessings, and by a reasonable Hope
 to anticipate the Joys of a better State: So
 that thus far at least he must be allowed to
 resemble his Maker; that as God by Intui-
 tion, so he by Faith, looks upon Things
 past and to come, as tho' they actually were
 present, and *calls the Things which are not,*
as tho' they were.

By virtue of this nimble and sagacious
 Mind, he takes a quick Survey of the va-
 rious Changes and Revolutions of the
 World; traverses in a Moment's space the
 remotest Regions; recollects the Actions of
 past Ages; and, so far as he can rely on
 prudent Conjectures and moral Probabili-
 ties, foresees even future Contingencies.

IN short, if we consider him merely as a
 rational Creature; how he discovers the
 Secrets, and dives into the Mysteries of Na-
 ture; what Arts and Sciences he invents;
 how

how he reasons and projects, designs and S E R M.
 executes; what surprizing Systems he brings I.
 forth; how he reduces scatter'd Ideas into 
 useful Propositions: Or, if we reflect on
 his social and political Virtues, how he
 communicates his Notions to others; how
 he discharges the several Offices and Rela-
 tions whereby he is allied to those of the
 same common Nature; how he mutually
 assists, and is assisted in Laws and Govern-
 ment, in Commerce and Trade, &c. Or,
 Lastly, if we behold him performing the
 Duties of Religion, contemplating and ad-
 oring the Nature of God, and making
 just Acknowledgments to his Almighty
 Creator in all these respects, his peculiar
 Worth and Excellence will sufficiently ap-
 pear, and afford us abundant Matter for his
 Praise.

AND thus have I represented to you both
 the disadvantageous and the favourable Side
 of Human Nature; both which, when re-
 duced to a closer View, will amount to
 thus much; that as Man is next under God,
 the supreme Lord of this inferior and visi-
 ble World; *so he that is least in the King-*

SERM. *dom of Heaven is greater than he: That*

I. he has Perfections indeed, but they are no more than Human; allay'd with somewhat of Dross, and obscured by a mixture of Deformity: That, though he cannot communicate his Thoughts by a quick Angelic Intuition, yet has he Words into which he can form his Conceptions and Organs of Elocution to convey them to others: As he is liable to many Errors, so he is capable of knowing many great and mysterious Truths: As he has not the Activity of a Spirit, so neither is he dull and insensible as a Mechanic Agent: As he is Inferior to the one in his present absence from Heaven, so is he Superior to the other, in that he is capable of attaining it hereafter; to which, upon a due Performance of the Gospel-Terms, he has a legal Claim and Title, and though it is not his Fate, it will yet be his Reward.

THIS is his just Prerogative, and this the Order of Preference that is due to him, which, as Man, he both may and ought to challenge, and to more than which he cannot pretend without the highest Arrogance
and

and Presumption. Which brings me to SERM.
my I.



SECOND GENERAL; namely, to show how unreasonably those Men act, who either extend this Prerogative beyond its due Bounds, or else depreciate and undervalue it, by wilfully disclaiming their Birthright, and receding from their just Inheritance.

THESE one would imagine to be two very different and opposite Extremes, as indeed they are: And yet we may observe, that one and the same sort of Men do frequently run into them both; who when they find that one of them will not serve their Purpose, immediately betake themselves to the other; I mean those Persons of loose and unsettled Principles, who though they start at the smallest Difficulties in Religion, can yet digest the grossest Absurdities, and reconcile both Ends of a Contradiction in a System of Infidelity. If you urge such an one with the Excellence of Faith, and the Certainty of Divine Revelation, he presently sets up Human Reason in opposition to it, which he extols and aggrandizes

SERM. grandizes beyond all measure: You must
 I. give him Mathematical Demonstration for every Thing, whether the Matter be such, as is in its own Nature capable of such a Proof, or not: You must account for the immediate Acts of Providence, by the ordinary Operations of second Causes; and reconcile the mysterious Productions and unsearchable Ways of the God of Nature with Experiments of Common Sense, and the Laws of Mechanic Motion.

HE will tell you now, that Man is a knowing and discerning Creature, and is not to be imposed on by a blind and implicit Credulity; that it is the Rational Part that discriminates him from a Brute, and by that he will be directed, in spite of all superstitious Fancies and pretended Revelations.

BUT when you have made it appear (as 'tis no hard matter to do) that, that very Reason to which he appeals, and on which he sets so high a value, if impartially consulted, is on Religion's side; and is so far from contradicting Revelation, that it warrants and authorizes it; That his own


Prin-

Principles and Actions are of all others the S E R M. most repugnant to right Reason, who denies the Existence of that God who inspired him with that boasted Faculty, which he now employs against him: Who, in order to gratify a brutish Appetite, and provide for the Ease of a perishing Body, exposes his more noble and immortal Part to a miserable Eternity hereafter, and by so doing contradicts the Light of his own Breast, and acts in Defiance of Nature, as well as Revelation: If, I say, you press him with Arguments of this kind, he is ready to change his Note, and can, upon occasion, as unworthily degrade and cry down Reason, as he before extravagantly exalted it.

HE tells you now, that Man is no such excellent Being as he pretends; that Brutes and he, are of the same Origin and Extraction, and that they both tend to the same End, *i. e.* to final Excision and Annihilation. That the only distinction between them consists in a different Modification of that Matter, of which they are equally composed: The quick Agitation and Repercussion

SERM. percussion of the Particles whereof, perform in Man the Offices of Understanding, Memory and Will, and make up that thinking and designing Part, which he calls his Soul. That the rational, as well as the vital and animal Functions, are like the Operations of a piece of Clock-work, which keeps moving for a while by stated and unalterable Rules; but as soon as the Weights are down, or the Springs worn out, the Motion ceases, and the Machine is at an End.


BUT if you should farther demand of him what powerful elastic Principle it was, that set that Clock-work first a going: Who forged and connected the subtle Engines by which he performs so regular a Motion, or wound up the fatal Chain by which he is determined to such a certain Duration. In answer to this, rather than own him for what he is, the Work of an All-wise and Intelligent Mind, he will take up with that idle Dream of the *Hobbean* Philosophy, and assert that Man, as well as all other Beings, is nothing else but the necessary Production of unguided Nature, which,

which, as he imagines, is self-existent S E R M.
and independent of any superior Power; I.
which obstinately and blindly executes its 
own rigid and irreverfible Decrees; which is
continually circling and revolving in one
eternal Round of Generation and Corrup-
tion; and cannot be fuperfeded in its Courfe,
nor obliged to make the leaft Alteration in
its Progreff, by all the Art of Man, or
Power of God.

IT were eafy to fhew the Wildnefs and
Extravagance of fuch Tenets as thefe, if
they were fingly defended, and without a
Complication of Errors; but fince thefe in-
confiftent, as well as unreafonable Doc-
trines, are generally maintained by one and
the fame fort of Men; there needs no o-
ther Confutation, but to fet their own
Principles againft one another, and leave
them to deftroy themfelves.

FOR I would only afk of fuch an one
why, if the Soul be nothing elfe but agi-
tated Matter formed of the fame Clay, and
compounded of the fame Elements with the
Body, why he values himfelf fo highly (as
moft of thofe Philofophical Pretenders do)
for

SERM. for the Acuteness of his Judgment, the

I.  Vivacity of his Parts, and other Accomplishments of Mind? Why is he so ambitious to be thought a Man of Reason? And why does he make such frequent Appeals to it, when at the same time he thus undervalues and declaims against it? If this be the Case, what has he to be proud of? Or wherein does he excel, not only other Men, but even other Animals, since (according to his own Principle) he is of the same Substance, the same Duration, as destitute of present, as hopeless of future Happiness, as material, and as mortal too as they?

WHY, if the Course of Nature be so fixt and peremptory as not to admit of the least Variation; since all Things must happen just as they do, since no possible Industry or Foresight can disturb one Link of the inviolable Chain; why does he himself so vainly attempt to alter the settled Course, and shake the whole Fabric of the Moral World? How comes he to be so impatient of Restraint, so eager to break loose from Religion and Laws, and whatever else sets


Bounds to his wild Excesses, and curbs the Exorbitance of his Lust? SERM.
I.

OR, how is this Doctrine of invincible Necessity, and a fatal Concatenation of Causes, consistent with that darling Notion of his great Philosopher, *That War is founded in Nature*; that Power and Right were originally the same Thing, till Man of his own Accord made a difference between them by positive Laws and Facts? For if Man was placed by Nature in a State of War, and has since exchanged that Condition for a State of Society and Civil Correspondence; then is not the Power of Nature so irresistible, nor its Laws so immutable, but that they may be superseded, and forced to submit to Custom and Education.

NOR is it less incongruous for those who defend the Eternity of the World, and the constant Succession of Things in one unchangeable uninterrupted Tenor, to talk of there having been a Time when Men first began to enter into Leagues, and form themselves into Communities. This indeed, according to the
Mosaical

SERM. Mosaical Account, is very easy to be ascertained ; but for the same Person to pretend that the World had no Beginning, and yet that the Civilization of Mankind had, is apparent Contradiction. For let him place this reduction of Mankind into Societies and Bodies Politic, as high as he can ; yet if from that stated Term we look back to Eternity, how many Millions of Ages must that State of War and Disorder have continued ? During all which Tract of Time, the principal Inhabitants of the Earth must have been no better than Human Savages, the Earth itself barren and uncultivated, its Virtues concealed, its Riches undiscovered, the Motion of the Heavenly Bodies unknown, the Sea unnavigable, and, in a Word, the whole Course of Nature must have been since inverted, and all Things must run in a quite different Channel to what they did, before the Coalition of those rude and undisciplined Mortals into confederate Bodies and Fraternities, which agrees very ill with the Notion of a fatal Necessity, or the Eternal Progression of Nature in one fixed and determinate Road.

BUT

BUT when some Men have a mind to SERM.
 have it so, Immutability must change, ir- I.
 reversible Decrees be revoked, the Privi- 
 leges of Humanity must be extravagantly
 over-rated, or ungenerously depressed. Li-
 berty and Necessity, Reason and Mecha-
 nism, Contingency and Fate, though the
 greatest Opposites in the World, must sig-
 nify the same Thing, and be equally al-
 ledged to the Disparagement of Religion.

THE *Hobbiſts* then, or *Materialiſts*, may
 fairly be produced as an Instance of both
 Extremes, as well for arrogating too much,
 as for aſcribing too little to Human Na-
 ture. For when they deny the Exiſtence of
 all Spiritual Subſtance, and aſſert that the
 whole Univerſe is nothing elſe but extend-
 ed Matter, they muſt make Man, with all
 his Imperfections, the moſt excellent and
 accompliſhed of Beings. For he is appa-
 rently the moſt noble and intelligent
 Being of this viſible World, and, accord-
 ing to their Hypotheſis, there is no invi-
 ſible one. From whence it would follow,
 that he is ſubject to no Controul, and has

SERM. no Acknowledgment to make to any superior Power.

I.

BUT as in this respect they are Traitors to the Almighty, by excluding him from that World which he made, and withdrawing his Subjects from their Allegiance; so are they Traitors to themselves, and Betrayers of their own Rights, when they deny the Immateriality of the Soul, and its Capacity of surviving this earthly Tabernacle; they degrade their own Species, and rank themselves with Bears and Tigers, when they affirm that Man is, in his own Nature, as wild and unfociable as they: That he has no Principles in him of Honour or Honesty, but is wholly acted by Fear and Self-Interest: That if it were not for the Fear of Punishment, and the Cognizance of the *Leviathan*, or Commonwealth; in defiance of the Light of Nature, and the Dictates of Equity and Conscience, he would soon throw off the Disguise, and appear in his true Native Colours an untractable two-legged Monster.

BUT those who give us this odious Representation of Human Nature, do only

draw their own Picture to the Life; and all S E R M. those foul Aspersions, which they endeavour to cast on Mankind in general, will I. stick at last upon themselves. For when I hear a Man declare it as his real Opinion, that if it were not for the fear of Punishment, every one would cheat, or betray, or stab, or poison, or take any other Measures for the Advancement of his own Interest, though never so much to his Neighbour's Prejudice; all that he convinces me of, is, that he himself would do these Things, if he could be sure of coming off with Impunity: For though he cannot answer for all Mankind, yet we may allow him to know his own Meaning: And consequently, when he tells me before-hand, that these are his Principles, I know how far I am to trust him.

THUS far therefore I can readily agree with him, that there are some such Men in the World, who are wicked to the utmost of their Power; who know no other dissuasive from Mischief, but the Terror of the Law, and the Hazard of Life, Estate or Reputation; but whatever clandestine

SERM. Wickedness they can commit, without endangering any of these, they make no scruple of accomplishing. And forasmuch as a very few such Persons, if they were under no Restraint, but suffered without Controul to execute whatever their ungovernable Lust or implacable Rancour suggested to them, would soon be able to embroil the World, and set it on a flame; on this account the Sanction of Human Laws is as absolutely necessary for the Restraint of these few, as if the whole World were as bad as themselves.

NAY, let the Number of them be never so inconsiderable, yet so long as we are assured that there are any such, this is enough to justify, in those who mean no harm themselves, a prudent Caution and Provision for their own Security against those that do.

WHICH is a plain and easy Answer to that insulting Question of Mr. *Hobbs*, who, after having branded all Mankind, without distinction, with the horrid Imputation of being by Nature Enemies to each other, demands at last, whether any of us, when

we love to travel well armed and accompa- SERM.
nied, when we lock up our Doors, and I.
make fast our Chests, do not accuse Man-
kind as much by our Actions, as he does
by his Words; or what Opinion a Man
must have, when he acts thus, of those of
his Neighbourhood or Family.

BUT this, I say, may be easily answered
from the aforefaid Consideration. For in
taking such necessary Measures for the Pre-
servation of my own Safety, and in De-
fence of my just Property, I mean no Re-
flection either on Mankind in general, or
on this or that particular Neighbour or
Domeftick, but on some indefinite Person,
I know not whom. For what does it avail
me, that all the rest of the World are ho-
nest, so long as I lie open to the Injuries of
any one, who, to all Intents and Purposes,
may as effectually undo me, as they all could
do, if combined together?

'TIS for this Reason therefore, that we
are forced to have Recourse both to pri-
vate Caution and public Justice; not be-
cause there are none honest, but because all
Men are not so. Whereas could we but

SERM. place the same Confidence in all, which the
 I. most distrustful among us will venture to
 do in some, we should need neither Locks
 nor Bolts to prevent Injustice, nor Whips
 nor Gibbets to revenge it.

Laws are indeed a necessary Terror to the hurtful and malicious, but were never intended for such conscientious and well-disposed Persons, as need no other discouragement from Violence and Oppression, than their own native Abhorrence of such inhuman Practices.

HOBBISTS and *Machiavillians* may pretend what they will, that there are no such Persons, that we are all born with Inclinations to do Mischief, and that every Man would be a Villain if he durst.

BUT I appeal to that unconstrained Probability, to those human and friendly Inclinations, and that tender Concern for the Welfare of Mankind, which you feel within your own Breasts, for the Confutation of so reproachful a Doctrine, and leave you to judge of the unnatural Perfidiousness of all who endeavour to propagate and defend it.

AND

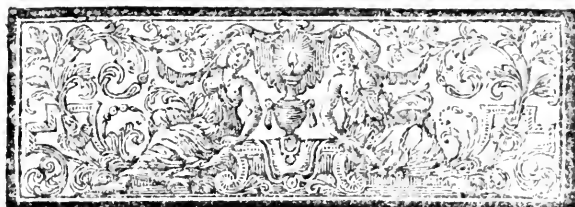
AND yet these are the Men, who would S E R M. persuade you that they are the great Friends I. and Patrons of Mankind; that they aim at nothing else but the Ease and Liberty of their Fellow-Subjects, by endeavouring to rescue them from the Tyranny of Custom, and the Prejudices of Education, to which they are enslaved. Whereas all the service they do them, is to philosophize away the noblest Perfections of their Nature, and reason them into Brutes; to dissolve, as much as in them lies, all Civil and Natural, as well as Religious Ties; to unhinge all Government, and unsettle the best compacted Societies; to encourage and abet all manner of Villany, provided it can be done with secrecy and safety; to inspire Men with continual Doubts and Fears, and make them jealous and distrustful of each other; and, in a Word, to make them sour and snarling, querulous and discontented in this Life, and eternally miserable in another.

THERE are many others who, if the Time would permit, might justly fall under our present Censure; there are many, on either Hand, who seem to have forgot

SERM. the Station that God has assigned them, and
 I. the End for which he sent them into the
 World.

BUT to all such Persons, whether they offend in one Extreme, or in the other; whether they invade another's Right, or relinquish their own; I shall at present give no other Advice but that short *Memento*, which was used to be repeated to the *Roman* Generals in the midst of their Triumph, *Remember, you are a Man, and but a Man.*





S E R M O N II.

Of the Relative Engagement between Ancestry and Posterity. Preached before the University of *Cambridge*, in *King's College Chapel*, on *March 25, 1707.*



P S A L M cxii. 9.

--- *His Righteousness endureth for ever.* ---



HIS excellent *Psalms* is in-SERM.
troduced with a Prefatory II.
Halleluiab, or Exhortation
to praise God, though as to
the Substance of it, it is, in
a manner, wholly taken up in setting forth
the

SERM. the Praise of Men; from whence I cannot
 II. but observe to you, before I proceed any
 farther, that whatever Praises and Encomiums we bestow on the best of Men, whatever Actions they have performed, for the Advancement of Religion, or Benefit of Mankind, for the sake of which we are induced to style them Good and Virtuous, Great and Honourable, or by any other Names of Dignity or Distinction; yet the Glory of all must be ascribed to God, as the Primary and Original Cause, who endued them with Grace and Power to perform such Actions.

THERE is indeed a vast and amazing Difference between one Man and another, both as to the Capacity and Inclination of doing good. As bad as the World has been, there have not been wanting some in all Ages, who have discover'd in the whole Conduct of their Lives, such a transcendent Greatness and Nobleness of Soul, such an unaffected Complacency in Acts of Kindness and Beneficence, such an honest and friendly Zeal for the Happiness of others, such a generous Concern for the common
 Welfare,

Welfare, and such an unwearied Application in promoting it; as if they were born for others more than for themselves, as if they were designed by Heaven as public Blessings, to be the Joy and Delight of Mankind, and to convince us what a Paradise this Earth might be, if every Man, like them, would lay aside all Selfishness and Narrowness of Spirit, and all, in their respective Stations, would conspire in procuring the general Good, and establishing universal Peace and Love.

BUT on the other Hand, it is too sad, and too evident a Truth, that though all Men agree in acknowledging the Beauty and Excellence of such a Character, and the happy Effects that would follow from such a joint Concurrence in promoting so noble a Design; yet the greatest Part of Mankind are too intent on their private Views, and the pursuit of their separate Interests, to contribute in any good Degree to so great and general a Blessing.

SOME are discouraged from any such Attempt, because they think it would be in vain, for that the great Majority would still

be

SERM. be for seeking their own, in Preference to
 II. the common Good; whom therefore they
 cannot think it reasonable to let into the
 Benefits of their Disinterestedness and Ge-
 nerosity, since they will not act upon
 the Square with them, since they are so te-
 nacious, uncommunicative, and ἀσύμβολοι,
 as not to help toward it in any Propor-
 tion.

SOME again appear very active and zea-
 lous for a time, in encouraging Works of a
 public Nature, so long as they find their
 own Account in them, and can advance
 their particular Interests in Conjunction
 with a more general Good. But when that
 ceases to be the Case, the Zeal soon abates,
 the bold and undertaking Spirit begins to
 flag and tire, and the glorious Schemes are
 let fall to the Ground.

BUT then there are others so habitual-
 ly depraved, so totally immersed and bu-
 ried in Self-love, so wedded to their own
 Advantage, and so devoid of any kind Re-
 gards for any one besides, such * Renegadoes

* Deferunt enim vitæ societatem, quia nihil conferunt in
 eam studii, nihil operæ, nihil facultatum. Cic. de Offic.
 l. 1. c. 9.

and Apostates from all all that is sociable and humane; that they cannot form one generous Thought, nor conceive any Notion of such a Pleasure, as consists merely in beholding or procuring the Happiness of others, in which themselves are to have no real Share. And therefore they will not be induced by any Considerations to forego the smallest Advantage to themselves, they will hardly bestow the least Care or Fore-cast, much less any Labour, Hazard, or Expen-^{II.}ce, though to the furtherance of the most useful and beneficial Ends, such as the establishing God's Worship, the cultivating Piety and Good-Manners, obtaining the greatest Blessings, or averting the greatest Mischiefs, rescuing a perishing Soul from Misery, or saving a whole Community from Ruin.

I CONFESS there are very few in whom all sparks of Humanity and Good-nature are so utterly extinguished: And perhaps, the Instances of Persons so thoroughly obdurate, may be as rare, as those of a consummate Virtue and disinterested Love to Mankind.

BUT,

SERM. BUT however, Examples of both sorts
 II. there are, or at least of such as very nearly
 approach both this and that extreme.

AND so far as they do so, the one deserves our highest Censure, the other our justest Praise, Esteem, and Veneration.

THE holy *Psalmist* indeed, in the Conclusion of the Psalm now before us, tells us of a more perverse and inveterate Sort of Men than any I have been describing, who not contented to do no good themselves, would envy and repine at them that did: Who, with an evil Eye and Heart would grieve when they beheld the Blessedness of the Receivers, and the greater Blessedness of the Givers. But he tells us withal, that they should envy and repine and grieve in vain: That they, and their malicious Designs should be blasted and consumed, whilst the righteous, charitable Man, in whose Commendations he had been enlarging, should flourish and prosper in his Undertakings, should purchase a lasting Benefit to others, and a lasting Memory to himself: *That his Righteousness should endure for ever.*

FOR a Man's Righteousness or Charity S E R M.
(which in the Language of Scripture usually II.
signify the same Thing) may be said to endure for ever, both with regard to himself, and to those toward whom it is extended. And the Expression may mean, either that a Man of this Character is never faint or weary in doing well ; he has no sooner accomplished one good Work, but he is ready to undertake another ; he is never discouraged, never thinks he has done enough, but persists in his pious Intentions and Endeavours through the whole Course of his Life : Or (which is yet more noble) he does not content himself with doing temporary and transient Acts of Charity, with exercising a short-lived Bounty, with freeing some lamentable Object from a present Necessity, and himself from present Impor- tunity : But that his Works of Mercy are durable and permanent, that he consults the future Happiness of Mankind, that he studies to perpetuate his Favours, and to lay such Obligations on the World, as Ages to come may reap the Fruits of.

OR

SERM.


II.

OR else the Perpetuity here expressed may refer to that lasting Honour and Reputation, that will adorn the Name and Memory of him, that delights in such charitable Deeds, as succeeding Generations shall admire, and remote Posterity shall bless him for. To the same Effect with what had been said in the 6th Verse, *The Righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance.*

THERE is no one of these Meanings, but by a fair and unforced Construction, may be applied to this Passage. They are all founded on Reason and Experience, they are all agreeable to Scripture, and not only delivered there in other equivalent Expressions, but these very Words are apparently used in such different Senses.

For in the 3d Verse of the *Psalms* before this, it is said of God himself, *That his Righteousness endureth for ever*; importing that his Goodness is boundless and unlimited, extending to all Persons, to all Ages and Generations. Whereas in the 3d Verse of this *Psalms*, where the same is affirmed of the charitable Man, the Con-


nexion

nexion of the Place determines one rather SERM.
to understand it of the Reward and good II.
Effects of his Charity, than of the largeness 
or extent of it, and as containing more of
a Promise than Panegyric. *Wealth and
Riches shall be in his House, and his Righteousness endureth for ever.*

BUT in this Verse of my Text, where
it is again repeated, as also where this Verse
is cited by *St. Paul*, one cannot well ap- 2 Cor. ix.
propriate it to one Sense in Preference to ^{9.}
another.

THERE is nothing in the main Scope
and Design of the *Psalms*, that determines
the Case either way, where there are fre-
quent Transitions from the Character of a
good Man, and particular Instances of his
Charity, to the Reward and Blessedness that
will attend him for it. And as little can
we conclude from the Context. For the
Words are placed in the middle of the
Verse, and if we join them with the for-
mer Clause, they are a Continuation of the
Character, *He hath dispersed abroad, he
hath given to the Poor, his Righteousness en-
dureth for ever, i. e.* He is not only liberal


SERM. in relieving those who are now distressed,

II. but, with a more diffusive Love, provides
 a Remedy for such as may be so hereafter.

OR, if we connect it with the latter Clause; 'tis then a repeated Promise, that he and his good Works should be honourably mentioned, that no length of Time should abolish the remembrance of them; that they should not only ascend for a Memorial before God, but remain a standing Memorial among Men, and excite the Generations that are yet unborn to praise and celebrate their Benefactor. *His Righteousness endureth for ever, his Horn shall be exalted with Honour.*

As there is this Latitude of Interpretation, I shall hope for Excuse, if I suppose my Text to speak both these Meanings, and to teach us, that the charitable Person is both a Doer of lasting Good, and that he is entitled to lasting Honour. These are so far from being inconsistent with each other, that the one is almost a necessary consequent of the other.

To this Purpose, I shall at present treat of the Relative Engagement between Ancestry

cestry and Posterity, and show what the S E R M. one is capable of doing, and how far ob- II.
liged to do it for the other: That the for- 
mer may, and is, in many Cases bound, to
provide for the future Happiness of the
latter: Whose Duty it is, in return, to
express a just gratitude for such Provision,
by honouring the Memories, extolling the
good Actions, and rightly employing the
Advantages procured for them, by the Care
and Bounty of their Ancestors.

By Ancestors, I do not barely mean our
Progenitors or Fore-fathers in the same
Race or Line, those from whom we derive
our Genealogy and Extraction: But our
Predecessors in general, those who have
lived before us, and appeared on the Stage
of the World, where 'tis now our Turn to
act our Parts, and where our Posterity,
(which I likewise understand of our Suc-
cessors at large) are hereafter to act theirs.


Now the Providence of God has so or-
dered it, that those who live in the most
distant Ages, may hold a sort of Inter-

SERM. course with one another, and perform interchangeable good Offices.

II.

FIRST then, I shall represent to you what may be done by the Generation now, or at any Time, in Being, for the Benefit of those that shall come after them, and what Duty is incumbent on them, as considered under that relation.

'TIS, indeed, owing to this Principle, next to the Divine Care and Protection, that the World is capable of being well, and orderly administered, which would be nothing else but a continued Scene of Disorder and Confusion, if the Seeds of future Discord were not timely removed: If every Age were to look no farther than itself, and should not provide (as far as human foresight can extend) for the stability of Government, and that without which no Government can be stable, for the security of Religion, the inculcating good Principles, and training up Youth under such Discipline as may afterwards make them good Men, good *Christians*, and good Subjects; the Preservation of public Tranquility and private Property, for limiting be-

times the Exorbitance of a justly suspected S E R M.
Greatness; and checking the Growth of II.
that dangerous Power, which there is any 
Reason to apprehend may afterwards break
out into Tyranny or Oppression, on the one
hand; or on the other, into Libertinage,
Tumult, or Rebellion, and the utter Sub-
version of all Peace and Order.

THIS is the Care which the present Ge-
neration may and ought to take for those
that are to succeed, because 'tis what they
are not capable of doing for themselves; for
before that Time, the Evil may be too
inveterate, and the Mischief spread too far
to admit of a Remedy, and consequently
there is the same Reason for it, that there is
for defending an absent Person when he is
rudely calumniated and defamed, for vin-
dicating the Honour of the Dead, who can-
not speak for themselves, when it suffers
by injurious Aspersions, or standing up for
the Right and Interest of an Infant, or
any other helpless Person, who is unable to
assert his own righteous Cause.

THES E are Offices of common Huma-
nity: And I say there is the same Reason

FORM
II.

for our Endeavours to prevent any Invasion or Infringement of the Rights of those who are yet unborn: To take Care it may be well with them, when we are gone, and that they may have their Portion on the Earth, as we have had ours; to * sow those hopeful and promising Seeds of Wealth, and Peace, and Happiness in our Days, which in theirs may arrive at Maturity and Perfection: And not to imitate the unnatural and improvident Conduct of † some we read of, who for present Gain and Greediness, forced their Vines to bear beyond their Strength, and left nothing to their Posterity, but dead Trunks, and an exhausted Soil: Not to skin over a Sore in our own Times, which in theirs may prove fatal and incurable; nor deceitfully cover up those Embers, which may then break out into dangerous and destructive Flames: Not to cry with that Inhumane of Old, Let there be Joy and Pleasure and Plenty, while I

* Serunt arbores quæ seculo alteri profint. *Cic. ex Cæcilio.*

† Frustrum vero plerique quam uberrimum præsentem consectantur, nec provident futuro tempori; sed quasi plane in diem vivant; ita imperant vitibus, & eas ita multis palmitibus onerant, ut posteritati non consulant. *Columel. l. 3.*

live: But Ἐμὲ θανάτω when I must pe- SERM.
rish, let the World wither and perish me. But to II.
look upon ourselves as acting in Trust for
those that are to come, to secure to them
all just and reasonable Immunities, and avert,
as far as we are able, the possible Dangers
they may be exposed to.

It were unjust not to exemplify this Argument by a domestic Instance, at this important Juncture, when by the indefatigable Care and Wisdom and Unanimity of the Supreme Authority, so happy a Foundation is laid for the future Peace and Quiet of this Kingdom, by cutting off the Occasions of Jealousy and Dissension, and the Tragical Effects of them, between us and a neighbouring Nation, making us one People, uniting us in the same Interests and Affections, and under the same common Denomination, securing to us the unvaluable Blessing of a Protestant Successor conforming to the best and purest of Churches. And we have Reason and Encouragement to hope, that whatever else may yet be thought wanting to perpetuate any of the

SERM. Blessings we enjoy, will be the subject of
 II. their farther Care.

IN the mean Time we may fairly presume, that, after the late Transactions abroad and at home, Posterity will not think this Age indebted to it, tho' some Part of the Burden of an expensive War, undertaken chiefly for their sakes, should devolve upon them, which will be thought an inconsiderable Price to pay for the security of their Religion, Peace, and Liberty, and whatever else they account dear and precious: They will not, I say, think much to pay part of the Price when, the entire Purchase is transmitted to them.

BUT to return to my Argument. Another piece of Service that may be done for those of After-times, is, providing for the comfortable Subsistence of those that may hereafter want it, by public and lasting Works of Charity.

BUT why, some may say, must such a Provision be made for them that are to come? Is not every Age sufficient to take Care of such Objects of Compassion, as itself produces? What are their Wants to

us,

us, whom we are never like to know, and S E R M. consequently cannot be concerned for? Or II. how can one pity, any more than he can love, an unseen and unknown Object?

BUT this is just the Language of a churlish and uncharitable *Nabal*, *Shall I give to Men whom I know not whence they be?* As 1 Sam. XXV. 11. if our Love could not be more extensive than our Knowledge, or as if our *Christian Charity* required no more of us, than barely the seeking of our own. Why should that large and generous Principle be bounded any more by distance of Time, than it is by that of Space? We can love our Friends though never so remote: And that was justly taxed by one of old, as the most * ill-natured of Proverbs, which affirmed they were no longer our Friends when dwelling at a Distance. As we are Men, there is nothing that has, or does, or can relate to human Kind, but may affect us with some Concern.

BUT it may be farther urged. We know not what will happen on the Earth, when


* ——— τῆ μισανθρωπιότητι τῶν παροισμιῶν ἀγρότης
 Τηλῆ φίλοι ναίσιες ἐκ εἰσὶ φίλοι.

Athen. Deipnos. l. 5. c. 2.

SERM. we have left it; we cannot foresee what
 II. sort of Generation will arise next, much
 less how they will stand affected many
 Ages hence. We cannot be sure but that
 our good Designs may be perverted, our
 pious Meaning ridiculed, and our Charity
 misemployed, by being either engrossed by
 unworthy, or invaded by sacrilegious
 Hands.


BUT neither must this Pretence hinder
 us from forming good Designs for the Be-
 nefit of Posterity. If this Excuse would
 serve, there would be the same Reason for
 never doing any Good at all, not even to
 those of our own Age. For no Man can
 be sure, when he does an intended Kind-
 ness, that it will have the desired Effect,
 that the Receiver will be grateful, or that
 he will employ his Charity to the Uses for
 which it was given. In such Cases Men
 can but act according to human Probabi-
 lity, and must leave the Event to Provi-
 dence.

I WOULD not be thought, by any Thing
 I have said of the Fitness, the Reasonable-
 ness, and, in some Cases, the Necessity of
 doing

doing Good to Posterity, in any wise to SERM.
detract from the free and unconstrained Li- II.
berality of our *pious Founder*, whom we 
are now assembled to commemorate, as if
the Advantages we enjoyed by his unparal-
lel'd Munificence, were a Debt rather than
a Gift.

FAR be it from me to insinuate a Re-
flexion so injurious and ungrateful. Cha-
rity in general, is indeed a Debt. The
Great and Rich are God's Stewards on
Earth, and are entrusted by him with the
Dispensation of those Talents they are pos-
sessed of. But as to the particular Objects
on whom their Charity is exercised, to
them 'tis a matter of meer Grace and Fa-
vour, and they are bound to bless the Hand
that administers, as well as the Divine
Goodness that both enabled and enclined
their Benefactors to be the Instruments of
their Good.

'TIS certainly in the Choice and Discre-
tion of the Possessors of Riches, to bestow
their Alms where, on what Objects, in
what manner, and in what Measure they
think fit; provided their Liberality, in the
main,

SERM. main, bear some proportion to their Substance; and be directed to the Glory of
 II.  God, and as much to the Benefit of Mankind, as can morally be presumed.

AND I may be allowed to say, without suspicion of Flattery or Partiality, that no one ever observed these Rules, more exactly, more religiously than the good King *Henry* in the settlement of his Charity. His Design in founding two such large Societies, and endowing them with a competent Maintenance for ever, for the successive Members of which they should be composed, was truly Great and Princely, worthy a Royal Soul, and more than proportionate even to Regal Wealth and Grandeur: Scarce imitable by any Subject, and only to be undertaken by a King. And we might well have imagined too, if all History had failed us, if no Chronicle had recorded the Tumults and Disorders, the Miseries and Calamities, the frequent Turns and Revolutions, with which the Reign of this excellent and godly Prince was disquieted and embroiled, the Loss of whole Provinces Abroad, his distracted Affairs at
 Home,

Home, the unsufferable Trials and Vexations with which his meek and enduring Temper was constantly exercised, in his Court, in his Camp, in his Council, and not a little in his Family: By what strange and sudden Reverses of Providence he was sometimes in Prison, and sometimes on the Throne; if, I say, the History of that unhappy Reign had entirely perished, and we were only to have judged of the Greatness of our Founder, from that of his Foundations; we should certainly have concluded, that no other than a fortunate, flourishing, and unmolested King, universally acknowledged and chearfully obeyed by all his Subjects, easy in his Government, abounding in Wealth, unclogged with War, and undisturbed with Faction; could have leisure to form so noble, so deliberate, so well considered a Design, or Ability to accomplish it.

BUT since we are informed by authentic undeniable History, that the case was far otherwise; how does it enhance our Obligation to him, that his peaceful Soul could not be diverted by so much Distraction,

SERM.
II.
~~~~~

SERMON. tion, such pressing Occasions and irresistible Necessity, from pursuing his gracious Purpose; but that he should still persist, with an unshaken Resolution, to build our Walls, as the *Halcyon* is said to build her Nest, in the midst of Storms and Tempests!

HE was acted in this, as in every Thing else, by a hearty and sincere Zeal for promoting God's Glory, and establishing his Worship, which was stronger than all his Discouragements from persevering in, or Temptations to intermit what he had so hopefully begun. No consideration of his own Wants and Exigencies could induce him to recal, or otherwise apply any Part of that Revenue, which he had but tacitly promised, and intentionally consecrated to God's Service; though some who succeeded, did not so scrupulously withhold their Hands from what he had actually given, and solemnly dedicated to him.

SUCH Diminutions of our *Royal Founder's* Charity had been something more excusable, if what has been taken from us,

as well as that which we still retain, had S E R M.  
not been purely and properly his own. II.  
He endowed us with nothing that was seized, under pretence of Forfeiture, or otherwise extorted from any, by Arbitrary and Lawless Force: For he resolved with good King *David*, not to *make an Offering to the Lord his God of that which cost him nothing.* 2 Sam. xxiv. 24.

WITH what obliging Circumstances was his Character attended! And how must it endear his Memory to us when we consider, that he parted with so fair a Revenue when he was living, and could have used it himself, when he was young and vigorous, and might have employed it in State and Magnificence, or (as too many other Princes have done) in Luxury and Riot; when he was frequently straitned and distressed, and sometimes needed himself the Assistance he has provided for us; that our Foundations were laid by such Innocent and Righteous Hands, stained with no Blood, nor filled with the Fruits of Violence and Oppression: That this fair and beautiful Structure, (which was his first and

SERM. and peculiar Care) where we are now praising God, and commemorating our *Royal Patron*, was not erected on the Ruins of injured Families, nor does it stand here, to cover, shall I say? or proclaim rather, the guilty Greatness of its Founder, at once the Monument, and the intended Expiation of late repented Crimes!

No, He had no enormous Offences to atone for, no other Miscarriages but such as were incident to Human Frailty; and as few of those (so far as the watchfullest Eye could observe, and as they who were most privy to the Secrets of his Soul have averred) as, not only any Prince, but any private *Christian* was ever charged with.

HE contrived to make his Charity as serviceable to God's Glory, as useful, as comprehensive, and as enduring as was possible, and therefore he did not confine it to his own Time, but fixed it in such a manner, that all succeeding Ages might reap the Advantage of it \*. This was do-

\* Illud enim semel profuit, hoc semper proderit Civitati. *Cic.*

ing Good always, that had been doing it SERM.  
but once. II.

IT was in some measure to imitate the  
Divine Goodness, to extend his Care so far,  
and scatter his Bounty at so great a Di-  
stance. It was, in the noblest and surest  
Sense, doing Good to those, from whom  
he could not hope to receive any Thing a-  
gain. Nothing, I mean, but Praise and  
Thanks and a grateful Acknowledgment of  
his Favours; for so much as this, 'tis in the  
Power of Posterity to render, and 'tis their  
Duty to render it to their Ancestors, when  
they have deserved it by their praise-worthy  
Deeds, as I come now in the

SECOND PLACE to shew. There is no  
one sure will make the least Scruple, but  
that Gratitude to Benefactors, and Praise to  
them that have done well, whether they  
be living or dead, is as much a Debt, and  
as indispensably required of us, as the Re-  
turn of a Loan, the Discharge of a Con-  
tract, Performance of a Promise, Recom-  
pense for Service done, or the Acquittal of  
an innocent Person from an Accusation not

SERM. proved, or any other Instance of commu-  
 II. tative or distributive Justice.




NOR does it therefore cease to be a Debt, because the Dead are insensible (if they are so) of the Honours that are paid to their Name and Memory. 'Tis what they expected, when living, and what we obliged ourselves to pay by a tacit Compact, when we accepted their Benefits; and as they went out of the World with a pleasing Assurance of leaving a good Name behind them, 'tis both unjust to them, and discouraging to others that are well-enclined, to defeat that Expectation.

THERE is indeed no Inclination, next to that of preserving our Being, which we find more deeply implanted in us, than that of preserving our Memory: Nor is there any Aversion so strong, if we except the Dread of Temporal, and the more amazing Horror of Eternal Death, no Thought so unwelcome to us, as the Expectation of being either soon forgotten when we are dead, or scandalously remembered.

THERE



THERE are few so hardy and regardless S E R M.  
of the Opinion of After-times concerning II.  
them, as not to be influenced by it, to   
some Degree, in the Conduct of their  
Lives. And next to the Satisfaction of a  
good Conscience, and the agreeable Refle-  
xion of being acquitted and justified in the  
sight of God; the most desirable Thing  
one can wish for, is the Favour and Ap-  
probation, the Esteem and good Will of  
Men; to have one's Integrity approved  
by the concurrent Testimony of all he  
has conversed with, to be beloved when  
living, and honoured when dead; never  
to be mentioned but in Terms of Decen-  
cy and Respect: never but with the Addi-  
tion of Good or Worthy, of Honourable,  
Brave, or Generous, or some such Expression  
that may denote the high Opinion we have  
of a singular Worth and peculiar Excel-  
lence.

IT has indeed been the affected Wish of  
some vain Pretenders to Philosophy, and an  
immoderate Contempt of the World, that  
they might live and die in it unheeded and

SERM. unknown: That no Chronicle might record their Actions, no Register their Names, that they might live to themselves, and pass their Days in silent Contemplation and Reflexion on their own Merit, which they desired might be concealed from the rest of Mankind.

BUT if these were their real Sentiments, how came we to be so well acquainted with them, or to know that ever there were such Men, who thought and reasoned at this Rate? Who drew them from their beloved Obscurity, and shewed them to the World? By what Chance did we hear of their wise Singularities, and sententious Paradoxes? Did not they themselves designedly make them public, whilst they artfully contrived to recommend themselves to the World, by the Elegancy and Quaintness of those very Sayings in which they expressed their Contempt of it?

'TIS plain then that the Love and Desire of Praise is a Natural Passion. And though, as in other Passions, the Excess of it is criminal: (especially, when we are acted by that

that, and no other Motive, or when we love the Praise of Men more than the Praise of God) yet there is a sober and innocent Degree of it, that neither can be rooted out, nor ought to be discouraged. And 'tis in vain for any Man to pretend he does not value it, for we shall always be ready to conclude, he is even then aiming at it, when he tells us so.

SERM.  
II.  



THE Heathen World, whose Notions of a future State were very languid and obscure, had little other Encouragement but the Prospect of recommending themselves to their own and After-Ages, to animate and excite them to virtuous Performances, or engage them either to subject themselves to unnecessary Hazards, or to relinquish their private Interest for the sake of the Public Good.

THE Founders of Kingdoms, the Inventors of Sciences, the contrivers of Laws, Men famous for Arms or Arts, had all of them this Recompense in view. Even they who have recorded the remarkable Acts of others, have had an eye to their

SERM. OWN Renown too, and it was always the  
 II. Poets Boast, that they had immortalized  
 their Heroes and themselves.

AND in Compliance with this Natural Inclination of Mankind to be remembered after their Decease, and to have it said that such Persons were once in Being, and after what Manner they signalized themselves; there have been various Methods devised of perpetuating the Memory of remarkable Men and Actions, such as Statues and Coins, Pillars and Inscriptions, &c.

AND thus far, could they have stopped here, their Zeal was commendable enough: But when they proceeded yet farther to erect Altars and Temples too, and to pay Divine Honours to mortal Men; when, I say either Excess of Gratitude to such as had been their real Deliverers, or (which is worse) an officious Flattery towards Tyrants and Oppressors, had transported them to that extravagant Pitch of Superstition; when, with an undistinguishing Hand, they as well bestowed such Marks and Testimonies of their Esteem on a *Nero* or a *Domitian*,

*Domitian*, as on a *Titus* or a *Trajan*; this S E R M. gives us a sad and convincing Proof how liable the best Things are to be corrupted, and how easily we are led on from an Opinion or Practice, which in its Original was innocent and well intended, either to an unwarrantable Degree of it, or to a wrong Application of it, and misplacing it on unworthy Objects. II. 

WE may look even into the Christian Church, and find Matter enough for this Complaint. The Memory of those who suffered Persecution for the sake of *Christ*, and laid down their Lives in Defence of the Gospel, was always dear and precious in the Esteem of such as were Professors of the same Faith. The Days of their several Martyrdoms, under the Name of Birthdays, were annually commemorated: Solemn Returns of Thanks were made to God, who had adorned his Church with such bright and illustrious Patterns: The Assistances of his Grace were devoutly implored for all who were under the like Pressures, or subject to the same Tempta-

SERM. tions, that they might be enabled to copy  
 II. such glorious Examples, and persist in the  
 Faith with equal Resolution.

THUS modest and inoffensive in the first Institution were the Festivals appointed, by Order of the Church, in Respect to the Memory of departed Saints. But the scandalous Abuses that have arose from this innocent Practice, and which still prevail in the *Romish Church*, are too notorious to be denied, and too gross to be defended.

INSTEAD of that decent Regard that is due to their Name and Memory, they worship and adore them, and whom they should only praise, they deify. They supplicate and invoke them with the same humble Gesture, in the same Terms of Reverence and Devotion in which they address themselves to God himself. They consecrate Altars to them, offer up the pretended Sacrifice of the Mass to their Honour, and (which exceeds all Bounds) they petition for Pardon of Sin, not only through  
 their

their Intercession, but through the Virtue SERM.  
of their Merits too. II.

NAY, they do not only confer such undue and profane Honours, on such as were really eminent in their Generation for true Piety, and a constant Perseverance in the Faith; but (which highly aggravates their idolatrous Practices) they first make Saints of very bad Men, and then from such Saints they make them Gods. They celebrate and canonize them for those very Actions, which ought rather to expose them to Ignominy and Hatred, and vilely prostitute the most distinguishing Reward, that can be given to shining Virtue, on this side Heaven, whilst they crowd their Annals their with fictitious Worthies, and stuff Calendars with not only Fabulous and Legendary, but execrable Saints.

OUR *pious Founder* sure (whom they once had formed a Design of canonizing, though even that had been unpardonable) would far better have graced their Calendar,

SERM. dar, than executed Regicides and barbarous Affassins.


II.  


BUT, blessed be God! we have the Happiness to be Members of a *purser Church*, which teaches us to pay that Veneration, and only that, to the pious Memory of such as have departed in the Faith, which is lawfully due to them, without entrenching on the Divine Prerogative. We are taught to love and reverence, to praise and imitate their Virtues, but not to deify or idolize them.

AND 'tis much to be desired, that Men would keep to such a happy Mean, as neither profanely to turn that Respect into Religious Adoration; nor on the other Hand treat them with an irreverent Scorn, or rude Neglect, endeavouring to abolish the Remembrance of their Virtues.

FOR I cannot but observe to you, that there is an Extreme on this side too, to be avoided. There are some who will not see the Difference between Civil Honour and Religious Worship, who fly so fast from Superstition, that they know not  
 where




where to stop, and think they can never SERM.  
get far enough from *Popery*, till they are II.  
quite broke loose from all sort of Awe or   
Reverence, for Persons, or Places, or  
Times, or Things Sacred, decrying all this  
as Bigotry and Superstition.

BUT as the Compilers of our excellent  
Liturgy have prudently, and with great  
Judgment removed whatsoever might give  
any just Cause of Offence in this Matter,  
since the Days appointed to be observed in  
Memory of Holy Persons departed are so  
very few, and those we do commemorate,  
of such undoubted Sanctity, none but the  
first and brightest Ornaments of the Chris-  
tian Faith; 'tis very strange that such a  
Practice as this, so pious and reasonable in  
its Institution, and now so free from any  
Abuse in the Exercise thereof, should still  
be imputed to us as a Relique of Popish  
Superstition, which so manifestly appears  
to have been the constant Usage of the *Pri-  
mitive Church*, long before Popery itself  
had a Beginning.

AND

SERM. AND if those who take Exception at  
 II. our Celebration of such Festivals, as if God  
 was thereby robbed of his Honour, would  
 but consult the public Offices of our Church  
 on these Occasions, (and particularly the  
 Collect for this Day) they might soon be  
 convinced, that, however the Day is called  
 by the Name of the respective Saint, the  
 whole Worship is paid to God alone. We  
 endeavour to approach him by no other  
 Mediator, but his beloved Son, and urge  
 no Merits, but only his. We return Thanks  
 indeed for the Examples of glorified Saints,  
 but put up no Prayers either for, or to  
 them.

BUT as to the Dead in general, who-  
 ever has been useful and serviceable in his  
 Generation, whoever has done or suffered  
 any Thing for the Name of *Christ*, who-  
 ever has abounded in good Works, and the  
 Labour that proceedeth of Love, whoever  
 has either done us Good, or set us a good  
 Example, has a Right to be mentioned by  
 us after his Decease in Terms of Respect,  
 Esteem and Value. 'Tis our Duty to praise  
 the

the Virtues of those, who have been thus SERM.  
signally beneficial to Mankind, and while II.  
we praise, to imitate them too. 

AND this is the best Return we can make to our *Royal Founder*, nor can we more acceptably thank him for his Charity, than by following the Example of his Piety. And as our Obligation to such a Behaviour, as may in some Measure make us resemble so fair a Pattern, is peculiarly great; so would our Neglect be inexcusable. For if such unwearied Devotion, such unblemished Chastity, such strict Sobriety, such a modest, meek and humble Frame of Mind, so regular a Conduct of Life, and such a remarkable Concurrence of every Grace and Virtue, was consistent with the *Royal Dignity*; what could be said in Excuse for us, if we should not excel in the same Virtues, but especially if any of those Vices should find Admittance in his *College*, which he banished from his *Court*?

WE have certainly in this State of Life, much greater Opportunities of being good, and fewer Temptations to be ill, than can  
ordi-

SERM. ordinarily be expected amidst the gay Objects and flattering Allurements that surround a Throne.

II.

NAY, the Virtue of our *good King* was so much the more conspicuous, in that, according to the Principles of the Church he was a Member of, (the best which was then visible, though a very bad one, and over-run with Errors and Corruptions) under the Protection of Wealth, he might have sinned to his Heart's Content; and that very Bounty he has bestowed on us, would have purchased for him such a plentiful Store of *Absolutions, Pardons* and *Indulgences*, as might have quieted his Conscience, and made him secure of his Salvation, in whatever Vices he had indulged himself.

BUT he had the Grace (in a good Sense) to shame his Profession by his Practice: And whatever his Religion was, his Life was certainly *reformed*. And I wish to God that all who are now admitted into a *purser Church*, were no impurer Members.

BLESSED

BLESSED be that Divine Providence, S E R M.  
which gave this excellent Prince both the II.  
Power and the Will, to be the Author of  
so great and good an Undertaking, and in-  
spired him with so sincere a Zeal for pro-  
moting Christian Knowledge, and true  
Piety.

AND blessed be the same good Provi-  
dence, which in different Ages has succes-  
sively raised up so many other Founders of  
Societies, which compose this learned and  
venerable Body, and other Benefactors both  
to us and them. May they for ever re-  
main prosperous, flourishing, and succes-  
ful. May they continue to abound in Re-  
ligion and Learning, Industry and Mora-  
lity, Duty and Loyalty, good Order and  
Discipline, and every Thing that is com-  
mendable; to the Encouragement of our  
Benefactors and Joy of our Friends, to the  
Benefit of the Nation, the Disappointment  
of those who wish us Ill, or would rejoice  
at our Miscarriages, the Security of our  
present Advantages, and the Enlargement  
of

80 *Of the Relative Engagement, &c.*

SERM. of them by farther Accessions, but above  
II. all, to the Furtherance of the Gospel and  
the Glory of Almighty God.

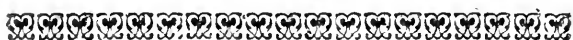
*To whom, with the Son and the Holy  
Ghost, &c.*





## S E R M O N III.


The Preparation of Mind, requisite  
for receiving the Gospel. Preach-  
ed in *Advent*.



ACTS xiii. 48.

*And as many as were ordained to  
eternal Life, believed.*



T. Paul in his Progress with S E R M.  
Barnabas (who, as we read in III.  
the beginning of this Chapter,   
had been separated, by the pec-  
uliar Designation of the Holy Ghost, for  
the Work whereunto he had called them)  
came to *Antioch* in *Pisidia*, and repairing  
to the *Jewish* Synagogue there, where the

S E R M. Congregation was made up partly of *Jews*,  
 III. and partly of Profelytes, and prepared to  
 hear any Word of Exhortation, that should  
 be delivered, stood up, and gave them a  
 compendious Account of God's Dealing  
 with the *Jewish* Nation, from the Time of  
 their Deliverance from the *Egyptian* Bon-  
 dage, till the Days of *Jesus* of *Nazareth*,  
 whom he proves by invincible Arguments  
 to be the promised *Messiah*; shows them  
 how their Rulers had mistaken those Scrip-  
 tures, they thought they understood so well,  
 and how they ignorantly fulfilled them, by  
 putting him to Death. He makes it known  
 ver. 38, to them, *that through this Man is preached*  
 39. *unto them and all Men, Forgiveness of Sins :*  
*And that by Him all that believe are justi-*  
*fied from all Things, from which they could*  
*not be justified by the Law of Moses.* And  
 concludes his Sermon with a serious Cau-  
 tion, that they should beware of exposing  
 themselves to the sad and astonishing Ef-  
 fects, which are threatned to those Despi-  
 sers, who reject such clear and palpable  
 Conviction. *Beware therefore, lest that*  
 ver. 40, *come upon you, which is spoken in the Pro-*  
 41. *phets :*



*phets: Behold, ye Despisers, and wonder and* SERM.  
*perish: For I work a Work in your Days,* III.  
*a Work which ye shall in no wise believe,*  
*though a Man declare it unto you.*

UPON this the *Jews* went away (though not all of them) very much dissatisfied and filled with Indignation, to find the Proceedings of those Rulers, whom they had in the highest Veneration, thus censured and exposed; to hear the Law of *Moses* so disparaged; to hear another Law cried up as more perfect than that, able to justify where the other could not, and themselves threatened with Reprobation, if they did not come in to this new Doctrine.

BUT the Profelytes from among the *Gentiles*, were affected in another Manner with the Apostle's edifying Discourse: And as they had made a large Step already from *Heathen* Idolatry and Superstition, to the Worship of the true God; so they were willing to go on unto Perfection, and to compleat that which was still lacking, in order to their obtaining a full Remission of their Sins, and getting into a sure and di-


SERMON. rect Way to everlasting Happiness and Salvation.  
 III.



THEY request the Apostle once more to renew his godly Labour, and to confirm the Hope he had raised in them, by another Discourse on the same Subject.

ACCORDINGLY, the next Sabbath-day he repeats the same Instructions before a greater Audience, when almost the whole City was gathered together; some with an honest Zeal and sincere Desire to be instructed, some through Curiosity and an Itch after Novelty; but others, especially the *Jews*, out of mere Envy and Malice, and a Spirit of Contradiction.

BUT notwithstanding all the Opposition they met with from them, the Apostles proceeded in their Doctrine with an undaunted Boldness; and when they found that all they could say, though never so clear and evident, would make no manner of Impression on them, but that they still continued obstinate in their Unbelief, they told them plainly, that for their own Parts, they had faithfully discharged the Trust reposed in them, and executed the Commission

tion they had received from God; which S E R M. III.  
was, in preaching the Gospel to have an   
especial Regard to the *Jews*, as God's select and peculiar People, to make them the first Overture of a better Covenant, than that in which they were now engaged, to invite them before, and in Preference to all others, to partake of the Benefits procured and purchased by the Death of *Christ*, and now declared and publickly offered to the World by their preaching; but since they had obstinately rejected *the Word of God*, ver. 46.  
*and put it from them, since they had judged themselves unworthy of everlasting Life*; that the Tenor of their Commission now required them to turn to the *Gentiles*, and make them the same Offer. *For so*, say ver. 47.  
they, *both the Lord commanded us, saying, I have set thee to be a Light of the Gentiles, that thou shouldst be for Salvation unto the Ends of the Earth.* And then it follows in the Verse of my Text, *And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the Word of God, and as many as were ordained unto eternal Life, believed.*

SERM. IN discoursing on which Words, I  
 III. shall



I. IN the first Place show what we are to understand by being *ordained unto eternal Life*.

II. I SHALL explain at large the Doctrine contained in those Words, and

III. REDUCE that Doctrine to Practice, by showing what Influence it ought to have in the Regulation of our Life and Manners.

I. I AM to show what we are to understand by being *ordained unto eternal Life*. And this is the more necessary, because of a mistaken Interpretation which some have endeavoured to put upon this Expression, and a very erroneous Conclusion that has been drawn from it, to the great Discouragement of Piety, and the disquieting Persons of tender Consciences. I mean the Doctrine of absolute Election and Reprobation, which they would infer from its being said, that some are *ordained to eter-*

*nal Life* in Preference to others, as if the SERM.  
ordaining here spoken of, were a mere III.  
arbitrary Act of Almighty Power, with-  
out any Concurrence of Human Endeavours: As if it were fixed by an unalterable Decree, that such and such Persons should readily believe and embrace the Gospel, when it should be preached unto them, so as not to have it in their Power to do otherwise, and as the Reward of such a Belief, should be everlastingly happy; and that such other Persons should despitefully reject it when offered, without any Possibility of being convinced by it, or giving their Assent to it, and as the Consequence of such an Unbelief, should be miserable to all Eternity.

Which Doctrine, tho' indeed it highly magnifies the free and undeserved Grace of God, of which we cannot have too honourable conceptions, and effectually destroys the pretended Merit of good Works, that the Gift may be of God, and not of Man; yet is it as injurious to the Divine Justice and Impartiality, as it is favourable to his infinite Power over all, and his free Grace

SERMON. and Benignity to some of his Creatures.

III. Nor must we explain one of God's Attributes to the Prejudice of another. The Divine Essence and Operations are all harmonious, and act in a beautiful Confederacy together, without any Thwarting or Incongruity.

And the natural tendency of such an Opinion is, to enervate and take off the Force of all the Motives and Arguments that can be urged, either for confirming Men in their Faith, or exhorting them to Practice; it being so very obvious for those who are persuaded that all their actions, and whatever can befall them, is already pre-determined by an irrevocable Decree, to answer; that if they are ordained to eternal Life, they cannot miscarry of it; if the contrary, they cannot possibly attain it, and consequently, that all Endeavours are in vain.

It is likewise very easy and natural for those who are thoroughly possess'd with such a Notion, to be carried to one or the other of two very dangerous Extremes, *viz.* Presumption, or Despair, as their particular Complexion or Temperament of Body happens

pens to incline them; the more gay and sanguine being over-forward, and apt, upon very slight Grounds, to conclude themselves in the happy Number of those whose Salvation is sure, beyond all Possibility of being forfeited: and others, of heavier Spirits, and a more melancholly Aspect, to terrify themselves with unjust forebodings, and give themselves over as lost and reprobate, without any room for Pardon, or prospect of Redemption.

But both these Apprehensions are injurious to God, and to themselves; nor are those Opinions, from which they proceed, founded on any Reason or Authority; tho' some have endeavoured to support them from mistaken Passages of Scripture, and this of my Text for one, where we are told, that *as many as were ordained to eternal Life, believed.*

Whereas indeed, no more is implied by this Text, but that as many as were rightly fitted and disposed, whose Hearts were in a due State of Readiness and Preparation to receive the Gospel, (whose saving Truths alone could bring them to the Knowledge,

SERM. or entitle them to the Hopes of eternal Life)

III. as many as were tractable and teachable, free from those corrupt Prejudices and Affections that blinded the Minds of others, and would not suffer them to see by the clearest Light, nor be convinced by the plainest Demonstration; as many as, with the generous *Beræans*, were willing fairly to try, and impartially examine the Doctrines they were taught, and to search the Scriptures, whether those Things were so: as many as, by the preventing Grace of God, and their own sincere Endeavours, had such an Honesty and Integrity of Heart wrought in them, that the Truths of Christianity could easily enter, and successfully take Root, and flourish there: So many, I say, as were thus qualified, are said to believe, upon the preaching of the Apostle, *i. e.* to be converted, and become Christians.

And this Intepretation is most agreeable to the Meaning of the original Phrase, the general Design of the Context, and corresponds best with other Passages of the New Testament, where the same Qualification



cation of Mind is required in one that is to be instructed in the Gospel.

S E R M.  
III.  
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'Tis well known to all who are versed in the *Greek* Language, that the Verb *τάττω*, tho' it does sometimes signify to command or ordain, institute or appoint, yet is often used for disposing or setting in order. We frequently meet with it in a military sense, and then it imports the marshalling of Troops, or placing them in their Ranks, and those who are so placed are *τεταγμένοι* (the very Word in my Text) *i. e.* not ordained, but disposed, and in a due Readiness or Posture to meet their Enemy, or to execute any Orders their Commander shall think fit.

Nay, we often read it in a reciprocal Sense, where the Action performed is purely voluntary, and a Man's own, without any Force or Direction, or perceptible Influence of any other (for I neither exclude the invisible Operations of the Spirit of God, secretly exciting Men to that which is good, nor the wicked Instigations of the Devil prompting them to Evil.)

And

SERM. And of this Usage of the Word there

III. are many Instances, both in sacred and profane Writers, but one more particularly, 1 Cor. xvi. 15. which shall serve for all others; for I affect not to trouble you with Quotations in a Language few understand, any farther than is absolutely necessary toward clearing my Point, and shewing I do not affirm Things without Proof.

We read then, I say, in the aforecited Place, of some who *εἰς διακονίαν τοῖς ἁγίοις ἤλαξαν ἑαυτοὺς*, addicted themselves to the Ministry of the Saints. Now would it not sound very strange, if the Word had been translated there, as it is in my Text, and we were to hear of Men who ordained themselves to the Ministry of the Saints; Ordaining being the Act of another, whereas what they did or undertook, is at the same time plainly represented as the Result of their own meer Motion?

But there would be no Impropriety at all, if my Text were adapted to that Passage; for Men may properly be said to addict or devote themselves to eternal Life, *i. e.* to set themselves in the Way of it, and be ready

to embrace the Methods that conduce to-
ward it.

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III.



AND as the Phrase will admit of this Construction, so does the Context evidently require it. There is a Comparison here made between the *Jews* and *Gentiles*. The obstinate Incredulity of the one, is aggravated by the Ingenuity and Pliableness of the other. The one were unqualified for Conversion, by their rooted Malice and inveterate Prejudice; they contradicted and blasphemed, and thrust away the Word of God from them with Scorn and Indignation; upon which, *St. Paul* tells them, they *judged themselves unworthy of eternal Life*; where, by judging, he does not mean that they thought or deemed themselves unworthy of everlasting Life; they had no such humble and modest Thoughts of themselves; but, on the contrary, 'tis evident from their Pride and Scorn in this Instance, that they thought themselves worthy of any thing, but the Word of God and everlasting Life rather unworthy of them.

T H E

SERM. THE Word *judging* then, is to be under-


III. stood in its original judiciary sense. They
 judged themselves unworthy, *i. e.* they
 passed a Sentence of Unworthiness upon
 themselves, and were condemned out of
 their own Mouth. And the Apostle ac-
 cordingly looking upon them as under such
 a Sentence of Condemnation, refuses to
 treat with them any further, but turns from
 them, and makes the same Offers of Salva-
 tion to the *Gentiles*, as the Tenor of his
 Commission required.

WHICH latter, on the other Hand,
 judged themselves worthy of it, *i. e.* they
 approved themselves such, by their Beha-
 viour, as were apt to receive the Gospel,
 and to whom it would not be preached in
 vain. And as many as did so receive it,
 and whose Hearts were in a due Prepara-
 tion to embrace the glad Tidings of Salva-
 tion with Joy and Chearfulness, and a ready
 Obedience, were *τεταγμένοι εἰς ζωὴν αἰώνιον*,
 (not ordained, but as it ought to be ren-
 dered) aptly disposed, or ready for eternal
 Life.

IF we understand it thus, the Reason of S E R M.
St. Paul's turning from the *Jews* to the *Gentiles* will be plain and evident. He left III.
the former, because of their obstinate and refractory Spirit, and betook himself to the others, because they were docible, and easy to be entreated; whereas if we take it in that other Meaning, of God's having ordained some and rejected others, the whole Force of the Apostle's Argument will be lost. For, why should he leave the *Jews* in Anger, and tell them, they had judged themselves unworthy of everlasting Life, when it was God that had judged them unworthy, and excluded them from all Possibility of it, and the Power of qualifying themselves for it, by an unalterable Decree?

WHY should it be said particularly of the *Gentiles*, that *as many of them as were ordained, believed*, which might have been affirmed, with equal Truth, of the *Jews* likewise? For as many of them too, how small soever the Number might be, as were ordained to Life, did certainly believe.

SERM. But the Exposition I have given you has

III. none of this Absurdity, and accords the best
 of any with the Scope of the Argument, and the general Design of the Context; and so it does also with other Passages of the New Testament, where such a previous Preparation of Heart is required in one that is to be instructed in the Gospel, as will appear under my


II. SECOND general Head, in which I have undertaken to explain the Doctrine contained in the Words of my Text, according to that Meaning wherein they have been interpreted. This then is what is here plainly implied, and elsewhere more largely taught; that it is not sufficient toward making one a Christian, to have the Gospel tendered him, and the Terms of Salvation proposed to him, even by an inspired Author, by one of the chiefest of the Apostles; unless his Mind be so prepared, so freed from vicious Prejudices, and moulded into such a Frame and Temperament, by the Grace of God, and his own careful Application, as to be susceptible of good Impressions, and ready to yield to such reasonable Motives as are proper for its Conviction.

LET the Seed be never so good, and the SOWER never so diligent and skilful, yet if the Soil be barren and undressed, covered with Stones, or over-run with Thorns, there is little or no Increase to be expected. SERM.
III.

As in the Cure of the Body there are many noble Remedies, that miss of their Effect, for want of a preparatory Course of Alteratives to clear the Patient of such corrupt Humours as clog and intercept them, and will not suffer them to reach the affected Part, or to operate with their full Force and Virtue; so is it with the Soul too, on which the highest spiritual Restoratives that can be administered, will have no Efficacy at all, unless the Obstructions of Pride and Prepossession, of Envy and Sensuality are removed, and leave the others free room to exert and diffuse their healing Virtue.

THOSE carnal Impediments are like the strong Man our Saviour speaks of; while they keep Possession of the House, there is no Admission for any other, till a stronger than they expels them.

SERM. THERE are several sorts of Persons, who

III. are declared by *Aristotle*, in the Entrance
 of his System of moral Philosophy, to be very improper and incompetent Hearers of such Lectures, and likely to make but little Improvement from them; such especially as, through the Heat of Youth, were strongly addicted to the Gratification of their inferior Appetites, and the Enjoyment of sensual Pleasures, so as to have no relish of a more refined and rational satisfaction, and the whole Force of whose Inclinations was bent against any Proposal that tended to deprive them of that in which they placed the Sum of their Felicity. To talk to such as these of virtuous Pleasure, and the Happiness of the Mind, was beginning at the wrong End; their Inclinations were first to be altered, and their eager Propensity toward unlawful and unworthy Objects to be abated.

AND that this is the case in the great work of propagating the Gospel, we see very plainly by the Effect; we see to how little Purpose it is offered to some, and how very successfully to others; how readily these entertain

entertain it, how injuriously those reject S E R M. III.
it.

Now whence can this sensible Difference arise, or what can be the Ground of such an Inequality? It is not in the word preached, for that is the same to all; both those that receive, and those that thrust it away— from them, are invited on the same terms and conditions to be for ever happy. It is not in those that preach it; for it is notorious, that many of both sorts have it administered to them in the same manner, at the same time, and by the same Person, whilst yet some receive it to their Edification, and others to their greater Destruction; some making large improvements under the meanest, whilst others are not to be wrought upon by the wisest exhortations of the most able of God's Ministers. It is not in the Acceptance of God, for he is ready to accept every one that doth Righteousness, nor merely in the Abundance or Defect of his Grace and Favour; for though he may have weighty Reasons for granting to some Persons an extraordinary Portion of his Gifts, yet he will always so far main-

SERM. tain his Character of being no respecter of
 III. Persons, as to grant that which may be
 ~~~~~ sufficient to all.

THE Difference then must lie here, the one sort are hard and unrelenting, stiff in their Opinions, and not to be persuaded by the most cogent Proofs, full of Cavils and Exceptions, ready to make Faults where they cannot find them, and mightily indisposed toward any thing that looks like yielding or complying. The Malignity of such Mens Tempers is the cause of their Unbelief, as we may conclude from those Words of St. Paul, *2 Theff. iii. 2. That we may be delivered, says he, from unreasonable and wicked Men; for all Men have not Faith.* They therefore have it not, because they are unreasonable and wicked; whereas the others receive the Word into Hearts well prepared; they are free from all Clogs and Incumbrances; they are willing to hear, and ready to be instructed; their Faces are set as if they would go to the heavenly *Jerusalem*: They are, as our Saviour speaks, *Beati, fit for the Kingdom of Heaven*; or, as it is in the Text, *disposed for eternal Life.*

IT was to beget in Men such a Dispo-  
S E R M.  
sition as this, that *John the Baptist* was III.  
employed as the fore-runner of our blessed  
Saviour: He was sent before him, to pre-  
pare the Way for him, and make room for  
the Reception of him and his Doctrine;  
to make the crooked Paths straight, and the  
rough Ways smooth; to remove all ob-  
structions of Pride and Haughtiness, and  
whatever else was like to prove a Hin-  
drance, and to exalt itself against the Truth.

IT is with a View to the same End, that  
the solemn yearly Commemoration of our  
Lord's Nativity, is appointed by our Church  
to be ushered in with this preparatory Sea-  
son of Advent; that, by hearing the an-  
tient Prophecies daily read in our Ears, and  
comparing them with Evangelical Facts;  
all Impediments to our Belief might be ef-  
fectually removed, that our Hearts might  
be so disposed as to embrace the glad Ti-  
dings of Salvation, with a full Assurance of  
Faith and Hope\*.

To the same Purpose are we exhorted

\* See *Ham. Postscr.* p. 5. *Jacks.* I. 820.

SERMON. by our Lord to receive the Kingdom of

III. God, as a little Child, if ever we expect to enter therein, *i. e.* to receive the Gospel with as much Simplicity and Candour as a little Child, that has yet no Impressions stamped on his Soul by Reflexion, or Education, or Experience, no precedent Notions settled there, to cross and thwart such useful ones as are to be instilled into him; but his Mind is a perfect Blank, that has not yet received its first Characters.

1 Pet. ii.

1. 2.

IT is to this Effect too that St. Peter cautions us *To lay aside all Malice, and all Guile, and Hypocrisies and Envy, and all evil-speaking, and as new-born Babes to desire the sincere Milk of the Word, that we may grow therein.* And St. James, *That laying aside all Filthiness and Superfluity of Naughtiness, we would receive with Meekness the engrafted Word, which is able to save our Souls.*

Ja. i. 21.

WE read of some whom the Word preached did not profit; and we are expressly told, the Reason why they did not edify by it was, because it was not mixed with Faith in them that heard it: and,  
gene-

generally speaking, wherever the hearty SERM.  
Endeavours that are used for Mens Con- III.  
version miss of their desired Success, it is  
not through any Defect in the Agent, it is  
not through any Insufficiency in the Means,  
but merely through an Incapacity in the  
Subject. I do not mean any natural Let or  
Hindrance, such as is unavoidable and  
without a Remedy, but such as arises from  
a stubborn Mind, and the wilful Unreadi-  
ness and Inaptitude of his own Heart to re-  
ceive any good Impressions.

OF such mighty and important Conse-  
quence is it, that we receive the Word of  
God into a sound and perfect Heart, where  
there are no Obstacles to hinder it from  
sinking deep enough, nor any Tincture of  
malignant Prejudice to sour and corrupt it,  
I shall now very briefly, in the

III<sup>d</sup> Place, reduce this Doctrine to Pra-  
ctice, and shew what Influence it ought to  
have in the Regulation of our Life and  
Manners. Since then a sincere and honest  
Disposition of Heart is so essential to our  
Profession, that without it one cannot be a

SERM. Christian, let us be careful to keep ours  
 III. always in such a Posture; and if the Seed  
 of eternal Life has already been sown in  
 good Ground, let us suffer no Tares to be  
 sown there afterwards, lest they spoil our  
 Crop, choak the good Seed, and disappoint  
 us in the Day of Harvest.


Or, to speak without a Figure, let us  
 always be ready to receive sound Doctrine,  
 and such as is agreeable to that sacred Rule  
 that is given us for the Government of  
 our Lives; but with all possible Caution  
 guard ourselves against those dangerous and  
 deceitful Errors, which are as certainly false  
 as the Word of God is true. Let that be  
 our Guide in all our Actions and in all our  
 Principles. Let us not, through Affecta-  
 tion or Singularity, entertain any loose No-  
 tions in Religion, nor suffer the Gospel-  
 Truths to have any Rival in our Breasts.  
 Let us not think them contemptible for  
 being common, nor fit to be laid aside,  
 because they have been long received. In the  
 Way to Salvation, as well as in that to  
 Health, the known and tried Remedies are  
 the safest. That pretended Wisdom which  
 will

will not be contented to be saved by the regular Methods, and will not be persuaded but that a Man of Parts and Penetration may find a better and more compendious Road to Heaven, than that by which the Vulgar arrive there; such pretended Wisdom, I say, is nothing else but empirical Pride and Ignorance, with which dangerous Leaven, if we are in the least infected, we are by no means prepared for receiving the Gospel, nor qualified to admit that Wisdom which descendeth from above. None but a modest and humble, a pure and obedient Heart, is fit to receive those divine Instructions; and it is only in such a one that they can be preserved. It is not enough that we have for once been dispossessed of the unclean Spirit, and that our House has been swept and garnished; but we must keep that wicked one still at a Distance, lest, if we permit him to enter once again, he bring with him seven other Spirits more wicked than himself, who will enter in and dwell within us, and so our last State will be worse than the first.

S E R M.  
III.  
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SERM. IT was a naughty and corrupted Heart,
 III. enslaved to filthy Lucre, and intent upon
 worldly Gain, which led the false *Judas*
 into that Act of monstrous Ingratitude and
 perfidious Treachery, the betraying his
 Lord and Master into the Hands of his
 cruel Enemies. He was grown hard and
 insensible there; and this was the Reason
 that neither the instructive Precepts, nor
 winning Persuasion, nor bright Example,
 nor astonishing Miracles of the blessed *Je-*
sus, wrought any Effect upon him. He
 saw and heard as much as the rest of the
 Apostles, had all the same Opportunities
 and Advantages, and the same Motives of
 Conviction. But his Heart was past feel-
 ing, and steeld as to all Impressions of
 Goodness. Nothing touched it, but that Re-
 morse which is worse than none; not the
 supple Relentings of a penitent Sorrow,
 but the sullen Gloominess and bitter Smi-
 tings of guilty Despair.

THIS drove him to add to his former
 Load of Iniquity the unnatural Sin of Self-
 Murder; and his Death made a Vacancy
 in the College of Apostles, which was sup-
 plied

plied by the Choice of a worthier Person, SERM.
the blessed Saint whom we this Day com- III.
memorate, who, far from copying the Ex- 
ample of his Apostate Predecessor, with
Joy and Zeal professed the Name of *Jesus*,
and faithfully propagated his Gospel in re-
mote and barbarous Regions, till at last he
sealed his Doctrine with his Blood.

Let the Example of him, and other ho-
ly Persons departed in the Faith, excite us
to an Imitation of their Virtues, that by a
constant Perseverance in well-doing, and
remaining faithful unto Death, we may
obtain a Crown of Life.

LET us keep our Heart therefore with
all Diligence, for out of it are the Issues of
Life and Death; if we neglect that, we
shall soon be spiritually dead, and the di-
vine Life will be totally extinguished in us;
but if we look well to it, and preserve it
always in a religious Frame, we shall grow
rich toward God, receive constant Supplies
of heavenly Wisdom and divine Instru-
ction, we shall find ourselves in the happy
Number of those who are ordained or dis-
posed to eternal Life, and shall not fail to
have our Recompence accordingly.

SERM. IN order to which, let us beseech our
III. gracious God, who so loved the World, as
to send his beloved Son for our Redemption,
that we may all be so thoroughly persuaded
of his first Advent, and so prepared to meet
him at his second, that when he shall come
again to judge the World, we may be found
an acceptable People in his Sight.

*To whom, with the Father and the Holy
Ghost, &c.*





S E R M O N IV.

The End and Circumstances of a
Future Judgment. Preached in
Advent.



M A T T. XXV. 31, 32.


*When the Son of Man shall come in
his Glory, and all the holy Angels
with him, then shall he sit upon
the Throne of his Glory; and be-
fore him shall be gathered all Na-
tions: And he shall separate them
one from another, as a Shepherd
divideth his Sheep from the Goats.*



HIS latter Part of the Chap-
ter, which contains a Descrip-
tion of the Last Judgment, is
an Application of the Parable of
the Talents. Our Blessed Saviour had been
relating

S E R M.
IV.

SERM. relating the different Success of those Ser-

IV.  vants to whom they had been committed :
 How those who had been faithful to their Trust, were applauded by their Master, and rewarded by him in Proportion to their several Improvements: And on the other Hand, how that slothful and unprofitable Servant, who had made no Use of his Talent, but buried it in the Earth, was sentenced to be cast into outer Darkness, being condemned out of his own Mouth; whilst the unreasonable Apprehension of his Lord's Austerity, which he alledged as an Excuse, was made an Aggravation of his Neglect.

HAD the Disciples understood this Parable a-right, and took it, as it was intended, for an Emblem of the Great Day of Accounts; had they considered that the Man who was to return from a far Country, was their own Lord: That the Servants, who were to be accountable to him, were they themselves: That the Talents to be accounted for, were those Powers and Faculties of Mind, those Endowments and Ornaments of Body, those Gifts and Advantages

vantages of Fortune, together with the several Means and Opportunities of doing Good, which the Divine Bounty had afforded them: And that the solemn Enquiry which is said to be made into the Use or Abuse of these Talents, was spoken with Allusion to that great and terrible Day, when they and all Mankind should be brought before the Judgment-Seat of *Christ*, to render an Account of their respective Actions:

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IF, I say, they had thus apprehended him at first; our Saviour, in all Probability, (as he frequently did in other Cases) would have spared the Application, and have left it to their own convicted Reason and awakened Conscience, to consider, how nearly it resembled their own Case.


THEY were naturally slow of Apprehension, and, like the generality of Men, too insensible and regardless of Futurity. Possibly therefore they might look upon this, as on many others of his Parables, but as a Matter of pure Fiction, a mere Fable without a Moral, a pleasant and surprizing Tale,

SERM. Tale, propos'd rather to amuse and divert,
 IV. than to edify and instruct them.



BUT whatever they thought of the Parable itself, or whatever Influence it had on them; his Meaning is now too plain and obvious not to be understood.

HE here describes the Nature and Circumstances of his Second Advent in most discernable and lively Colours: He tells them in plain and express Words, in what an august and formidable Manner he will appear, attended *with his Holy Angels, and sitting on the Throne of his Glory; that before him shall be gathered all Nations: That he will separate the one from the other, as a Shepherd divideth the Sheep from the Goats: That the one shall be set at his Right-hand, the other on his Left: That the Righteous, after an exact and faithful Enumeration of their Virtues, and in particular, of their Charity and Benevolence to their Fellow-Members in Distress, shall receive their deserved Approbation, and be admitted to their Inheritance of the Kingdom prepared for them from the Foundation of the World.* But the Wicked, after a
 black

black and dismal Rehearſal of their Crimes, S E R M.
 and above all, of their tenacious and grip- IV.
 ing Diſpoſition, and Want of Compaſſion 
 to the Poor, ſhall be for ever adjudged to
that Fire that is prepared for the Devil
and his Angels. That the Sentence thus
 pronounced, ſhall, when the Judgment is
 over, and the great Audit at an End, be
 impartially and finally executed on either of
 them: *That theſe ſhall go away into ever-*
laſting Punishment, but the Righteous into
Life eternal.

THIS is the main Purport of the lat-
 ter Part of the Chapter, in which the
 Words of my Text are comprehended;
 from whence we may obſerve the follow-
 ing Particulars:

I. THE Perſon that ſhall come to
 judge the World, *i. e.* the ſame Je-
 ſus, who came once into the World
 to redeem it, ſhall come again to
 judge it: *The Son of Man ſhall*
come.

II. The Manner and Circumſtances of
 his coming, *He ſhall come in his*
Glory,

SERM.

IV.



Glory, and all the Holy Angels with him, and shall sit on the Throne of his Glory.

III. THE End and Design of his coming, *i. e.* in Order to the final Arbitration of the eternal Fate of all Mankind, discerning between the Just and the Reprobate, and consigning them over to a joyful or a miserable Eternity. *Before him shall be gathered all Nations, and he shall separate them one from another, as a Shepherd divideth his Sheep from the Goats.*

IV. How much it concerns us all to prepare for that Day, and keep ourselves in a constant Readiness to expect it, that we may meet our Sentence with Joy and not with Grief.

I. WE may observe from hence, who it is that shall come to judge the World, even that Son of Man, who came once to redeem it.

THERE are four different Advents of our Blessed Saviour, taken Notice of by the
Evan-

Evangelists, and alluded to by our Church in S E R M. some one or more of the Epistles or Gospels IV. appointed for this Holy Season. Two of them, which are those already mentioned, are of a more general Nature, *viz.* his first coming from Heaven in Quality of a Mediator, and taking upon him the Form and Fashion of a Man, in order to the gracious Work of our Redemption, which is already past: And that other which we yet expect, when he shall come again, with all the Pomp and Terror of a Judge, to take a strict Cognizance of every Man's Behaviour.

HIS other two Advents were more particular indeed, but equally tending to the Accomplishment of solemn Predictions, the one serving as a commemorative Representation of his first great coming; the other as a significant Type and certain earnest of his Second.

I MEAN his remarkable Entry into *Jerusalem* a little before the Passover at which he suffered, and his coming, (not in a visible Form indeed, but with that Power and Vengeance he had foretold he should) to-

SERM. tally to destroy that City, and disperse the
 IV. Inhabitants of it, which came to pass not
 many Years after his Ascension.

AND as certainly as he came in any one of those Instances; so surely will he come again at the End of the World to judge the Quick and the Dead.

HE himself, that very crucified *Jesus*, who was arraigned and condemned as a common Malefactor, at the Tribunal of an earthly Judge; shall sit in Judgment over Him and all Mankind. Then shall the malicious Prosecutors, the perjured Evidence, the insolent Multitude who were all so eager for his Crucifixion, with Horror expect their fatal Sentence from the Mouth of that Sovereign and awful Monarch, whom they once, in Derision, called a King.

IT is indeed with Respect to those Sufferings he underwent here on Earth, and for that very Reason, because he himself was judged, that God has committed this Power to him, and appointed him to be the supreme Judge of all the World. For so we read, *Thou art worthy to take the Book, and to open the Seals thereof* (meaning that Book

in

in which all the Actions of Men are re-
 giftred) *for thou wast Slain.* And again,
Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to re-
ceive Power, &c. And to the same Pur-
 pose he himself assures us, Joh. v. 22. *That*
the Father judgeth no Man; but hath com-
mitted all Judgment to the Son; and a little
 after, 27. he assigns this as the Cause, *why*
God had given him Authority to execute
Judgment, because he is the Son of Man.

SERM.
IV.

Rev. v.
12.

John v.
22.

ver. 27.

Matt.xxvi
64.

AND at the very Time of his Arraign-
 ment, whilst he was standing before the
 Tribunal of the High-Priest, and question-
 ed by him in taunting and captious Inter-
 rogatories; he did not scruple to let him
 know, that there would be a Day, when
 the Case between them would be widely al-
 tered; when He who was now the pretend-
 ed Criminal, should appear as the real
 Judge. *Nevertheless, I say unto you, here-*
after shall ye see the Son of Man sitting on
the Right-hand of Power, and coming in the
Clouds of Heaven.

AND highly reasonable it is, and most
 agreeable to the Justice of God, that He
 who had humbled himself to such a De-

SERM. gree, should be thus eminently exalted:

IV. That He who submitted to the Sentence pronounced against him, though perfectly Innocent and free from any Crime, should be made the Judge of Innocence and Guilt.

How equitable is it, that his Accusers should be accused before him, and he that condemned him, be condemned by him: That his Crucifiers should look on him whom they had pierced, and the *Jews* to their Cost be forced to acknowledge that Majesty they had so obstinately denied!

ACTS i. 11. THIS is that *Jesus*, who, the Angels declared, should so come in like Manner (*i. e.* in the same Form) in which his Disciples had seen him go into Heaven, and who himself, before his Passion, had given them this Assurance: *I go to prepare a Place for you; I will come again and receive you unto myself:—Ye have heard how I said unto you, I go away, and come again unto you.*

ACTS xvii. 31. THIS is that Man by whom God hath ordained that he will judge the World in Righteousness, in the Day that he hath appointed: And who accordingly commanded his

his Disciples to preach unto the People, SERM.
And to testify that it is He, who was or- IV.
dained of God, to be the Judge of Quick Acts x.
and Dead. 42.

THERE is indeed no one Truth of *Chri-*
stianity more fully and clearly revealed in
Scripture, than this which is asserted in my
Text, *That the Son of Man shall come in*
his Glory; which minds me of my

II^d CONSIDERATION, *viz.* the Manner
and Circumstances of his coming. *He shall*
come in his Glory, and all the Holy Angels
with him, and shall sit on the Throne of his
Glory. He shall come in his Glory, i. e.
not in such a mean and despicable Form as
he took on him at his first Advent, but in
that very glorified Body wherewith he as-
cended into Heaven; the same, or even
more glorious than that, into which he was
transfigured, when his Face, we are told,
shone like the Sun, and his Raiment was
white as the Light. He shall come, as it
is written of him in the Volume of the
Book, in the Body which God has pre-
pared for him, in order to his becoming

SERM. the heavenly *Adam*; in Substance more
 IV. pure, refined, and subtle in its Texture;
 more exquisite and delicate; of a Presence
 far more awful and majestic, than that
 which he bore while he was yet unglorified.

THE Place from whence we are to expect him is the highest Heaven, that celestial Paradise, where God, in a more eminent Degree, manifests his Glory, and displays himself in all the Fulness of his Majesty. To those happy and exalted Regions of Glory he ascended, where he now sits at the Right Hand of God. And the Heavens must continue to receive him, 'till
the Time of the Restitution of all Things.

ACTS iii.
21.

BUT when that determinate Period is come; when God's Purposes in creating this sublunary World are fully answered; when the Time is come for him to reap upon the Earth, and when the Harvest of the Earth is ripe; when his long-suffering will no longer wait for the Amendment of ungodly Men, nor his Justice defer the Recompense that is due, whether to the Good or Evil; (which, when it will be, is hither-

to

to known to himself alone) then shall the Lord himself descend from Heaven with a Shout, with the Voice of the Archangel, and with the Trump of God; the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his mighty Angels, and we shall see the Son of Man rising up from the Right Hand of Power, and coming in the Clouds of Heaven.

S E R M. IV.
 1 Theff. iv. 16.
 2 Theff. i. 7.
 Mat. xxvi. 64.

So that at his Return to Judgment, he will be conveyed down into the lower Regions of the Air, (where his Tribunal most probably will be erected) on the same Vehicle, on which he was born away at his Ascension. *He will make the Clouds his Chariot, and come flying upon the Wings of the Wind.*

THIS riding on a Cloud is so often mentioned in Scripture, that we have no Reason to doubt but that it is to be understood in a literal Sense, and that our Saviour will be wafted down on a Portion of compacted Æther, and a small Degree of Condensation may serve to render that fluid Substance, solid and stable enough to contain both him, and all his numerous Retinue; they

SERM. they being Spirits wholly void of Matter,
 IV. and consequently incapable of any Gravity
 or Pressure, and his glorified Humanity
 being freed from all gross and terrestrial
 Matter, from all that may be called Flesh
 and Blood, which, while they are such,
 cannot inherit Incorruption, tho' still com-
 posed of the same Particles which were
 once Flesh and Blood, which is sufficient
 to make it the same numerical Body it was
 before, and refined to such a Degree of Pu-
 rity, as to be fit to breathe in the ethereal
 Regions.

IN this pompous and triumphant Procef-
 sion, whole Myriads of the Angelic Order
 will accompany him, and a numberless
 Train of the Spirits of just Men made per-
 fect. Thus St. *Jude* tells us, that *Enoch*
 prophesied of old; *Behold, the Lord comes*
 Jude 14. *with Ten Thousand of his Saints, to execute*
Judgment on the ungodly. And *Daniel*,
 in a prophetic Vision, beheld him with
Thousand Thousands ministering unto him,
and Ten Thousand Times Ten Thousand
standing before him, the Judgment was set,
and the Books were opened.

WHAT

WHAT Part the Angels are to have in SERM. that great Solemnity, is sufficiently evident. IV.
They are the Ministers and Officers of *Christ's* Kingdom, who are assisting and subservient to him, in all the Acts of Sovereignty which he exercises; but particularly in that great and concluding Act of Royalty, which once performed, his Mediatorial Offices will cease, he will resign the Kingdom into his Father's Hands, and become subject unto him, that God may be all in all; I say, when the last great Judgment is to be solemnized, the holy Angels have particular Offices allotted.

THE Voice of the Archangel is to serve as a Trumpet, which will be so shrill and piercing, so powerful and all-commanding, as to open the Graves, awaken the Dead, and summon them to the Judgment Seat of *Christ*. The rest of the Heavenly Host will be employed in gathering the Elect together from the four Winds, *i. e.* from all the distant Quarters of the Universe; and another Gathering or Collection they will make, of those that shall arise to Condemnation, as our Saviour tells us, *Mat. xiii.*


SERM. 41, 42. *The Son of Man shall send forth his*

IV. *Angels, and they shall gather out of his Kingdom all Things that offend, and them which do Iniquity, and shall cast them into a Furnace of Fire, where there shall be wailing and gnashing of Teeth.*

THEIR Office then is not only to cite and summon the new-raised Dead to their Trial, but to execute the Sentence that shall be passed upon them, and conduct them to the Place appointed for them for their eternal Habitation.

As for those blessed Saints, whose Spirits we are expressly told, shall likewise accompany the great Judge in that his glorious Advent, 'tis not so evident what Part they are to have in that judiciary Process. Thus much we certainly know, that *they* shall, in the first Place, re-assume their Bodies, and be re-united to them; that *their* Resurrection (and probably their Trial) will be antecedent to that of the Wicked; for so says the Apostle, *the Dead in Christ shall be raised first*; and that after the joyful Sentence is once passed, *they shall be caught up into the Clouds, to meet the Lord in the Air, and so to be for ever with the Lord.*

¹ Theff.
iv. 1, 7.

OF this, I say, we have sufficient Proof; S E R M.
 but it is a Question less easy, and indeed IV.
 not at all necessary to determine, how far 
 they are to be concerned in the Trial of the
 Ungodly; whether they shall only be pre-
 sent, as Witnesses and Spectators, or whe-
 ther they are to be Co-Affessors with *Christ*,
 to be a sort of Jury at the Grand Assize;
 to give their Vote and Suffrage, and con-
 cur with the Judge in the Condemnation
 of the others.

THIS latter Opinion seems to have the
 Countenance of some Texts of Scripture to
 justify it, which yet are capable of being
 otherwise interpreted.

FOR Instance: Our Saviour makes this
 Promise to his Disciples; *Verily I say un-* Mat. xix:
to you, that you who have followed me in 28.
the Regeneration, when the Son of Man
shall sit on the Throne of his Glory, ye also
shall sit upon twelve Thrones, judging the
twelve Tribes of Israel.

AND St. Paul urges it as an Argument 1 Cor. vi.
 to the *Corinthians*, to dissuade them from
 going to Law with one another, and citing
 their Fellow-Christians before Heathen Ju-
 dica-

SERM. dicatories; that they themselves were Judges
 IV. of a higher Degree, than those Magistrates
 to whom they made their Appeal. *Do you not know that the Saints shall judge the Earth?*

BUT it is not certain that the former of these Passages was spoken with Reference to the last Judgment; or if it was, the Promise was only to the twelve Apostles, and not to the Saints in general. And indeed, the Judgment mentioned in both these Texts, is by some learned Men expounded, not to imply a formal sitting in Judgment, and passing a decretory Sentence; but a judging or condemning the World, even in this Life, by preaching that Gospel which they rejected, and setting them a Pattern of Piety and Holiness, which they refused to follow. In which Sense it is said of *Noah*, *Heb. xi. 7.* that by his Faith he condemned the World, *i. e.* by being a Preacher of Righteousness, exhorting them to Repentance, giving them Warning of the universal Destruction that was coming, and shewing them by his own Example in preparing an Ark, how surely he himself believed
 what

what he foretold ; he condemned them, by leaving them without Excuse, without any thing to say in their own Justification, from the Pretence of Ignorance, or Surprize, or Want of better Information. In this Sense did our blessed Saviour actually judge and condemn the World, even while he was here on Earth, by speaking the Words that never Man spake, and doing among them such Works as never any other Man had done: But since all he could say or do was lost upon them, they had no Cloak for their Sin. This was *the* Condemnation, that Light came into the World, and they chose Darknes rather than Light: The Word that he has spoken is the Judge of such Men ; and it was not without good Reason that he cried out, *Now is the Judgment of this World.*


BUT whether the Judgment that is ascribed to the Saints be of this kind, or whether they are really to be admitted to some Share of Jurisdiction in the Trial of the Wicked at the great Day of Accounts, is no Article of Faith, and we may safely be ignorant about it. Present to be sure they will be, and from their Place at the Judge's Right

S E R M.
IV.

SERM. Right Hand, will behold the dejected Criminals that stand before him; they will at least hear their Examination, and what a wretched Defence they make to the just and heavy Charge that is brought against them. They will attend to the whole Process, and in Conclusion, though they should not pass any authoritative Verdict, they cannot chuse however but pass within themselves a tacit one of Consent and Approbation; they cannot but confess that the righteous Judge acted with all possible Equity and Candour, and that such incorrigible and remorseless Wretches deserved not to be sentenced to any milder Fate.

HAVING thus represented to you the Manner and Circumstances of his coming, I am now, in the

III^d Place, to consider the End and Design of it, which was in order to the final Arbitration of the eternal Fate of all Mankind, that he might discern between the Just and the Reprobate, and consign them over, according to their several Demerits, to a joyful or a miserable Eternity. *Before him, says my Text, shall be gathered all Nations,*

Nations, and he shall separate them one SERM.
from another, as a Shepherd divideth his IV.
Sheep from the Goats. 

NOTWITHSTANDING that the Affairs of this World are under the Guidance and Inspection of an all-wise Providence, and the Course of Nature is constantly upheld by the same divine Power by which it was originally formed, who has hitherto preserved it from Dissolution or Decay, and has afforded suitable Means to the great Variety of Beings of which it is composed, to continue and perpetuate a Succession in their respective Species, whatever Change has been made in the Individuals; though he has generally concurred with second Causes in the Production of Events, and on some great Occasions thought fit to overrule them; and by so doing, preserved a due Order and Harmony, and kept the Foundations of the World from being out of Course:

NOTWITHSTANDING, I say, all this, the many and great Irregularities that happen in the World, and which too manifestly deface the noblest Part of his Work-

The End and Circumstances

UR M. manſhip, are too apt to make ſuch un-
IV. happy Impreſſions, not only on the weak
and inconfiderate, but even the thinking
Part of Mankind, that they ſometimes are
ready to diſtruſt and call in queſtion that
providential Care by which the World is
governed and diſpoſed, and to aſcribe the
Government of it either to a blind Chance,
or a fatal Neceſſity.

THEY conclude, that if there was a
wiſe and good God, who was a ſtrict Ob-
ſerver of every Action and Event, who
both hated Iniquity, and had a Power ſuf-
ficient to reſtrain it, he would never ſuffer
ſuch flagrant Enormities to be predominant;
that his Knowledge and Hatred of them,
joined together, would certainly incline him
to exert his Power, in order to prevent, and
put a ſtop to them.

BUT ſuch Reasoning as this proceeds
from a partial and imperfect View of God's
Diſpenſation, and becauſe our Minds are
not large and capacious enough to take
in the whole Scheme and System of Provi-
dence at once. Who can form any true
or ſolid Judgment of the moſt exquisite
Piece

Piece of Poetry or Painting, Music or Architecture, who only beholds some scattered Fragments, and does not survey the whole Work together? How rude and ill-contrived, how improper and contrary to all Rule, do the Ruins of great Works oftentimes appear, which yet, in their proper Place, and in Connexion with the other Parts, were of singular Use and Beauty?

So happens it in the Course of Providence; some particular Dispensations may be thought hard and unequal; and yet even those seeming Hardships and Inequalities, if we were able to discern the secret Springs, and Connexions, and Consequences of Things, would appear to be of excellent Use and Benefit, and conducive to a much greater Good than will counter-balance the Evil they carry with them. There is a wise, though latent, Reason for every thing which God does or suffers. There is no Action so ill, which he cannot direct to some beneficial End; no Person so profligate and abandoned to Impiety, whom he cannot make the Instrument of his Glory. And that he actually does so, though

SERM. we are too short-sighted to discern it now,


IV. will be made evident to us in the great Day,
 when all Secrets shall be disclosed.

THEN shall we perceive the gracious Reasons for which he suffered the Righteous to be oppressed; who shall, at last, be sensible of the Efficacy of those Prayers, which seemed to be offered up in vain to a God, that either could not hear, or would not be entreated by them.

Then will it appear that the temporal Ease and Prosperity of the Wicked, which has been such a Stumbling-block and Rock of Offence to a great Part of Mankind, was only in order to their more sure and inevitable Destruction: If they were fatted, it was for the Slaughter; and in lieu of those good Things which they have so luxuriously and wantonly enjoyed in this Life, they will meet with a miserable Portion in the other.

THE Scene will then be happily changed; they who now weep and mourn, shall then rejoice and sing; and the Ungodly, who are comforted here, shall be tormented there.

WHEN

WHEN the whole Clue of Providence SERM.
shall be thus unravelled, and we can look IV.
backward through all the intricate Mazes of 
it, we shall, with a pleasing Astonishment,
confess, that God's Care, as well as his
Mercy, was over all his Works; that he
was always watching for our Good, even
then, when we thought ourselves most
abandoned and forlorn: And even those af-
flicting Severities which we most complain-
ed of, and in which we thought ourselves
most hardly dealt with, we shall find to
have purchased for us a far more exceeding
and eternal Weight of Glory.

To rectify then all such Mistakes con-
cerning God and his Providence, to bring to
light the hidden things of Darknes, to make
a remarkable Difference between the Virtuous
and Profane, to sever the innocent and harm-
less Sheep from the mischievous and wan-
ton Goats, to reward the Purity and Sim-
plicity of the one with everlasting Joy and
Peace, and to punish the lawless Insolence
and ungoverned Luxury of the other with
Flames more devouring than their Oppres-
sion, and hotter than their Lust;

SERM. To answer these Ends, I say, shall the

IV. Son of Man come down from Heaven at the Last Day: And when once that terrible Day of the Lord is come, we shall be effectually, and too fatally, convinced, if we are not convinced before, that *there is a God that judgeth in the Earth*, and that *the Judge of all the Earth will do Right*.

Pf. lviii.

11.
Gen. xviii.

25.

THE natural Result of all that has been said is, what I am now going to consider in my

IVth and last Head, how much it concerns us all to prepare for that Day, and keep ourselves in a constant Readiness to expect it, that we may meet our Judge with Cheerfulness and Alacrity, and hear him pronounce our Sentence with Joy, and not with Grief.

SUCH Reflexions as these will naturally arise, if once the main fundamental Article of our Saviour's second Advent be well fixed and rooted in us. Our Judge will come; he will come we know not when; he may come this very Hour; and when he does come, we must meet him: Why then

then should any of us be negligent and unprepared? How fatal a thing would it be for us, if he should find us sleeping, or, which is worse, eating and drinking with the Drunken, beating and abusing our Fellow-Servants, and wasting our Talents in Chambering and Wantonness, in Riot and Excess! We are positively told, that the Day of the Lord will come as a Thief in the Night, without giving us any previous Notice; we know not in what Watch he will come, whether in the Evening or Morning, or Cock-crowing or Noon-day; but it nearly concerns us to be still on our Guard, as if he were alway just at hand; and that more especially, since the Continuance of the Day of our Lives is as uncertain as the Approach of the Day of Judgment: And in either Case, whether the one leaves, or the other overtakes us, we are sure to be deprived of any farther Opportunity of amending our Lives, and rectifying our past Miscarriages.

SEEING then there is no avoiding this awful Tribunal, since we must all die, must all be judged, must all fall in that Judgment,

SERM. ment, and receive the Sentence of eternal

IV. Damnation, if we cannot render a fair and
 clear Account of all our Actions; my Be-
 loved, what manner of Persons ought we
 to be in all holy Conversation! Who
 would not tremble with *Felix*, at the men-
 tion of a Judgment to come, if, at the
 same time, he is conscious to himself, that
 if he should be called at this very Instant
 to appear before the Judgment Seat of
Christ, he should carry with him such a
 heavy Load of unrepented Crimes, as would
 be sure to sink him to the bottomless Lake,
 there to have his Portion for ever with the
 Devil and his accursed Angels?

AND on the other hand, what a joyful
 and comfortable Allay is a Man's own Peace
 of Conscience to all the Horror and Dread
 that can arise from the Consideration either
 of Death or Judgment?

LET us therefore, above all things, be
 careful to keep that domestick Monitor
 quiet; I do not mean by lulling it asleep,
 stifling its Reflexions, and striving to
 drown its disquieting Reproofs in Mirth
 and Jollity, or to harden ourselves a-
 gainst

gainst them by a stupid Insensibility; but that we would behave ourselves so conformably to the Dictates of Reason and Religion, as to afford it a sure Ground of Quiet on which it may rest with a good Assurance; that, denying all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we would live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present World, looking for that blessed Hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour *Jesus Christ*.

HAPPY that Soul which, after a fair and impartial Reflection on its own Proceedings, can say with a just Confidence; “ I have done my Lord’s Will to the best of my Power, and now may his Kingdom of Glory come;” which can glory with *St. Paul*, *I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a Crown of Righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that Day; and not to me only, but to them also who love his Appearing.*

IT is a high Degree of Perfection indeed, and which only some great and generous

SERM.
IV.
~~~~~

SERM. generous Minds attain to, to have one's

IV. Work in such a Forwardness, as to be in a Condition to love the appearing of *Christ*; to wish for that Day with Joy and Pleasure, which others start at the Apprehension of, and are for putting off the Thoughts of it, and would be glad if they could put off the Day itself too, which will indeed be to them an evil Day.

WHAT earthly Pleasure or Satisfaction can be comparable to that of such a well-grounded Hope in *Christ*, and such a firm Assurance of Salvation?

AND if the Prospect alone of a future Reward affords such Delight and Comfort, how unspeakably ravishing must the Possession be?

CONSIDER, I beseech you, while you have the Day of Grace still before you, the vast and momentous Difference between those Pleasures, and that State of Misery and Woe, which is prepared for the obstinate and disobedient. Consider too, that one or the other must unavoidably be your Lot.



IMAGINE with yourselves in as strong SERM.  
and lively Ideas as you can (though lively IV.  
enough be sure they can never be) the  
amazing Pomp and Terror of that solemn  
Day, when the great Machine of the Uni-  
verse shall crack, and Nature sustain an  
universal Shock, when the heavenly Lumi-  
naries shall be extinguished, and the Earth,  
having first given up its Dead, shall perish,  
and be consumed in a general Conflagra-  
tion. Imagine you hear the Sound of the  
last Trump, the Shouts and Acclamations  
of the heavenly Host; that you behold the  
Judge seated on his Throne, encompassed  
with radiant Beams of Light, and attended  
with Legions of ministring Spirits; that  
you see the whole Race of Mankind brought  
before him, to receive the just Recompense  
of their Deeds; the Righteous, to their  
unspeakable Joy and Comfort, openly ju-  
stified and acquitted in the Sight of Men  
and Angels, and received with universal Ap-  
plause into the Joy of their Lord.

BUT the Ungodly, with ghastly and de-  
jected Looks, shrinking and dismayed, un-  
willingly dragged to that hated Light by  
which

SERM. which their Deeds are to be discovered and  
 IV. made manifest, and seeking in vain for  
 some Holes and Caverns, in which they  
 may hide themselves from the Presence of  
 their Judge.

BUT there now remains no more Shelter  
 for them; appear they must, and that in  
 their own loathsome Figure; the Deformi-  
 ties of their inward Man must now be no  
 longer hidden; the wicked Secrets of their  
 Heart, which before were so carefully  
 locked up within their Breasts, and con-  
 cealed from all Mankind, are openly ex-  
 posed, and those naughty and corrupt De-  
 signs which they entertained in private,  
 whilst they varnished them over with more  
 specious and plausible Pretences, are dis-  
 played in their true native Colours.

TRY if you can conceive with what  
 Shame and Confusion those miserable  
 Wretches will be covered, when their Mask  
 is thus taken off, and they have nothing  
 else to cover them; or with what insup-  
 portable Anguish and Horror they will hear  
 the Doom pronounced against them, which  
 shall adjudge them to dwell with everlast-  
 ing

ing Burnings. Consider how that miserable Crew will be then changed from what they fancied themselves here on Earth. What will then become of all the Pride and State-  
 linefs of the Haughty and Supercilious? What a different Air and Mien will they put on! See how they droop and hang their Heads. See how the scornful Things who once difdained to look down upon their Fellow-Creatures, are now afraid to look up upon their Judge. Where will be the Pomp and Pageantry of the Vain? Where will be the loud Laughter and wanton Drollery of petulant and profane Wits? It will be turned into bitter Wailing and Lamentation. Or where the Riches of the covetous Oppreffors? unless it be that Treafure of Wrath which they have *treafured up for themfelves againft the Day of Wrath and Revelation of the righteous Judgment of God?*

SERM.  
 IV.  


*O confider this, ye that forget God, left he pluck you away, and there be none to deliver you! Be warned in time to fly from the Wrath to come, while it is yet to come; fo Iniquity fhall not be your Ruin.*

Re-

SERM. Remember the Lord is coming, who both

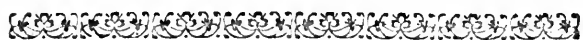
IV. *will bring to Light the hidden Things of Darkneſs, and make manifeſt the Counſels of the Hearts; as we read in the Epistle for the Day; and with the Collect of which I ſhall now conclude.*

*O Lord Jeſu Chriſt, who at thy firſt coming didſt ſend thy Meſſenger to prepare thy Way before thee: Grant that the Miniſters and Stewards of thy Myſteries may likewise ſo prepare and make ready thy Way, by turning the Hearts of the Diſobedient to the Wiſdom of the Juſt; that, at thy ſecond coming to judge the World, we may be found an acceptable People in thy Sight, who liveſt and reigneſt with the Father and the Holy Spirit, ever one God, World without End.*



## S E R M O N V.

The Seasonableness and Certainty of  
*Christ's* Incarnation. Preached be-  
fore Queen *Anne* 1709---10.



GALAT. iv. 4, 5.

*But when the Fulness of the Time was  
come, God sent forth his Son,  
made of a Woman, made under  
the Law; To redeem them that  
were under the Law, that we might  
receive the Adoption of Sons.*




THE Apostle is here treating S E R M.  
of that State of Bondage and V.  
Subjection, under which both  
*Jews* and *Gentiles* were en-  
thralled, before the Son of  
God was Incarnate and came into the World,  
to pay the Price of their Redemption.

THE

SERM. THE unhappy and servile Condition in  
 V. which he found them, is represented in the  
 three foregoing Verses, by a very fit and  
 notable Comparison; where their Case is  
 shewn to be much the same with that of an  
 Infant or Minor, who, while he is under Go-  
 vernment or Tuition, is liable to be check-  
 ed and controuled by those to whose Care  
 he is committed, to be over-ruled in his  
 Motions, and crossed in his Desires, with-  
 out being suffered to enter on the actual Pos-  
 session of his rightful Inheritance, or to  
 dispose of that Portion of his Father's Sub-  
 stance, that is duly allotted and legally de-  
 scended to him: he is kept under Authority,  
 subject to Discipline, and awed by the Fear  
 of Correction, till he is arrived at a perfect  
 Manhood, and has reached the appointed  
 Time, at which he is to be his own Ma-  
 ster.

IN such a State of Infancy or Minority  
 had the whole World continued for many  
 Ages, before the coming of our Saviour.  
 They were all, without Exception, the  
 Heirs of great and glorious Privileges, to  
 which they had a very early Title given  
 them,

them, by the infallible Promise of the God S E R M.  
of Truth: But the Time was not yet come V.  
for the Completion of that Promise, and   
the instating them in their Possession. They  
might indeed, and many of them did, an-  
ticipate it by Faith, and please themselves  
with the reverfionary Prospect: They might  
gaze on it at a Distance, through the Types  
and Prophecies, and survey it, as *Moses* did  
the Land of *Canaan*; but Matters were not  
then ripe for their actual Enjoyment of it.  
They were brought forward in the Know-  
ledge of the Blessing reserved for them, by  
slow Degrees, and leisurely Advances; they  
were instructed, as Children, with Line  
upon Line, and Precept upon Precept, here  
a little and there a little: They were held  
in Bondage under the Elements of the  
World, under carnal Ordinances and In-  
junctions, and the Law was their School-  
master to bring them to *Christ*.

THIS is the Purport of the Apostle's  
Comparison, which he expresses in these  
Words:

*Now I say, that the Heir, as long as he  
is a Child, differeth nothing from a Ser-*

SERM. he did not bring it immediately to pass, but fixed a determinate Point of Time, at which it should infallibly be effected. In the mean while, though the promised Blessing was kept at a mighty Distance, yet it was still in View: A Combination of various Events did from Time to Time make way for, and in their proper Measure conduce toward it, and that more plainly and visibly as the appointed Time drew nearer. There were other Dispensations preparatory and introductory to that of the Gospel; there was a dawning of Evangelical Grace, which brightened, and cleared up by Degrees, till, according to the Divine Appointment, *The Sun of Righteousness shone forth in his full Splendor, and brought Life and Immortality to Light.*

THE first Foundation of the great Mystery of Man's Redemption, was laid under the Patriarchal State before *Abraham*. The holy Men who lived under that Oeconomy, had some Assurances and Expectation of such a Deliverance. But the legal  
Insti-




Institution, considering the symbolical Rites, and encouraging Predictions that attended, and the miraculous Occurrences that happened under it, gave the *Jewish* Church a more distinct and certain Prospect of such a Blessing: The Evidences of which were still more strong and clear, as that Dispensation drew nearer to its final Period. And just in the very Close of it, came *John the Baptist*, to prepare the Way of the Lord, and to declare that the Kingdom of Heaven was at Hand; or in other Words, that the Fulness of Time was coming.

THUS much for the Fact, and now for the Reason of it, why there was a Fulness of Time to be expected, before Mankind could be redeemed. Or, to state the Question more largely, in Form of an Objection: For an Objection it has been made, not only by the *Jews*, but moreover by some dissatisfied *Christians*:

WHY, says the *Jew*, (who cannot bear to hear the Law of *Moses* undervalued, its Rites and Ordinances decried as unprofitable and only Temporary, which though

SERM. they were required for a Season, were always intended to be abolished, when the Fulness of Time should come, and to give way to a purer and better Worship; who is angry to find the Worshippers of God in his own Way, represented as Children under Age, unfit to be trusted with the Knowledge of their own Concerns, and as dealt with by God accordingly) Why, says this Reasoner, if God is infinitely wise, and always consistent with himself, if he is constant and unchangeable, and his Purposes cannot alter, why did he himself appoint such Ritual Ordinances, as Circumcision, Sacrifices, &c. and bind them on our Forefathers and their Posterity, with a Curse on the Infringers of them; if he did not intend they should be of perpetual Obligation? If you say they were deficient or imperfect, you reflect on the Wisdom of that God, who commanded them to be observed. Or if you allow them to be wise and rational, why should they be abolished?

AND much in the same Manner says the unbelieving *Deist*, or, who is near of kin

kin to him, the cavilling *Christian*. If God S E R M.  
 is infinitely good and powerful, able to do V.  
 all that he pleases, and pleased to do all   
 that is good and beneficial ; why, when he  
 saw Mankind in so lost and hopeless a  
 Condition, did he so long defer the Blessing  
 of our Redemption, and postpone it for  
 the Space of four thousand Years? Why  
 did he do his Work by Pieces? Why was  
 the Operation so slow, when the Case was  
 so extremely dangerous, and instant Help  
 so requisite ?

To the first of these Objectors, (who charge God with Levity and Inconstancy in repealing Laws of his own making, supposing Circumcision and the other legal Injunctions, to be superseded by his Divine Authority and Command, as we *Christians* affirm,) it may be thus replied: That although the Almighty has various Methods of dealing with Mankind, and Dispensations of fundry Sorts, which, as Occasion serves, he makes Use of in the Government of the World, some of them subservient and subordinate to one another, others

SERM. destructive of and inconsistent with the  
 V. former Measures he had taken; yet amidst  
 all this Diversity of acting and ruling, he  
 remains himself unchangeably the same.  
 He had set himself a fixed Rule from  
 all Eternity, and has never swerved  
 from it, so to deal with Mankind as he  
 should find them affected, to govern them  
 by such Laws as were best fitted to their  
 several Circumstances and Conditions; he  
 takes his Measures, not from his own  
 Strength, but our Weakness; like a wise  
 Physician he varies his Remedies, as the  
 Distemper takes a new Turn, or as the Age  
 and Constitution of the Patient will admit,  
 and prescribes such Things, not as he is  
 able to administer, but as the other is able  
 to bear. And therefore, if all his Proceed-  
 ings in the several Periods of Time, have  
 not been exactly uniform, (though there is  
 a much greater Uniformity in them, than  
 such prejudiced Judges are willing to appre-  
 hend) this argues no Mutability of Tem-  
 per in Him, who has constantly pursued his  
 original Design, which was, to adapt and  
 accom-

accommodate his Institutions to the Dispo-<sup>SERM.</sup>  
 sition of the Persons for whom they were  
 intended, and the Season at which they  
 were to take Place: *To give Milk* of  
 Knowledge to *Children*, and *strong Meat* to  
*them of full Age.* <sup>V.</sup>

THE *Jews* themselves must be forced to  
 confess, even upon their own Principles,  
 from the History of the Old Testament,  
 that there has been such a Variety in God's  
 Methods of acting, and that he has, upon  
 Occasion, revoked his own Edicts, when,  
 in the Course of his Government, he has  
 judged it expedient. For did he not restrain  
*Adam* and his Descendants from eating any  
 Flesh, and confine them to the Fruits of  
 the Ground? Did he not afterwards take  
 off that Prohibition, by granting a general  
 Indulgence to *Noah* and his Posterity, to  
 feed on all Flesh without Exception? And  
 then again did he not clog that Indulgence  
 with one Limitation, when he forbid their  
 own Nation, the *Jews*, to feed on that of  
 Swine?

SERM. FOR how long a Time after the Covenant was made with *Abraham*, was Circumcision the only Ceremony, required of those who were Partakers of that Covenant? And yet after their Church had subsisted for so many Years, as were between *Abraham* and *Moses*, with this single federal Rite, to wean them from the *Egyptian* Superstition, and make them forget the Idolatrous Customs they had learnt, during a Captivity of more than two hundred Years; he thought fit to exact of them that heap of carnal Ordinances, which we see in the *Levitical* Law.

AND to leave them without Answer upon this Head, is not their still-depending Expectation of a *Messiah*, a plain Acknowledgment, that they are yet in an imperfect State? Have they not express Prophecies which declare, that when the *Messiah* is come, their Sacrifices and Oblations shall cease? and does not the whole Tenor of the Prophetic Writings prepare them to expect a more joyful and blessed Dispensation than the Almighty has yet been pleased to make  
 their

their Portion? So that they have no Reason to be so much affronted when they are told, that they who will not allow the Fulness of Time to be come, are still in the Condition of Children or Servants, are in Bondage to the Elements of the World, which can never by those Sacrifices, which are offered Year by Year continually, make the Comers thereunto perfect.


HAVING said thus much in Vindication of God's Immutability, notwithstanding the different Treatment the several Ages of the World have met with from him; it is Time now to make some Reply to the other Objectors, who would make his Delay of Man's Redemption, till *the Fulness of Time was come*, an Argument against his infinite Goodness or his Power. If he could not redeem us sooner, say they, where was his Power? If he could and did not, where was his Goodness, and that Love to Mankind for which he is so much magnified?

To which I answer, that without all Dispute, God had it in his Power either to have prevented the Fall of *Adam*, or to have

SERM. have restored him immediately after it; without suffering any ill Consequences from it to intervene; so that his Omnipotence is safe, and will admit of no farther Question. All that remains is to consider, whether he might not have sufficient Reasons to defer that Act of Grace till a proper Opportunity, without any Impeachment of his Goodness. And were I now at Leisure to represent to you the wilfulness of the Fact, the Heinousness of the Provocation; how the Divine Measures were, in a Manner, broken by it, and his Providence diverted, as it were, into another Channel; together with that constant Succession of flagrant Impiety, that has ever since prevailed in the World, and added to the Charge; you would see Cause enough to bless his Goodness, and adore his Mercy, for redeeming us at all, and no Ground of Complaint against him, for not effecting our Redemption sooner.

BUT the chief Obstacle to our more early Restoration, I take to have been, the Satisfaction that was due to his Truth and Justice



Justice, for the wilful Violation of such a S E R M.  
positive Command, in Defiance of the V.  
Threatning solemnly denounced, in Case   
of Disobedience; *In the Day thou eatest  
thereof, thou shalt surely die.* If we con-  
sider the Divine Attributes apart, and with  
regard to external Beings, it is most cer-  
tainly true, that God is infinite in every  
one of them; he is infinitely good, infi-  
nitely just, infinitely true, infinitely wise,  
and so for the rest of them; nor is it pos-  
sible for any created Substance, for any  
thing without the Deity, to set Bounds to,  
or confine any one of his Properties. But  
before we presume to draw rash Inferences  
from the Extent of them, we must view  
them by another Light, and consider the  
Harmony between them, and their Consist-  
ency among themselves; and how, though  
nothing else can bound them, yet they are  
a sort of pleasing Check upon one another;  
how when Justice is ready to proceed to  
some Extremes of rigorous Severity, Good-  
ness steps in and moderates the avenging  
Blow; and on the other Hand, when Good-  
ness

SERM.ness is enclined to an Excess of Lenity and  
 V. Forbearance, then Justice interposes, and  
 calls for some Degree of Satisfaction to the  
 injured Majesty of God: And in like Man-  
 ner, Truth and Wisdom, and the other  
 Properties of the Divine Essence, are gra-  
 tified, in a becoming Measure, in all pro-  
 vidential Dispensations. We must not say  
 they thwart or oppose each other, (for all  
 is perfect Love and Unity in the Eternal  
 Mind) unless it be by such a Discord as  
 Harmony is made up of, whilst each is as  
 forward to consent to the other's Claim, as  
 to assert its own, and yields as readily as it  
 challenges.

THE most natural Resemblance I can  
 think of in this Case, tho' a short and im-  
 perfect one, and very inadequate to the  
 lofty Subject it is brought to illustrate, is  
 the Agreement between two Bosom Friends,  
 or that true conjugal Affection that ought  
 to be in every married Pair, where the hap-  
 py Union and Confederacy of Love is  
 maintained and preserved, not by the en-  
 tire Submission of one to the Will of the  
 other,

other, but by yielding in their Turns, mutually prevailing, and mutually receding, and carrying on only the friendly Contention, which shall do most to gratify the other.

S E R M.  
V.

THUS, tho' in a Degree infinitely more excellent, do the several Attributes of God conspire together, and every Scene of Providence has a Share of them all. His Goodness has done much to save us, and would do infinitely more, if his Justice had no Demands upon us. And therefore, to them that ask why our Redemption was wrought no sooner, (with a Thousand other Queries of the like Nature that might be started) it may serve for Answer, that there were Rules of Justice, or Reasons of Wisdom, or some other of God's Attributes in the Way, that hindered his doing that, which his Goodness, if that had been his only Quality; might have inclined him to bring to pass.

A MAN may indeed, with as much Reason and Modesty, demand, why he was so long in making the World, and so much longer in filling it; since there is no Doubt  
but

SERM. but he could have contracted not only his  
 V. own six Days Work, but all that has since  
 been done by the Industry of Man, into  
 the Product of a Moment. He could have  
 spoke the Universe into Being, and have  
 said, Let there be a World ready Peopled,  
 and there had been such a World, with as  
 much Ease as he said, *Let there be Light,  
 and there was Light.*

BUT if Questions of this Kind were ad-  
 mitted, where would they stop, or when  
 would inquisitive Man be satisfied? For,  
 by the same Rule, may not any one ask,  
 Why did he make the World no sooner,  
 why no larger, why but one World, when  
 it had been the same Thing to Him, to  
 have made ten Millions, and when that was  
 done, ten Millions more, and so on? Why  
 did he not make us all Gods, or Angels at  
 least, instead of Men? Why does he suffer  
 Pain and Misery, Shame and Sorrow, Sin  
 and Death, to waste and to torment us?  
 Why, if we must be Inhabitants of these  
 lower Regions, must our Mothers wait the  
 Fullness of their Time too, before they are deli-


delivered of us; nay, why must we wait S E R M  
the Fullness of our own Stature? Why are V.  
we brought forth in such a weak and help-  
less Condition, and not at our full Growth,  
and with the entire Use of our Reason?

THERE would be no End of such En-  
quiries, if we had the Liberty to indulge  
our busy Imaginations; but the Answer to  
all is this; that what has been done, was  
best and fittest to be done, as being the Re-  
sult of God's infinite Wisdom, Justice,  
Goodness, and all his other Perfections,  
when acting in Consort and in Deference to  
one another; forbearing to proceed to the  
utmost Degree of Operation in their several  
Qualities, which the Divine Nature is ca-  
pable of exerting. So that altho' his Good-  
ness would, and his Power could have re-  
deemed us sooner; tho' he could have given  
us the Gospel earlier, and have spread the  
Knowledge of it farther and faster, or have  
saved us without a Gospel; yet Truth and  
Justice and Wisdom stood between; the  
Chain of Providence, and projected Scheme  
of Government framed and agreed on by all  
the combined Perfections of the Deity, did

SERM. both retard and shorten the Blessing that  
 V. came at last; and for ever blessed be his Di-  
 vine Goodness that it came at all; and that  
 however short of what was within the Com-  
 pass of Almighty Power, was yet sufficient  
 for all who are not their own Enemies; and  
 tho' still but conditionally offered, it is yet on  
 Conditions so very practicable and easy.

AND having thus shewn you both what  
 is meant by the Fullness of Time, and  
 why there was a Fullness of Time to be  
 expected before the World could be re-  
 deemed; I proceed under my

II. SECOND general Head, to consider  
 what is said of our Saviour in my Text,  
 that he was the Son of God; *God sent  
 forth his Son, made of a Woman, made un-  
 der the Law.* We have here a very plain  
 Distinction between the two Natures of  
*Christ*, the Divine and Human. For if  
 he were intended to be represented as the  
 Son of God, only in his Human Capacity,  
 without Regard to any antecedent Genera-  
 tion, it would not so emphatically be said  
 of *Him*, that *He* was the *Son of God, made  
 of*

of a Woman, which is equally true of all S E R M. who are the Sons of God in any Sense, as V. in some Sense we have all a Right to call  God our Father. But by the Son of God, brought forth into the World, and made of a Woman, we are evidently given to understand that he was the Son of God in a more high and exalted Sense, before he was either brought forth into the World, or made of a Woman.

So that even from this Text, tho' there are many others much more clear and indisputable, we have a fair Argument for our Saviour's Divinity. But the Truth of that Point I have already, on former Occasions, and may again find a Time to vindicate.

WE have a Proof of his Humanity too, but that is what is evinced by almost every Line of the Gospel, and has never yet been disputed, but by the Maintainers of a short-lived Heresy, the Abettors of which professed to believe that he was not very Man, as well as very God; but that the Divinity only passed thro' the Blessed Virgin, without partaking of her Substance; that tho'

SERM. he appeared in a human Shape, he had not  
 V. Flesh and Blood, but that the Senses of  
 those who thought they saw, and heard, and touched him, were all the while imposed on, for that he was nothing but a Spirit. But this was so gross an Error, and fell so soon, that it is not worth your while to stay for the Confutation of it. The Scripture is as express as Words can make it, that he not only partook of our Nature, but of all the Frailties and Infirmities of it, but Sin; since those he came to redeem were Flesh and Blood, he also himself took Part of the same; he came not only in our Likeness, but in our real Substance; and herein consisted the Merit of his suffering for us; 'tis this that gives us a Title to the Benefits of his Death. It is particularly remarked of him by St. *Paul*, that he took not on him the Nature of Angels, but of Men; and consequently not the fallen Angels, but fallen Man enjoys the Benefit of that Salvation which he has wrought.

NOR was he only *made of a Woman*, but as it follows in the Text, *made under the Law*. As he was born a Subject, he sub-



submitted to the *Roman* Emperor, who, in S E R M. his Days, governed *Judea* by a Deputy; V. and tho' a greater King himself, condescended to pay Tribute to him. As he was born a *Jew*, he observed the *Jewish* Rites and Ceremonies, and in his own Person performed that very Law, from the Bondage of which he came on Purpose to deliver others.

AMONG other Instances of his Obedience, he underwent (as on this Day) the painful Ceremony of Circumcision: and that for this very good Reason, that if he had not been so made under the Law, he would have been very ill qualified to have redeemed any of those who were under the Law. If he had not born this Seal of the Covenant, and been so admitted into the *Jewish* Church, 'tis probable he would have made even fewer Converts than he did among that People, who looked upon Circumcision as so necessary and distinguishing a Mark, that they would not vouchsafe to have any Communication or Intercourse with any Body that wanted it; inso-much that to call one uncircumcised,

SERM. was the worst Name of Reproach they  
 V. could invent for those they were most  
 averſe to.

A FARTHER Reason of his submitting to this Ordinance was, that he might fulfil the Ceremonial Law himself, before he proceeded to abolish it, and leave one Instance of a perfect and entire Obedience. There was a Curse pronounced against all who did not continue in all Things that were written in the Law of *Moses*, to do them, and there was no one of the *Jewish* Race besides himself, who had not incur'd the Penalty of that Curse. Nor could any one but he, who, by his punctual Observance of the whole Law, had avoided that Condemnation himself, have taken off the Force of it from others.

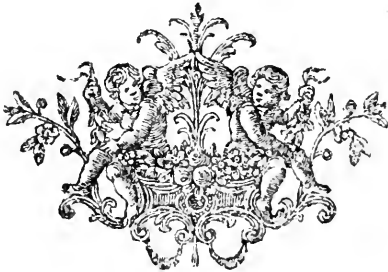
THUS, as *St. Paul* speaks, did *Jesus Christ* become a Minister of the Circumcision for the Truth of God, to confirm the Promises made unto the Fathers. He acted in this Case, not as our Pattern, but our Proxy; not to encourage us to be circumcised too, but to take off the Obligation, and free us from the Necessity of undergoing that Discipline, since

since he has undergone it so effectually in S E R M.  
our Stead. V.

IN this however, we must be sure to follow him; that *as he, for our sakes, was contented to endure the painful and bloody Circumcision of his Flesh, so we should be circumcised in Spirit, that we put away all Filthiness and Superfluity of Naughtiness, and be mortified in our Hearts and all our Members, from all worldly and carnal Lusts.* We do, and we justly may, reproach the *Jews* with their Circumcision now, and their not accepting the Deliverance *Christ* has offer'd them, as much as they did the rest of Mankind before, with their want of that distinguishing Badge: But at the same Time, if we ourselves are Slaves to our Lusts and Passions; if we harbour any evil Desires, or sensual Inclinations in our Hearts; if we are uncircumcised in Spirit, we are worse than those that are circumcised in the Flesh, and are under a more than *Jewish* Bondage.

I SHOULD now proceed to shew, in the Third Place, the gracious Design of our Saviour's taking upon him our Human Na-

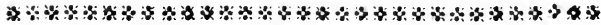
SERM. ture; it was to redeem them that were un-  
V. *der the Law, that we might receive the*  
Adoption of Sons: But of that, &c.





# S E R M O N VI.

The Seasonableness and Certainty of  
*Christ's* Incarnation. Preached be-  
fore *Queen Anne* 1709-10.



GALAT. iv. 4, 5.

*But when the Fulness of Time was  
come, God sent forth his Son,  
made of a Woman, made under  
the Law; To redeem them that  
were under the Law, that we might  
receive the Adoption of Sons.*



THE Method in which I pro-  
posed to treat of this Sub-  
ject, when I entred on it  
the last Time, was

S E R M.  
VI.  
~

I. To shew what is meant here by  
*the Fulness of Time*, and why there  
was



was a Fulness of Time to be expected, before the World could be redeemed.

- II. To consider what is here affirmed of our Saviour, *That he was the Son of God, made of a Woman, made under the Law.*
- III. THE gracious Design of his taking upon him our human Nature, *viz. To redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.* And,
- IV. BY way of Application, to shew how highly we ought to value this Privilege, of being God's adopted Sons, and what sort of Behaviour the Sense of it should produce in us.

I HAVE shewn under the first of these, that by the Fulness of Time we are to understand that stated and determinate Season, at which the Almighty purposed from all Eternity to accomplish his great Work of redeeming Man from the Misery of his Fall, toward which he had all along been making some preparatory Steps, and contriving

triving such Providential Occurrences as SERM. VI. conduce toward it : That both the Patriarchal and *Jewish* Dispensations, and the Ministry of *John the Baptist*, were subservient and introductory to the more perfect Oeconomy of the Gospel, which at last took Place, when all the previous Designs of God's Providence were answered, and Man in a full State of Ripeness to receive it.

I LIKEWISE endeavoured to justify his Providence, in so long deferring that gracious Act, and in the mean Season governing by such Laws, as in Process of Time were to be repealed : All which I have shewn to be very consistent, both with the Infinity of his Goodness, and the Immutability of his Counsels, by Reflexions drawn from the Harmony of his Attributes, and that kindly Combination among themselves, whereby they mutually consent to each other.

I CONSIDERED under my Second Head, from what is affirmed of our Saviour in my Text, *That he was the Son of God, made of a Woman and under the Law*; how fair

SERM. a Proof we have here of the Reality both  
 VI. of *Christ's* Divine and Human Nature. I  
 also shewed you, with what Intent he was  
 made under the Ceremonial Law, and sub-  
 mitted to it, not, in this as in other Instances  
 of his Obedience, to set us an Example that  
 we should follow his Steps, but, by fulfil-  
 ling, to abolish that Law of Works, and  
 to take off the servile Yoke from all that  
 should accept of the Deliverance to which  
 they were invited. I am now to consider  
 in the

III<sup>d</sup> PLACE the gracious Design of his  
 taking upon him our Human Nature, *viz.*  
*To redeem them that were under the Law,*  
*that we might receive the Adoption of Sons.*  
 He came not only to rescue us from the  
 most servile and ignominious Condition, but  
 to place us in a happy and honourable  
 State, in the nearest Degree of Relation to  
 God himself. I say, to rescue *us*, for *we*  
 too, of the *Gentile* World, who were not of  
 the Stock of *Abraham*, nor *so much* as un-  
 der the Law, have a Part, and, indeed, the  
 most considerable Part in that Redemption.

AND




AND therefore though the Apostle, in SERM.  
this Text, alludes only to the Redemption VI.  
of those who were subject to *Judaical* Or-  
dinances before, whose Case he is here parti-  
cularly considering ; yet we may be sure he  
means it not exclusively of those who  
were without the Pale of that Church,  
whose universal Redemption he has in o-  
ther Places frequently and largely asserted,  
and it had been foreign to his Purpose to  
have recited it here.

THEIR Deliverance indeed was great,  
but ours is greater, who are brought to God  
from a greater Distance : Their Ordinances,  
it is true, were burdensome, and their Ser-  
vice was a Yoke ; but it was of God's ap-  
pointing, and so far eligible ; it was then not  
only a convenient but a necessary Disci-  
pline, fitted to the Season for which it was  
calculated, and the very best those Ages  
would admit of.

THEY had the Honour of having God  
himself both for their Prophet and their  
King. They had not only a standing De-  
claration of his Will, but an Opportunity  
of consulting his immediate Pleasure on  
any

SERM. any emergent Occasion: They had a cer-

VI.  tain Reward promised to their Obedience; and that not only carnal and temporal, as they generally apprehended it, but spiritual and eternal too, as was discerned by those who had Strength of Faith enough to look through the Veil and Shadow that clouded and obscured the Substance. And, to make them the more easy under the Burthen of their Rites and Ceremonies, they were told often and plainly enough, if they could have construed the Prophecies aright, that a Time would come, when they should be superseded by a purer and more rational Worship.

How much nearer was this to a State of Grace and Restoration, than the Condition of the Heathen World, who lay involved in endless Doubts and inextricable Difficulties, with nothing but the Dawning of Reason to direct them, and some traditional Remains of ancient Promises, confusedly represented, and mixed with a strange Variety of fabulous Errors and Delusions!

AND, consequently, how much happier is our Recovery, who were so far estranged before,

before,

before, and are now so nearly allied to S E R M.  
 God! whose very Curse is turned into a VI.  
 Blessing; whose great Unhappiness it was  
 before, that we were without the Law, and  
 Aliens to the Commonwealth of *Israel*, and  
 yet now that very Freedom from it is our  
 Privilege and our Glory. We were once  
 behind the *Jews* in the Want of many sub-  
 stantial Advantages which they enjoyed;  
 but, by the Grace of God and Benefits of  
 the Gospel, are now made equal to the  
 best of them, even to those that have em-  
 braced the *Christian* Faith; and vastly su-  
 perior to the Obstinate and Unconverted,  
 who chuse to continue in their former Bon-  
 dage, and reject the glad Tidings of the  
 Gospel, which invites them both to present  
 Liberty and eternal Glory.

OF such a happy Consequence was the  
 glorious *Epiphany* or Manifestation of *Christ*  
 to us Gentiles, who lay before in Dark-  
 ness and in the Shadow of Death.

OF the Miseries of our natural, and  
 Happiness of our regenerate State, much  
 might be said, and many Instances pro-  
 duced; but the Subject in hand, and my  
 pro-

SERM. proposed Method, confine me to one memorable Advantage of the latter, *viz.* our being made the Sons of God by Adoption.

VI.

THERE are various Respects in which we may be called the Sons of God ; though, in a more noble and exalted Sense, our Saviour *Christ* is most undoubtedly his only-begotten Son. He from whom any Person or Thing receives the first Principle of Life and Motion, is, in a figurative Way of speaking, said to be the Father of that Thing or Person. And in this Regard God is said, *Job xxxviii. 28.* to be *the Father of the Rain*, and to have *begotten the Drops of Dew* ; and by *St. James* he is called *the Father of Lights* ; which, though they are void of Life and Sense, yet not only their first Production out of nothing, but their various Transmutations, when they put off the old, and appear in a new Form, are looked upon as so many metaphorical Births.

AND by almost such a Figure of Speech, the Inventors of Arts and Sciences among Men are, in the Scripture, styled the Fathers of those Arts. We read, *Gen. iv.* of

one

one who was *the Father of such as dwell in Tents*; and of a Brother of his, who *was the Father of all such as handle the Harp and Organ*. And, to give you one Instance of a worse Nature, the Devil is described by the Character of *the Father of Lies*, as being the first Liar, and both the Author and Propagator of that odious and mischievous Quality in the World.

BUT God Almighty is, in a much higher Sense, the common Parent of every thing, of the Beings above as well as those below us. The Angels are called *his Sons*, and he himself the *Father of Spirits*. And our blessed Redeemer is, on many Accounts, his Son, not only as begotten by him before all Worlds, and by an eternal Emanation flowing forth from him, and subsisting with him in the Unity of the same Godhead; but as he was conceived by the Operation of his Holy Spirit in the Womb of the blessed Virgin, as he was sent and acted by his Commission; as he was raised by his Power from the Grave, and became the First-born from the Dead. In Allusion to which the *Psalmist* thus


SERM. prophesied, and the Apostle applies it to

VI. his Resurrection, *Thou art my Son, this Day have I begotten thee*; the Day on which he raised him from the Dead.

AND, to come to our own Case, we Men are his Sons too, we *Christians* more especially. We are his Children by Nature, inasmuch as it was he that fashioned and created us, that gave us our Life and Being, and made us rational and thinking Creatures. In that Sense indeed he is equally the Father of all Mankind; and all Men without Distinction, *Jews* and *Turks*, *Heathens* and *Infidels*, as well as *Christians*, are his Sons or Children by Creation.

BUT this does them little Good, whilst at the same time they are Children of Wrath too, as having forfeited his Favour, and not being restored to it again; Children of this World, as their Hope is in this Life only, and Children of the Devil as they do the Works of the Devil, and help to enlarge the Kingdom of Darkness.

BUT we are in a more peculiar Sense the Sons of God: We are his Sons by Regeneration, he has begotten us anew to a

divine Life, we are born again of *Water* S E R M.  
*and of the Holy Ghost.* We are all, as VI.  
 St. Paul says, in the third of this Epistle,   
 §. 6. *the Children of God by Faith in Christ*  
*Jesus*; and, as it follows, § 27. *As many*  
*of us as have been baptized into Christ, have*  
*put on Christ.* We are closely and inti-  
 mately joined to him, we have received and  
 acknowledged him for our Head; and to  
 them that have so received him, we are  
 told, that *he has given Power to become the*  
*Sons of God, who were born, not of Blood,*  
*nor of the Will of Man, but of God.*

THIS spiritual Generation is performed,  
 not as when the natural Issue of a Man is  
 brought forth after the Similitude of his  
 Parents; not by human Adoption, when  
 the Defect of such natural Issue is supplied  
 by the voluntary Choice of an adscititious  
 Heir from another Family, or from a re-  
 mote Branch of the same; and yet not  
 without Allusion to that Act of Favour  
 among Men; for we do acquire that Son-  
 ship I am speaking of by Adoption indeed,  
 but it is by a divine Adoption.

SERM. AND this makes a mighty Difference ;  
 VI. for when once we are engrafted into his  
 Family, and become Members of the  
 Household of Faith, we have a sure and in-  
 defeasible Title to an everlasting Inheritance  
 immediately conveyed to us, unless we  
 foolishly vacate it ourselves, by selling or  
 throwing away our Birth-right. We de-  
 pend not on the capricious Will of Man,  
 who, after having raised our Expectation  
 to the Height, may, through mere Levity  
 of Temper, without any Default or Cause  
 of Forfeiture on the Part of him he has  
 adopted, repent of and revoke his Kind-  
 ness, and cast him off as arbitrarily as he  
 took him up.

BUT God is the same yesterday, to-day,  
 and for ever ; *his Covenant will be not  
 break, nor alter the thing that is gone out  
 of his Lips* ; we cannot be disinherited by  
 him, whilst we keep to the Terms of our  
 Admission ; but when he has owned us for  
 his Sons, he will always deal with us as a  
 Father, and give us a secure Inheritance  
 with our Brethren.



BY this honourable Relation we are united to the whole Trinity, of which we already feel the happy Effects, and derive a Communication of Blessings from all the Persons. The Father watches for our Good with an affectionate Concern, he pities our Weakness, prevents our Failings, and supplies our Wants with a paternal Tenderness; he suffers us to call him Father, encourages us to make our Requests known to him by that endearing Appellation, and condescends to reckon us in the Number of his Children.

SERM.  
VI.  
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THE SON most graciously invites us to a Communication of his Glory, and a Share in his Inheritance; he is not ashamed to call us *Brethren*, and *Members of his Body*: And to qualify himself to be our Brother, he vouchsafed to partake of our Flesh and Blood, and not only familiarly conversed with us upon Earth, but even now in Heaven makes continual Intercession for us, is solicitous for our eternal Welfare, and concerned lest any of his Brethren should miss of the Salvation he has purchased for them, and be condemned to the Place of Torment.

SFRM. AND for the Holy Ghost, we are assured  
 VI. that he that sanctifieth, and they which are  
 sanctified, are all one: He sets the Seal to  
 our Adoption, and ratifies our Title to the  
 Promises; and by leading us under his au-  
 spicious Conduct, gives us an Earnest and  
 a Pledge of them: *For we have not re-  
 ceived the Spirit of Bondage again to Fear,  
 but we have received the Spirit of Adop-  
 tion, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The  
 Spirit itself beareth Witness with our Spi-  
 rit, that we are the Sons of God; and  
 if Children, then Heirs, Heirs of God, and  
 Joint-Heirs with Christ.*

THIS Testimony of the Spirit speaking  
 in our Hearts, as well as in the written  
 Word, is a distinguishing Gospel-Privilege.  
 This inward Evidence of our Relation to  
 God, and our Acceptance by him, the *Jews*  
 were wholly Strangers to; though they  
 were, in some Sense, the Sons of God as  
 well as we: For we find them represented  
 in the Passage of my Text as Sons and  
 Heirs too, but in the Condition of a Son  
 and Heir under Age, who is not trusted  
 with the Knowledge of his own Affairs;  
 they

they enjoyed a Dignity they did not understand, and Prerogatives of which they knew not the Value; they were full of the Spirit of Bondage, and were acted wholly by a Principle of Fear. SERM.  
VI.

BUT the divine Witness diffused in the Hearts of us *Christians*, gives us a surer Knowledge of our spiritual Concerns; it drives away all groundless Apprehensions and unreasonable Terrors; lets us know who we are, how gracious a God we serve, and how we stand related to him. It speaks Peace, and Joy, and Comfort to us, so long as we suffer ourselves to be led by that holy Guidance. It teaches us to address our heavenly Father with a full Assurance of Success, makes us pass through this Life in a peaceful Calm and Tranquillity, and prepares us to expect a far more delightful and happy State, when it shall please God to call us from his Kingdom of Grace to our Inheritance in that of Glory.

Which brings me to the

IV<sup>th</sup> and last Part of my Undertaking; where I am, by Way of Application, to

SERM. shew how highly we ought to value this  
 VI. Privilege of being God's adopted Sons, and  
 what sort of Behaviour the Sense of it  
 should produce in us.

Now when we consider that we have God for our Father, in this exalted Sense, that from him we have received our first Beginning and Principle of spiritual Life and Motion, and that in him our inward Man also *lives and moves, and has its Being*; this teaches us to whom we ought to betake ourselves for the Supply of our spiritual Wants and Necessities, for such Gifts and Graces as are the proper Nourishment of our Souls, such as will sustain and keep them up in a due and orderly Frame, and prevent or repair whatever Breaches or Decays they are otherwise exposed to.

AND such Gifts as these we are fully assured, as he is our Father, he will not deny us upon our humble Request. For, as our Saviour himself argues, if earthly Parents, even those among them who in other respects, are evil, *know how to give good Gifts to their Children, how much more shall our heavenly Father give his Holy Spirit*

*Spirit* (which is the Gift we stand most in need of) *to such Children of his as ask it of him!* If our Fathers according to the Flesh are so careful to provide for our convenient Maintenance, to bestow on us such things as are fit for the Body, and to give us that Portion of their Substance that fall-eth to us; how much rather will the Father of Spirits, who is always at leisure to hearken to our Wants, and always able to supply them, whose Ears are never shut, nor his Treasure ever to be exhausted; how much rather, I say, will he relieve the Distresses of our Souls, raise us from a dejected State, and abundantly replenish us with all good Things? *Even as a Father pitieth his own Children, so is the Lord merciful to them that fear him.* For he knoweth whereof we are made; he remembereth that our Bodies indeed are but Dust and Ashes, but that our Souls are of a nobler Extraction, even of his own begetting, made after his own Image, and that both together are the proper Objects of his paternal Care.

SERM.  
VI.  
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SERM. IT is a Case much to be lamented, when

VI. Children are deprived of the Assistance and Support of their earthly Parents, whether they are snatched away by Death, or neglect to do their Duty, or are provoked by their continual Disobedience to abandon them to themselves, and to give over all farther Concern for them. But we cannot lose the Protection of our Father which is in Heaven the two former of these Ways. It is impossible he should die, and it is as impossible that he should be unmindful and regardless of those whom he has begotten, so long as they are mindful of their Duty, and carry themselves toward him with a due Submission and Observance. But otherwise indeed, if they are obstinate and rebellious, forgetful of his Counsels, Transgressors of his Commands, and impatient of his Discipline; they are liable (and it is what they must expect) to be disowned by him, as if they had no Relation to him; and those who are so cast off, are of all other Orphans the most unhappy.

SUCH is the State of the disobedient *Israelites*, whom the Almighty once regard-
ed

ed as his chosen People; but they would not own him for their God: He treated them as his Children, but they had no filial Reverence for him; as we find him complaining in the Prophet, *A Son honouretb his Father, and a Servant bis Master. If I then be a Father, where is my Honour? And if I be a Master, where is my Fear?*

SERM.
VI.


And to the same Effect, *Hear, O Heaven, and give Ear, O Earth, for I the Lord have spoken it: I have nourished and brought up Children, and they have rebelled against me: For which Rebellion they were at last finally rejected, and we Christians were adopted in their Stead.*

AND here I cannot but observe to you, that it is a very unjust and mistaken Notion in those who are either drove themselves, or who take pains to drive others into a desponding Way, though they are very sincere in the Duties of Religion, and walk, according to the best of their Capacity, by the Laws that God has commanded.

AND this they do by excessively magnifying God's Threatnings and Judgments against Sin, by representing no Images but
of

SERM. of Dread and Horror, invoking God by
 VI. none of his milder Attributes, but wholly
 taken up with Reflexions on his Rigour and
 Severity; or if they happen to mention his
 Love and Mercy, it is so sparingly, in such
 a disproportionate Degree, and with such
 an Allay of harsher Considerations, as leaves
 but little room for Comfort, and damps
 again the small Dawning of Hope which
 the terrified Mind was beginning to con-
 ceive.

BUT is not this chasing away the Spirit
 of Adoption, that should encourage them
 to say, *Abba, Father*, and tearing off the
 Seal of their Redemption? Was the Gos-
 pel given us for a glorious Light, and will
 these Men make it all Shade, without ever
 a bright Side? Will they make it the
 Messenger of mournful instead of glad Ti-
 dings, and God a severe Task-master in-
 stead of an indulgent Father?

DOES not our blessed Lord assure us,
 that *they who come to him shall find Rest to
 their Souls?* that *his Yoke is easy, and his
 Burden light?* Does not the good Apostle
 profess for himself and the other Ministers
 of

of *Christ*, that they pretend to no Domi-^{SERM.}
nion over Mens Faith, but to be Helpers ^{VI.}
of their Joy?

BUT how is that consistent with the terrible Ideas raised by such Men, who treat of scarce any Subject but Damnation, who clog the Terms of Salvation, and make the strait Gate straiter; whom, if their much Reading has not made mad themselves, yet at least their much Writing has helped to make many others so?

THESE black Representations may sometimes proceed from a Predominancy of splenetick Humours in him that vents them; but sometimes too, I fear, there may be an artful Design in those who rather seek to have Dominion over Mens Faith and Consciences, by keeping them in continual Awe, than to be Helpers of their Joy: An Art, it must be confessed to the Honour of the Church of *England*, much seldomer practised in her Communion, than in any other in the *Christian World*.


AND to do Justice to those of the Separation too, they have spoke more comfortable Words of late than formerly. But
it

SERM. it were much to be wished that some of
 VI. their former Writings had never survived
 their Authors; and if so, I am verily persuaded, there would be fewer dissatisfied Minds, and causelessly troubled Consciences, and that your Hospital of *Betlehem* would be more thinly inhabited.

I speak it from pretty sure Observation, and a personal Knowledge of many such Instances, that they who have gone beside themselves, through a religious Melancholy, have been generally found to be carried into such Disorder of Mind, by the reading Presbyterian Books, or being under the Influence of the Teachers of that Profession.

BUT what then, it will be said? Must Men be suffered to go on in their Sins, without Check or Warning, for fear of scaring them out of their Senses instead of their Sins, at the mention of God's Judgments?

No; there is Vengeance prepared by the Lord for the Hardned and Unrepenting; and it is fit they should be warned of the Wrath to come, that they may flee from it
 before

before it be too late. It is our Duty to SERM
alarm notorious Sinners by such awakening VI.
Notices, and to press them to Repentance 
by the Terrors of the Lord, when softer
Arguments will not prevail.

ALL I am contending for is, that the Gospel may not be so represented, as if it were wholly made up of Threats, that the humble and well-meaning Soul may be comforted under its Doubts and Fears, and not be broken and quite sunk by an additional Weight of Horror, besides what Pain it feels from its own unhappy Suggestions; that it may be taught to look up to God with a joyful Hope and full Assurance, as to a gracious and tender Father, and put into a Way of recovering that Spirit of Adoption, by which it was sealed unto the Day of Redemption.

AND we may depend upon it, that a chearful Frame of Mind is so far from being inconsistent with a good Conscience, that it is the proper and natural Effect of it. Nor has any one so just a Foundation for a Sprightliness and Gaiety of Spirit, as he who is conscious to himself, that he has
faithfully

SERM. faithfully discharged his Duty, and who

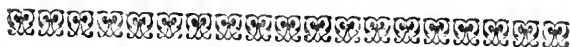
VI. feels no Weight of unrepented Sin to affect
him with any uneasy Remorse. That we
may all demean ourselves in such a Manner
as to be entitled to that Joy which the
Apostle tells us is one of the Fruits of the
Spirit, and which is the Earnest of a much
greater Joy in Reverſion, *God of his in-*
finite Mercy grant, &c.





S E R M O N VII.

The Insufficiency of Reason, and
the Advantages of Revelation.
On the *Epiphany*.



I COR. ii. 7, 8.

*But we speak the Wisdom of God in a
Mystery, even the hidden Wis-
dom, which God ordained before
the World unto our Glory. Which
none of the Princes of this World
knew.*



T. Paul in this and the fore-
going Chapter, is giving an Ac-
count after what Manner he
preached the Gospel to the
Corinthians and other *Christians*: Not

S E R M O N
VII.

SERM. not with the enticing Words of Human
 VII. Wit or Eloquence; but in the Demonstration of the Spirit and of Power, *i. e.* by making it evident from Scripture that those Things must be so, and that *Christ* ought so to have suffered, by comparing antient Prophecies with late Events and Occurrences, and shewing the exact Harmony and Correspondence between the one and the other: Which was proper Matter of Conviction, not only to the *Jews*, who allowed the Authority of those Scriptures, but even to the *Gentiles* too, who disallowed them before. For, how mean an Opinion soever they might have had of their Credit and Authority, as to the Truth of Things there foretold; they could not but allow them to be antient Records; a Collection of Writings highly valued, carefully preserved, diligently studied, and firmly believed by a Set of mistaken Men, as they might think them; and not any new supposititious Work, calculated to serve a present Turn, falsely pretending to Antiquity, but in reality composed after the Facts they speak of, had come to pass.

THIS,

THIS, I say, they could not, they did not offer to insinuate. The Matters they contained, and the Expectation of the *Jews*, to whom those Oracles were committed, were too well known to leave any room for such a Doubt. SERM.
VII.

AND when they were fairly called upon, and required to compare those antient Predictions, which before they looked upon as idle Tales, with subsequent Events, and were made sensible of their wonderful Correspondence, that such an extraordinary Person as was there promised, had actually made his Appearance in the World, with all the Marks and Characters by which he was to be distinguished, who did and suffered all those Things at such Time and in such Manner, as it was foretold he should; this I say was a proper Conviction even to the *Gentiles*, who believed nothing of the *Old Testament*; and a sufficient Ground for them to embrace both that and the *New*, to see them so harmoniously concur to establish and confirm the Truth of each other.

THIS was that Demonstration of the Spirit with which our Apostle professes he

SERM. taught the Gospel, to which he subjoins


VII. that he did it with the Demonstration of
 ~~~~~ Power too, *i. e.* with the undeniable and  
 prevailing Evidence of Signs and Wonders,  
 and miraculous Operations, which accom-  
 panied and confirmed the Doctrine he  
 taught, and made it apparent, beyond all  
 reasonable Contradiction, that he must be  
 commissioned so to teach by that Supreme  
 and over-ruling Power, which alone was  
 able to invert the settled Order of Nature,  
 and produce such astonishing Events, not  
 only without the Concurrence, but even a-  
 gainst the Natural Tendency of second  
 Causes.

AND this was truly and properly De-  
 monstration, these were convincing Proofs,  
 not only to their Reason, but their Senses:  
 Far beyond all the Fetches of crafty So-  
 phistry, or the affected Strains of studied  
 Rhetoric.

SUCH worldly Wisdom, for which some  
 valued themselves so highly, the Apostle  
 condemns at large in these Chapters, and  
 proves it to be mere Folly and Blindness, in  
 comparison of that true spiritual Wisdom,  
 by



by which alone the mysterious Points of S E R M.  
*Christianity* could be apprehended. VII.

THE difference I say between these two   
he represents at large, but particularly in these  
Words, which I have now chosen to discourse  
on. *But we speak the Wisdom of God in a  
Mystery, even the hidden Wisdom which God  
ordained before the World unto our Glory;  
which none of the Princes of this World knew.*  
The Truth of which Assertion I shall en-  
deavour to make good, by considering,

I. THE miserable Blindness and Imper-  
fection of Natural Reason, unassisted  
by Divine Revelation, and unenlight-  
ened by the Spirit of God. And,

II. THE Excellency and Advantage of  
spiritual Illumination, and that bright  
Revelation of the Will of God which  
first began to shine upon the *Gentile*  
World, as on this Day, in Commemo-  
ration whereof we observe this Feast  
of the *Epiphany*; which signifies a  
Manifestation or Discovery; because  
the great Truths of *Christianity* were  
on this Day discovered and made ma-



nifest to those from whom they had been kept secret from the Foundation of the World.


I. Let us consider the miserable Blindness and Imperfection of natural Reason, unassisted by Divine Revelation, and unenlightened by the Spirit of God. If we look back to those dark and ignorant Ages which preceded the Evangelical Institution, and make a Judgment of their Improvements from the best Accounts which History affords, and those scattered Remains of what they committed to Writing, which Time and Accidents have suffered to come down to us; we may soon be convinced of the Weakness and Insufficiency of the best Notions with which their Reason and Experience could furnish them: How fatally they were bewildered; in what intricate Mazes of Error and Deceit they were involved; how, with all their Industry and Study, they could fix their Hopes on no solid Basis, nor agree on any durable Scheme, or such a Set of Principles, as might give them a reasonable Prospect of true and substantial Happiness.

FOR, though there wanted not very diligent Enquirers, and such as made it their only Business to perfect such a Discovery, and who pretended to chalk out the Way to others; yet, after all, we see how widely they were mistaken; and those who enquired farthest, were farthest from the Mark: And no wonder, since they reasoned from such erroneous Principles, that the more they proceeded, they should be still more distant from the Truth. They wandered in a perplexed Labyrinth; and then, when they were once wrong, each Step they took was a farther Deviation, and less likely to bring them either to the Centre they aimed at, or to the Place from whence they at first set out, that they might be enabled to renew their Endeavours, and try to find out a surer and better Way.

THERE were Men indeed among them of very high and singular Endowments, of great Vivacity of Wit, and Strength of Reason; and these too improved by all the Advantages of Education, and cultivated with the utmost Industry and Application.

SERM. BUT, with all these Assistances, they  
 VII. were able to arrive at no more than bare  
 ~~~~~ Morality; that is, very noble and exalted  
 Notions about the Excellence of moral Vir-
 tue; they could reason very sublimely con-
 cerning Abstinence and Fortitude, Pru-
 dence and Justice; of the Benefits of So-
 ciety, and the Necessity of political En-
 gagements; of curbing unruly Appetites,
 and keeping irregular Passions under due
 Subjection.

NAY more; they could practise those
 Virtues they so recommended, with such a
 Degree of Earnestness and Zeal, as may
 shame the less perfect Performances of too
 many indifferent and luke-warm *Christians*,
 and will be an eternal Reproach to such vi-
 cious and immoral ones, as disgrace that
 holy Name after which they are called; who,
 under the clearest Light, delight in the
 Works of Darkness, and suffer them-
 selves to be outdone in all good and com-
 mendable Qualities by the very Heathens,
 who, though they had no Law, yet did by
 Nature the Things contained in the Law.

BUT on what Encouragements did they S E R M.
so act, or what Advantage did they pro- VII.
pose to themselves from the Practice of the 
strictest Virtue? Whom did they think
to please by it, or what Assurance had they
either of a present or future Recompence?

WHY, some of them will tell you, that
Virtue is its own Reward; that he who has
a true Taste and Relish of the inward Plea-
sure and Satisfaction that springs within a
Man's Soul from the Sense of having done
well, and the conscious Reflexion on one's
own Integrity, will need no other Invita-
tion to lead him on to the Exercise of such
Acts.

AND this indeed is by much the most
plausible of all their Pretences; it has the
Appearance of something very brave and
generous. It is a Notion capable of being
set off, and actually has been so, with very
fine Turns of Wit and Fancy: It has
been recommended in a great Number of
quaint Aphorisms and sententious Para-
doxes.

BUT after all, how languid and inef-
fectual an Incentive was this to corrupted
Nature!

SERM. Nature! How few even of those who
 VII. were the greatest Admirers, nay even the
 Authors of such fine and applauded Sayings, could be contented with so thin an Encouragement, or prevail with themselves to check their Appetites, and resist the importunate Cravings of Lust and Passion, of Avarice, Ambition, and Revenge, without the Prospect of any other Reward, but the single Testimony of their own Breast, and that internal Complacency which was occasioned by a secret Reflection on those Acts of Self-denial?

HUMAN Nature was too far depraved to be influenced to any great degree by such a Principle only. Those who had never experienced the Pleasure that arises from such Actions, had quite different Thoughts, and could not believe that there was any such: And even those that had, having other natural Inclinations that prompted them to seek for Pleasures of another kind, were frequently induced to comply with their Sollicitations, and tempted to gratify them at the Expence of their Virtue and Integrity.

AND

AND to this they were the more prone, S E R M.
because they saw no Restraint upon them, VII.
but thought themselves at liberty to do as
they saw fit: And finding upon the Trial
that Vice afforded them a present Gratifica-
tion, without being apprehensive of any
future Inconveniences that might follow
from it; they were willing enough to take
up with sensual Delights, and leave the
Pleasure of Virtue to be enjoyed by such as
had a better Taste of it, and thought it
preferable to the other.

AND this indeed is a very natural Con-
sequence, which must almost unavoidably
follow, when Men look upon Good and
Evil merely as Matters of Choice and Dis-
cretion; and, in order to come to a Deter-
mination, consider only how far both the one
and the other is expedient or inexpedient,
without being at all concerned as to the
Lawfulness or Unlawfulness of them. When
they look upon themselves as accountable
for their Doings only to themselves, and
stand in awe of no other Tribunal but that
of their own Consciences.

NAY,

SERM. NAY farther ; the very Nature of Good
 VII. and Evil was by no means sufficiently ascer-
 ~~~~~  
 tained, nor brought to any just and authen-  
 tic Regulation ; there was no fixed and set-  
 tled Standard by which each Action might  
 be tried, and receive its proper Denomi-  
 nation.

WHILST therefore they were left to  
 judge for themselves, while they were un-  
 der the Obligation of no penal or compul-  
 sory Precepts, not under the Direction  
 of any stated Law, (none I mean that  
 could bind the Conscience ;) for as for the  
 political and municipal Laws of the re-  
 spective Governments and Kingdoms where-  
 of the World consisted, they were only of  
 Force so far as to restrain open Violence,  
 and could do no more than extort an Obe-  
 dience as far as the Letter of them reached  
 from such as were subject to them, but  
 could not command the Assent of the Un-  
 derstanding ; nor did every one that com-  
 plied with them in his outward Actions,  
 approve of them in his Heart as just and  
 equitable) whilst, I say, they had no ap-  
 pointed Rule to guide them, but each par-  
 ticular



particular Person was at liberty to follow the Dictates of his own Reason, and to call any thing good or evil, as that should either approve or condemn it; it is notoriously evident that, instead of Reason, they often consulted their Humour or Fancy, their particular Temper or Complexion; inso-much that, as these happened to differ, (and how widely they do so in different Persons we very well know) so the very same Action was represented under an innocent or a criminal Aspect; and the self-same thing was reputed by one extremely meritorious and praise-worthy, which was condemned by another as foul and unnatural, base and scandalous.

HENCE we see that there was no Vice so horrid, so detestable, which had not its Patrons and Advocates among them: They did not only applaud the worst of Men, but they deified and adored them for their very Crimes. Even Drunkenness and Thievery, Lasciviousness and Revenge, had all of them their tutelar Deities, who first had encouraged those Practices by their own Examples; and these being the meritorious

S E R M.  
VII.  
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SERM. torious Causes of their Consecration, they  
 VII. were afterwards supposed to afford their  
 Countenance and Protection to such as were  
 engaged in the same abominable Vices.

So grossly were they mistaken both in the Objects of their Worship, and the Worship itself, that they not only misplaced their Devotion, by paying divine Honours to the Memory of mortal Men; but the very Adoration they paid was such, as was more likely to exasperate than appease a merciful, holy, and all-sufficient Being. The Truth of which will be very plain to any one who considers their shameful and impure Rites, their barbarous Sacrifices, their offering their Sons and Daughters unto Devils, their fond Opinion that they could bribe the Deity with fat Victims and sumptuous Offerings; as if the great Creator of the Universe stood in need of his own Creatures; as if he cared for Bulls Flesh, or to drink the Blood of Goats.

THEIR whole System of Theology was, in short, most unworthy, fabulous, and inconsistent; as may appear from the excessive Number of their Gods, and the gross  
 Ideas

Ideas they had of them and their Attributes; S E R M  
the Nature of the Service they rendered VII.  
them, the slight, nay many times the wick-  
ed Occasions that first induced them to dis-  
tinguish such Persons by the Title and  
Character of Gods, as were far from de-  
serving the Character of good and honest  
Men; their making them preside over all  
manner of Vice and Immorality, whilst  
this (as I observed before) was made the  
Patron of Intemperance, that of Wanton-  
ness, another the grand Promoter of Theft,  
and a fourth of Murder.

IN this Point alone they were almost  
unanimous, that some Being there was su-  
perior to human Nature; that there was a  
Homage and reverential Awe which they  
owed to some supreme and sovereign Pow-  
er, as a just Acknowledgment of that Be-  
ing which they received originally from it,  
and the continual Favours they enjoyed un-  
der it. Thus much they could plainly col-  
lect from the admirable Beauty and Stru-  
cture of the Universe; the Justness of every  
Part, and the regular Frame and Con-  
texture of the Whole; the Tendency of  
senseless

SERM. senseless and irrational Causes to the most  
 VII. wise and rational Ends. These Observations, I say, were sufficient to demonstrate to them, that such mechanical and undiscerning Agents, which had no Skill or Power to move themselves at all, much less in so wonderful and orderly a manner, must be guided by some all-wise and invisible Director. They needed not to go up to Heaven, or to have Heaven come down to them, to inform them that there was such an Almighty Being; but might read it in large and legible Characters in every Part of the visible Creation. But though they were generally agreed in a Belief of the Existence of God, there were only some great and exalted Minds, who were able to discover the Unity of the Godhead.

AND even those great and celebrated Names, whose Notions we read with Pleasure and Astonishment, to think that in the midst of so thick a Darkness, they should have the Sagacity to discover so much; yet we cannot but read with Pity too, when we observe the Imperfection and Uncertainty of that Knowledge, which however

it was able to lay open and expose the Stupidity and Folly of the vulgarly received Notions; yet could not settle for itself any sure and stedfast Principles; nor was it in the reach of the deepest Philosophy to contrive such a Set of Maxims, as could with any tolerable Assurance be depended on, or which could fully satisfy the Mind of Man, either that such an End was most eligible, and that for which he was created; or that such Means were most likely to promote that End.


WE find indeed the greatest and wisest of them all, toward the Conclusion of his Life, bewailing this Uncertainty of Philosophy, and the Insufficiency of natural Reason. We find him confessing that, after all his Study and Contemplation, the only thing he was sure he knew, was, that he knew nothing.

AND another that came after him, that he might say something more to express the Sense he had of the Shallowness of human Understanding, thought fit to deny that Man was capable of knowing even that one thing, that he did know nothing at all.

SERM. So vastly did it exceed the utmost Stretch

VII. of Reason, to find out a Way to perfect  
 Happiness, that even those who perceived the Darkness under which they laboured, could not yet direct either themselves or others to any certain Light; and though they felt the Inveteracy of the Disease, they could not tell where to seek a Remedy: They were sensible of the Corruption of their Nature, but could not so well tell how to rectify it: They were very miserable from what they felt, and more miserable from what they feared: They had no Security of any Reward for doing well; and as little were they secure of Impunity, in case they did amiss; nay, when they did well, and when amiss, was a Question of no small Difficulty.


IN this distressed and benighted State was the Heathen World, thus ignorant of God and of themselves, when the Almighty, of his great Love and Goodness, was graciously pleased to bring Life and Immortality to Light through the Gospel; to dissipate at once their Ignorance and their Fears, *to enlighten those that sat in Darkness and the Shadow*

*Shadow of Death, and to guide their Feet* SERM.  
*in the Way of Peace.* Which brings me VII.  
to my 

II<sup>d</sup> Consideration ; namely, the Excellency and Advantage of that spiritual Illumination, and that bright Revelation of the Will of God, which first began to shine upon the Gentile World, as on this Day ; and in Commemoration whereof we observe this Feast of the Epiphany.

THIS Discovery was first made (as you read in the Gospel for the Day) to the *Magi*, or wise Men of the East, who by the Guidance of a new Star, which on that Occasion appeared in the Heavens, made a long Journey to *Jerusalem* to pay their Homage to the new-born Saviour of the World ; the Appearance of which Star, at that very time, is recorded even by Heathen Astronomers, who yet did not make so good an Use of it, as to follow its Light, till by that they were directed to a brighter, even *that Sun of Righteousness which arose with Healing in his Wings.*

BUT these were wiser and better Men, who knew how to make a proper Use of a

SERM. VII.  miraculous Signification of the Divine Pleasure. They immediately left their Country at the Sight of this unusual Star, and followed its Direction, till it pointed at the Place where the heavenly Infant lay, whose Nativity that Star accompanied, and whose Glory it portended.

WHOM as soon as they beheld, without the least Doubt or Hesitancy, and without being prejudiced by the Obscurity of his Parentage, the Meanness of his Habitation, and the Smallness of his Attendance, they acknowledged and adored for what he was, the Son of God, the King of the *Jews*, in a spiritual Sense, and the Deliverer of Mankind from Slavery and Bondage, from Blindness and Corruption, from Wrath and Judgment, and all that Train of Miseries that attended a State of Nature.

THUS they became his first and most early Converts, even before he began to preach, or had entred on the Exercise of his prophetic Office.

THEY were the First-fruits and Fore-runners of the Gentiles, but (blessed be God) have since been followed by larger Numbers, by whole Kingdoms and Communities



munities of Men, who have chearfully embraced the same Faith, been admitted into the same Covenant, and, to their everlasting Benefit, have been made Partakers of that glorious Revelation, which has cleared up the Way to Heaven and Happiness, dispelled those dark and gloomy Mists of Ignorance and Error, removed that Wall of Partition which enclosed the unworthy Descendants of a particular Family, to whom alone the Divine Favour was, in a manner, till then appropriated; and taught Mankind in general the Way to be virtuous and holy, and the sure, the desirable Reward of being so.

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THIS is that pure and undefiled Religion which has improved adulterate and corrupted Nature, re-enforced its true and genuine Dictates, rescued it from the unnecessary Clogs and Incumbrances under which it laboured, and pulled off the Disguise with which it had a long time been clouded and obscured, through the Ignorance of misguided Zeal, the Credulity of blind Superstition, the Craft and Imposture of subtle and designing Men, and the wilful Depravity of others, who made their Duty

SERM. comply with their Inclination, and contentedly took up with any Form of Worship which was most consistent with their irregular Desires.

VII.

WE now behold Religion in its native Purity; we are taught to cultivate moral Virtue, to exercise Sobriety, Justice, and Charity; to be gentle and peaceable, tractable and benevolent, to promote, as far as we are able, the common Happiness of Mankind; to be reasonable in our Desires, and moderate in our Enjoyments; to keep our Temper sedate and even, our Reason calm, and undisturbed with Passion; to be wise and prudent in the Choice of our End, and resolute and manly in the Pursuit of it. And what is the best End we can pursue, and what the best Methods by which it may be compassed, we are fully and certainly informed.

AND the better to quicken our Endeavours, we are taught not only how we may be good, but why we should be so. We know the Consequences that will attend a virtuous or a vicious Demeanor; so that, whatever Aversion we may have to our Duty, or whatever Propensity to unlawful or

for-

forbidden Gratifications, occasioned by the false and deceitful Appearance of worldly Objects, and the eager Desires of Flesh and Sense; yet, in spite of all our Unwillingness and Reluctance, the Observation of the Divine Precepts is enforced by such weighty Motives, as might be sufficient to overbalance that leaning and irregular Biass: And it is only for want of Consideration, that those Motives do not always prevail and obtain their due Effect.

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THE Gospel has not only its Exhortations and Dissuaves, but its Promises and its Terrors too. It speaks to us not only in a Voice of Persuasion, but of Authority and Command. It joins our Duty and Interest in one, by absolutely requiring our Obedience; and in case we do obey, assuring us of a glorious and everlasting Reward in Heaven; and forbidding us to do otherwise, on pain of God's Displeasure, of Banishment from his Presence, and Condemnation to a State of eternal Torment.

IT must therefore be our Care to perform good Actions, to preserve our Uprightness and Integrity, not merely to please

SERM. ourselves, by a secret Reflexion on what
 VII. we have done, but to please our Creator
 and our Judge. It concerns us not only so
 to behave ourselves, that we may not con-
 demn ourselves in the Things which we
 allow ; but that God may not condemn nor
 bring us into Judgment for them.

THE Testimony of a Man's own Con-
 science approving his Ways, and bearing
 Witness of his Godliness and Sincerity, is
 indeed a Matter of unspeakable Joy and
 Comfort. Happy is the Man who, upon
 good Grounds, can say within himself, " I
 " have faithfully discharged my Duty, and
 " am well assured of my Reward." As on
 the other hand, miserable beyond Expres-
 sion is that unhappy Wretch, who carries an
 Accuser in his own Breast, and stands con-
 victed by his own Evidence.

BUT what is it that makes these Warn-
 ings and Suggestions of a good Conscience
 so full of Consolation, and those of an ill
 one so dreadful and discouraging? Why,
 it is because we know that God, as well
 as our own Heart, is a Witness of that
 Rectitude or Depravity. It is the Judg-
 ment we have Reason to expect he will
 one

one Day pass upon our Works, that makes SERM.
our own Judgment on them so quick and VII.
pungent. We are well assured there will 
be a Time, when he will bring to Light
the hidden Things of Dishonesty, and the
hidden Things of Honesty too; when se-
cret Virtues and secret Vices shall both be
equally proclaimed; when slandered Inno-
cence shall be acquitted, and painted Hy-
pocrisy detected.

IT is this Consideration, I say, that gives
all the Satisfaction and grateful Resentment
to a good Conscience, and all the Sting
and Terror to a bad one; not that we know
and feel our own Innocence or Guilt, but
that he, who has the Power of rewarding
and punishing, knows it as well as we.

SUCH powerful Sanctions has the Gospel
annexed to our Duty, to enforce the Ob-
servance of it; so fully and amply has God
manifested his Will, and afforded us such
gracious Helps and Assistances toward the
Performance of it; that nothing is now
wanting, but our own Sincerity, Constancy,
and Resolution, to complete our Hap-
piness and Salvation.

218 *The Insufficiency of Reason, and*

SERM. *WHATEVER* Breaches and Decay our

VII. Nature had before suffered, we are now taught how to repair. That spiritual Ignorance and dark Uncertainty, those gross Mistakes and Misapprehensions, under which we laboured, are now entirely rectified: We have the sure and infallible Direction of a plain and easy System of divine Truths, which teach us the Knowledge of God and of ourselves; which describe his Immen- sity, Justice and Holiness; his Delight in Virtue, and his Abhorrence of all Iniquity: And on the other hand, our own Frailty, Weakness and Indigence, when we put ourselves out of his Protection; but our Privilege and Glory, if we adhere to his Word, and qualify ourselves for the Blessings he has appointed for us.

As for Matters of useles Speculation, and such as would only serve to gratify our Curiosity, they indeed are no Part of the Discovery of this Day, as being a Knowledge neither fit nor necessary for us. We know enough already to carry us to Heaven; and when we come there, it will be time enough to know the rest, which God,

in

in his Wisdom, has thought fit to keep un-
revealed.

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HAVING thus, under the two Considerations I propos'd to treat of, shown the Insufficiency of Reason, and the Advantages of Revelation; I shall only crave your Patience for an Inference or two, and I have done.

WHAT then shall we think of those ungrateful Men among ourselves, who, though they have been made Partakers of this glorious Light, and admitted to a Share in so transcendent a Privilege, are yet the professed Enemies of Revelation, and pretend to set up natural Reason, as a surer and a better Guide? As if, by the mere Strength of their own Parts and Abilities, they could form a more perfect Rule of Faith and Manners than that which is delivered in the sacred Oracles.

BUT all that has been said to my first Head, is an Answer to this Pretence; where I have already shewn how very little can be done by all the Powers of Nature, without the Succours and Assistances of Grace.

I would only now propose one Question to them; by what Name they call those
Dictates

SERM. Dictates of their Understanding, by which
 VII. they pretend to be directed, whether Laws
 and Precepts, or only Counfels and Admonitions? Laws to be sure they cannot be, if they are secured and guarded by no Sanction. But what Sanction or compulsory Obligation have they, if there are no future Rewards or Punishments, as the generality of these Reasoners would persuade themselves and others that there are none?

CONSEQUENTLY therefore, this Voice of natural Reason can amount to no more than bare Counsel and Advice. And can any one think the Bent of Inclination is so weak as to be held by such a Tie, without breaking loose, and following its own Impulse? Will a Man deny himself any thing that is grateful and pleasing to his Appetite, when he is only told he would do well to forbear, but is not made sensible of any ill Consequence that will attend his Non-forbearance? Can there be any depending on the moral Honesty of such Men, whatever Pretences they may make to it, who act from no better a Principle?

No; when once it comes to this, there is no Vice so horrid, in which a Man will
 make

make any scruple to indulge himself, if he happens to take a Fancy to it; there is none which he will not justify, when he he has done, by saying, Why truly my natural Religion does not tell me that this is any Crime at all.

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AND pray what can any one, who is equally an Opposer of Revelation, say in answer to this Plea of his Brother Deist? or, in case of such a Dispute, how shall it be determined whether his natural Religion or the other's be the truer; since they have neither living Judge, nor written Rule to which they can appeal?

So easy is it for natural Concupiscence to call itself by the Name of natural Reason. So variable and flexible is this Rule, that it may be accommodated to any Practices; and let a Man's Behaviour be ever so scandalous in itself, or ever so destructive to Society, he still may alledge in his Defence, that he was prompted to it by inward Suggestions, and acted as he was moved by his natural Sentiments.

BUT; my Bretheren, it is our Privilege, and ought to be our Joy, that we have a regular and certain Rule to walk by. We have

S E R M. have *Christ* himself to be our Pattern and
 VII. our Guide, who was made this Day a Light
 to the Gentiles, the Day-spring from on
 high to visit those that sat in Darkness.

AND as we all feel the happy Effects of
 the Publication of the Gospel; so let us
 all most thankfully receive the kind Disco-
 very, and devoutly adore the Divine Dis-
 coverer.

LET us walk as Children of that Light
 whereof we are made Partakers, and no
 longer have any Fellowship with the un-
 fruitful Works of Darkness. Let us so tho-
 roughly improve, and make so good an
 Use of those enlightening Beams of Grace
 which are afforded us here below, that at
 length we may be thought worthy to be
 admitted to those Regions of everlasting
 Light and Glory, where *Christ* sitteth on
 the Right-Hand of God.



S E R M O N VIII.

The Belief of Christian Doctrines
necessary to Salvation.



JOHN XX. 31.

*But these Things are written, that ye
might believe that Jesus is the Christ
the Son of God; and that believing
ye might have Life through his
Name.*



HIS Holy Evangelist, the be-
loved Disciple of our Lord, S E R M O N VIII
having recorded such remark-
able Occurrences in the Life of
his great Master, as for the most Part had
either been wholly pretermitted, or less
punctually related by the other Three; but
espe-

SERM. especially, and which seems to have been
 VIII. his principal Design, having in many clear
 and formal Texts, expressly declared our
 Saviour's Divinity, and eternal Pre-existence,
 which then began to be called in question
 by *Ebion, Cerinthus*, and other Hereticks:
 And lastly, having given us, in the preced-
 ent Chapter, a History of the Passion, and
 in this of the Text, of the Resurrection of
 our Saviour, he concludes it with the
 Words I have just now read to you; *These
 Things are written, &c.* which is such a
 Re-capitulation, or Summary of the main
 Substance therein contained, as most Wri-
 ters, whether sacred or profane, are wont
 to make upon a final Review of their whole
 Work: So that what follows in the twenty
 first Chapter, containing some further Pas-
 sages that occurred during the Space of
 forty Days, in which our Saviour conversed
 with his Disciples after his Resurrection,
 seems to be added by way of Appendix or
 Supplement to the rest. But however that
 be, 'tis plain, I say, that his chief Design
 in these Words, is, to give us at once a short
 View of the Argument he had all along
 been

been pursuing, which was, to establish the S E R M.
Truth of that grand and fundamental Ar- VIII.
ticle of the Christian Faith, *Jesus is the*
Christ, the Son of God. A true, lively, and
operative Belief whereof is sufficient to en-
title any Man to Salvation; *and that be-*
lieving ye might have Life in his Name.

THUS far 'tis readily agreed on all Hands, both that the principal Scope and Purport of this and all the other Gospels, does tend to the Confirmation of this important Article; and that as many as do truly and rightly assent to it, are thereby entitled to everlasting Salvation: But forasmuch as it is not a bare Form of Words, but the Doctrine contained in those Words, that can be the Object of a true Faith, 'tis plain that he alone can have a lawful Title to this Promise, who believes the Proposition to which it is annexed, in the same Meaning, and to the same Effect for which it was propounded. And yet there are a sort of Men who are contented to rest, and who would persuade others to do so too, in an empty Confession of the external Terms; or if they admit of any Meaning, 'tis such a

SERM. narrow and insufficient one, as is far from
 VIII. answering the Intent of the Evangelist; but,
 on the contrary, would make him inconsistent with himself, if in this short Abridgment of his Gospel he had excluded those Things from being necessary Doctrines, which he had all along before been recommending as such: They cannot be reconciled to our Multiplicity of Creeds, and the numerous Articles therein contained, which they think to be altogether superfluous; since, as it appears from this Text, our Assent to this single Proposition, *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*, is enough to entitle us to the Promises of the Gospel; Why then, say they, should we perplex ourselves with needless Mysteries? To what Purpose should we encumber ourselves with the Belief of dark and controverted Points, since we are expressly told, that if we do but hold this *Unum Necessarium*, this single Article of Faith, *that Jesus is the Christ*, which is universally acknowledged by all Sects and Denominations of *Christians*, it will carry us a shorter and surer Way to Heaven, than if we believed three Persons in
 the

the Godhead, two Natures in *Christ*, the Resurrection of the same numerical Body, and other the more abstruse and disputable Tenets of Religion? But as it happens in Writing or Discourse, that those who too affectedly study a Brevity and Conciseness of Style, do oftentimes, by omitting some material Particle, render themselves unintelligible, and so frustrate the End of their Speech, which was to make themselves understood: So those who endeavour to reduce their Religion into too narrow a Compass, do frequently, by rejecting as useless and impertinent, some very requisite and indispensable Doctrines, lose all the Benefit of their Labours, and make even that Part of Religion which they do conform to, of none Effect. For it will easily be made appear, that when they argue thus, they understand that in a limited Sense, which is only true in a large and comprehensive one, which is a very fallacious and illogical way of reasoning. Accordingly therefore, for our clearer Discovery of this Mistake, I shall, in my following Discourse, endeavour to evince these two Things:

Q 2

I. That

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III.


- I. That the Belief of this Proposition, *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*, if taken in a limited Sense, without Regard to the Consequences and Deductions which may be drawn from it, and are necessarily included in it, is not sufficient for Salvation.
- II. That in that Sense wherein it is here taken by St. *John*, and in which it may be said to be sufficient, it both fairly may, and unquestionably ought to be extended to all those Doctrines which are now taught in our Church as necessary to Salvation. Which done, I am afraid it will appear, that a great many of those who insist upon this as the whole Sum and Substance of their Creed, will find it as hard to be digested, as the *Apostolic*, *Nicene*, or even the *Athanasian* itself.

I. That the Belief of this Article, *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*, if taken in a limited Sense, without Regard to the Consequences and Deductions which may be drawn

drawn

drawn from it, and are necessarily included S. 1. 1. 1.
in it, is not sufficient for Salvation. V. 1. 1.

WE are taught, and truly enough, by one that was a great Propagator of the Notion which I am now going to oppose, that all Representatives may be taken under a double Capacity, publick or private, either as acting in their own Right, or in Right of those whom they represent. Now the same Distinction may be observed in the Case now before us; for this Proposition may be considered either in itself, as a separate Member of the Creed, and no more than a Part of the Whole, or else (because it is that on which all the others do in a great measure depend) it is sometimes put as a principal Part to represent the Whole; not that it thereby ceases to be a Part, no more than he ceases to be a Man who is chosen to represent that Body of Men of which he is a Part; who though by this Means he bears a politic Person, does at the same Time retain with it his own nominal Person too. But yet some perverse and ill-designing Men, without regarding this Distinction, have taken Advantage from

SERM. these equivocal Terms, to ascribe that Efficacy and Sufficiency to this Confession in my Text, when simply considered as one single Branch of the Creed, which then only belongs to it, when it is put for a brief Summary and Compendium of the whole.

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FOR if we look no farther than the bare Words, who does not see that here is no express mention made of God's Omnipotence, Wisdom, Goodness, and other Divine Attributes; or his creating the World by his Power, and ruling it by his Providence? yet no one sure will pretend that it is of less Importance, or less necessary to be believed that God made us, than that *Jesus Christ* redeemed us; or that we are so far to submit to Revealed Religion, as wholly to abandon and renounce the Natural one. For if our Saviour had come to advance such a Notion; if instead of promoting his Father's Worship, he had totally abolished it, and substituted his own in the room of it, he would indeed *have sought his own Glory, and not the Glory of him that sent him*; and the *Jews* might have demanded of him, with much better Reason than

John vii.
:8.

than they did, *Whom makest thou thyself?* SERM. VIII.
 'Tis true, the Proposition now under Con-
 sideration is a very important and funda-
 mental Truth; our Saviour pronounced a John viii. 53.
 Blessing on St. *Peter*, when he made a noble
 and illustrious Confession of it, and pub-
 licly declared, that this was *the Rock* on Mat. xvi. 18.
which he would build his Church; but then
 that Rock itself is founded on another Rock,
 to wit, the Testimony of *Moses* and the
 Prophets; and whosoever believes that *Je-
 sus* was the expected Messiah spoken of by
 the Prophets, must first acknowledge this
 previous Truth, that there was a Messiah
 expected and foretold.

Besides, if we were to acquiesce in the
 Form of Words, and confine ourselves to
 the simple Meaning of them, without con-
 sidering their Dependence on and Subser-
 vience to other Truths, their natural Scope
 and Tendency, the certain Illations and
 Conclusions which, if once we admit this
 single Article, must unavoidably flow from
 it; it would from hence follow, that Faith
 alone, without good Works, is sufficient to
 qualify us for Heaven and Happiness;

SERM. which yet is an Opinion that our Adverfa-
 VIII. ries themselves cannot pretend to justify,
 nor are they so unreasonable as to maintain
 it; and yet, I say, 'tis a Consequence that
 would naturally follow from their way of
 arguing: For 'tis plain, there is no mention
 made in the Text of good Works, or of
 Obedience to the Law of God; *and that*
believing, says St. John, ye might have Life
in his Name; not believing and practising:
 So that if in a strict and literal Sense, no
 more than this was required in order to
 Salvation; if it were enough to believe that
 he is *Christ*, though we do not accept of
 his Mediation; to acknowledge him a Pro-
 phet, without obeying his Doctrine; to
 confess that he is a King, without submit-
 ting to his Government; the Devils were
 as orthodox Believers, and are in as hope-
 ful a way of Salvation as any Christian what-
 soever; for they as publicly declared this
 Truth, and gave as ample a Testimony of
 it as *St. Peter* himself; *Let us alone, say*
they, what have we to do with thee, thou
Jesus of Nazareth, art thou come to destroy
us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One

of God, Luke iv. 34. and again, *ŷ 41. And* S F R M.
Devils came also out of many, crying out, VIII.
and saying, Thou art the Christ the Son of
God. But I suppose I need not use many
 Arguments to prove that this unwilling
 and extorted Confession did not amount to
 a true saving Faith; both because the con-
 trary is so often asserted in Scripture, where
 the Fall of the rebellious Angels is positive-
 ly declared to be irrecoverable, and their
 Sentence never to be reversed; and also be-
 cause it is readily granted by those against
 whom I am now arguing, that by believ-
 ing we are here to understand such a prac-
 tical and operative Belief, as inclines us to
 a chearful Obedience to the Doctrine, and
 Conformity to the Commands of that great
 Redeemer, of whose Authority and Divine
 Mission we profess ourselves to be fully per-
 suaded. But still, though this must unques-
 tionably be allowed to be the true Mean-
 ing and Importance of the Phrase, yet is it
 apparently more than is contained in the
 express Terms, but must be gathered by
 way of Inference and Deduction, by re-
 flecting on the Aim and Design of the Evan-

SERM. gelist in this Place, that he is here speaking in the gross, where, for Brevity's sake, he comprizes the whole Duty of a Christian, whether it relates to Faith or Practice, under the general Name of Believing, by observing, that the same Word is used in such an extensive and accumulative Sense, in many other Places in the New Testament; and lastly, by remarking under what Notion it is most consistent with other revealed Truths, and most agreeable to the general Current and Tenor of Scriptural Doctrines; which, considering the many equivocal Terms and ambiguous Expressions, together with the different Figures and Modes of Speech, with which all Languages are obscured, is the only way of ascertaining the true Meaning of any Sentence or Passage, whether in Writing or Discourse, and without which the plainest Words that can be invented are liable to be misunderstood, and the soundest Doctrines to be mistaken and misapplied. 'Tis very evident therefore, and they themselves cannot but allow it, that St. *John* has not, in this Place, expressed all that he meant, but

has

has left some Part of his Intention to be made out by natural Consequences and Conclusions from what he here says, compared with what he had before delivered in the precedent Part of his Gospel; and consequently, which was the first Thing I undertook to prove, that the Belief of this Proposition, *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*, is not sufficient to Salvation; it having been shown, both that the Profession of many other Doctrines, and also a Practice answerable to such a Profession, are Qualifications no less requisite than the other, tho' there is no direct mention of either of them in the Text.

BUT, for our full Satisfaction in this Point, 'tis farther to be observed, that one of the chief Assertors of the contrary Opinion (I mean Mr. *Hobbes*) hath made us at last such a favourable Concession, as, in my Judgment, quite overthrows all that he had been saying for some Pages before: For, having taken a great deal of Pains to prove the Sufficiency of this Article alone, and abused many Texts of Scripture to that Purpose, he at last concludes as follows (which

I beg

SERM.
VIII.


SERM. I beg leave to give you, in his own Words,
 VIII. tho' 'tis something too long for a Quotation.

“ But a Man may here ask, says he,
 “ whether it be not as necessary to Salva-
 “ tion to believe that God is Omnipotent ;
 “ Creator of the World ; that *Jesus Christ*
 “ is risen ; and that all Men else shall rise
 “ from the Dead at the last Day ; as to be-
 “ lieve that *Jesus is the Christ*. To which
 “ I answer, says he, they are ; and so are
 “ many more Articles ; but they are such
 “ as are contained in this one, and may
 “ be deduced from it with more or less
 “ Difficulty. For who is there that does
 “ not see, that they who believe *Jesus* to
 “ be the Son of the God of *Israel*, do there-
 “ in also believe that God is the Omnipot-
 “ tent Creator of all Things ? Or how can
 “ a Man believe that *Jesus* is the King that
 “ shall reign eternally, unless he believes
 “ him also risen from the Dead ? For a
 “ dead Man cannot execute the Office of a
 “ King. In sum ; he that holdeth this
 “ Foundation, *Jesus is the Christ*, holdeth
 “ expressly all that he seeth rightly deduced
 “ from it, and implicitly all that is conse-
 “ quent

“quent thereunto, tho’ he have not Skill S E R M.
“enough to discern the Consequence: And VIII.
“therefore it holdeth still good, that the
“Belief of this one Article is sufficient to
“obtain Remission of Sins to the Penitent,
“and consequently to bring them into the
“Kingdom of Heaven.”

THUS far he: Which I confess is such a Conclusion as one would little have expected, after what he had been just before advancing. Nor is it easy to imagine what it is he is here attempting; for if he would insinuate, that our Assent to this as a simple Proposition, exclusive of all other Articles of Faith, is as much as is required of us, that so he might give a secret Stroke at the Mysteries of Religion, such as the Trinity, Incarnation of our Saviour, &c. by making them be looked upon as useles and super-vacaneous Notions (as some later Writers have endeavoured from the same Text, and by the same way of arguing;) if this, I say, be what he aims at, he soon after contradicts himself, and unsays, in direct Words, what he had as good as said before by sly Intimation: But if he allows it to be a complicated

SERM. plicated System of all such Christian Points
 VIII. of Doctrine, as can by a fair and lawful

Consequence be inferred from it, he grants as much as need be desired; and he might have spared his many long and needless Proofs, in contending for a Cause which no one would have denied him.


'TIS agreed then on all Hands, that this one substantial Principle, together with all its Connexions and Dependencies, does, in Effect, amount to the whole Sum of that *Faith which was once delivered to the Saints*. So that the whole Controversy will be reduced to this, *viz.* what other Articles are included in this one, or deducible from it; which of them can derive their Pedigree from it by a just and lawful Descent, or claim the Benefit of so potent an Alliance? Which brings me to my

II. SECOND Head; wherein I have undertaken to make it appear, that this Proposition, *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*, in the Sense in which it is here taken by *St. John*, and in which it may be said to be sufficient for Salvation, both fairly may,
 and

and unquestionably ought to be extended to S E R M.
all those Doctrines which are now taught VIII.
in the Church whereof we are Members, as
necessary to Salvation. In order where-
unto, I desire to use no greater a Liberty
than the before-cited Author himself has
done, with relation to those few Articles
which he is pleased to admit; and if, ac-
cording to his own Rules of Interpretation,
I can as lawfully prove the Extraction, and
make out as good a Title for the mysterious
Points of Religion, as he has done for the
more plain and obvious ones, and that by
at least as unforced and natural Conclu-
sions as any of his (which by the Grace of
God I shall be able to do) I hope we shall
afford those Divine Truths a Place in our
Creed, notwithstanding the repeated At-
tempts of irreligious Men to subvert and
undermine them.

FORASMUCH then as it is not our naked
Assent to Words and Phrases, but to the
Sense that is couched under them, which
ought to be esteemed an Act of Faith, 'tis
requisite for us to examine what is the true
Signification and Importance of this Asser-
tion,

SERM. tion, *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*, and
 VIII. what we must be supposed to understand
 by it, if we mean any thing at all. Now
 I presume there is no one who is in good
 earnest, when he makes Profession of that
 form of Words, but would willingly be
 understood to signify thus much by them
 at the least, that he who was born in *Beth-*
lehem of Judea, whilst *Herod* was *Tetrarch*
 of that Province under *Augustus*, the *Roman*
Emperor, who was call'd by the Name of
Jesus (which Name and the Interpretation
 thereof, to wit, *Saviour*, were foretold by
 an Angel) the real Son of *Mary* and the
 supposed Son of *Joseph*; the History of
 whose Life and Death, Resurrection and
 Ascension, is recorded by the four Evan-
 gelists; that this Person was not only an
 extraordinary Prophet, but that he was
 κατ' ἐξοχήν the *Christ*, the Anointed one,
 that very *Messias*, who was promised to the
 Patriarchs, foretold by the Prophets, pre-
 figured by many Types, forerun by *John*
 the *Baptist*, and expected by the whole Na-
 tion of the *Jews*. This is the very least
 that any one, who repeats these Words as
 his entire and only Creed, can pretend to un-
 derstand

derstand by them, and even this too is so SERM.
 imperfect and unsatisfactory, that it must of VIII.
 necessity create new Questions, and lead him 
 on to some farther Acknowledgments; for
 the Word *Anointed*, which is the Translation
 of the *Greek* Χριστός, and the *Hebrew* *Messias*,
 when we come to explain what we
 mean by it, will appear to be of a very great
 Latitude, and to comprehend within it self
 many great and important Things. For
 suppose I were to give an Account of my
 Faith to an Infidel or Pagan, and should
 tell him that the sum of what I believed
 was, that such a Person, *Jesus* by Name,
 who appeared in the World at such a Time,
 was the *Anointed*; will not any one take it
 for granted that he would farther demand
 of me, what I meant by his being anointed?
 what he was anointed with? or to what end
 and purpose? to which if I should be able
 to make no farther reply, but that this was all
 I counted myself obliged to hold, and that for
 holding thus much I expected to be reward-
 ed with everlasting Salvation, would he
 not, think you, look upon this as a very odd
 and ill-grounded System of Religion, and

SERM. a very poor Opinion of *Christianity*? Now the

VIII. Imputation of believing they know not what, and being led by a blind and implicit Credulity, is such a one as the Persons I am now arguing with, would not willingly lye under, who, purposely to avoid it, have contrived to reduce their Faith into this narrow Compass, that so they might not be obliged to give an explicit Assent to such abstruse and sublime Articles, as they are less able to comprehend: to be sure therefore they will easily grant me this, that it is as necessary for us to acknowledge something wherein this Unction of our Saviour did consist, as to believe that he was anointed; and indeed one of our Adversaries has taken a great deal of Pains to explain the meaning of this Title, who will have it, that our belief in him as *Christ* is no more than acknowledging him to be King; this he asserts to be the great and only Scope of all the Evangelists, and produces a whole heap of Scripture-proofs where our Saviour is expressly styled a King, or where there is any Allusion to his Regal Dignity, without taking notice of such Texts where any other Office is ascribed to him: so that

that, according to him, the result of this Proposition *Jesus is the Christ*, is no more than *Jesus is the King*. Another of them is no less industrious in applying this Confession to his Prophetical Office, and he laying little or no Stress on his Regal Function, insists mightily on those Places where he is represented as a Prophet, teaching and expounding the Law, exhorting Men to seek the Kingdom of Heaven, preaching Repentance and Remission of Sins, foretelling the Destruction of *Jerusalem* and the Consummation of the World &c. so that if this Gentleman's Notion prevail, we mean no more by owning him to be *Christ*, but that he was the Prophet that should come into the World: And now if I thought it in the least needful, I could produce as many Places as either of them has done in defence of their respective Arguments, to prove that he was a Priest; and would only desire to know of them, why, when we confess him to be the *Christ*, we may not as properly be said to own him for our High-priest as for our Prophet or our King? for indeed he was all three, and in each of these respects was *Christ*, the

SERM. Unction belonging equally to all these three
 VIII. Offices, nor can any tolerable Cause be assigned why we should appropriate it to any one of them exclusive of the other two.

I might hence take Occasion to set forth to you the agreeable Harmony of the several Functions, what each of them contributes toward the Redemption of Mankind, and how necessary it was that they should all concur in the Person of the Mediator; but this would be beside my present Purpose; nor need I go about to prove this by long and far-fetched Arguments, for which I have the direct Authority of Scripture, there being a Multitude of Texts in which he is expressly called by every one of these Names. And it is as evident from the same Scripture, that under the *Jewish* Oeconomy, these three supreme Administrators, did all receive an Unction by way of Preparation and Inauguration to their Office. The Kings (as it is well known) and before them the High-priests, were commonly styled *the Lord's anointed*, and *Elijah* received a Commission from God to anoint *Elisha* the Son of *Shaphat* to be Prophet in his own room. The great Mes-

fias indeed, in whose Person they were all u-^{S E R M^o}
 nited, was not anointed like them with the ^{VIII.}
 same material Oyl, but as it is said of him
Acts x. 38, he was anointed with the Ho-
ly Ghost and with Power, i. e. he was a Pro-
phet solemnly inaugurated at his Baptism by
the descending of the Holy Ghost. In the Power
of which, as he was teaching in one of the
Galilean Synagogues, and expounding that
*Prophecy of *Isaiab, The Spirit of the Lord is**
upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach
*the Gospel, he declared unto them, *This Day**
is this Scripture fulfilled in your Ears. This
 inward and spiritual Unction supplied the
 Place of the external consecrating Oyl,
 by Virtue whereof he is properly called the
Christ, or the Anointed; which Name and
 Character whoever pretends to ascribe to
 him, must mean it under that three-fold
 Consideration, and to all the Intents and Pur-
 poses for which it was imposed on him,
 there being no manner of Reason to be gi-
 ven why it should belong to him in one re-
 spect, any more than in the others.

The sum then of what I have been hi-
 therto urging is this, that the plain English of

SERM. *Christ is anointed*, and that the meaning of

VIII. *Anointed*, is the being consecrated or set apart to the three Offices before mentioned; from whence it follows, that whosoever professes *Jesus to be the Christ*, does therein pronounce him to be King, Priest, and Prophet, and that by a certain and necessary consequence, tho' he who makes such declaration hath not Skill enough to discern the consequence. And now if I should descend to a particular consideration of all those Regal, Prophetical, and Sacerdotal Acts, which he is hereby supposed to execute, it would appear that a great many necessary and substantial Articles of Faith are included in every one of them; but I need not at present consider him under any other capacity than that of a Prophet, because if that alone be granted me, tho' we should confine the Chrism or Unction of our Saviour to this single Office, it will yet be sufficient to prove all that I have undertaken to make good: it being demonstrable, that all these Doctrines which are held by the Church of *England* as necessary to Salvation, (and those are they which I am at present concerned to vindicate) do depend on the

Testimony

S E R M.
VIII.

Testimony, and are founded on the Authority of that Divine Prophet, who was sent from Heaven to reveal his Father's Will to Mankind: Thus, for instance (to pass by those plainer Truths which are equally acknowledged by all *Christians*) when I am taught by that holy Seer, that inspired and inspiring Author, that *he and the Father are one*, that *he who was not fifty Years old*, was older than *Abraham* his Progenitor, that *he was in the beginning*; that *he was with God, and was God*; that *he was the brightness of his Father's Glory, and the express Image of his Person*; that *being in the form of God, he thought it no Robbery to be equal with God*; when I hear him expressly called *the true God, the mighty God, God blessed for evermore*, in that standing and authentic Word, which he has delivered to us to be an infallible Guide both of Faith and Manners, how can I forbear confessing and adoring his divine Nature? unless at the same time I call in question the Authority by which he spake, and the certainty of his Prophetic Mission. And if this did not make it abundantly manifest that the Belief of our

SERM. Saviour's Divinity is comprehended in this
 VIII. short and compendious Creed, we might
 farther call into our Assistance the other
 Branch of my Text, of which I have hitherto
 taken no notice, where he is called *the Son of God*, that ye might believe that *Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*. For altho' our Saviour was called *the Son of God*, on some other accounts, yet we may very readily presume that the Appellation in this place refers to that peculiar Sonship, that Unigeniture whereby he was *begotten of his Father before all Worlds*. For it is observable, that whereas two other Evangelists begin their relations with the Nativity of *Christ*, and a description of his human Generation; St. *John* begins with his eternal Generation and Coexistence with the Father; *In the beginning*, says he, *was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God*, and makes it his more peculiar Business to establish the Belief of his Divinity: Accordingly therefore when he concludes in my Text, *These things were written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God*, we may well imagine that he is speaking of
 that

that Sonship which he himself had before S E R M. ascribed to him; for why should he say, *These things are written that ye might believe that he is the Son of God*, alluding to his human Generation, when he had not been saying any thing to that purpose, when he had taken no notice of his Conception by the Holy Ghost, his being born of a Virgin &c. when he had omitted all Particulars of the Manner of his Birth, and only declared in general that the *Word was made Flesh*; so that the Godhead of our Blessed Saviour has a twofold Title to be included within the meaning of this Confession. VIII.

BUT to return to our consideration of him as a Prophet; when I find him commissioning his Disciples *to baptize in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost*, when he ascribes such Properties to the Holy Ghost, and assumes them to himself, as none but God is capable of, when he so strongly maintains an Unity of Nature, and yet gives such evident Marks of a Distinction of Persons in the Godhead; when *Ananias* who lyed to the Holy Ghost, is in the next Verse said *to lye unto God*; when it is said *that there*
are

SERM. are three that bear Record in Heaven, and
 VIII. that *these three are one*; when all this, I say,
 is spoken either immediately by himself, or
 by those who spake by his Commission, if I
 do in good Earnest believe him to be a Pro-
 phet, I must of necessity take it on his Word
 and Attestation, that there are three divine
 Persons subsisting in the Unity of the same
 undivided Essence.

AND by the same Way of Arguing, any o-
 ther fundamental Doctrine which is plainly
 delivered in Scripture, (and such are all the
 Articles of the Creed) may be reduced with-
 in the Compass of this one Proposition on
 which I have been enlarging; for how can
 I believe that he was an extraordinary Pro-
 phet sent from God to reveal his will to
 Mankind, if I do not at the same Time be-
 lieve likewise whatsoever that Prophet has
 revealed? Whosoever therefore denies his
 Assent to the Doctrine of the Trinity, the
 Incarnation of our Saviour, or any other po-
 sitive and essential Truth which is apparent-
 ly grounded on the Authority of Holy Writ,
 does not *believe that Jesus is the Christ*, but
 does in effect call him a false Prophet.

I HOPE by this time I have made it appear, S E R M.
that those who would infer any thing from VIII.
this Passage in my Text to the disadvantage
of the Mysteries of Religion, have taken a
great deal of Pains, and used abundance of
Sophistical Arguments to prove nothing at
all; since if we take it as a simple Proposition,
it is not true in Fact that the Belief thereof is
sufficient to Salvation: but if we admit a train
of Consequences, the certainty of these Sa-
cred Truths may be evinced by as good Au-
thority and as just a Sequel, as those which
are most universally acknowledged and re-
ceived.

Now instead of any other Application of
what has been said, I shall only conclude with
a general Apology for this way of reasoning
which I have used, which perhaps, at first
sight, may seem to be very groundless and
precarious: Men may be apt to imagin that we
are put mightily to it, and are forced to strain
hard to secure our Creed, when we endea-
vour to prove the principal Points of it from
such remote and incongruous Texts as seem
not so much as to look toward them, nor to
have the least relation to them. And indeed
our

SERM. our Faith would stand on a very loose and
 VIII. unstable Foundation, if it depended on the
 strength of this single Verse. I confess, if we
 had no other corresponding Proof, this Place
 would make no more for a Trinity than it
 does for Transubstantiation, or the Infalli-
 bility of the Pope; but since (as I have
 shewn before) this Doctrin is one of those
 which our great Prophet has revealed to us,
 and since this Place of St. *John* is a general
 Head to which such Doctrines are to be re-
 duced; we may take it for granted, that this
 as well as any other, is virtually included in it;
 and he who therefore disbelieves it, because
 it is not expressly mentioned, may for the
 same Reason reject all the rest, not excepting
 the very first Principles of natural Religion:
 For I appeal to any impartial Men, whether
 it be not as just an Inference to say, I believe
 that *Jesus* is a Prophet, therefore I believe all
 that he taught as a Prophet, and by conse-
 quence the Doctrin of the Trinity among
 the rest; as to say, I believe that *Jesus* is
 the Son of God, therefore I own there is a
 God, and consequently that this God was
 the Creator of the World; and yet this is
 Mr.

Mr. *Hobbes's* Conclusion, as you have heard S E R M.
in his own Words. And I farther submit VIII.
it to consideration, whether, when he is so
forward to lay hold on a perverted Interpretation of this one Passage, thereby to invalidate a Doctrine which in so many others is amply attested and confirmed, whether, I say, this is not (to use his own expression) casting Atoms of Scripture only to raise a Dust, and opposing the Authority of a single Text to the general Design and Tendency of the Sacred Writings.

BUT farther, that I may not seem to take an unusual Liberty in drawing such a remote Conclusion, and running such division on one single proposition, give me leave to observe to you that this is a very frequent and customary Practice, to which we have recourse on many other occasions. Thus for instance, we all allow that the Ten Commandments are of indispensable Obligation, and must be observed by all who expect to arrive at Heaven, and yet our Saviour includes them all under those two comprehensive Duties, toward God, and toward our Neighbour, on which two, he tells us, *hang all the Law and the*

SERM. *the Prophets*, nay which is more compen-
 VIII. dious still, he assures us in another Place,
 ~~~~~ *that there is but one thing needful*: Now  
 unless in the explication of these short Apho-  
 risms; we did admit of such consequential  
 Reflections as naturally ensue from them,  
 how can the whole Decalogue be comprized  
 in those few Words? or how can all the Law  
 and the Prophets depend on them? As there-  
 fore in the *Agenda*, so in the *Credenda* of  
 Religion, there is a *Unum Necessarium*, one  
 aggregate and collective Truth that repre-  
 sents and personates all the rest; and what St.  
*Paul* says in one Case, *Rom. xiii. 9. For*  
*this, thou shalt not commit Adultery, thou*  
*shalt not steal, thou shalt not kill, thou shalt*  
*not bear false Witness, thou shalt not covet;*  
*and if there be any other Commandment, it*  
*is briefly comprehended in this saying, name-*  
*ly, thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self;*  
 this, I say, may fitly be applied in the other  
 Case. For this, God the Father made me,  
 God the Son redeemed me, God the Holy  
 Ghost sanctifieth me, and if there be any o-  
 ther Article of Faith, it is briefly compre-  
 hended in this saying, *Jesus is the Christ:*  
 and

and he who excepts against any Doctrine S E R M.  
which is elsewhere plainly revealed, because VIII.  
it is not directly named in this short Epi-  
tome, may with just as good reason deny  
that this or that Passage is any where to be  
found in such an Author, because he does  
not meet with it in the Contents, or (which  
is yet more absurd) may as well disown the  
particulars of a Bill, because they are not spe-  
cified in the sum Total.

NAY, if we consider the matter through-  
ly, it will appear that the Commands  
themselves, tho' they are but special Branches  
of that extensive and universal Precept, *thou  
shalt love thy Neighbour as thyself*, yet  
with respect to those subordinate Streams  
and Rivulets that flow from them, they are  
all of them general heads of Duty, which  
both may and ought to be multiplied by  
several Inferences and Deductions, to so many  
several Commandments or Prohibitions as  
we meet with Cases of right and wrong.  
The best of it is, these deductions for the  
most part are so obvious and easy, that every  
Man is able to be his own Casuist, and  
needs no other Comment on the Law than  
found

SERM. sound Reason and a sincere Mind: I say, for  
 VIII. the most Part; for I confess some Cases  
 there are so doubtful and uncertain, that the plain and unlettered *Christian* will frequently find himself at a loss without the direction of his spiritual Guide; nay some again may be so extremely nice and intricate, that that Guide himself may stand in need of another Guide. But still our Comfort is this, that the more of Difficulty and Perplexity there is in any matter of Duty, it is for that very Reason by so much the less necessary to be resolved, and so much the more excusable if mistaken.

LET us then remember that these general Heads of Faith and Practice, of which I have been treating, were not proposed to us with a design to exclude and obliterate the Particulars whereof they consist, but rather to establish and confirm us in the Belief and Observance of them: Let us remember that they were only given us as short Helps to Memory and Hints of Admonition, that they are not our Instructors but Remembrancers, that they were not intended to teach us what we did not know, but to re-  
 mind

mind us of what we have been already S E R M.  
taught. VIII.

To conclude; as we should not on the one hand be too superstitious in admitting those things as necessary to Salvation which are altogether needless and uncommanded; so on the other, we ought to be very well advised before we presume to cast off those Doctrines as burdensome and superfluous, which we shall find in the End to be of the highest Importance and most absolutely necessary: we should not, I say, be too hasty and rash in rejecting either practical Virtues or speculative Truths, that so we may reduce our System of Faith and Obedience into a narrower compass, and make it more portable and easy, lest by our unseasonable Caution and Distrust we run the Fate of that foolish Mariner, who for fear of over-lading his Ship, neglected to take in the necessary provision for his Voyage.

BEWARE therefore, that ye also defraud not your own Souls: Consider what it is that God has required of you, and be not imposed on by false Pretences: Assure yourselves that he only can be said to love his Neighbour as

S E R M. himself, who observes all those special and  
 VIII. incidental Duties, so far as he is concerned  
 in them, to which that Precept may be extended. This is that love which is the fulfilling of the Law, and to such a one alone it is said, *This do, and thou shalt be saved.* And he who embraces those requisite and fundamental Points of Faith which are established by that sure Word of Prophecy, to which we should all do well to take heed as to a Light that shineth in a dark Place; he I say, who holds fast those Articles of Faith which are recommended to us by our blessed Saviour, and dictated by his Prophetic Spirit; He, and he only it is who truly *believes that Jesus is the Christ,* and who for so believing shall have Life and Immortality thro' his Name.





# S E R M O N IX.

The great Wisdom of learning and adhering to Religious Principles. Preached before Queen *Anne*, Feb. 24, 1713-14.



M A T T. vii. 24, 25.

*Therefore whosoever heareth these Sayings of mine, and doth them; I will liken him unto a wise Man that built his House upon a Rock: And the Rain descended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew, and beat upon that House: and it fell not, for it was founded upon a Rock.*



UR Blessed Saviour having con- S E R M.  
cluded his Divine Sermon on the IX.  
Mount, and perceiving (as we  
may well imagine) that it had

SERM. made a good Impression on his Disciples,

IX. and wrought in them a pious and hopeful  
 Disposition towards the Virtues he had been recommending, the better to fix and confirm them in their good Purposes, he presses on them, in these Words, the Necessity and Advantage of a practical Assent to those sacred Truths, and such a one as should demonstrate its Liveliness and Efficacy by suitable and correspondent Actions.

AND his Design in this Comparison is to teach both them, and all that should afterwards receive the same Doctrine, that, if they hoped for any Benefit from it, they must set it up as a Rule and Standard, and act by it as by a fixed and steady Principle; not varying, and shifting, and practising by Fits, and then flying off from it again; but adhering to it with Firmness and Resolution, and being so far influenced by its Directions, as not to be drawn aside by any Temptations the World can offer.

HE that can vigorously and cheerfully pursue the Precepts of the Gospel with such a regular and even course, and who sets up the *Christian* Religion as the governing Principle of his Life, who is Proof against the

Soli-



Solicitations of the World and the Flesh, and all the specious Allurements that would inveigle him from his Duty, and draw him aside from the Ways of Righteousness into the By-paths of Error and Disobedience; is that wise Man described by our Saviour in my Text, who laid the Foundation of his House upon a Rock: *And the Rain descended, and the Floods came, and the Winds blew, and beat upon that House, and it fell not, for it was founded upon a Rock.*

S E R M.  
IX.  
~~~~~

To the Practice and Imitation of whose Wisdom that you may be the more effectually excited, and that your Faith and Morals may be built on so stable a Foundation, that no Temptation either of Pleasure or Pain, no Storms of Adversity, nor all the soothing Blandishments of Sin may be able to unsettle them; it is necessary that every one should diligently and attentively exercise his Mind in a serious Meditation on these three Points:

- I. THE End proposed by the Gospel, the Greatness and Certainty of the Reward, and how well it will answer his utmost Endeavours, if with all his


SERM.
IX.



- striving, Watchfulness, and Care, he can attain that high and heavenly Prize.
- II. THE Way that leads to that End, the Length and Straitness of it, the Snares, and Dangers, and other Difficulties that are likely to attend the Passage thro' it. And
- III. THE certain Connexion between that Way and that End; that the one, if pursued, will infallibly lead to the other, and the Impossibility of arriving at it by any other way.

I. I say a Man must possess his Mind with a just Consideration of the End proposed by the Gospel, the Greatness and Certainty of the Reward, and how well it will answer his utmost Endeavours, if with all his striving, Watchfulness, and Care, he can attain that high and heavenly Prize.

FOR without a due Reflection on this, without directing his Actions to some certain Mark, and looking forward toward the End with which he expects them to be crowned, without considering why or to what Purpose he does this or that, or what he thinks will be the Consequence, no one can


can be entitled to the Character of a wise SERM.
Man, nor be said to build his House on any IX.
sure Foundation. 

ALL that he does will be at random and by chance, his Actions will frequently clash and interfere with one another, and he will pull down with one Hand, what he builds with the other. He may possibly be sometimes in the right, as his Humour or Fancy may happen to lead him: But there is great reason to conclude he will be much oftener in the wrong, while he has no Recompense in view.

THERE is nothing we esteem a greater Argument of Folly, than for a Man to amuse himself about Trifles, and to employ his most serious Endeavours and utmost Application in the Pursuit after vain and empty things, which have nothing in them of Worth or Value, or which is able to compensate the Labour of acquiring them. Nay, tho' they should have something desirable in them, and be worth the accepting, provided they could so be enjoyed as not to prove our Hindrance in greater Matters; yet, when they interfere with our more important Interest, when they must of necessity cost us

S E R M. the same Pains and Industry, by which we

IX. might compass a far greater Good; we still
 are liable to the Imputation of Folly, if we
 make a Choice so weak and disadvantageous. 'Tis a great Part of Wisdom to be
 able to fix a just Value and Estimation on
 things, and rate them according to their
 intrinsic Worth; to discern, with a true
 Accuracy of Judgment, what is justly eli-
 gible and well-deserving our Choice, from
 that which only cheats us with a fair Ap-
 pearance, but can never yield us any solid
 and real Good: out of those things that
 we find to excel, to approve the things that
 are most excellent, and give them the Pre-
 ference to others of inferior Excellency. I
 mean in such Cases where they cannot be
 enjoyed together, and where there is an ap-
 parent Necessity of resigning one or the o-
 ther of them. And when, after a careful
 Enquiry, we have discover'd what is the
 chief and supreme Good of all (which to
 any one that reasons wisely, and considers
 soberly, will appear to be a glorious and
 happy Immortality) to direct all our Aims,
 and bend the whole Strefs of our Endeavours
 toward the Prosecution of it: to suf-
 fer

fer no tempting Avocations to draw us off SERM.
from our Pursuit, or rebate the Edge of our IX.
Desire; but whenever we are so beset, and 
solicited to engage in other Measures by the
specious Appearance of less worthy Objects;
still to look up to our Prize, and fortify
ourselves with such Reflexions as these:

“ CAN there be Delight enough in the
“ Gratification I am now prompted to, al-
“ luring as it seems, to countervail the Loss
“ of Heaven? Will not the Enjoyment of
“ this Pleasure be a means of defeating me
“ of far more durable and transcendent
“ Joys? Can any thing be given in Ex-
“ change for so rich a Blessing, or make
“ me amends for parting with my Title to
“ so fair an Inheritance? Can it be too dear-
“ ly purchased, or can my best Endeavours
“ be more profitably employed than in pro-
“ curing me the Favour of God, and gain-
“ ing me Admittance to his Heavenly King-
“ dom? Is not this that Pearl of exceeding
“ great Price, for which a Man sold all he had
“ to enable him to purchase it? And as
“ there is no other Treasure so valuable, so
“ is there no other Security so good. My
“ Expectations are built on the unchange-
“ able

SERM. "able Word of the God of Truth, who

IX. "cannot promise falsely or act deceitfully.

~ "Nay, for my more abundant Satisfaction,
 "he has bound himself by two immutable
 "Ties, tho' either of them alone had been
 "very ample Security, his Promise and his
 "Oath; his eternal Son is ever ready at his
 "Right Hand to plead in my behalf, and
 "his Holy Spirit is the Witness, the Ear-
 "nest, the Pledge, the Seal of the Cove-
 "nant between us: Such a Reward, so in-
 "viting in itself, and so faithfully secured
 "to me, I cannot fail of attaining, if I
 "will not be wanting to myself: And shall
 "any meaner Aim, or more unworthy
 "Prospect divert me from so noble a Pur-
 "suit?"

THIS, I say, is one main step toward laying a good Foundation, that will be Proof against all Storms; to chuse the best and most excellent End, to which ones Actions may be directed, and to keep it constantly in view. A

SECOND Meditation wherein we must exercise our Minds for the better strengthening and confirming this Foundation, is the Way that leads to that End, the Length and
 Straitness

Straitness of it, the Snares and Dangers and SERM.
other Difficulties, that are likely to attend IX.
our Passage thro' it. For unless we are thus
convinced, and stedfastly resolved to walk
in that Way, and make our Passage through
it, notwithstanding all the Opposition we
may meet with; in vain are all our curious
Speculations, and highest Estimation of the
Prize that waits us at the End of it: In
vain do we contemplate on the Glory of
Heaven, and warm ourselves with the de-
lightful Thought of those inexpressible Joys
which glorified Spirits shall possess in the
Regions of eternal Light; if we do not at
the same time consider likewise, how we
shall get thither, or by what means we
may arrive at that glorious and happy State.
To dwell on the Idea of the former, with-
out endeavouring the latter, will avail us
no more than reading the History of some
remote and distant Country, or seeing it
very accurately described in a Map, or beau-
tifully represented in a Picture; which
when we have done, and pleased ourselves
with the delightful Scene, we are no nearer
the Place, and like to be no more the bet-
ter

S E R M. ter for any of the Entertainments it abounds

IX. with, than if we never had heard of, or
 had any Notion at all about them.

BUT indeed the latter of these Meditations I am recommending to you, will naturally enough follow from the former, when that has been pursued with Fervor and Intense-ness. When an eager Reflexion on those Seraphic Joys has made a strong and lively Impression on one's Mind, 'tis obvious enough for him to cast about with himself, by what Methods he may best compass so desirable a Portion, and what he must do to attain so great Salvation, being easily convinced by the Weight he feels about him, from that Incumbrance of Flesh, that clogs and keeps down his better Part; that he cannot rise to Heaven with a Wish, nor soar thither on the Wings of a heated Imagination.

OUR blessed Lord himself has taught us to make a difference between our Journey's End, and the Way that must lead us to it; which he describes to his Disciples, as two different Degrees of Knowledge. *Whither I go, says he, you know, and the Way you know.*

know. And even his unbelieving Disciple S E R M.
 St. Thomas allows the Distinction, tho' ac- IX.
 cording to his usual Diffidence he takes the
 Liberty to contradict his Master, and dis-
 owns both Instances of that Knowledge
 which his Lord had imputed to them: *Lord*
we know not whither thou goest, and how can
we know the Way? He argues from the sup-
 posed Want of the one, to an Impossibility
 of the other kind of Knowledge. The In-
 ference was not amiss, if the Assertion had
 not been false, and directly contrary to
 what our Saviour had immediately before
 asserted, as well as to what he subjoins in
 the next Words, *I am the Way, and the*
Truth, and the Life: no Man cometh to the
Father but by me.

Now it is for this Reason that the great
 Author of our Salvation does, in this Pas-
 sage, call himself *the Way*, and in another
 Place of this Gospel, *the Door*; because it is
 by him alone, that we can gain admittance
 into Heaven. Nothing but our Belief of
 his Doctrine, our living conformably to his
 Precepts, our Trust in his Merits, and De-
 pendence on his Aid; that can bring us

SERM. to his Father's Prefence, and make us ever-

IX. lastingly happy.



BUT this is, in some Measure, anticipating a Point that will more properly belong to my next Head, when I affirm that Salvation is attainable through him only. I return therefore to shew the necessity of reflecting how far it is attainable through him, how he would have us run that we may obtain, and what are the appointed Methods by which he requires us to work out our Salvation.

WE must remember then that *Christianity* is a State of Action, that it requires us to exert our Strength, to employ our Faculties with a vigorous Cheerfulness in the Service of God, and in obedience to his Commands; to be exceedingly zealous for his Glory, and Labour to promote it in whatsoever we undertake. We must remember it is a State of Discipline, and must not think much of any outward Misfortunes, whereby he thinks fit to prove our Constancy and Sincerity; but receive them with a quiet and patient Submission, and suffer them to attain the End for which they were sent,

viz.

viz. the purifying and refining us, and causing our Faith and Obedience to shine out with a more distinguished Lustre. We must remember that it is a State of War, that we have ghostly Enemies to encounter, who lie in wait to beguile us of our Inheritance, to seduce us into Error, and possess us with a Spirit of Rebellion; that we have need of all our Courage to guard us from their Assaults, of all our Vigilance and Caution to prevent and defeat their Stratagems, and of all our Resolution to avoid their ensnaring Baits. We must remember too, that notwithstanding the signal Pre-eminence that *Christianity* has above a State of Nature, yet it is still a State of Dependence and Subjection, that we are impotent and insufficient of ourselves to struggle with these Difficulties, and master the Opposition we shall be sure to meet with; that those Graces and Endowments, whereby we are enabled to Labour and Endure, to Run and Strive, to Fight and Conquer, are solely the Gift of God, and such as we have not, nor can have of ourselves; that we cannot stir one Step in the *Christian Race* without


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SERM. without his special Grace assisting us, and
 IX. that whensoever that Assistance is withdrawn,
 the animal Nature will of course prevail,
 and all Sparks of the Divine Life be extinguished in us.

THESE are fundamental and necessary Truths, of which we must be thoroughly convinced, and fix them in our Mind by frequent Meditation. For how shall that Man's Task be done, who does not consider that he has any to do? how much of it will be omitted, and how faintly and imperfectly will the rest be performed, for want of a quickning Sense of the Weight and Importance of it, and of what absolute Necessity it is for him to do this, if he will be saved? How restless and impatient will he be under every Disappointment! How furiously will he rage, or how dejectedly will he pine at those trying and perplexing Crosses which in a greater or less Proportion, will unavoidably befall him, if they do not find him armed with this Reflexion, that the great Disposer of Events, who can direct all things to the good of his Creatures, has a kind and gracious Meaning, even in the severest of those

Troubles, wherewith he suffers him to be exercised: that he is corrected in Love, and not in Anger, for his Reformation, not for his Destruction! How will he be prepared to engage with the Enemies of his Soul; how naked, how exposed, how defenceless will they find him, if he forgets that he has any Enemies to contend with, indulges himself in a carnal Security, and cries Peace to his Soul, when there is no Peace! Or what Assistance will he have from above, if he is not sensible of his own Weakness and the All-sufficiency of God: that under his Direction the most powerful of his Adversaries will flee before him, but without it the weakest are irresistible! If he is not at all convinced, or but slightly convinced of the Reality, or of the Efficacy of such supernatural Aid, he will neglect to seek it by the appointed Method, *i. e.* by devout and fervent Prayer: and if he neglects so to seek it, he may be assured he will not find it.

IF therefore we will act like wise Men, and build our everlasting Hopes on so firm

SERM. a Foundation, that nothing can shake or
 IX.  undermine; we must keep our Spiritual
 Accounts exactly stated, and always have
 an Eye to the Terms on which we stand:
 what Progress we have made in the *Chri-
 stian* Race, how much of it is still before
 us, and whether we have Strength and Re-
 solution enough still left, to hold out unto the
 End: what Struggles and Encounters we
 may reasonably expect to meet with, before
 we arrive at the end of our Stage, and how
 we are appointed for the Combat, by what
 sort of Temptations we are most likely to
 be ensnared, and to which of them we are
 most inclinable to yield, and accordingly to
 watch with more than ordinary Diligence,
 and fortify ourselves against them with a
 redoubled Caution. We must take Care to
 keep in the strait and narrow Way, which
 alone can bring us to Heaven, though we
 should find it encompassed with never so
 great Difficulties, and full of Obstacles and
 Impediments; and though we meet with
 never so little Company who are going the
 same Way, and making toward the strait
 Gate;


Gate; and to avoid the broad and frequented S E R M.
Path, where we have a Prospect indeed of a IX.
more pleasing Entertainment for the time
(though possibly even that Expectation may
fail us) as well as a greater Variety of Com-
pany to amuse and divert us, being fully
assured, that notwithstanding all the fair and
soothing Blandishments, wherewith it would
flatter and entice us, it can lead us to no-
thing, but that broad Gate that opens to
inevitable Ruin and Perdition.

THUS then you may be furnished with
two very useful and necessary Materials to-
ward building your Faith upon a Rock,
viz. a heedful Attention to the greatness of
that Reward, which in the End will crown
your Christian Endeavours, and to the length
and Straitness of the Way, through which
you must pass in Order to attain it. But
there is a

THIRD Consideration, which I am now
to recommend to you. And that is, the cer-
tain Connexion between that Way and that
End, that the one, if pursued, will infal-
libly lead to the other, and the Im-

SERM. possibility of arriving at it by any other
IX. Way.

THE Road to Heaven is but one, and that one is direct and even. There are no secret windings in it, nor undiscover'd Passages, no private Inlets where any body can creep in by Stealth. He that will enter there, must go in fairly by the Door, and carry such Recommendations with him, as will be sure to make him welcome: he must enter pure and undefiled, clothed with the Wedding Garment, and entirely cleansed from all sinful Defilements, by an universal and sincere Repentance. If he is in such a State, whenever he knocks there, he will be sure to find Admittance. 'Tis then his covenanted Wages, of which he cannot be defrauded, for God is faithful who has promised, and not one Jot or one Tittle of his Word shall fail. His *Kingdom* was prepared before the Foundations of the World. For Persons so qualified, *Christ* is gone before to make ready a Place for them, and they will be received into different Mansions, according to their respective Degrees

degrees of Goodness, and as they have been S E R M.
more or less conformable to the divine Will, IX.
and that Declaration of it, whereby they 
were required to regulate their Life and
Manners.

BUT in vain do these Men hope to have a share in that Reward, who will not submit to the requisite Conditions, who either act by no rule at all, or govern their Conduct by Rules of their own appointing: who have spent their whole Lives in nothing else, but doing what was grateful to themselves, and right in their own Eyes; and yet expect to have their Portion with them, whose chief Study it has always been to please their Creator and their Judge: who think to find out some other way to Heaven, than that which is chalked out for them to walk in, or that they are at Liberty to leave it, as often as they will, for any By-path that seems to them more pleasant and entertaining, without any Hazard of being lost, or of missing the Gate, where they would be glad at last to enter.

To be more particular. There are many,

SERM. who would willingly enough be Partakers
 IX. of eternal Happiness, and are convinced
 that they must do something on their Parts,
 in order to attain it: But then they would
 fain persuade themselves, that a bare obser-
 vance of the Doctrine and the Precepts of
 Morality will be sufficient for their Purpose.
 They tell you they believe in a supreme Be-
 ing, who made the World by his Power,
 and rules it by his Providence: that all E-
 vents are subject to his disposal, and all hu-
 man Actions liable to his Cognizance. And
 this is the substance of their Creed. They
 pretend likewise to be singularly just and
 punctual in their Dealings, to do no Injury,
 and invade no Man's Property, to be chari-
 table, kind, and hospitable, Lovers of Peace,
 and Composers of Differences among Neigh-
 bours, to be strict in the discharge of all re-
 lative Offices: nay more, to be temperate
 and chaste, or at least to give no Offence to
 those among whom they live, by any open
 and flagrant Debaucheries. And this is the
 Sum total of their Practice.

THESE indeed are very commendable
 Qualities

Qualities, and go a great way toward constituting a good Character, but they do not go far enough to complete it. There is no one of these Virtues but is highly necessary; but these are not all that are necessary. If any one of these be wanting, a Man cannot be a good Christian, but a Man may have them all, and yet be a meer Heathen. And many instances there are of meer Heathens, who have talked and acted as religiously as this, which under that imperfect Light that was afforded them, was as much as could well be expected from them.

S E R M.
IX.
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But much more may and will be required of those who receive the Gospel Manifestation, and who have been initiated in the Mysteries of *Christ*. God alone knows how those others will be dealt with, who knew but little, but practiced what they knew.

But it will surely be a very insufficient Plea for any Christian to urge, that he acted like a good moral Man. If morality alone would have sufficed, to what Purpose was the Son of God incarnate, or why was the

SERM. Gospel superadded to the Law? Is it of no

IX. Importance, think we, provided we confess
 our Creation by the Father, whether we acknowledge or not our Redemption by his Son, our Sanctification by his Spirit, the Divine Inspiration of his Word, the Truth of our Saviour's Death and Resurrection, the Merit of his Sufferings, the Perpetuity and Universality of his Church, the Authority of his Ministers, or the Certainty of his final Judgment of the World?


CAN any one imagine, that he does enough to be saved under so bright a Dispensation, if he is but honest and sober; tho' he lives in open Violation of the express Commands of his Redeemer? never invoking him by Prayer, tho' too often by profane Oaths and Curses: Never repairing to the Assemblies of his Worshipers; or if he does, behaving himself there, not only with Coldness and Indifference, but with Rudeness and Irreverence: never commemorating his Death and Passion, with other devout *Christians*, in the way that he himself has appointed: Or if ever he does, is it to qualify himself for
 Heaven,

Heaven, or for a gainful Employment here S E R M.
on Earth? never reading or Meditating on IX.
his Word, unless it be in Hopes that he 
may pick out something to expose and cavil at.

LET not such Men flatter themselves, that foundutiful a Behaviour toward God will be attoned for, by their observance of some Duties toward their Neighbour. Tho' alas! how few are there of those who thus trample upon Revelation, who have so much as natural Religion to boast of? How few are there of them who pretend so much as to carry the Face of Morality in their Principles or Actions? and how many of those that do, are immoral at the Bottom? But those few who are Sincere, do but lean on a broken Reed, whilst they trust to the Merit of those Works, which, tho' otherwise to be commended, can only be rendred acceptable to God, and be made Instrumental to their Salvation, thro' the Merits of that Saviour whom they defy.

BUT there are others, who are contented to practise the greatest Part both of Moral and
Christian

SERM. Christian Duties, but it is with a reserve to
 IX. some others, that would lay a restraint upon
 their particular and most darling Inclinations. Allow them to gratify but these, and they will be very exact in the other Parts of Religion, that do not cross them. Too many, I say, there are who deceive themselves by such a partial and imperfect Righteousness, and would fain compound with God, by performing his Laws in the main, but with an exception to what they do not relish. But what is so wanting communicates a defect to all that they abound with, and makes it of no value. Nothing but an universal Innocence, or, so far as that has been impaired by Guilt, an universal Repentance, is sufficient to put a Man into a state of Salvation. Tho' he has gone a great Way in his Duty, and is in the Case of the Young Man in the Gospel, whom our Saviour told he was not far from the Kingdom of Heaven; yet notwithstanding his Nearness, if any one thing is wanting, he will be as much excluded, as one that had made no Advances toward it. So that if ever we hope to enter
 there,

there, our Devotion must be uniform and of a S E R M.
Piece, we must let no sinful Leaven remain IX.
to taint and sour our Vertuous Performances. 

BUT my Text more immediately points at a third sort of Men, who mistake their Way to Heaven, and think to get thither by barely hearing the Word, without ever doing it. These more especially our Saviour compares to a *foolish Man*, that without any Foundation *built his House upon the Sand*. And how fitly may they be so compared, who show themselves so very wavering and unsettled? Who, whatever Resolutions they may have taken up (as some they cannot but take up) at the time of their hearing some wholesome Lessons of Instruction, yet before they come to put them in Practise, they are all blown away and vanished like dust before the Wind. Such Persons, like those the Apostle speaks of, are *ever learning, but never able to come to the Knowledge of the Truth*, i. e. they never know it to the Purpose, they never know it practically, it makes no Change in their **Manners**, nor has any Influence on their
Lives

SERM. Lives and Conversations. They learn and

IX. forget, and learn again, as if they learnt on purpose to forget. They will lose no Opportunity of hearing, and lay hold of no Opportunity of practising, as if all Religion consisted in meer Speculation, and were to be directed to no useful end of Life. Tho' there is no one thing they hear so often as that the eternal Fate of Men will be decided according to their Actions, yet still they neglect to act, and come to be told the same again, and fancy there is some singular Merit in the bare Act of Attention, though they stifle the Word spoken, and will not let it sink down into their Hearts, so as to fructify in their Lives. Not even our blessed Saviour's own Auditors could be saved by hearing only; for so he tells them in *Luke xiii. 25, 26, 27. When once the Master of the House is risen up, and hath shut to the Door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the Door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence you are. Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten*
and

and drank in thy Presence, and thou hast SERM.
taught in our Streets. But he shall say, I IX.
know you not whence you are; Depart from
me all ye Workers of Iniquity. What
will all the preaching in their Streets, or in
the Synagogues avail them in that Day, if
they have been barren and unfruitful
Hearers, and made no Improvement from
what was taught them?

'TIS, I confess, the indispensable Duty
of every *Christian*, to endeavour to be well-
nurtured and instructed, to hear the Word
with Joy, and meditate on it with Delight;
to hear it explained and enforced, and try
to comprehend the true Meaning of the
Scripture, according to the best of his Ca-
pacity, and by so doing to enliven and con-
firm his Faith. And, in a Word, to be as
rich in spiritual Knowledge as he can be.

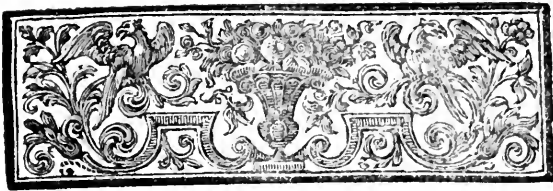
BUT all this will be too little, if he con-
tents himself with a useless Knowledge and
unactive Faith, unaccompanied with Works,
which St. *James* assures us is as dead as a
Body without a Spirit. But the same Apostle
tells us, for our Encouragement, that who-
soever

SERM. soever is not a forgetful Hearer, but a Doer
 IX. of the Work; that Man shall be blessed in
 his Deed.

THAT we all may be such Workers, and
 all of us accordingly so blessed,

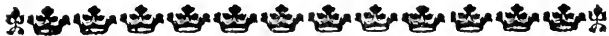
God of his infinite Mercy grant, &c.





S E R M O N X.

The use and abuse of comparing
our Practice with that of other
Men.



L U K E XVIII. II.


*The Pharisee stood and prayed thus
with himself: God, I thank thee
that I am not as other Men are,
Extortioners, Unjust, Adulterers,
or even as this Publican.*



HIS Parable, we are told, was S E R M.
designed as a Lecture of Humi- X.
lity, as a check to the vain Ar-
rogance, and a just reprehension
of the uncharitable Pride of such Persons as
trusted

SERM. trusted in their own Righteousness, and
 X. despised others: the case before us is a notable Instance of such a haughty and ill-confiding Humour; and the Conclusion severely mortifying to all who are possessed with that Spirit of vain Glory.

Two Men, we read, went up into the Temple to pray, the one a Pharisee, the other a Publican, both with the same Intent, but their Behaviour, when there, very different. The former of them stood by himself at a distance from the Publican, as who should say, Come not near me, for I am holier than thou: And in so doing he shewed himself a true Pharisee, both according to Name and Thing (for from a word that signifies so to separate or divide, the Word Pharisee is derived.) Then, as to the Matter of his Supplication, he came thither indeed to pray, but we find not that he prayed at all; he addresses himself to God in such a manner, as if he had forgot that he himself was a dependent Being, liable to wants and accountable for Frailties, and now in the presence of that God, who alone was able to supply the one, and forgive the other.

IN all he says, we meet not with any one S E R M.
word that imports either confession of Sin, X.
or Intercession for others, no Petition for 
Pardon, or for any other temporal or spi-
ritual Good, no deprecating God's Wrath
and Vengeance; and where all these eminent
Branches of Prayer are wanting, what Man
can be said to Pray?


ALL that looks like it is, that he invokes
him indeed by the Name of God, and gives
him Thanks, for that he is not guilty of the
Crimes after mentioned; which (to allow
him his Due) seems to have something com-
mendable in it, and to be a fair Acknowledg-
ment of the Divine Grace in preserving him
from the usual Corruptions of the World;
and had the rest of his Devotion been of a
Piece with this, he might have gone down
to his House better justified than he did.
'Tis well his Pride did not transport him so
far, as to transfer the Obligation on God's
side, and bring the Almighty in, as rather
indebted to him for such signal and merito-
rious Performances, bespeaking him after
this upbraiding and insulting Manner: *Lord,*
thou mayst thank me that I am not as other
Men; this only was wanting to compleat

SERM. the Abomination of his Sacrifice, and to turn

X. his pretended Prayer into Sin. All that follows after, *God, I thank thee*, is made up of uncharitable Censure of his Neighbours, and immoderate Praise of himself, *I am not as other Men*; he does not say, “as some others, but as other Men without exception.” “I am not an Extortioner, no unjust Person, no Adulterer.” This is very well, as far as it goes, and thou shalt escape the Punishment that is due to these Sins; but where is the Merit of all this? or hadst thou any to boast of, thou hast destroyed it by boasting. That, and thy rash Judgment of every body beside thy self, as if thou alone wast not chargeable with these Crimes, together with thy peculiar Disdain and hard Thoughts of the poor Publican, is enough to blemish all thy Virtues, were they not only true in fact, but active and positive in their Nature, much more when they are merely negative, and all their Pretences, if admitted, amount to no more than an abstinence from some Vices.

“Nay, but I fast twice a Week.” Thou dost, it may be, but thou fastest unto Men, and from Men thou must look for thy Reward. “I give Tithes of all that I possess,


“I with-

“ I with-hold not those Dues which thou S E R M.
“ hast appointed for the support of thy Al- X.
“ tar, and of those that wait at it.” Why 
then thou art so far free from Sacri-
lege, as well as from Extortion. But
where are thy Works of Charity and Mer-
cy, of Meekness and Humility? Thou
speakest nothing of these, and 'tis because
thou hast no such to speak of. Where
is that Contrition of Heart, and Confusion
of Face, which the Sense of thy Guilt,
and the awful Presence of the divine Ma-
jesty should beget in thee? where are the Ex-
pressions of Sorrow and Submission, and
thy humble Application to the Throne of
Grace for Pardon and Forgiveness? nothing
of all this. No, thou hast not confessed or
repented of any one Sin; and therefore thy
Sins, which are many, remain with thee;
thou hast disdained to ask, and therefore
thou shalt not receive pardon: Go down to
thy House, but then first be assured that thou
wilt depart hence less justified than thy
Neighbour, whom thou so undervaluest.

SUCH was the Department of the proud
Pharisee, and such in effect was his Recep-
tion. And now if we look once more into

S E R M. the Temple, we may see in how very different a Manner the other Votary demeaned himself, *He stood afar off*, i. e. either at a distance from the Pharisee, as deeming himself unworthy to approach him, of whom perhaps thro' a mistaken Charity he might conceive as highly, as he himself did in his own vain-glorious Opinion; or else at a distance from the Altar, whether thro' Necessity, as a *Gentile*, and as such incapable of going farther than the outer Court of the Temple; or if a Profelyte, and so qualified to enter farther, we must ascribe his Forbearance to that humble and modest Sense of his own Unworthiness, for which Temper of Mind he is here particularly commended.

FROM the same consideration it was, that he durst not so much as *lift up his Eyes to Heaven*; which, tho' a very proper and decent, a very laudable and antient praying Gesture, (for so says the Holy Psalmist, *Unto thee lift I up mine Eyes, O thou that dwellest in the Heavens*; Psal. cxxiii. 1. and a Psalm or two before, *I will lift up mine eyes to the Hills, from whence cometh my Help. My Help cometh even from the Lord*
who

who hath made Heaven and Earth: With S E R M.
 other Passages to the same purpose) tho' this, X.
 I say, was a very fit and proper Gesture even 
 for Suppliants too; yet was it more especi-
 ally used, when any one had occasion to as-
 sert his own Innocence with a more than
 ordinary Vehemence, and appeal to Heaven
 as the Witness of it. And the Publican
 knew himself and his Infirmities too well,
 to dare to offer at any such appeal. *He smote*
upon his Breast, which was a Token of self-
 accusation: as we read in this same Gospel,
 that the Crucifiers of our Saviour themselves
 did, when they beheld the unusual Prodigies
 that attended his Crucifixion. *Luke xxiii.*
 ¶ 48.

AND not hoping to be the better heard
 for his much speaking, he only delivers him-
 self in these few, but hearty and pathetic
 Words: *God be merciful to me a Sinner.* A
 very short and concise Prayer, and yet we
 know where God accepted of a shorter *i. e.*
 in the Case of *Hannab*, *1 Sam. i. 13.* even
 where nothing at all was vocally uttered, but
 mentally and internally a great deal, which
 with respect to God the great Searcher of

SERM. steps will be free and open to him, as if he
 X. had never gone astray.



THIS is the great concern of our Lives, and it ought to be the principal Care of every one to consider, whether he has declined from his Duty or not; and if he has, whether he has yet returned to it, and got into the direct Way that leads to Happiness and Salvation. But how can that Man be sure either of the one or the other, who does not put himself upon a just and legal Trial, nor measure his Actions by a perfect Rule?

Now one Man's Actions were not intended to be the Rule of another's, but the known Will of God is to regulate them both. And he that is resolved to sift himself to the bottom, and to keep a strict account between God and his Conscience, will reason with himself after this or some such like Manner.

“ THUS and thus hath God spoken in his
 “ Word, these Duties he hath enjoined, and
 “ these Vices he hath forbidden; to the first
 “ I am invited by the most glorious Re-
 “ wards; from the latter I am discouraged
 “ by the most terrifying Threats. My Du-

ty lies plain before me ; or if any Doubt or SERM.
Uncertainty arises, I have a sure and live-X.
ly Oracle to have recourse to: God's Word
is that Lanthorn that directs my Feet,
and that Light whereby the Paths in which
I am to tread, are made discernible and
clear: 'Tis true, I observe such and such
Persons, whom I am conversant with, to
be guilty in outward appearance, of much
higher Violations of the Divine Precepts,
than I am conscious to my self ever to
have committed. But whether, in the
main, I am a better Man than they, I
am not my self a sufficient Judge: Or if
I were, yet alas! what other Men do, is
no Rule to me. The Injunctions laid on
me are positive and irrelative: I am
not required to be better than my Neigh-
bour, but to be as good as I can. Where
I feel my Conscience burdened with the
weight of any heinous and notorious
Crime, I can find neither Comfort nor Ex-
cuse in the Reflection which my flattering
Lusts would suggest to me, that there
are those who are much worse, and who
have offended to a much higher Degree.

The

SERM. " The Example of all Mankind is no War-
 X. " rant or Authority for me to transgress the
 " Commands of my great Creator: 'Tis by
 " my own Actions that I must stand or fall. I
 " am convinced it is possible to follow a Mul-
 " titude, and yet to do Evil; and to follow a
 " Pattern which appears to be highly deser-
 " ving of my Imitation, and yet to be
 " wretchedly mistaken. The Blind after all
 " may lead the Blind, and both may fall into
 " the Ditch.

" BUT while the Law of God is in my
 " Heart and before mine Eyes, I am sure
 " my goings can never slide. *The Law of*
 " *the Lord is perfect, converting the Soul:*
 " *the Testimony of the Lord is sure, making*
 " *wise the simple.—The Judgments of*
 " *the Lord are True and Righteous altoge-*
 " *ther.—Moreover, O Lord, by them is thy*
 " *Servant warned, and in keeping of them*
 " *is great Reward. But who otherwise can*
 " *understand his Errors? Wherewithal then*
 " *shall a Young Man cleanse his Way? Even*
 " *by ruling himself after thy Word. That*
 " is the settled Standard and Criterion of
 " Good and Evil: And when I bring my Ac-
 " tions to the Touch-stone, and find they
 will

“ will bear the Test, I have all the Ease S E R M.
“ and Security, that an honest Heart or a fa- X.
“ tified Mind and a quiet Conscience can
“ afford; and which they seek in vain, who
“ trust to the uncertain Conduct of any o-
“ ther Guide. ’Tis these Heavenly Ordi-
“ nances alone, from which I can make a
“ true Estimate of my spiritual Progress; these
“ are or ought to be the Counterpart of my
“ Actions; which if they exactly fit and
“ fairly answer, I desire to make no other
“ Comparison. I can reap from thence both
“ Pleasure and Instruction at once, and
“ make them, as the Holy Psalmist did,
“ *My Delight and my Counsellors too*; my
“ Delight in the approbation I find there of
“ my past Behaviour, and my faithful Coun-
“ sellors for the Time to come.

SUCH Reflections as these I say a Man should make, that would judge of himself and his Condition aright; and the principal Question on which he ought to examine himself should be, how good he had been himself, and how obedient to the Laws of God; not, as the proud Pharisee did, how much more excusable, or less criminal than
this

SERM. Extortioner or that Adulterer. I come now
 X. in the

II. Second Place to shew, that it is neither safe nor honourable for any one to content himself with such a comparative and accidental Holiness. I call it accidental, and for the same reason I affirm it not to be safe, because such a one as acts only by Imitation, and judges of himself but by Comparison, has no adequate and suitable Measure whereby he can regulate his Work, and consequently can never be sure that it is done aright. He has so little regard to his everlasting Interest, as to leave it to the Choice and Discretion of others, whether he shall be happy or miserable, and is equally indifferent to be steered by them to his Salvation or his eternal Ruin.

AND while he makes their Actions the Rule of his, instead of consulting the Laws of God, which are the only sure and infallible Guide, he acts with no more Prudence than that Mariner would do, who in a dangerous and tempestuous Sea, should neglect both his Compass and the Stars, and leave himself to the conduct of the Waves,

in


in confidence that they will bring him safe S E R M.
to the Haven where he desires to be. X.

'Tis possible indeed (though it is great odds against him) that a Man of such Levity and Unsteddiness of Temper may, by the singular Providence of God, have his Portion assigned him in such a Neighbourhood, where Virtue and Religion are in request, and where there are many bright and illustrious Patterns to stir up his Emulation; and then he acts as he sees others do, and, for ought he knows, becomes virtuous by chance. But such a Virtue as this is too weak and tender to bear transplanting; Remove it to a colder Climate, where it wants that shelter and Encouragement it had before, and must be forced to stand naked and alone, in a cold unsheltered Soil, and exposed to rugged Blasts, and you presently kill it; or if it barely lives, it will make no shoots, nor ever after look prosperous and thriving. Or (to speak without a Metaphor) when such a Man changes his Neighbourhood, he changes his Manners too, and his Piety declines in proportion to his Conversation. He will still perhaps take care to be equal at least to the foremost; but that alas! is many Degrees

S E R M. Degrees short of what he had before attained
 X. to; and he that in time past was the best
 among good Men, is now contented with
 the poor Satisfaction of being one of the
 best among very bad ones.

So variable a Rule is the Vogue and Practice of the Place where one converses, for the Government of his Life and Actions; that not only one Place may encourage a greater Regularity of Life and Strictness of Morals than another, but the very same Place may be unequally disposed at different times to countenance Religion and Sobriety, as it happens to be inhabited by Persons of different Principles and Practices; nay even the self same Persons may, and generally do in process of time, both shift their Opinions, and alter their way of living, and either grow more serious and considerate, as the Grace of God and Influences of Religion give them a right Sense of their Duty; or else more loose and dissolute, as the final withdrawing of his Holy Spirit leaves them destitute and graceless, and abandoned to all the Impurities of their own vile Imagination.

So that, in short, a Man must resolve

either not to be carried away with a vain S E R M.
Compliance to every idle and irregular Fa- X.
shion which he meets with in the course of 
his Conversation, or must bid adieu to that
uniform and steady Virtue which alone
is able to carry him to Heaven. Both of
these can never be reconciled, nor God and
Mammon be served at once. A Man might
as well hope to describe an exact Circle
without keeping his Compasses to the same
Distance, but either widening or contracting
them, with an intent to take in within the
Circumference some Portion or Space, that
otherwise was too remote from the Centre,
or else to exclude some other, that would
have been too near it.

BUT farther, allowing that Men were
not thus liable to change, could we be as-
sured that they would always continue to be
what they are at this present, yet how can
I know whether he with whom I compare
myself, and whom I flatter myself with the
thoughts of either equalling or exceeding,
is such a one in reality, as I apprehend
him to be? God indeed is a Discerner of
the Heart, but except him, there is no

SERM. one knows the Thoughts of a Man,
 X. but the Spirit of Man that is in Man.



How can I know, for instance, whether I come up to my Neighbour in the Acts of private Charity, where the Left Hand must not know what the Right Hand doth? or in those of private Devotion, where the Closet is the only Scene of Action, and he that seeth in secret the only Spectator? Nay, how can I be sure that he is really chargeable with those Vices, which lessen his Character in my esteem, and in my own Abstinence from which, I place that superior Merit for which I value myself above him? Things are not always what they seem to be: Even violent Suspicion has oftentimes proved false and injurious, though grounded on very foul Appearances, and many an upright Heart and pure Conscience has had the Disadvantage of a guilty Face. Or let the Imputation be never so just, although perhaps in this single respect the ballance might incline to my side; yet take the whole Man together, and set his Virtues and his Failings against mine, and it may be hard to say, I am sure it would be presumptuous to pronounce

pronounce whether of the Scales would be S E R M.
 the heavier. X.

'TIS a very wrong Conclusion then for any one to argue after this Rate: I am not as that Extortioner, I am not as that Adulterer, therefore I am an innocent and good Man. Perhaps thou mayst not be like him, not in his Extortion, I mean, not in his Adultery: But thou mayst have other Sins of as deep a Dye, and which may render thee as odious in the sight of God. Or wert thou indeed much holier than he, yet it will be a very insufficient Plea, when thou art called to account for thy own Miscarriages, to alledge that thy Neighbour has done worse.

No earthly Magistrate will be moved by such a lame Excuse, nor will the great Judge of the World have any regard to it.

WE should live in a godly World indeed, if no one was to be accounted a bad Man that was able to point out a worse. If this had been Righteousness, I make no doubt but *Sodom* itself would have been saved; and the Holy Patriarch that interceded for it, might have found his compleat Number of such righteous Persons there.

'TIS a fatal Delusion, into which the

SERM. Members of that Church are led, who are
 X. encouraged to hope for Salvation from the
 Virtues of other Men: but would it not be
 a more preposterous Error in us, should we
 expect to be saved by other Men's Vices and
 and Enormities?

THIS is much like the Case of those Labourers in the Vineyard, who expected an Encrease of their Wages, not that they had wrought more or longer than they were hired for; but because there were some who had wrought less.

'TIS the meanest and most dishonourable good Character one can aspire to, when he only endeavours to have it said of him; that, as times are, and, as the World goes, he is a tolerable upright Man. And 'tis an evident sign that Probity and good Manners run very low with him, when he stands in need of others Vices to make him appear Virtuous. Like some sordid, slimy Substances, that are forced to be beholden to Darkness for their shining.

IF to appear good, and to be so, were the same thing, and did entitle a Man to an equal Reward; I grant that he who is the best in his Neighbourhood, though in
 himself

himself a bad Man, would have some advantage from that small share of Credit, to which his comparative Goodness might recommend him among those, who for want of being furnished with better Examples, are naturally led to admire the best they have. SERM.
X.

BUT God seeth not as Man seeth, he beholds us as we really are in ourselves, he beholds us severally and singly, and places no such imaginary Merit to any Man's account, which adds no more to his real Goodness than standing on higher Ground does to his Stature, or a foil to the intrinsic Value of a Diamond.

HAD *Noah* and *Lot* thought it enough that they were barely the least Offenders, the one in a corrupted World, the other in a flagitious City, notwithstanding their comparative Innocence, they might have been wicked enough to have shared the same Fate with the other Delinquents, and the one have perished in the Watry, the other in the Fiery Destruction.

AND thus have I shown that it is neither safe nor honourable to make an Estimate of our spiritual Condition by comparing it with

SERM. that of other Men, and imputing their Vices to ourselves as Virtues; that the bare Satisfaction of falling short by some Degrees of that Measure of Wickedness which they commit, or which we think they do, is too weak Security for a wise Man to depend on, and too proud and uncharitable a Thought for an humble or ingenuous Man to entertain. I come now in the

THIRD and last place, to subjoin something by way of Limitation of what has already been said. As there are few Rules so general as to admit of no excepted Cases, so neither is this of not comparing ourselves; which, with one particular View and Intent it may be not only lawful but expedient to do, *i. e.* when we compare ourselves with Persons of superior Excellence and more distinguished Piety than ourselves, with a design both to mortify our Pride and excite our Emulation. When with a pious Ambition we behold, and learn to imitate their Virtues. Not that the Actions of the most excellent Person upon Earth are of themselves a sufficient warrant for me to act by, any farther than they are consonant to the Will of God; and he that in every thing follows the most absolute and perfect

perfect Pattern (if we except our blessed Sa-
viour himself) will in some things be mis-
led.

S E R M.

X.




BUT when we see their Good Works, and have proved them to be such, we may safely admit them as a secondary Rule, and suffer them to have an Influence on our Manners. Thus we cannot but feel a more than ordinary Weight in such Exhortations to a more abundant Holiness as are drawn from the Examples of that Cloud of Witnesses who have gone before us in the Christian Race, and as a Reward of their pious Constancy are now become glorified Saints in Heaven, whose Faith we are required to follow, and to walk so as we have such for our Examples. We must transcribe and imitate the noble and generous Faith of some, the cheerful and stedfast Hope of others: some again are recommended to us for their large and exemplary Charity, some for their strict and fervent Devotion, and others for those other praise-worthy Qualities, which made them the Glory and Ornament of their own Times, and should make them not only the Praise and Admiration, but the Pattern of all succeeding Generations, pressing

SERM. forward in the Race of Virtue, and striving
 X. with the utmost Activity and Vigilance to
 overtake them. And there is this Advantage in comparing ourselves with those before us, that we are not in the least hindered in our Race, nor diverted by needless Interruptions; for at the same Time that we look forward toward them, we are looking toward the Mark too: whereas while we look back at those behind us, there is not only a loss of Time in the Act of Retrospection, but an Encouragement to loiter.

THE only thing then that can justify our making remarks on Men's Actions is, when we do it with a design to better our selves. When we are more sagacious in discerning Beauties than Imperfections, and make it our Business to find out Virtues to quicken and invigorate us, rather than Vices and Frailties to check our own Growth in Piety, and which are too apt to possess us with a Spirit not only of Laziness and Inactivity by beholding the like in others, but of Irreligion and Immorality too. For Sin is a catching Evil, that spreads and communicates itself, not only by Contact, but by Intuition.

WHERE

WHERE we can be content to single out S E R M. that which is bright and shining, and fit for X. our Imitation, and let the Dross alone; we are  taught by the Scripture it self to make Comparisons. And the very Parable in my Text is intended as a Lesson of Humility: which we are required to learn from the Encouragement we see given to that Virtue in the instance of the Publican; not that we are to copy him in every Thing else, but only in that one particular good Quality, for which he is chiefly commended.

THUS from the Practice of the unjust Steward, we are taught by our Saviour himself this Lesson, *that we should make us Friends of the Mammon of Unrighteousness, i. e.* in short, his Prudence and Forecast in temporal Things is recommended to us in Spiritu-als, his Contrivance and Thoughtfulness and Care for the Future is proposed to our Imitation, but not his Fraudulence and Dishonesty. Nor indeed is there any Thing so reproachful as to see our selves outdone in Piety or Learning, or any other commendable Quality, by those who had at best but the very same or perhaps much lower Advantages than ourselves. And the forward Advances

SERM. vances which are actually made by some,
 X. are an evident Proof, what might be done
 by others, who have the same Capacity, the
 same Means and Opportunities, and want
 nothing for their Improvement but Industry
 and Resolution.

So that if nothing else can prevail, yet at
 least the shame of being excelled by those
 who were before their Equals, should be a
 Spur and Incentive to generous Minds.

FOR Emulation, when it is not attended
 with Envy and Detraction, is a useful and
 beneficial Affection of the Mind, *i. e.* when
 we truly labour to rise to the Character of
 him we vye with, and do not, as a base and
 disingenuous Shift to justify our own Lazi-
 nefs, endeavour to bring that down to a Le-
 vel with our own: When we fairly and can-
 didly allow that he has climbed to a very
 great and surprizing height of Goodness,
 but at the same Time resolve he shall not
 be there alone. 'Tis indeed the peculiar
 Advantage of those who are blest with a free
 and ingenuous Education, that they have
 always before their Eyes many bright and
 shining Patterns to stir up their Emulation,
 and quicken them in a Course of Virtue:
 And

And it must be a very low and abject spirit S E R M.
on which such Examples have no Influence. X.

But the living Instances of the Saints that are on Earth, and such as even now excell in Virtue, some of which (God be praised) even in the most corrupt and degenerate Times are set before us, as they have a nearer Aspect, so should they have a more powerful and commanding Influence on our Conduct. There is an attractive Force and Energy in conspicuous Goodness, which they who can resist, and not be drawn by it into a good Degree of resemblance, must certainly have an incurable Malignity of Heart, and be utterly lost to common Shame, as well as dead to all good Principles. There can be nothing so reproachful as to persevere in the worst Courses, in defiance of the best Example. Not only to hear the Dictates of Religion inculcated by the most edifying and reasonable Instructions, but to behold it shining out in a most eminent and illustrious Practice, and yet to remain unalterably wicked:

IN how complicated a Guilt do such Persons involve themselves, and how justly heavy must their Condemnation be, who delight in the Deeds of Darkness, while they have such a Light before them!

NAY

SERM. NAY not only Human Actions, but even
 X. those of irrational Creatures have something
 useful and instructing in them, something
 that may shame us at least into an Endeavour after that commendable Quality, for which they are peculiarly remarkable.

THUS the Sluggard, you see, is sent to the Ant to learn Industry, and our Saviour thought the Serpent a fit Emblem of Wisdom, as well as the Dove of Innocence, for his Disciples to observe. Nay, from the Examples of the very Fowls of the Air and Lilies of the Field, he teaches them to rely on Divine Providence.

BUT in conclusion, whether our Improvement in Religion is from Precept or Example, whether we are good of our selves or by Imitation, whether Piety shines into our Souls with a direct Ray, or if we have it only at Second-hand and by Reflection; this is a Truth infallibly certain, that Piety we must have, Virtuous and Honest we must be, and Religion must be our Guide, or else we must be content not only to relinquish all our claim to an Eternity of Bliss, but prepare for one of Misery and Torment.

From which &c.



S E R M O N XI.

The Inconsistency of loving God
and the World.



I JOHN ii. 15.

Love not the World, neither the things that are in the World. If any Man love the World, the Love of the Father is not in him.



HERE is no Part of *Christianity* so unwillingly embraced, or less sincerely profest by the generality of *Christians*, nor indeed which Men care so little to hear of, as that Doctrine which would put them out of love with the World,

S E R M,
XI.

SERM. World, and persuade them that there is no-


XI. thing in it deserving of their Esteem, nothing of such Value as ought either to engage their Desires, or possess them with immoderate Fears, or affect them with any passionate Concern; nothing that a wise Man should eagerly covet, or a good Man repine for the loss of.

IT too apparently thwarts the general strain of their Aims and Designs, and puts too great a Force upon them to be willingly and cordially embraced.

THERE is something in worldly Objects so seemingly inviting and desirable, and such a Propensity in the Mind of Man to comply with those Invitations, that it seems a sort of Violence to Nature, to forbid Men the free and familiar use of them, or to endeavour to alienate their Affections from them.

So that a thorough Contempt of the World, an Indifference and Unconcernedness as to the Possession and Enjoyments of it, such as the Gospel requires of us, looks rather like an entertaining Paradox, a fine plausible Notion to contemplate or discourse on, than a necessary Duty incumbent on

all, or really and sincerely practised by SERM.
any. XI.

BUT neither the Agreeableness of the 
Objects, nor the Force of Inclination, nor
the too general and prevailing Practice and
Opinion, and the mistaken Value Men are
apt to set on the things of the World, can
dissolve or evacuate the Command, take off
the Obligation, or acquit us from the
Guilt, if we presume to violate it.

HOWEVER specious and alluring the
World may seem, we have solemnly renoun-
ced it with all its Poms. We pretend to
be Professors of a pure Religion, that
teaches us to undervalue the most glittering
and splendid Vanities, and to look upon every
thing but as Dross and Dung, that stands
between us and Heaven, and bars up our
way to everlasting Happiness.


'Tis true, we cannot forget that we are
for the present Inhabitants of this lower
World, that we are cloathed with frail and
perishable Bodies, whose continual Waste
and Decay of Spirits requires as constant
Refreshments and Supplies.

AGAIN, Men cannot be insensible of that
Rank and Degree, in which the Providence
of

SERM. of God has placed them, a suitable Provision
 XI. for the Support whereof may be reckoned
 among each Man's Necessities.

AND indeed the pleasing Variety of agreeable and entertaining Objects, with which our great Creator has thought fit to adorn this visible Part of his Workmanship; the abundant Store even of temporal Blessings, which his bountiful Hand has scattered among us; the attractive Power of sensible Objects, and the Correspondence between them and human Faculties; and, in a Word, the plentiful Provision he has made for the Ease and Conveniency of Life; are so many Proofs that these outward Comforts were intended for our Use and Benefit, and were not placed, like the Tree of Knowledge in the midst of Paradise, to be gazed at and admired, but never tasted.

BUT after all these Concessions, we must ever be careful to remember, that these things are, at best, but subordinate Means, and not the End we must propose to ourselves; that they are the Diversions, not the Business of our Lives. They are neither allotted to all, nor necessary to any. They are sometimes the Helps, and sometimes the Hindrances

of our Salvation. They are given to some S E R M.
as Blessings, to others for their Punishment. XI.
They are always embittered with some  Alloy,
and have ever a Mixture of Uneasiness and
Disappointment; or if enjoyed to the height
they bear no proportion, either in Substance
or Duration, to that State of endless Glory
and Felicity which every Man is made
capable of attaining, and every wise Man la-
bours to attain.


AND consequently it can be worth no ones
while, either to pursue them with im-
moderate Eagerness, or to be ravished with the
Possession, or dejected at the Loss of them.
He should sit loose as to all these Matters,
be equally prepared for whatever Appoint-
ments the Providence of God shall allot,
bear every thing with a sedate and even
Mind, that is neither elevated beyond Mea-
sure with good Fortune, nor depressed with
Ill.

HE should pass through this World with
the Indifference of a Traveller, who, if he is
favoured with good Ways and seasonable
Weather, with an easy Passage, and Places
of good Accommodation, he is pleased, to
be sure, for the present, and passes his time

SERM. more agreeably, than if he had met with a
 XI. more rugged Treatment.

~ BUT still he does not imagine that these transitory Conveniences contribute any thing to the Happiness of his Life; he does not set up his Rest on the Road, be it never so delightful, nor at his Inn, be the Entertainment never so good, but with as little loss of time as may be, goes on and pursues his Journey; and on the contrary, though he does not meet with every thing to his Mind, though he is perplexed with deep and cross Ways, severe and stormy Weather, incummodious Lodging, &c. he lays not these petty Discouragements to Heart, he gets over them with as much Diligence as he can, and these temporary Crosses and Hardships quicken his Endeavours to reach the End of his Journey; they do but recommend his Home to him, and make it more welcome and desirable.

JUST thus should we be affected toward the things of this World. If Blessings and Comforts attend us, let us thankfully accept the Gifts and devoutly adore the Giver; but not unreasonably dwell on them, and wholly immerse ourselves in the Enjoyment

of them, as if we were born for no other S E R M.
End, and this were all the Portion we ex- XI.
pected or desired. Let us bless him who 
has afforded us such an easy Passage through
this Vale of Misery, improve these outward
Talents to the Honour of our Lord, and
our own spiritual Advantage, and not, by
foolishly squandering or unprofitably bu-
rying them, deprive ourselves of a better
and more enduring Substance, *an Inheri-
tance that fadeth not away, eternal in the
Heavens.*

BUT if it has seemed good to the Divine
Wisdom to exercise us with Crosses and
Tribulations, and to deny us that Proportion
of worldly Felicity which we would be glad
to have, or which we see others have; this
Dispensation too of Providence must be re-
ceived with a Calmness and Evenness of
Mind, without grutching or repining, with-
out Envy at the Lot of others, or Discon-
tentedness with our own. Nor must we
suffer ourselves to sink into such an Excess
of Sorrow and Despondence, as if our Hope
were in this Life only, and we had not our
Prospect, though all the Enjoyments and
Comforts of this Life should fail us.

SERM. IN short, we must receive both Good and
 XI. Ill as from the Hand of God, and employ
 both the one and the other to the eternal
 Welfare of our Souls. But if any Man is so
 intent in procuring, or so earnest in enjoy-
 ing the good Things of this Life, or so bu-
 sily employed in preventing or removing the
 Evils and Calamities thereof, as to neglect
 the Favour of God, and grow regardless of
 his everlasting Interest; such an one is in
 the most criminal Sense a Lover of the
 World, and falls under the Censure of St.
John in my Text, who tells us: *We must
 not love the World, neither the Things that
 are in the World; for if any Man love the
 World, the Love of the Father is not in
 him.* In discoursing whereon I purpose

- I. To explain to you these several Ex-
 pressions in my Text, *the World, the
 Things of the World, the Love of the
 World, and the Love of the Fa-
 ther.*
- II. To show how the Love of the World
 is inconsistent with the Love of the
 Father. After which it will be easy
- III. To determine whether of these two
 Loves

Loves it is our Duty and our Interest to SERM.
adhere to. XI.



I. THEN, by *the World* we may either understand this inferior and visible Frame of Things, this earthly Globe with its Connexions and Dependencies; or else the Men that inhabit it, *i. e.* the wicked and profane Part of them that live a worldly and sensual Life, and mind nothing but earthly Things; who so far forth as they do so, are not to be loved, any otherwise than with a Love of Pity and Charity, but not with a Love of Complacency and Desire, which is apt to produce Imitation and an Affectation of being like them.

OR farther, by *the World*, in Scripture-Phrase, we are often to understand the Pleasures and Diversions, the Possessions and Advantages which are proper and peculiar to this World, and in the Pursuit or Enjoyment whereof the greatest Part of Mankind is occupied and amused.

BUT because, in this Passage of my Text, the World is expressly distinguished from the Things that are in it, *Love not the World, neither the Things that are in the World; I*

SERM. rather conceive that by the World we are
 XI. here to understand this mortal Life, the
 State and Condition of our earthly Pilgrimage; as when any one is born, he is said to come into the World, and when he dies, to go out of it.

AND by the Things of the World, are meant the Riches, the Honours, and Pleasures of it; the several Delights and Satisfactions with which this World is plentifully stored thro' the gracious Indulgence of our supreme Benefactor; those Entertainments and Conveniences of Life, which serve as Diversions and Refreshments to Men of Virtue and Understanding, but quite take up the Thoughts and engage the Affections of the foolishly mistaken and worldly-minded.

AND that Love of the World that is here forbid is, an inordinate Desire and Passion for these external Goods, an unreasonable Fondness for them, an insatiable Thirst after them. When we hunt after, and court them by irregular and unlawful Methods, or indulge our selves in the Exercise of them without Measure or Restraint: When we set them up as the Standard of our Felicity, and

and judge ourselves happy in the Abundance, or miserable in the Defect of them. When we are so wedded to sensual Delights, that we retain no Taste of Heavenly Things, but look upon every serious and sober Thought as an ungrateful and needless Interruption of our Pleasure. When we make a God of unrighteous Mammon, or devote ourselves to the Service of our Lusts.

S E R M.
XI.
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OR even in a lower Degree, if we worship the Creature more than the Creator; if we suffer any worldly Cares, or immoderate Concern for the good Things of this Life to weaken our Love of God, to abate our Zeal for his Service, entrench on our Hours of Devotion, make us less apt and disposed to praise and honour him, and take off a great deal of that Pleasure and Delight we were used to find, and ought always to find in pious and religious Exercises; so far in Proportion we are *Lovers of the World, and of the Things that are in the World, and the Love of the Father is not in us.*

Now this Love of the Father, I need not tell you, does not here signify God's Love to us, as the Expression frequently imports elsewhere in Holy Scripture; but our Love

SERMON to him. The thing speaks itself, it being  
 XI. evident that mention is here made of such a  
 Love as resides within our own Breasts. *The Love of the Father is not in him; not to or toward him.*

THE meaning then is, not that God will not love a worldly-minded Man; (tho' that also is infallibly true) but that a Man of such a worldly and sensual Mind can never love God, with that Fervency and Sincerity he ought. He does not, nor can he love him, as his Duty requires, and as the Beauty and Excellency of the Divine Nature deserves, *with all his Heart, with all his Mind, with all his Soul, and with all his Strength.*

FOR truly to love God, is to value him above all Things, to despise all earthly Things in Comparifon of him, with all possible Earnestness to court his Favour, and fear nothing so much as his Displeasure: To be industrious in his Service, to be zealous for his Honour, to endeavour to be like him, and desire to be with him.

BUT that a Man, whose Thoughts are wholly taken up with sensible Objects, cannot do this in any Degree, and that every Man must fall so far short of this Divine Love,



as he retains any Affection or Fondness; be it SERM.  
more or less, for low and earthly Things; XI.  
will appear under the second Thing proposed, which I come now to treat of, and wherein I am to shew

II. How the *Love of the World* is inconsistent with the *Love of the Father*. Our blessed Saviour himself has told us, that *no Man can serve two Masters*; that he who pretends to do so, *whilst he holds to the one, must despise the other*, and that God and Mammon cannot be served at once.

INDEED, where both the Masters will accept of a partial and imperfect Service, where each will be contented with a divided Duty, and suffer us to pay an equal Observance to the Commands of the other; or where the Precepts and Injunctions are so much of the same Nature, and so well directed to the same End, that both the one and the other may be obeyed in the Performance of the same Act; the Case is not so difficult, nor a double Allegiance so irreconcilable.

BUT how shall we divide ourselves between God and the World? How shall we obey two Masters who both expect a Submission so absolute and entire, and would lay on us  
Commands

SERM. Commands so opposite and contradictory to  
 XI. each other?

W God requires us whole, and so does the World too, when once the Love of it is rooted in us. He will admit of no Rival, but, as he is himself the most ravishing and amiable Good, challenges all our Esteem and Veneration. And all who truly consider him as such, who with a stedfast Eye of Faith behold him as he is, must and will adore him with all the Faculties of their Soul.

THE *Lord our God is a jealous God*, and will not suffer the Respect due to him, and only him, to be given or imparted to an Idol; but such is every Thing that pretends to rob him of his Honour, and sets itself up in opposition to him. He made every Part of us, he sustains and preserves every Part, and every Part must harmoniously conspire in his Service, and exert its proper Functions in such Manner as is most agreeable to his Will.

BUT the World, on the other hand, would fain be, and indeed too often is, as entirely and thoroughly complied with. When once it has taken hold of the Affections of Men, and possessed them with a greediness and  
 longing

longing after its Vanities and Pleasures; it S E R M. ties them fast down to a Dependency and XI. Subjection, and will not suffer them to raise their Thoughts, or aspire after any other Joys than those which itself affords.

THEN as to the Nature of the Commands, nothing can be more difficult or disagreeing. To please the one, our Thoughts must be high and elevated, our Ideas pure and spiritual, our Contemplations fixed on invisible and celestial Objects, and ravished with the Prospect of the brightest Scene of Glory that a lively Faith can paint, or a well-grounded Hope can apprehend.

Our Words and Actions must be so regular and just, as may demonstrate that we are always under the Influence of such Thoughts.

WHEREAS, if we would please the other, we must have a quite different Frame of Mind and Turn of Thought. Our Mind will be sunk and depressed and brought down to the level of the Body, visible and corporeal Things will be our constant Entertainment, we shall never look farther than the present, and not disquiet or molest ourselves with distant Futurities, with abstracted Notions and speculative Truths.

SERM. WHEN once a Man is grown a hearty

XI. Lover of the World, every Action he performs will either be directed to the Prosecution of his secular Interest, and making his Fortune, as we call it, or to the Gratification of his sensitive Appetites, or to the making a Figure, outshining his Neighbours, and purchasing to himself Applause and Admiration.

IN every thing he does, I say, he will have a View and Regard to some one or more of these things, accordingly as he is determined by the strength of his prevailing Passion.

BUT the Love of God is so far from having any Place in him, or any Influence on his Actions, that he cannot think of him with any Pleasure; nay if his private Sentiments were known, he even Wishes there was no such Being, as inspects his Heart and knows every Turn and Motion of it, overlooks and disallows his Practices, and is at once a Witness and a Judge of them.

AND though he cannot break loose from these Convictions, nor bring himself to a formal Disbelief that he is under the Power and  
and

and Inspection of such an Almighty and SERM.  
All-Wise God, the great Creator of his be- XI.  
loved World and him; yet instead of blef-  
sing and adoring him for that plentiful Sup-  
ply of external Comforts he has provided  
for the Use of Man, instead of employing  
them to his Glory, and using them with  
a due Moderation and Restriction, he se-  
cretly repines at his Manner of dispensing  
them, and calls his Wisdom or his Good-  
ness in question, for that he has put such  
Limitations upon them, and will not suffer  
them to be enjoyed to the full, but under  
such narrow Rules and Boundaries, with  
such unnecessary Clogs and Incumbrances,  
as in his Esteem do quite destroy all the  
Pleasure and Satisfaction of them, and  
which if he should comply with, he should  
find no Manner of Taste or Relish in  
them.

HE is apt to fancy, that if he himself was  
the Governor of the World, were he to  
deal out these Blessings to Mankind, he  
should dispense them with a more liberal  
Hand; he would give every Man as much  
as his Heart could wish, he would not qua-  
lify his Favours with such ungrateful Mix-  
tures,

SERM. tures, nor tie up the Receivers to such un-  
 XI. pleasant Conditions.

~ To such wild and extravagant Reasoning does the inordinate Love of earthly things transport the greedy and insatiable Worldling; who all this Time does not consider, that that very God, of the slackness of whose Hands he so unreasonably complains, and of the scanty Portion he has allotted him, if he will loosen his Affections from these corruptible things, which, as he himself experiences and confesses, can never satisfy or make him happy, and use them with a just Abstinence, and in due Subordination to a better State; has provided for him such an abundant Supply of unmixed Joys, of undisturbed and endless Pleasures, as will more than answer his most unbounded Wishes, beyond all that Fancy can suggest, or Self-Love prompt him to desire.

BUT such Thoughts are indeed too refined for a carnal Soul, nor do Considerations of this Nature make any Impression on it; which plainly shows that such Men are altogether Strangers to the Love of God, the  
 certain

certain and necessary Effect of which Love S E R M.  
is a desire of enjoying him. XI.

THE Love of God then, and the Love of the World, are so directly opposite one to the other, that as one of them gains upon us, the other in proportion must decrease.

NOR is it any wonder that things in their Nature so repugnant should expel each other, and not reside at the same time in the same Subject: when we perceive other things, that have a nearer Affinity, as contentiously striving for the Mastery over us, and by turns displacing and driving out each other from our Breasts.

EVEN our Lusts and Vices, our irregular Appetites and Passions, however they are agreed in the main Point, in endeavouring to destroy the Kingdom of God and establish the Devil's Empire in us, yet cannot all be complied with at a time, since they put us upon different Methods of acting.

THUS, for the Purpose, how opposite are the Dictates of Sloth to those of Ambition; how different are the Suggestions of Fear and Revenge! How is a Man divided between  
Unchari-


SERM. Uncharitableness and Vain-Glory! But the

XI. most remarkable Struggle of all is between  
 Avarice and Pride, which may there-  
 fore deserve a more particular Considera-  
 tion.

WHEN these two Passions are harboured in the same Breast, they pull different Ways, and each of them by Fits prevails and draws the other after it. In the mean while the miserable Wretch that lets in such dangerous and quarrelsome Guests, knows not which to follow, stands balancing with himself, in a State of Uncertainty and Irresolution, whether of the two Evils he shall chuse.

IT were pleasant to observe (if Men's Sins and Misfortunes, as well as their Weaknesses and Follies in the common Occurrences of Life, might be the Subject of our Mirth) what Pains he takes to make these two repugnant Humours consistent with each other; how artfully he contrives to gratify the one, without the necessity of crossing or denying the other. But he can never bring them to act in consort, or to allow of the same Measures.



FOR Pride is a costly and expensive Vice, S E R M.  
it pushes Men on even to a Waste and Profu- XI.  
sion beyond their Circumstances and Con-   
ditions, rather than they should not be fur-  
nished with every thing that may contribute  
to the Support of their State and Grandeur.  
It delights in Show and Ostentation, requires  
things Great and Sumptuous, and must be  
maintained by Superfluity and Excess;  
whilst Avarice, on the other hand, would  
not only curb this extravagant Humour,  
but repines even at necessary Charges.

THE one consists in a Haughtiness, the  
other in a Meanness of Spirit; the one affects  
what the other shuns: they aim at dif-  
ferent Ends, and pursue them by different  
Means.

WHENSOEVER therefore these two Pas-  
sions concur in the same Person; (as they  
sometimes do, though they cannot both  
predominate at once) they seem designed  
as the Plague and Punishment of each other,  
by crossing one anothers Purposes, and de-  
feating both the intended Aims, whilst the  
Haughtiness of his Soul gives a Check to the  
Improvement of his Fortunes, and the  
Narrowness of it deprives him of that Share

SERM. of Credit and Reputation, which he is ambitious of attaining.


XI.



AND as it is a Torment to the Persons themselves to be distracted by these two disagreeing Vices, so is it in some Measure a Benefit to the rest of Mankind, by rendering them less hurtful than if either of these corrupt Inclinations were singly pursued with the same Application and Fervor. For we see it sometimes owing to Pride that Avarice is not wholly insupportable, whilst that (for want of a better Principle) opens the unwilling Hand, and draws out the hoarded Treasure. As, on the other hand, the immoderate growth of Pride is checked by a niggardly and fordid Temper. And the desire of getting, or care of preserving Wealth doth sometimes oblige even those to be courteous and condescending, who would stoop to nothing but the Love of Money.

I HAVE brought this Instance as an Illustration of the Point in Hand, and to show how absurd it is to think that a Man can be acted by two Principles at once, when each of them requires a different Way of acting. There is Room in the Mind but for one  
Concern

Concern at a time, if that one be pursued SERM.  
with Clofeness and Intention. XI.

*Pectora nostra duas non admittentia Curas.* 

So long therefore as the Love of the World is in our Hearts, the Love of God can no more enter, than one Body can come into a Space possessed by another, before that other is withdrawn.

I SPEAK this of one in whom the Love of the World is the prevailing Principle, and who is given up and abandoned to the Service of it: who, in short, is so fond of this Life as to be regardless of another. For otherwise I grant that a Man may enjoy an innocent and real Delight, in proper Season and due Measure, without entrenching on the Love of God. Nor is it the Use and Conversation, but the Friendship of the World that is Enmity to God.

AND now having shewn the Inconsistency of the Love of the World with the Love of the Father, I proceed in the

III<sup>d</sup>. and last place to consider whether of these two Loves it is our Duty and our Interest to adhere to. One of them, you see, must be renounced: and sure if we have any Sense of Gratitude for Favours already received, or

SERM. any concern for future Happiness, we shall  
 XI. soon be determined where to fix.

THE Question proposed by our Saviour to *Simon* the Pharisee, after having told him the Parable of the two Debtors, was very easy to be resolved. *Tell me*, says he, *which of them will love him most.* To which he readily answers, *I suppose that he to whom he forgave most.* For without doubt all Obligations rise in proportion to the Benefits received, and as our Saviour elsewhere affirms, to whom Men have committed much, of him they will require the more.

OR had the Question been otherwise stated, not concerning the Measure and Degree of Obligations from two Debtors to the same Benefactor, but from the same Debtor to two Benefactors, whether of the two will he love most; the Reply had been still as obvious, I suppose that he will love him best, who gave or forgave him most.

THE Case then standing thus, can it yet remain a Question, whether God or the World has the better Title to our Love? whether he from whom we received our Being, and at whose Pleasure we hold it, who gives us Life and Breath and all Things,  
 who

who in his great Mercy restored us from our Fall, and graciously contrived the Method of our Redemption, to whom we are indebted for such valuable Blessings, as Men, such transcendent Privileges, as *Christians*; whether he, I say, may not justly challenge our sincerest Love and most enflamed Affection; rather than the World, with all the Enjoyments it either offers or pretends to have afforded us?

S E R M.  
XI.  
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WHICH neither has, nor can yield us any durable or solid Good: and even these transitory Comforts by which it would allure our Minds and engage our Affections, even they are from God too. That it can please, that it can entertain, that it is adorned with any Objects capable of exciting or gratifying our Desires, must all be ascribed to him.

IF then in the Workmanship we think there is so much Beauty, how much more amiable must he be that formed it?

How can we forbear to reflect on, or, reflecting, forbear to admire that infinite Fountain of Perfection, from whom all created Excellency is derived? How should the lively Sense of the intrinsic Goodness and inherent Loveliness of his Nature, and

S E R M. a grateful Sense of his Benefits to Mankind,
 XI. and how much he has done for us his unwor-
 thy Creatures, possess us with a holy Zeal,
 and transport us to a high and exalted Pitch
 of Love and Adoration? What Thankfulness
 and Praise, what Duty and Service shall we
 not render him, when we recollect, as we
 ought to do, *that every good Gift and every
 perfect Gift is from above, and cometh down
 from the Father of Lights, with whom there
 is no Variableness, neither Shadow of turning.*

Ja. i. 17.

OR if we look forward to our future
 Welfare, what Happiness can the World,
 what cannot God bestow on us? Here we can
 look for, at the best, but a Mixture of Joy and
 Grief, Pleasures attended with Uneasiness,
 which, before they are attained, do either
 mock us with vain Hopes, or disquiet us
 with causeless Fears; and when possessed
 neither satisfy our Desires nor answer our
 Expectations.

OR should every thing succeed according
 to our Wishes, 'tis all but momentary and
 of short duration. How fortunate soever
 our State may be, we cannot enjoy it long,
 but must pass away our selves, and so must
 the World too.

BUT

BUT he that allotted us our Portion in S E R M.
this World, has prepared for us a far better XI.
in another. A State of perfect Bliss and ever-
lasting Rest, where no Misery or Pain can
enter. Pleasures that no Heart can conceive,
nor Tongue express, where the Entertainment
will be always new, and ever satisfy but
never cloy us.

AND the most ravishing Part of this Scene
of Glory will be the Enjoyment of God him-
self, the beholding *him as he is*, and dwelling
for evermore at his Right Hand. So that to
God is in effect to desire our own Happi-
ness.

BUT this indeed, in the esteem of some
Persons of too refined and abstracted Notions,
is a low and unworthy Motive, who would
persuade us that not only the Love of this
World, but that of the other too is not con-
sistent with the Love of the Father: That
as the Fear of Punishment is a slavish, so
the Hope of Reward is a selfish Principle:
That we ought to love God for his own sake,
without any regard to ourselves, or concern
for our own Happiness and Salvation.

BUT this Doctrine, however commenda-
ble in its Intention, as designed to improve the


SERM. Love of God in us, whom it is certain we
 XI. cannot love too well, yet is utterly impracticable in it self, and very pernicious in its Consequence, and carries the Duty as much too high, as some of late have endeavoured to sink it too low.

WE are born with Desires of being happy; it is what all Men do and must aim at, and no one can extirpate this Inclination, tho' all Men are not so wise as to pursue those Measures that would make them so.

GOD has proposed these Rewards as an Inducement for us to love him; and what God has proposed as a Motive, Men may certainly embrace as such.

THEN as to the Consequence of such a Notion, when Men of less abstracted Ideas, though according to their Capacity truly pious and good Men, are required to elevate their Thoughts and Affections to such a Pitch as they find they can never reach, it is apt to drive them to Melancholy and Despair, it puts them out of Conceit with all their other Religious Performances, which they conclude to be nothing worth, since they find themselves incapable of raising their Thoughts to so high a Degree, and loving
 God

God with so pure and disinterested an Affection as some others pretend to do, and require them to do. Whilst others of a warmer Imagination and more lively Emotion of Spirit, persuade themselves that they have attained to that Purity and Perfection of Divine Love, that they are become wholly enamoured of God for his own Sake, without any View of private Interest or Concern for their own Happiness.

S E R M.
X I.


AND hence they are too often transported with an Enthusiastic Pride, and Contempt of other *Christians* of lower Attainments, who are acted by the Principles of Hope and Fear. Hence they place the Strefs of Religion in romantic Heats, and unaccountable Raptures; they neglect the sober and regular Way of pleasing God, and run into vain Singularity and affected Novelty.

IN conclusion, God is to be loved, adored, and served with all the Faculties of our Mind; our Ideas of him cannot be too pure, nor our Love and Gratitude too exalted and sublime. But still we must remember we have Souls to be saved, we are called upon to work out the Salvation of them, and look up to the Prize that is set before us,

We

SERM. We are made capable of eternal Blessedness;
 XI. nor can we better express our Love to God,
 than by labouring to be with him in the
 celestial Mansions and so demeaning our-
 selves in this mortal State, that we may be
 sure to spend a long eternity in his Presence.

HE that has this Hope in him, and in
 consequence of this Hope does so purify
 himself as to retain no gross and carnal Af-
 fections, no hankering and longing after
 worldly Objects, no Inclinations or Desires
 which he is not ready to part with, when-
 ever they stand in competition with his ever-
 lasting Interest; need not be uneasy or un-
 der any Disquiet, for that he does not feel
 in himself those extraordinary Flights of se-
 raphic Love, which some Pretenders would
 seem to have attained. He may love Hea-
 ven, and the things that are in Heaven, and
 the Love of the Father is so much the ra-
 ther in him. It is a sufficient Demonstra-
 tion of the Sincerity of his Love, that it be-
 gets this Hope in him.

WHICH that we may all have in this
 World, and the Fruits of it in the next,
God of his Infinite Mercy grant, &c.



S E R M O N XII.

The Necessity of working out our
own Salvation.



P H I L. ii. 12.

— *Work out your own Salvation
with Fear and Trembling.*




IN some of the foregoing Verses, S E R M.
the Apostle had represented our XII.
blessed Saviour under three very
different States. First in his ori-
ginal State of Glory, as the only begotten
Son of God, subsisting together with his
Father in the Unity of the same God-head,
before the Foundation of the World: *When* 6.
*being in the form of God, he thought it no
Robbery to be equal with God.*

T H E N

SERM. THEN in his State of Abasement and Humiliation, when in order to the Salvation of Mankind, he, by his own voluntary Act divested himself of that Divine Splendor, and obscured the Brightness of the Godhead by uniting it to frail Humanity, and becoming thereby obnoxious to Pain and Sufferings, to Hunger and Want, to Reproach and Contempt, and all the innocent Infirmities of our Nature, not even Death itself excepted, the last and greatest of them.

AND under this view he is set forth to us in the seventh and eighth Verses, *But he made himself of no Reputation, and took on him the Form of a servant, and was made in the Likeness of Men: And being found in Fashion as a Man, he humbled himself, and became obedient to Death, even the Death of the Cross.*

LASTLY, in his State of Exaltation: When his human Nature, that very Body which had been so ignominiously treated here on Earth, and in which he had undergone such cruel Indignities, was after his Resurrection, taken up into Heaven, placed at the Right Hand of God, above the highest

est of the Angelic Orders: and moreover SERM.
invested with absolute Sovereignty and Do- XII.
minion: and by reason of its conjunction 
with the Godhead, entitled to the Obser-
vance and Subjection, the Worship and Ad-
oration of every Creature.

AND this we have described in the 9th,
10th, and 11th Verses. *Wherefore God also
hath highly exalted him, and given him a
Name which is above every Name, That
at the Name of Jesus every Knee should bow,
of Things in Heaven, and Things in Earth,
and Things under the Earth: And that
every Tongue should confess that Jesus Christ
is Lord, to the Glory of God the Father.*

ON which Advancement of *Christ* to his
Heavenly Kingdom is grounded that past
Obedience of the *Philippians*, which *St.*
Paul commends in the following Verse,
which is that of the Text: And that Ex-
hortation, in the Words of it, to farther
Duty, and such a Demeanor for the Time
to come, as may exalt them likewise to the
same Heavenly Mansions — *Work out your
own Salvation with Fear and Trembling.*

FROM which Words I shall take occasion
to treat of the following Particulars:

SERM.
XII.

I. THE exceeding Worth and Desireableness of the Object here recommended by the Apostle, to our most earnest Endeavours, *viz.* the Salvation of our Souls.

II. THE Manner and Method by which this Salvation is to be obtained: It must be wrought out. *Work out your Salvation.*

III. THAT this Work will not be accepted from a Second-hand ; one Man's Labour will not satisfy for another, but every one must perform it in his proper Person. *Work out your own Salvation.* And

IV. With what Temper and Disposition of Mind we must set about this Work. *Work out your own Salvation with Fear and Trembling, i. e.* with a hearty Solicitude and Concern lest you should not perform it effectually, nor in such a manner and to such a Degree as is required of you. And likewise a serious Apprehension lest by the Neglect or Insincerity of your Work you should become obnoxious to the sad reverse of the glorious

glorious Reward which is here pro-SERM.
mised, and work out your own Ruin XII.
instead of your Salvation. Where I
shall also prove, that the Fear of Punishment, tho' far from being the best and noblest Principle of Action, yet, in defect of better Principles, is such a Motive as both may and ought to be insisted on, in Order to excite Men to the working out their Salvation.

I. I AM to consider the exceeding Worth and Desireableness of the Object here recommended by the Apostle to our most earnest endeavours; *viz.* the Salvation of our Souls.

AND methinks there should need but little of Argument to persuade any one, who is in good earnest convinced he has a Soul, to endeavour the Preservation of it by all the possible means that are afforded him.

THERE is no Man who is thus convinced, but must know it to be his best, his most valuable and most durable Part; and, as such, to deserve his most importunate Concern: That he ought to make it the supreme Scope of his Aims and Designs to compass its
Happiness

SERM. Happiness and Perfection: And that no Care
 XII. can be too perplexing, no Labour too bur-
 denfome and painful, if in any wife it can
 contribute to fo great a Bleffing.

NOR fould we fee fo great a number of deluded *Chriftians* as we do, either neglecting to purfue with Vigour, or, which is worfe, running backward from this their trueft and beft Intereft; did not a miftaken Apprehenfion, occafioned by the falfe Appearance of fenfible Objects, ftifle their habitual Perfuaſion, and make them act in Contradiction to what they know and believe: whilft the neceffary and important Truth, that fould influence their Actions, lies deep buried within them, for want of being drawn out, for their Ufe and Advantage, by confiderate Reflection.

BUT whether Men will confider it or no, there is certainly no Folly fo great, as the not proportioning our Care and Concern to the real and known Value of Things; neglecting fuch as are of higheft Eftimation, and moft confeffedly beft deferving our Choice, and purfuing thofe with all imaginable Application and Fervour, which are of little or no worth at all in themſelves, and often-
 times

times most fatally pernicious in their Consequences. SERM.
XII.

AND which is much to be wondered at, in all other Matters, Men are commonly wise enough to discern the force of this Reason; they have Sense enough to perceive that a greater Good is to be preferred before a less: and that it is not worth a Man's while to amuse himself in the pursuit of a trifling Advantage, when he knows it is in his Power to make himself Master of a much more solid and substantial one, with the very same Pains and Industry.

ONLY in the greatest and most important Concern of all, Men lose their discerning Faculty; their Care and Diligence in the Prosecution of it bears no Proportion to the real worth of the Object: Where the richest and most valuable Treasure is to be obtained, they affect it but very coldly, and pursue it with great Indifference and Neglect: not with that Warmth and Vigour with which they follow the most trivial and inconsiderable Matters.

WHEREAS, did they use the same Prudence in spiritual Things, which they com-

SERM. monly do in Worldly, they would rather
 XII. be like the Merchant in the Parable, *who,*
 when he had found a Jewel of vast price,
 went and sold all that he had, and bought it.

Now the Soul is that Jewel, the Salvation whereof cannot be too dearly purchased, and the Loss of which no earthly Advantage can compensate: Nay he that should gain the whole World at the Expence of that, would be a loser by the Exchange.

'Tis this alone which no Time can wear away, no Sickness or Infirmity can waste: It is this which has no Principle in it of Corruption or Decay, but will survive when its old Associate the Body shall be mouldered into Dust. And although it may sometimes seem, during its conjunction with it, to bear a part in its Sufferings and Weaknesses; to flag and droop, and suspend its Operations, and to decline in proportion to the other; yet this is far from proceeding from any Deficiency in the Soul, or any Tendency to Corruption: but is wholly owing to the Indisposition and Unaptitude of the Body to receive its former Impressions, or to be made
 sensible

sensible of that Smartness and Vigour with S E R M.
which it still continues to act upon it. XII.

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THIS rational Part can no otherwise influence the Animal, but by means of the proper Organs of the latter; and consequently when they are obstructed either by natural or accidental Impediments, or grievously wasted and impaired, or finally perished and worn out; the Operations of the former, under all these several Stages of Decay, must of course grow less and less effectual, and in fine wholly useless as to informing the Body, which at last is no longer capable of it: Not that itself ceases thereby from being or acting, any more than the Sun ceases to shine, tho' you may shut out the Rays of it from a particular Place, by the interposition of a dark Body.


THE Soul is a pure, simple, and uncompounded Substance, and, as it is not made up of different and disagreeing Parts, there is no Room for a Dissolution, nor Possibility of its being lost; so lost, I mean, as to exist no longer. For in another Sense it may be irrecoverably lost; and in this Sense we are earnestly to endeavour its Salvation,

SERM. since in the other it will and must be saved,  
 XII. whether we endeavour it or not.

IT may forfeit all its Title to Heaven and Happiness, and be for ever excluded the Presence of God, and the Society of blessed Angels. It may be condemned to Misery and Despair, to everlasting Horror and Remorse, and be adjudged to a restless and uneasy Portion *with the Devil and his Angels*. And the wretched Soul that lies under this Sentence, is in a hopeless and lost Estate indeed.

AND therefore to rescue it from these Agonies, to purchase for it those other glorious and transcendent Privileges, is no light or trivial Concern: if ever we are in good earnest, if there is any Thing in which we think our Care and Industry most beneficially employed; this sure is a Salvation well worth the working out: and it is fit that work should be performed with *Fear and Trembling*.

How careful and solicitous are we about the Preservation of our bodily Health! what painful Operations and tedious Courses do we chuse to undergo, in order to prevent or remove a dangerous Distemper; and yet how much less valuable in its self, as well

as more uncertain in the Attainment, is the SERM.  
Health of the Body than that of the Soul! XII.  
For altho', next to the Blessing of God, we   
both may and ought to have recourse, as our  
Means and Abilities permit us, to the pro-  
perest Remedies that Human Skill can sug-  
gest; yet, after all that can be done, how  
often do the wisest and most skilful Appli-  
cations miss of their desired Success, and our  
very Remedies add to our Disease.

OR allowing them to answer their End ne-  
ver so effectually, though we are blest with all  
the Strength and Soundness of Constitution  
which ourselves can wish; 'tis yet no more  
than a State of Indolence, a meer Privation  
of Pain and Suffering. As great and desira-  
ble a Blessing as it is, though without it all  
other Pleasures are tasteless and insipid; yet  
has it nothing real and positive in it self;  
insomuch that whenever we are restored to  
Health, we rejoice, not that we feel a Pleasure,  
but that we cease to feel a Pain.

AND were it not that the firmest State of  
Health is sometimes interrupted by Sicknes  
and Infirmity, and Intervals of Pain; or at  
least if we were not startled and alarmed at  
the Torment and Uneasiness of others, who

SERM. labour under the Want of it; it is such a  
 XII. Blessing as we should scarce know how to  
 value, and should think it no Privilege at all.

AND yet we think these frail and perishable Bodies well worth the preserving: And indeed it is our Duty to preserve them by a due Care and Temperance: Or, in Case of Accidents, to endeavour to repair them by the best Helps that are afforded us.

ONLY we must not suffer them to ingross all our Care, as if we had no other Part that was worth the saving. When indeed we have a far better and more enduring Part, whose Welfare and Security is of much greater Importance to us; where our Labour and Diligence cannot be misemployed, and no intervening Accidents (if we ourselves are but active and sincere) can cross our Designs, or hinder the Success of our Endeavours.

AND as the Salvation of our Souls depends on no Hazards or Uncertainties, nor is liable to be defeated by any outward Hindrances; so is it a Prize of inestimable Value in it self, such as consists not in a mere privative Happiness, *i. e.* in the Absence of Pain and Want and Immunity from Misery and Torment; but in actual, positive, and substantial Joys,  
 such

such as neither need, nor will admit of any S E R M. Interruption; which are able to recommend XII. themselves by their own exquisite Perfection; and do not require us to taste sometimes a short Draught of Bitterness and Woe, in order to make us relish them the better: Which will make themselves sensibly felt without any invidious Comparisons, nor will the Sight of others Miseries be any Addition to our Happiness. In sum, which will neither flatter nor pall, nor wear with using, nor satiate with enjoying, and when once obtained will be securely and everlastingly our own.

SUCH is the Object which we are here exhorted to make the End of our Labours and Scope of our Designs. This must be our first and principal Care, to preserve our precious and immortal Souls, to rescue them from the Power of Sin and Tyranny of Satan, and procure for them an Inheritance of Glory, *an Inheritance that fadeth not away, eternal in the Heavens.*

I am now in the

II. SECOND place to consider the Manner and Method whereby this Salvation is to

SERM. be obtained, it must be wrought out. *Work*  
 XII. *out your Salvation.* This we may learn  
 from the whole Current and Tenor of the  
 New Testament, where we are frequently  
 called upon *to strive and labour, to run*  
*and fight, to watch and be circumspect, and*  
*give all Diligence,* with other Expressions  
 of the like Nature, which may serve to con-  
 vince us, that, notwithstanding the Easiness  
 of *Christ's* Yoke, eternal Happiness is not  
 to be had on such very cheap and easy Terms,  
 as to cost us no Pains at all. Though the  
 Task is light in Proportion to the Reward,  
 yet a Task there is which we must perform,  
 if we expect to be made Partakers of the  
 Reward.

THE Subjects of, or rather the Candidates  
 for the Kingdom of Heaven, are compared in  
 Scripture to Labourers in a Vineyard, and  
 that itself to the Hire or Wages which are  
 usually given to such Labourers. Whence it  
 appears, that those only had a Title to the  
 Penny, who had born a Share in dressing the  
 Vineyard. And altho' we read of some that  
 were allowed the full Stipend, though they  
 had wrought but one single Hour; and  
 others but from the third, sixth, and ninth  
 Hours;



Hours; yet work they did all, and proba-  
bly with the greater Diligence and Earnest-  
ness, as their coming in was later, so as to  
recommend them to the Favour of the good  
Man of the House, and to this equitable Con-  
struction of their Tardiness, that had they  
been called sooner, they too would have  
born the Burthen and Heat of the Day  
with the same Activity and Cheerfulness.

SERM.  
XII.  
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THIS *St. Paul* affirms of himself (who
came into the Church as these Labourers
did into the Vineyard, *i. e.* very late, and,
as it were, at the last Hour) that though he
was *born out of due Time, yet he laboured
more abundantly than all the rest of the
Apostles.*

SUCH therefore as our Works are, will our
Recompence be. God will render to every
one according to his Deeds, whether they be
Good or Evil. 'Tis by a patient Continu-
ance in well-doing that we must seek for Glo-
ry and Honour and Immortality.

ST. *Paul* indeed, in his Epistles to the
Romans and *Galatians*, has many Sayings
that derogate from the Works of the Law:
telling them that *a Man is justified by Faith
without the Deeds of the Law, that Abra-
ham*

SERM. *ham and other holy Persons were so justified,*
 XII. and quoting the Royal Psalmist, where he
 describes the Blessedness of the Man unto
 whom the Lord imputeth Righteousness
 without Works, *That as many as are of
 the Works of the Law, are under a Curse,*
 as being incapable to perform an absolute
 unfinning Obedience, without ever offend-
 ing in one single Instance, when yet it is
 written, *Cursed is every one that continueth
 not in all things which are written in the
 Book of the Law, to do them:* With other
 Expressions to the like purpose.

BUT the Works he here speaks so slightly
 of, are the ceremonial and ritual Observan-
 ces; the laying a stress on their outward
 Washings and Sacrifices, their New Moons
 and solemn Assemblies, while greater and
 weightier Matters were neglected. For he is
 speaking to those that had been brought up
 in the *Jewish* Way, who were generally too
 apt to rest in external Show and Formality,
 and to be little concerned for the Life and
 Spirit of Religion.

THIS is the Law from which he tells
 them *Christ* has set them free, and that they
 are no longer its Servants and Debtors. And
 by

by which he assures them they can never be justified before God, but by Faith in *Christ* only, who has blotted out this Hand-writing of Ordinances, nailing it to his Cross. SERM.
XII.

BUT then by Faith he does not mean a bare Assent of the Mind to the Truths of *Christianity*, an acknowledging *Jesus Christ* to be the Son of God, the expected *Messias*, and Saviour of the World; but a practical and operative Belief, such as exerts itself in a lively Obedience and Conformity to the Will of God, and of *Jesus Christ* whom he has sent: and brings forth in them the Fruit of Good Living.

THAT the justifying Faith he so extols, is not be understood exclusively of the Moral Commandments, is evident from many Passages in the Writings of this Apostle, and this of my Text for one; and more largely from the second Chapter of St. *James's* Epistle, where he professedly handles this Argument; and affirms that *Faith without Works, i. e.* without Works of Charity and Mercy and other real and substantial Virtues, *is as dead as a Body without a Spirit.*

IF then we would be saved, we must *work*
out

SERM. *out our Salvation*; we must make it not only

XII. the Employment of our leisure Hours, but
 the Business of our Lives: and we must not expect that Business to be done to our Hands, while we do nothing to promote it, but are idly sleeping away, or unprofitably or wickedly mis-spending the Day of our Lives that is allotted us for Action, *till the Night overtakes us when no Man can work.*

NOT that there is any real or intrinsic Merit in the Actions of the most upright Man, or which for their own Sakes can be acceptable to God, so as to procure our Pardon at his Hands, and entitle us to a State of Bliss and Glory. But yet, thro' the Merits and Mediation of that blessed Redeemer, who died for our Offences, and rose again for our Justification, those weak and imperfect Endeavours, which have no Value or Efficacy in themselves, will help to reconcile us to our offended God, and be sure to meet not only with Acceptance, but Reward.

BUT of this we may assure ourselves, that he only who diligently labours, and sincerely discharges his Trust: who does the Lord's work, and that not coldly nor deceitfully; who faithfully occupies with his Talent, and
 takes

takes pains to improve it, will hear the blessed Sentence pronounced, and be bid *to enter into the Joy of his Lord.* S. F. R. M.
XII.

IT was pertinently asked by some, who were warmly affected by a moving Discourse of St. *Peter* in the Second of the Acts, and thoroughly convinced of the Necessity of regarding their everlasting Interest, *Men and Brethren, what shall we do?* And to the same purpose, the Jailor, to whose custody *Paul* and *Silas* were committed, when he beheld how without any Human Means they were loosed from their Bonds, and the Prison-doors flew open, *Sirs, what must I do to be saved?* He did not ask, what can you do for me? Or which way must I expect Salvation to come to me? But what can I do myself? what Labours of my own, what Vigilance or Assiduity will make me capable of so rich a Blessing?

'TIS by doing then, and doing as we are required to do, that we must hope to arrive at Heaven, not by unprofitable gazing and idly waiting for that, which by waiting only we gain no Right or Title to. So that in this Sense too it may be affirmed, that the Kingdom

SERM. Kingdom of Heaven cometh not with Obser-
 XII. vation.



AND the Design and Spirit of true *Christianity* is certainly better answered by an active and industrious Life, in contriving to be serviceable in our Generation, and beneficial to the Fellow-members of the same Community with ourselves, in Offices of Kindness and Benignity, of Love and Charity, in promoting both the spiritual and temporal Welfare of as many as we can, in admonishing the Vicious, instructing the Ignorant, and relieving the Distressed, and administering to all, as we have Means and Ability, and as their several Exigencies require: in manfully struggling with the Temptations of the World, in daring to preserve a good Conscience, and act according to the Dictates of it, in the midst of prevailing Corruptions: By such a Life as this, I say, the true Design of *Christianity* is better answered, than by a sour and Monastic Austerity, by a fullen Privacy and Retirement, withdrawing ourselves from the World, and living to ourselves perfectly regardless and unconcerned


unconcerned at whatsoever befalls the rest of S E R M.
Mankind. XII.

'Tis a great Mistake in some well-meaning but deluded *Christians*, who persuade themselves that the truest Piety is to be wholly Passive themselves, to give themselves up to devout Contemplations and a thoughtful Solitude, to make no Motions or Tendencies of their own, but to leave the Grace of God to act upon their Minds, and dispose them as it sees fit, from which unactive and motionless State of Life they obtained the Name of *Quietists*; and many others, who do not come under that Denomination, being grown angry with the World that their Virtues are not sufficiently taken notice of, nor they esteemed according to their Merit, resolve to seclude themselves from the rest of Mankind, retiring, as they would have it thought, and perhaps persuade themselves, to a solitary Devotion, complaining of the Iniquity and Corruption of the Times, of the Falseness and Depravity of the World; which, with all its Faults is not so bad, but that with good Heed and Attention they might make

SERM. a Shift to keep themselves untainted with
 XII. its Errors. Nay, were they more and
 greater than they are, they might much
 easier be remedied by friendly Admonitions
 and Reproofs, and the Excellency of a
 bright Example, than by morose Complaints
 and private Invectives.

IT may be this is not the Case, and the Reason of their retiring is not any Disgust or Indignation, but only that they may be at Liberty to serve God without Distraction or Interruption. And this indeed may be a lawful Plea, when a Man is so far disabled by Age or Infirmities, or the want of competent Abilities to render him helpful to his Neighbours, that he is able to do no other Good but that whereof the Closet is the proper Scene.

BUT otherwise is there any Command, any Warrant or Authority, any Example in Holy Scripture of a Life so entirely contemplative as to leave no room for Action? Are not many of the most shining Virtues and most indispensable Duties required by the Gospel, of such a Nature as can only be performed in Society? Such as suppose


Men to live in Fellowship and Communion, S E R M.
and to have a Correspondence and Inter- XII.
course with one another? 

THERE are social and relative, as well as absolute Duties enjoyned by *Christianity*. 'Tis not enough that we have Light in ourselves, but we must let it shine, nor that we are rich in spiritual Treasure, if we do not communicate and impart it. If we hide the one under a Bushel, and the other in a Napkin, we make them both unserviceable.

OUR Blessed Saviour himself, the most perfect Pattern of Piety, though he had his Retirements, and sequestered himself from Company at proper Seasons, yet led a Life of Action: He went about doing Good, and seeking Opportunities to promote the Happiness of Mankind.

THIS is not spoken to check or discountenance private Devotion, or Strictness and Severity of Discipline; there is little need to discourage Men from that, which of themselves they are too apt to neglect. But since in this, as in most other Cases,

SERM. there is a double Extreme to be avoided,
 XII. and though the generality of Men are on
 the defective Side, yet some there are who
 offend in the Excess, though very few in
 proportion to the others; my subject leads me
 very naturally to consider their Case at this
 time, and obliges me to put them in Re-
 membrance that God is to be served in pub-
 lick as well as private: that, besides those
 secret Duties where our Left Hand is not to
 know what our Right Hand does, it likewise
 concerns us to give the World some Demon-
 stration of a truly pious and devout Temper,
 and a serious Disposition to advance the
 Cause of God and Religion; that we may
 animate and excite others by our Example
 to embarque in the same good Design; and
 that we ought so to *let our Light shine be-
 fore Men, that they may see our good Works,
 and glorify our Father which is in Heaven.*
 And in a Word, we can never sufficiently
 admire the Goodness and Love of God,
 and the Excellency of his divine Perfections;
 yet it is not the Design of the Evangelical
 Institution, that our whole Time should
 be


be spent in mere Speculation: but we ought S E R M.
to employ a reasonable Proportion of it in XII.
Works of Justice and Charity, and acting 
in Subserviency to the Rules of the Gospel.

AND thus much for the Second Particular, wherein I have shewn the Manner and Method by which our Salvation is to be obtained, it must be wrought out. I am now to prove in the

III. THIRD Place, that this Work will not be accepted from a Second-hand: One Man's Labour will not satisfy for another, but every one must perform it in his proper Person. *Work out your own Salvation.*

THE Obligation of Religion is personal, and not to be transferred from one to another. God has furnished every Man with sufficient Faculties to enable him to discharge his Duty, and expects him to make a suitable Use of them. And in case of any one's Failure, under all the means of Grace that are afforded him, and coming short of that Measure of Holiness that is expected

SERM. from him, there remains no other Remedy,

XII.  but he must submit to the Penalties of the Law, and receive the just Reward of his Disobedience. If he has no Righteousness of his own to plead, he cannot borrow from his Neighbour, who, be he never so regular and upright, will have little enough to serve his own Purposes.

THIS is fitly illustrated by the Parable of the ten Virgins in the Twenty fifth of *St. Matthew*, and you know the Answer that was returned by the wise ones to the foolish that would have borrowed Oil for their Lamps, when the Bridegroom was just coming. *Not so, lest there be not enough for us and you; but go ye rather to them that sell, and buy for yourselves.* Which while they went to do, the Bridegroom came, they that were ready went in with him, and the Door was shut upon the rest.

So will every one be served, who neglects to do his own Work, and expects it to be done by other Hands. 'Tis in no Man's Power to redeem his Brother's Soul, or to
make

make an Agreement with God for him; it is all that a Man can do, (and a Life well spent if he can do that,) to work out his own Salvation. But he can lay up no stock of Merit to be assigned over to another at his Pleasure. He must acknowledge it to be an Act of meer Grace and Favour, that his honest Endeavours to please God, will be imputed to his own Account, and be accepted in order to his Salvation.

S E R M.
XII.

FOR in many things the best of us fall short of the Glory of God, we are guilty of frequent Breaches of Duty, and daily and hourly stand in need of Pardon and Forgiveness: Who then can pretend to be so rich in good Works, as to be able thereby to cover not only the Multitude of his own Sins, but that of his Brother's too? How can he propitiate God for anothers Sins, who stands in need of a Propitiation for his own? Or how can he pretend to be a Mediator between God and Man, who, but for anothers Mediation between God and him, (I mean that of the blessed *Jesus*, who

(the only Mediator) must inevitably be established.

And how the Practice of the Church of Rome is too notoriously bad to be defended, by her boldest and most hardy Advocates, who therefore rather chuse to explain it away as a late Writer has done, that takes a great deal of unprofitable pains, to remove the ill Opinion we have justly conceived of that way of Worship, and to bring us, if possible, to Catholick Communion; since I say they cannot defend a Doctrine so directly contrary to the Scripture, and so utterly inconsistent with the sole Mediation of *Jesus Christ*, as that of Works of Supererogation, *i. e.* a Superabundancy of Duty and Obedience in some departed Saints, who having done more than was necessary to their own Salvation, have left an Over-plus of Merit behind them, to be disposed of at the Discretion of the Bishop of *Rome*, to such as should perform less; they would however persuade us, who take Offence at it, that this is not a Doctrine of their Church, as not being taught in their Catechisms or Creed, nor enjoined by any Council.

BUT

BUT whether we call it a Doctrine, or no, S E R M.
it matters not much. It is apparently a scan- XII.
dalous Practice grounded on a most erroneous
Persuasion; and that Persuasion too coun-
tenanced and encouraged by the highest Au-
thority among them, even that Judge that
would be thought infallible. For that these
pretended Merits are commonly bought and
sold, is a Matter of Fact too flagrant to be
denied. Which plainly shews both the Opi-
nion the People have of their Value and Effi-
cacy and the Willingness of those that
should inform them better, to let them go on
in their Mistake.

BUT, Beloved, *we have not so learned
Christ*, we are neither taught, nor permitted
to fly to any other Substitute, on whom we
may lay the Burden of our Iniquities, but
him alone who had none of his own to
bear; *who did no Sin, neither was guile
found in his Mouth*, and yet, tho' he had
done nothing amiss, he suffered as the vilest
Malefactor, without murmuring or repi-
ning.

HE indeed did truly supererogate, and
exceed the strictest Injunctions of the Law

SERM. he had Merit enough to atone and satisfy
 XII. for the Sins of all Mankind besides.

~ BUT what need have we then, it may be said, of working out our own Salvation, or of doing any thing for our selves, since *Christ* has done so much for us, and his Satisfaction is so extensive? If he has paid the Price of our Redemption, may we not reckon the Debt discharged? and what then remains for us to do?

OH a great deal! notwithstanding the Death and sufferings of *Christ*, and the Expiation made by him on our behalf. For his Merit, large and diffusive as it is, will only be imputed to such as by Faith lay hold of it, and evidence that Faith by a solemn and serious Repentance.

THIS every one is capable of doing, and so far the Redemption he has wrought for us is universal. But this every one will not do, and therefore notwithstanding the Possibility that is afforded all Mankind of being for ever happy, there are great Numbers that finally miscarry, and remain under the Guilt and Dominion of their Sins,
 because

because they will not accept of the Deliverance that is offered them.

S E R M.
XII.

WITHOUT that Sacrifice that he made of himself, we were under an absolute Incapacity of being saved, nor could any possible Endeavours of our own have been able to reconcile us to our offended God. But by that meritorious Oblation he has taken off the Incapacity, and put it in our Power to become the Friends of God, and Inheritors of his Glory. Yet still, if we will not use the Liberty he has procured for us, if we will not work when we know our Labour will be accepted, we may continue as miserable Wretches, as if *Christ* had never died, or we had never been redeemed.

THIS lazy Recumbency on *Christ*, this resting and leaning on him, and trusting to his Merit, without any Endeavours of our own to entitle our selves to the Benefits of his Death and Passion, is so far from being a regular Consequence from the Doctrine of *Christ's* Merit, that this Passage of my Text, where we are exhorted *to work out our own Salvation*, is an Inference drawn from that very Doctrine.

SERM. I SHOULD now proceed to my fourth
XII. Particular, namely, to shew with what
Temper and Disposition of Mind we
must set about this Work. *Work out your
own Salvation with Fear and Trembling.*

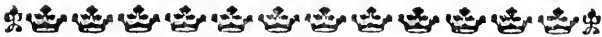
BUT of this, God willing, at some other
Opportunity.





S E R M O N XIII.


The Necessity of working out our
own Salvation.



P H I L. ii. 12.

— *Work out your own Salvation
with Fear and Trembling.*



HAVE already from these S E R M.
Words considered the Worth XIII.
and Desirableness of the Object 
recommended therein to our
Endeavours, and shown that the Salvation
of our Souls and the Attainment of everlast-
ing Happiness is no such light and trivial
concern, that we should be negligent and
indifferent about it: But, as it is the Per-
fection of our Nature, our supreme and
most

SERM. most valuable Good; that we ought to be
 XIII. possessed with a proportionable Care and
 Solicitude for it, and give it the uppermost
 Place in our Desires and Affections.

I HAVE likewise shown the Manner and Method by which this Salvation is to be obtained, it must be wrought out, *i. e.* We must be laborious and vigilant, active and assiduous in the discharge of all *Christian Duties*. We must conquer all Difficulties, and remove all Obstacles that stand between us and Heaven; and be constantly exercised in Works of Mercy and Charity, and other Virtues and Graces; which though they have no real and intrinsic Merit in themselves, nor can, by their own Power and Energy, reconcile us to our offended God, or procure our Admission into Heaven; yet have they thus far a saving Efficacy, that they are a necessary Condition without which Salvation cannot be attained; nor will the Merits of *Christ*, however infinite in their Value, or large and diffusive in their Extent, be imputed to us on any other Terms. *Work out your Salvation.*

I farther made it appear to you, that each individual Man must perform this Work in
 his

his proper Person, that no vicarious Satisfaction or Obedience will be accepted, except that of our Blessed Redeemer, which, on what Conditions it will be applied to particular Persons, has been already mentioned: But that no other Substitute or Proxy can in this Case be deputed, that no Man, however Innocent and Perfect he may think himself, or be thought by others, can or ever did so thoroughly discharge his own Duty, as not to fall short of that Measure of Righteousness expected from him: Much less can he have any Merits to spare, or to be reserved in store for the Benefit of others: *Work out your own Salvation.* Every one in this Case must be for himself, and must stand or fall by his own Actions.

THE last thing I inferred from the Words of the Text, and which I reserved for the Subject of this Discourse, was

To consider with what Temper and Disposition of Mind we must set about this Work: It must be done *with Fear and Trembling*, *i. e.* with a hearty Solitude and Concern lest we should not perform it effectually, not in such a manner and to such a Degree as is required of us; and likewise

SERM. a serious Apprehension left by the Neglect
 XIII. or Insincerity of our Work, we should become obnoxious to the sad reverse of the glorious Reward which is here promised, and work out our Ruin instead of our Salvation.

WHERE I am also to prove, that the Fear of Punishment, tho' far from being the best and noblest Principle of Action, yet, in defect of better Principles, is such a one as both may and ought to be addressed to, and insisted on, in order to excite Men to the working out their Salvation.

OR, to state the Matter more briefly, I shall treat of what remains to be spoken to, under these three Heads.

I. The Fear of offending.	} Both which are highly necessary to quicken us in this Work of our Salvation. And
II. The Fear of suffering for such Offence.	

III. The Lawfulness and Expedience of urging the latter of these Motives to this Purpose.

I. THEN I shall consider that Fear and Tembling that ought to possess our Minds while

while we are *working out our Salvation*; as S E R M. it consists in a Fear of offending God, if we XIII. either perform less, or act otherwise than he requires of us. For this Passion, as well as Love, must be the necessary Result of a due Reflection on all or any of God's Attributes, which are the true Foundation of all our Duty and Obedience to him.

NOR is it only his Majesty, his Justice, and his Power, those awful and tremendous Properties of the Deity, that ought to fill us with a sacred Horror, and reverential Dread; but even the more amiable and propitious Qualities, his Goodness, Love, and Mercy have their Terrors too; whence the Prophet *Hosea* foretells the Time when the Children of *Israel* should fear the Lord and his Goodness. *Hof. iii. 5.* And to the same Purpose the Psalmist, *cxxx. 4.* *For there is Mercy with thee, therefore shalt thou be feared.* And we have just Cause to apprehend the Loss and Forfeiture of them by rude Neglect, by incorrigible Disobedience, and obstinate Ingratitude. Nay we may not only lose and forfeit them, but cause them to be turned into Anger and Displeasure. And you know the severest of all Angers, and heaviest
cf

SERM. of all Displeasure is that which arises from
 XIII. slighted Favour, and abused Indulgence.

AND indeed the one of these Passions is a very natural Consequent of the other, forasmuch as wherever we have a true Love and Value for any Person, we naturally desire to please him, and are ambitious of gaining his Favour and Good Will: and the Desire of gaining is always accompanied with the Fear of losing the Object we so affect.

WHERESOEVER therefore this Apprehension is wanting, when a Man is wholly insensible and regardless of the Consequences of a Miscarriage, and how fatal a Disappointment it would be, to miss of the thing he aims at, if he has not some Forebodings and Anxiety of Mind from the supposal that his Purposes may possibly be defeated; he can never be truly in earnest, when he pretends to love and desire that Object. A faint Inclination toward it he may have, or rather a cold Indifference and Non-aversion; But his Heart can never be eagerly set upon the Possession of that, of which he does not apprehend the Loss.

IF then we are truly desirous to become the Favourites of God, and (which is the certain Effect of that Favour) to be eternally happy; our Study and Endeavour of recommending ourselves to him, must and will be attended with a Fear of incurring his Displeasure.

HOPE itself, the most rational and well-grounded Hope has a Mixture of Fear that goes along with it. And altho' the Divine Promises, on which the surest and best established Hope is built, give us on the one hand a most encouraging Prospect, when we consider how rich and durable a Treasure is laid up for us, how faithful he is who has thus promised, how infallible his Word, how unchangeable his Truth and Equity; yet on the other hand, when we call to Mind, that these Promises are but conditional, and will not be conferred on us but on certain Proviso's; that many who have had an equal Title to them with ourselves, and some that thought themselves as sure, have mistaken the strength of their own Resolution, and for want of a steady Perseverance, have been utterly rejected at last, and lost, all their claim to the Privileges

SERM. of the Gospel; these Considerations, I say, XIII. cannot but be a just Allay to the Wantonness and Luxuriancy of a too forward Hope, and shew us the Necessity of tempering such a Redundancy of Joy, with a seasonable Proportion of prudent Fear, and a wise Distrust of ourselves and our Performances.

HENCE in the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, the Apostle having instanced in some of their Ancestors, that by Reason of their Unbelief and Hardness of Heart, had never entred into the promised Rest; gives this Caution to the Descendants of those stiff-necked Unbelievers, *Let us therefore fear lest a Promise being left us of entering into his Rest, any of you should seem to come short of it. For unto us was the Gospel preached as well as unto them; but the Word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with Faith in them that heard it.* Heb. iv. 1, 2.

AND it is certainly a most dangerous Error in those who rely so far on their being the Chosen and Elected of God, as to persuade themselves that their Salvation is so sure, that they have no need to work it out, much less to do it with Fear and trembling: That they

they are out of all Possibility of falling, and above the reach of Dangers or Temptations. SERM.
XIII.

THIS no Man can promise himself, while he continues here below upon his Trial and Probation, and lives in a warring State, where Dangers and Difficulties surround him, and insidious Foes lye waiting for his Fall.

WHEN all the several Stages and Periods of Life, when every Circumstance and Condition, when Company and Retirement, Business and Diversion, the most public Occupations and private Recess, are all beset with Temptations, and full of ensnaring Baits: When we see how innocent unpractised Youth is unhappily led away and engaged in destructive Courses, notwithstanding all the Guard of a Virtuous Education: When the riper Sense and Discretion of more manly Years, that observes and censures these juvenile Follies, is not however a sufficient Preservative against them: When the Wisdom and Experience that should accompany grey Hairs does sometimes give way to unseasonable Vanity, ridiculous Wantonness, and all the Extravagancy of Dotage:

WHEN, I say, we are so liable to fall away

SERMON. from Goodness in every Scene of Life; can

XIII. any one, in the midst of all these Perils, be
 ~~~~~ careles and secure? is there no danger, think  
 we, no need of Vigilance and Circumspec-  
 tion, of Carefulness and Solitude, and a se-  
 rious Apprehension lest we also, being led a-  
 way with the Error of the wicked, should  
 fall from our own Stedfastness?

——*potes hoc sub casu ducere somnos?*

Is it possible to sleep, to be negligent and  
 supine in the midst of so much Hazard? How well does the Apostle advise him that  
 standeth, to take heed lest he fall! There is  
 none, tho' never so upright, but may chance  
 to slip, and there are none who do slip so of-  
 ten, or so shamefully as the over-confident  
 and secure.

WHOEVER he is therefore, who presumes  
 so far on his own Integrity, and the Certainty  
 of his Perseverance, as to entertain no Sus-  
 picion of his Frailty, and no longer to think  
 himself capable of relapsing, or falling off  
 from a State of Grace and Salvation, he is  
 by that very Presumption so much the more  
 exposed, and in a greater Probability of of-  
 fending God, and swerving from his Duty,  
 than others whose Thoughts of themselves

are more Humble and Modest, who think more of their Infirmities and less of their Perfections, having always in remembrance that Exhortation of the Apostle, which belongs to the most perfect and greatest Proficients in Religion, as well as to those of the lowest Attainments: *Be not high minded, but fear.*

St. *Peter*, whose other Excellencies were very great, had too little of this Distrust of himself, which, more than once, was the occasion of his falling. When he saw his Master walking on the Sea, he desired leave to go and meet him, being persuaded in himself that he had Faith enough to support him, but before he had gone far, his Faith began to sink, and so did he too, so that he was forced to cry out for other Support, and his Forwardness got him this Reproof, *O thou of little Faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?*

AND again, when our Saviour was telling his Disciples before-hand *that they would all be offended because of him that Night, that the Shepherd would be smitten and the Sheep scattered*; while the rest were silent under the Imputation, and did not contradict what their Lord asserted; St. *Peter* a-

SERMON alone abhorring the Thoughts of so cowardly  
 XIII. a Desertion, and assured of his own Resolu-  
 tion to stand by him, cries out, *tho' all  
 Men should be offended because of thee, yet  
 will I never be offended.*

BUT his Lord, who knew him better than he knew himself, applies what he had before said in general, particularly to him, *Verily, I say unto thee, that this Night before the Cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice.* This however did not hinder him from repeating his Promise with a more positive Assurance, *though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee.* And then indeed he drew the other Disciples into the same Declaration, for it follows, *Likewise also said they all.*

BUT what became of this mighty boasting at last, and how ill it was answered in the Effect, you know by the Sequel of the Story. And our Saviour after his Resurrection seems to have had an Eye to St. *Peter's* threefold denial of him, when he asks him three several times whether he loved him, before he gave him a Commission to feed his Sheep.

Jer. ix. 23. *Let not then the wise Man glory in his  
 Wisdom;*

*Wisdom; neither let the mighty Man glory* S E R M.  
*in his Might: Let not the rich Man glory* XIII.  
*in his Riches:* Not even in spiritual Wis-  
 dom, Strength and Riches. All these Suc-  
 cours may be too weak to preserve us, if  
 once they betray us into Security; if they  
 disarm us of that cautious Diffidence, and  
 jealous Watchfulness over ourselves, which  
 is the best and most effectual Remedy against  
 a ghostly Surprize.

A MAN indeed may carry this Diffidence  
 too far, and be possessed with such timorous  
 Apprehensions as to the State of his Salva-  
 tion, as to be afraid not only of his own  
 want of Perseverance, but that he shall not  
 partake of the promised Reward, in Case  
 he does so persevere. But this is not dis-  
 trusting a Man's self, this is distrusting God's  
 Grace and Goodness: And God forbid  
 that any one should entertain a Doubt of  
 this Nature.


'Tis one thing to question whether I  
 shall diligently serve God, or no, and con-  
 tinue in my Obedience to him all the Days  
 of my Life; and another, to question whe-  
 ther he will be a faithful Rewarder of such  
 as diligently do serve him. If our Fear be

SERM. of such a sort, instead of guarding us from  
 XIII. Offences, it is itself a most provoking Of-  
 fence, it cancels and defaces all our good  
 Actions: And what we are entitled to by  
 our reasonable Service, we forfeit again by  
 our unreasonable Incredulity.

NAY farther, even that lawful and ne-  
 cessary Fear which I am now pressing upon  
 you, may likewise be criminal in the excess,  
 and a Man may be carried by too great a  
 Degree of it to Despondency and Dejection,  
 and an unjust Suspicion that all his Endeavours  
 will be in vain, that he can never be  
 able to *work out his Salvation*; that the  
 Dangers that encompass him are too nume-  
 rous, and the Enemies with whom he is to  
 contend too powerful to be resisted by all  
 the Force of his natural Faculties, seconded  
 with all the Assistances of Divine Grace.

BUT this too is a Conceit that highly de-  
 rogates from the Grace of God (who, we are  
 positively told, *will not suffer any Man to be  
 tempted above that he is able, but will with  
 the Temptation make also a Way to escape it*)  
 and is cruelly unjust to ourselves. It gives a  
 Damp to our spiritual Joy, and robs us of that  
 Complacency of Mind that should be the re-  
 sult



fult of a good Conscience: It heightens our S E R M. Difficulties, and magnifies our Dangers, XIII. and throws imaginary Obstructions in our  Way. It gives us unworthy Notions of the supreme Being, and represents him as an unmerciful and severe Oppressor, as he must have been thought, had he given us Commands impossible to be kept, and such as had exceeded the utmost stretch of our Abilities.

THIS is a groundless, a superstitious, a wicked Fear. We are taught by the Holy Scripture, we may learn from Experience and Example, we may learn from our own feeling, and by trying what we are able to do; that as he has given us Laws to be observed, so has he afforded us Means and Opportunities, and sufficient Helps to enable us to observe them.


IF some, who were fairly advanced in the *Christian* Race, have poorly and degenerately fallen off, and given over their Pursuit after the Glorious and Heavenly Prize, being choaked with the Cares of the World, and the Deceitfulness of Riches, and other tempting Avocations; yet all the Seed has not been cast on such unthankful Ground,

SERM. Ground; some there are who have endured  
 XIII. to the End, have brought forth Fruit to Per-  
 ~~~~~ fection, and received the just Reward of  
 their Constancy and Resolution.

NOR did those, who did thus fall away, miscarry for lack of Power to discharge their Duty, or a competent Measure of God's gracious Assistance to strengthen and confirm them, but merely thro' their own Obstinacy and Wilfulness.

THIS then can be no Discouragement to any whose Purposes are sincere, and who are honestly disposed to do their utmost in order to work out their everlasting Salvation.

IF therefore we would preserve a due mean between these two dangerous Extremes, *viz.* Confidence and Despair; this must be our firm and most settled Persuasion, that as no one is incapable of falling, so long as he is a Member of the militant Church, so every one is capable of standing: that the strongest is still liable to be overcome, and the weakest has Grace sufficient to enable him to conquer; that, though it happened otherwise in a certain Case; yet the ten Talents may be buried in a Napkin,
 and

and the single one may gain such an increase, S E R M.
as the Lord will receive with Approbation XIII.
and Reward. 

HENCE it is that Men are exhorted to the Practice of Religion from such very different Motives, and are sometimes told of the Hardness, and sometimes of the Easiness of the *Christian* Yoke; it is both, but in different respects, and to Persons of different Complexions.

'Tis hard, at least it seems so, to such as enter grudgingly into the Service, or who, after having continued in it for some time with Diligence and Success, grow impatient of Discipline, and cannot bear the Thoughts of being still on their Guard, that they must always be watchful and distrustful of themselves, and after so many Victories be afraid of a Surprise.

BUT to a willing Mind, and one that considers the Greatness of the Reward, and the Shortness of the Service, when human Life is compared with Eternity, together with the powerful Assistances, both inward and outward, that are afforded, there is nothing easier.

AND from this double view of the State
of

SERM. of *Christianity*, there arises Matter enough to
 XIII. humble the Pride of the self-confiding, and
 also just Matter of Comfort and Encouragement, to raise the Hopes and hearten the Endeavours of the timorous and dejected.

THUS far I have considered that Fear and Trembling wherewith we are exhorted *to work out our Salvation*, as it consists in a Fear of offending, together with its proper Limitations; and in this Sense is the wise Man's Observation exactly true, *Happy is the Man that feareth always*, Prov. xxviii. 14. But the Exhortation does not rest here. There is something still more terrible to be dreaded than a bare Punishment of Loss, there is a Punishment of Sense too that will follow the neglect of this Work; and if eternal Salvation be not the Reward of it, eternal Misery will. Between these two there is no middle Portion, but every Man must have either the one or the other for his Lot, in proportion to the Faithfulness or Insincerity of his Work. Which brings me to consider in the

II. SECOND place, the Fear with which we are required to work, as it consists in a Fear
 of

of suffering for our Offences. The Observa-
tion of God's Laws is not only enforced by
the most glorious and inviting Rewards, but
likewise by the most severe and terrifying
Threats in Case of our Non-compliance ;
that by all possible Means Men might be
induced to do what is pleasing and accept-
able to God, and perform the necessary and
indispensable Conditions of Salvation.

SERM
XIII.

AND indeed, without the Promise of such
Rewards, and the Denunciation of such Pe-
nalties, his Commandments, however just
and reasonable in themselves, would have
been in vain. For a Law without a Sanc-
tion, *i. e.* without some good or evil Conse-
quence annexed, to give a Force and Sting
to it, is no Law in Effect, but merely an
Exhortation or Counsel. Men may obey
if they think fit, but they see not what they
shall gain by their Obedience ; or they may
as well be refractory and disobedient, when
they do not perceive how they shall be the
worse for it, nor how they shall lose or suf-
fer by it.

SINCE therefore Man was made a free
Agent, and equally at Liberty, for any
Force that overruled his Will to determine
either

SERM. either way, and indifferently to make Choice
 XIII. either of Good or Evil, the way to encline
 him to a better Choice was, to propose such
 Motives as might be able to work upon his
 Hopes and Fears.

AND both these ways the Almighty has endeavoured to keep him steady in the Paths of Righteousness, to make him act like a rational Creature, and agreeably to the End for which he made him. That where one of those Methods should not be effectual (as Mens Passions are differently predominant) the other might supply what was lacking, and so make him perfectly resolved, and thoroughly furnished unto every good Work.

IF therefore the Hopes of Heaven, and the joyful Expectation of an Inheritance with the Saints in Light, if a State of everlasting Bliss and Glory, if the most perfect and consummate Happiness, if the Enjoyment of God's Presence, and the Society and Friendship of blessed Angels, if a glorious Crown of Immortality and more than Royal Magnificence and Splendor, if a long uninterrupted Succession of Pleasures that never can decay; If all this, I say, is too weak and languid an Incentive to have any Influence
 upon

upon us, to quicken and invigorate our drooping Zeal, and fire us with a brave and noble Ambition of attaining to that high and heavenly Prize; there are other Considerations more dismal and tremendous, such exquisite Pain and Torture, such extremity of Misery and Woe, as can no more be thoroughly conceived, or lively enough expected, than the Joys of Heaven themselves. Such a Scene of Horror as no Ideas can reach, nor the liveliest Fancy paint, and they only can describe, who feel.

AND since, upon a supposal that we are careless and remiss in the Work of our Salvation, if we are Truants and Loiterers, if idle, wicked, and unprofitable Servants, complaining of the hardship of our Task and severity of our Master, and drawn aside from our business by every lazy Excuse; if we bury or misemploy our Talents, if we throw off the Yoke and flatly deny to do God any Service at all, or though we pretend to do it, yet do it treacherously and deceitfully, laying waste his Inheritance, whilst we would seem to dress it, and sowing Tares, when we should be plucking them up, and in a
word

SERM. word, doing the Devil's Work, instead of
XIII. God's:



SINCE I say such a failure in our Work, such a prevarication and perverting of it, will be attended with such dreadful Consequences, have we not just reason to perform it with Fear and Trembling? Is Hell so desirable a Place, and the Danger of a miserable Eternity so little to be regarded, as to make no Impression on our Minds, and strike us with no Terror and Astonishment? Can we hear these Menaces denounced against us with a cold Indifference, and unmoved Affections? Is it for nothing, do we think, that God has guarded and fenced his Laws with such penal Sanctions; or can we flatter ourselves with a groundless Persuasion that he will never execute what he has so solemnly declared? Can we think of that Horrid and Infernal Receptacle for accursed and polluted Souls, and yet be possessed with no Apprehensions, lest we ourselves should add to the unhappy Number by an obstinate neglect of our Duty, and Sins that are finally unrepented of? And every Sin, for ought we know, may be the concluding Action of our Lives, so as to leave

leave no Room for Repentance and Amend-^{S E R M.}
ment. XIII.

Most surely then 'tis high time for us to awake out of Sleep, not to indulge our selves in a carnal Sloth and Security, but to alarm our selves with a serious Reflection on the Miseries that may befall us. Let us consider the deplorable Condition of those lost and hopeless Wretches, who have gone out of the World insensible of these Terrors, unfit for Death, and unprepared for Judgment; who have left their Work behind them undone, or else ill-done, which it is now no longer in their Power to perfect or to rectify: And in Consequence thereof, have already felt the beginnings of those Sorrows, and are now expecting with Horror and Confusion the last fatal Summons in order to receive the full Recompense of their Iniquity.

LET us consider too, that, as this is actually the Case of very many, so it may and will be our own, if we, like them, go on in our Transgressions without Reluctance or Remorse; if we suffer the Day of Grace to be overpast, before we provide for our Security, and stay till the Night is come

SERM. upon us, when no Man can any longer
XIII. work.

How much better is it then to look to ourselves in Time, and prevent our sharing in so irrecoverable a Fate, whilst we have Opportunity before us, whilst God is still calling upon us to amend, and his Holy Spirit ready to assist us; than to squander away that precious and valuable Time, which no Cost or Pains will hereafter be able to redeem, in useless and trifling, if not wicked Amusements? how much more rational to fear those Dangers, which by fearing we may yet prevent, and against which we have Time to arm ourselves; than to stay till they turn to Realities and actually come upon us, when they will make us tremble, but alas! all our trembling will then avail us nothing.

'Tis the part of a wise and prudent Man to provide even against possible Inconveniences, much more will he be upon his Guard, when he has just Reason to apprehend not only Inconveniences but utter Ruin and Destruction. And his Caution will be still the greater, if what he foresees is not only possible, but extremely probable,

may

may most visibly certain and apparent, if S E R M.
not timely and carefully prevented. XIII.

Now such is the Danger of our Souls; there can be no Loss so great, and there is none so certain, without sincere Repentance of our Sins; no Torments to compare with those of Hell, and none so sure, if we are not careful to secure our Title to Heaven, by a lively Faith in *Christ*, and the proper Fruits of it, *viz.* Obedience and good Works.

Is all the Ease and imaginary Pleasure of a sensual and voluptuous Life, a sufficient Recompense for such an eternity of Pain and Sufferings? Will all the Riches the most successful worldling is Master of, nay more, all that the most unbounded Avarice can crave, be able to procure one Drop of Water to cool his Tongue, when once he is tormented in those Flames? Is all the Pomp and Pageantry, the Show and empty Titles of the Ambitious, and the false Applauses of mistaken Men, a just equivalent for the Shame and Reproach with which he will then be covered, when he shall be exposed in the Sight of Men and Angels, and all his hidden Dishonesty be brought to Light?

SERM. UPON the whole then: Since the Inveigle-
 XIII. ments of Sin are so numerous and enticing,
 and the Reward of it so insupportably terrible; who can be too careful and wary of offending, or too apprehensive of Suffering if he does offend? How justly may we be warned, as we are in my Text, *to work out our Salvation with Fear and Trembling?*
 I am now in the

III. AND last Place to show the Lawfulness and Expedience of urging the Fear of Punishment as a Motive to Duty, and a dissuasive from Sin.

I MENTION this, because such an Obedience as proceeds from this Principle, *viz.* the Fear of Punishment, is commonly taxed with Disingenuity and Insincerity; those who are acted by it, are said not to fear God, but his Correction only, not to be afraid of Sin, but its Consequences: It is distinguished by the Name of a servile or slavish Fear, and opposed to that filial Reverence, and awful Regard that a Son owes to his Father; that willing Observance and Deférence which he is ready to pay to his Commands, even without Coercion or Restraint.

AND indeed it must be confessed that it S E R M.
is a very low Degree of Virtue that has no XIII.
better Foundation: When a Man is good
merely by Compulsion, not that he has
any real Taste of the Pleasure of Goodness,
or any Complacency in the Exercise thereof.
But this however is a good beginning, and 'tis
well if a Man upon any Motives can be
brought to the Practice of Religion. And
tho' he had much better suffer himself to be
led, there is some Hope if he can be drove to
it. A man can never continue long in such
a State, on such an Inducement only, but
if he perseveres in it, and frequently repeats
the same commendable Actions, his Good-
ness will settle itself on a better Bottom;
his Acts by frequent Repetition will im-
prove into Habits; Virtue will grow easy
and familiar to him, which will take off
by Degrees his Aversion to it; he will begin
to find a pleasing Relish in it, and at last
will love and take a Delight therein.

If this be not the Consequence, he will
fall back again to his wonted Courses, and
harden himself against those affrighting
Terrors. For the Practice of what one

SERM. hates is so violent and unnatural, that it
 XIII. can never be of long Continuance.

~ THUS we see it happens in the Case of Obedience that is extorted by Fear of another Kind. A Youth under Discipline, for Example, has an Aversion to Learning, because he finds it difficult and laborious; but yet while the Rod is over him, and he is awed by the Fear of Correction, the Work goes on, however unwillingly, 'till at last it becomes habitual to him; and then, what was begun with Reluctance and against the Grain, is continued with Pleasure and Delight.

OR if it does not come to this, if he cannot conquer his Aversion, we may be pretty sure, as the next Remedy, that he will conquer his Fear, he will grow insensible of Threats or Blows, and not always be kept in a forced Subjection.

Now what I would infer from hence is this: That altho' an Obedience wholly servile, that is altogether the Result of Fear, without any Mixture of Love or Hope, does not always carry a Man on 'till he arrives gradually at those more noble and generous Principles; yet it sometimes does.

Nay,

Nay, it may be questioned whether the highest Proficiency in the other two did not make its first Entrance by this Door. SERM.
XIII.

ST. *John* indeed tells us, that *there is no Fear in Love, but perfect Love casteth out Fear.* But if it casts it out, it is a Sign it was there before, and consequently that a Man who is arrived at the Perfection of Love, may have set out at first with much lower Principles.


WHAT therefore may be improved to so good an Use, may and ought to be applied and directed to that End. God's Threatnings are recorded in Scripture as Motives of Reformation, that knowing the Terrors of the Lord, by the Force of those Terrors we might persuade such to be wise, as would not otherwise be persuaded.

NAY even those who have made a considerable Progress in the *Christian* Life, must not be insensible of God's Wrath and Vengeance, which is reserved in Store for the Children of Disobedience. This must be pressed upon them, as an outward Fence to their Virtue; that if their Desire of Heaven should fail, the Fear of Hell may keep them within their Bounds.

SERM. HOPE and Fear are the two Master-
 XIII. Springs of human Actions, and where they
 are well directed, they are a double Security: And consequently if either of them is weakned, a Man is so much the more unguarded.

AND accordingly, our Blessed Saviour, we see, did not only encourage those he taught by Promises and Invitations, but moreover, as he saw Occasion, he terrified them with Threats; which that they might be sure to regard, he expressly urges them to stand in awe of the Divine Judgment, and inculcates his Command with a Repetition; *Fear not them which kill the Body, and after that have no more that they can do; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both Soul and Body in Hell; yea, I say unto you, fear Him.*

HE tells them how by certain Offences they might run the hazard of being cast into Hell-Fire, where their Worm dieth not, and the Fire is not quenched. And, to mention no more, in his Description of the last Judgment, he represents the miserable State of the Reprobates, and the heavy Doom pronounced against them, as well

as the happy and joyful Sentence that was S E R M.
passed in Favour of the Righteous. And as XIII.
one of these Instances was intended to work 
upon Men's Hopes, so is the other addressed
particularly to their Fears.

To sum up all; while we live in this World, these are the Passions by which we must be acted: When once we arrive at the other, we shall have no Use for either. We shall then have nothing to wish but what we enjoy, nor any thing to dread but what we already feel. Both the one and the other Expectation will be lost in Certainty. If we have Righteousness enough to carry us to Heaven, we shall have no Reason to wish for what we are actually possessed of; for, as the Apostle observes, *what a Man hath, why doth he yet hope for?* And if we die with Wickedness enough to sink us to Hell, we shall know at once the utmost of our Doom, nor will our Misery admit either of Alleviation or Increase.

OUR Hope and Fear will in short be turned into Joy and Grief, and what we now apprehend as Future, we then shall feel, as Present.

GOD

SERM.
XIII.
~

GOD Almighty grant, that all of us may, during our Passage through this World, so truly serve him with Fear, and rejoice unto him with Reverence, that when we come to receive our eternal Recompense, we may hear the Sentence pronounced with Joy, and not with Grief.





S E R M O N X I V .


The Inexcusableness of obstinate
Impenitence.

~~~~~

E Z E K . xviii. 31.

— *For why will ye die, O House  
of Israel.*



THE Almighty thro' this whole S E R M .  
Chapter is expostulating with X I V .  
the rebellious House of *Israel*: 

Who, as if it had been a small thing that they had violated his Commands, profaned his Name, defiled his Altars, and prostituted his Worship; as if it had not been enough that they had been guilty of gross Idolatry, notorious Oppression, and foul Adultery, with other very heinous and provoking Crimes here recited, proceeded yet farther to murmur against God, to re-  
present


S E R M. present him as a cruel and unjust Being, and  
 XIV. to exclaim against the Partiality of his

Dispensation, and the Severity of his Punishments. So ready are Men to charge their own Miscarriages upon God, and to recriminate when they cannot make a direct Answer to that which they are accused of; and so true is the Observation of the wise Man, *that when the Folly of a Man has perverted his Ways, his Heart fretteth against the Lord*, Prov. xix. 3.

A God so impiously, a Benefactor so ungratefully, a Judge so insolently treated, might justly have been expected to have proceeded in another Manner, and to have spoke in another Language than in affectionate Wishes and pathetic Exhortations, in gentle Expostulations and Terms of Endearment.

BUT what Provocations are beyond the endurance of Infinite Mercy? to how prodigious a bulk must that Guilt be swelled, which is more extensive and unbounded than Divine Love?

THUS audaciously challenged and affronted, we find him notwithstanding so far from an implacable Rage, and inflexible  
 Resolution

Resolution of avenging his injured Honour, S E R M.  
that he still persists in his Endeavours by soft XIV.  
and gentle Methods to work their Reforma-  
tion and prevent their Ruin. 

HE who was bound by no other Rule but the inherent Rectitude of his own Nature, whose peculiar Right it was to require an account of their Actings, vouchsafes to give them an Account of his; he argues the Case calmly and familiarly with them, and appeals to their own Reason, whether he did not, both in the Execution of his Punishments and the Distribution of his Rewards, proceed according to the strictest Rules of Equity: *Hear now, O House of Israel, says he, are not my Ways equal? Are not your Ways unequal?* After which Conviction he still leaves it to their Choice, whether they will be happy or miserable; and perceiving them more inclinable to the latter, he addresses himself to them in this other passionate Interrogatory, *For why will ye die, O House of Israel?*

BLESSED God! was it not enough for Thee, who art accountable only to Thyself, to be conscious of Thy own Justice, but  
must

SERM. must Thou appeal to sinful Men, and make  
 XIV. the Criminals the Judges? But this indeed  
 leaves them without Excuse, and it must of  
 Necessity follow from such a Display of Thy  
 Goodness and their Perverseness, that, as Thou  
 art self-justified, so they are self-condemned.

FROM the Words of the Text I shall consider these following particulars:

- I. THE patient Forbearance and long suffering of a gracious God.
- II. THE obstinate Impenitence of a disobedient People.
- III. The Consequence that will infallibly attend such a State of final Impenitence, *viz.* Death. *Why will ye die?*
- IV. THAT if we so finally miscarry and meet with eternal Death for our Portion, we have no body to complain of but our selves; it is our own voluntary Choice, and we might have prevented it if we would. *Why will ye die?*

I. THE first thing observable is the patient Forbearance and Long-suffering of a gracious God. This is a Reflection that is always



ways full of unspeakable Comfort and Satisfaction: This is the Foundation of all our Hopes, the Source of our Pardon, and Security of our Happiness; to this we owe the Delay of our Punishment, and every fresh Opportunity of Repentance; hither is the only Retreat for a wounded Conscience, and Sanctuary for despairing Guilt. *If God should be extreme to mark what is done amiss; if he should show no Forbearance, and his Threats would admit of no Respite or Mitigation, but every Transgression of his Law were to be prosecuted with the utmost Rigour; who then could endure the Severity of his Wrath? or who is that upright unblameable Person, that could stand the Fury of his naked Justice? 'Tis of his Mercy alone that we are not consumed, because his Compassions fail not. He spares when we deserve Punishment, and in his Wrath thinks upon Mercy.*


NAY, so long does he bear with Mens Iniquities, and suspend the Execution of his Judgments, that we are sometimes ready to censure his Indulgence, and tax him with too much Lenity, and even to upbraid him, as it were, as *Dauid* did with a *Quous-*

SERM. *que Domine? Lord how long wilt thou look*  
 XIV. *upon this? How long shall the Adversary do*  
 this Dishonour? *Why pluckest thou not thy*  
*Right Hand out of thy Bosom to destroy the*  
*Enemy?*

We repine at his Goodness toward others, as *Jonah* did when he reversed his Sentence against *Nineveh*. *I pray thee, O Lord,* says he, *was not this my saying, when I was yet in my Country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish: for I knew that thou art a gracious God and merciful, slow to Anger and of great Kindness, and repentest thee of the Evil,* *Jon. iv. 2.*

AND as to our Imitation of God in this Particular (as 'tis our Duty to imitate all his Attributes and Perfections, as far as our frail Nature will permit us) we are so far from bearing with a true *Christian* Patience, real, accumulated, and repeated Affronts, that we are frequently transported beyond all Patience and Moderation by seeming and imaginary ones; our Sufferance is seldom any longer than till we have an Opportunity of requiting the Injury, and our Inability to be avenged as we would, has often a considerable Share in our Forgiveness.



THERE are indeed some Degrees of ill SERM.  
 Usage, which good Nature and a Sense of XIV.  
 Religion will teach a Man to overcome; but   
 'tis very rare that either the one or the other  
 are a sufficient Proof against that Resent-  
 ment that is occasioned by reiterated Wrongs,  
 and repeated Provocations.

ST. *Peter* himself, we see, was afraid of  
 going too far in this Duty, and of Suffering  
 too long: he was very solicitous to know  
 of his Master, to what Degree he was  
 obliged to bear with Injuries, without endea-  
 vouring to return them; how many several  
 Tryals he must sustain, how many Acts of  
 Forbearance he must put in Practice, before  
 Forgiveness might lawfully end, and Re-  
 venge begin to take place.

*Lord*, says he, *how often shall my Brother  
 sin against me, and I forgive him? Until  
 Seven times?* And thought, no doubt, that  
 he had stated the Case disadvantageously  
 enough to himself, and that he had rather  
 exceeded than fallen short of that Measure  
 of Charity his Lord would expect from him.  
 But you know what our Saviour's Answer  
 was; *I say not unto thee, until Seven times,  
 but until Seventy times Seven.*

SERM. WE must not therefore confine our Pardon and Oblivion to any limited Number of Offences; but as often as our Brother renews his Provocation, so often must we our Forgiveness, especially where he makes an Acknowledgment and Submission, and expresses a Desire to be forgiven.

SUCH is God's Dealing towards us, and such would be ours towards our Brethren, if we endeavoured to be like God. He, though he never wants the Power to vindicate his Honour, and has always his Enemies at his Mercy, chuses rather to proceed by gentle Methods, and instead of compelling, endeavours to win them to his Service; he courts them at once to their Duty and their Happiness, invites them earnestly to a Reconciliation with him, and solemnly declares in the twenty second Verse of this Chapter, that if they will but turn from all the Transgressions they have committed, they shall not so much as be mentioned to them. Nay he promises them not only Pardon and Oblivion, but an inestimable Reward. And if ever he has recourse to Harshness and Severity, 'tis as it were unwillingly and with some Reluctance; so unwillingly, that the Prophet

Prophet *Isaiab* calls it *alienum opus* a strange S E R M. XIV.  
 Work, *i. e.* a Work that can hardly be called his; 'tis so foreign to his purpose and offers such a sort of Violence to his Nature; *He shall be wroth*, says the Prophet, *as in the Valley of Gibeon, that he may do his work, his strange Work, and bring to pass his Act, his strange Act*, *Isaiab xxviii. 21.*


How slow he is to wrath, how backward and loth to punish, we have a remarkable Instance in the long Suspension of his Judgment toward the Inhabitants of the old World. *One hundred and twenty Years bore he their Iniquities, which were then at the height; for all Flesh (we are told) had corrupted their Ways upon Earth:* And in the mean time *Noah* a Preacher of Righteousness gave them warning of the Danger that attended them, that he who had so lately made them, would again destroy the whole Race of them, by an universal Deluge, if they did not timely prevent it by acknowledging their Creator, and forsaking their abominable Profaneness and Corruption.

SERM. AND to show how much he was in ear-  
 XIV. nest, and how thoroughly he was persuaded

himself of the reality of that Danger, with the Apprehension whereof he laboured to possess them, they saw the Ark which he was preparing for the Security of Himself and Family (who alone were free from that general Pollution wherewith the rest of the World were overspread) and without doubt they looked upon it as an extravagant Project, as a piece of groundless Fear and ridiculous Superstition (as many do now adays the Terrors of a future Judgment, and the Fear of an avenging Deity) but at last the Flood came, foretold indeed as to the Certainty of the Event, but unexpected as to the proper Time; and if it left them Time for such thoughts, it made them wish that they had either hearkened to the Instruction of *Noah*, or followed his Example; that they had either prevented the Deluge, or provided an Ark too.

AND this leads me to the

SECOND thing I proposed to treat of, *viz.* the obstinate Impenitence of a disobedient People.

IT was the Complaint of God himself, SERM.  
that all the Day long he had stretched forth XIV.  
his Hands to a disobedient and gainsaying   
People; that after he had cultivated his  
Vineyard with the utmost Care, yet when  
he expected it should have brought forth  
Grapes, it brought forth wild Grapes.

THERE is somewhat so highly ungrate-  
ful and disingenuous in some Tempers, that  
no Favours can win, no Excess of Courtesy  
can oblige them; he that heaps on them  
kind and good Offices, only heaps to himself  
Affronts; they grow presumptuous by Indul-  
gence, and insolent by Forbearance; the  
very Strength they borrow emboldens them  
to contend with him that lent it, and those  
very Motives that should excite them to  
love and honour, to praise and celebrate  
their Benefactor, do on the contrary beget  
in them nothing but Ingratitude and Re-  
bellion.

SUCH is the dealing of wicked Men to-  
ward God. He bears with their Iniquities,  
and connives at their Transgressions; he  
spares them when they deserve Punishment,  
and long suspends the execution of his Judg-  
ments; nay instead of punishing he blesses

SERM. and makes them prosper as to their temporal  
 XIV. Concerns: He makes his Sun to shine upon  
 the Wicked as well as Good, and sends  
 down Rain on the Just and on the Unjust.  
 To the intent that so much Lenity and  
 Goodness may at last soften and civilize their  
 rugged Nature, and either allure, or reason,  
 or shame them into a Compliance with his  
 Will.


BUT such is their perverse Obstinacy, that  
 all these engaging Arts and endearing Me-  
 thods of Divine Love have a quite contrary  
 effect; they are so far from relenting at the  
 Thoughts of God's Forbearance, that it  
 hardens them the more; and instead of  
 admiring his Goodness, they distrust his  
 Power; they conclude he either cannot or  
 will not punish, since he has born already  
 with so many Provocations; and because

Ecc*i.* viii.  
 41. *Sentence against their evil Works is not ex-  
 ecuted speedily, therefore their Hearts are  
 fully set in them to do Evil.*

ST. Peter indeed foretold, that there  
 should be a set of such unkind and ungrate-  
 ful Reasoners. *There shall come, says he,  
 in the last Days Scoffers, walking after their  
 own Lusts, and saying, Where is the Promise*  
 of


2 Pet. iii.

3.


*of his coming? for since the Fathers fell asleep, SERM.*  
*all things continue as they were from the*   
*beginning of the Creation, i. e. They should*  
argue against a Judgment to come from  
God's patient enduring the corruption of  
the World, without being provoked to send  
down a speedy Destruction on the race of  
Men, but letting things go on in a regular  
and even Course, without any great or re-  
markable Change. But in answer to this,  
he puts them in Mind of one memorable  
Change that had already happened, *viz.*  
the Destruction of the World by Water,  
and warns them of another that was yet to  
come, when it should again be destroyed  
by Fire. And they therefore who obsti-  
nately continue in their Sins, in confi-  
dence of God's Patience, do as St. Paul  
speaks; *they despise the Riches of the long* Rom. ii. 4,  
*Suffering of God which should have led*<sup>5</sup>  
*them to Repentance. But after their Hard-*  
*ness and impenitent Hearts, treasure up un-*  
*to themselves Wrath against the Day of*  
*Wrath, and Revelation of the righteous*  
*Judgment of God. As will farther appear in*  
my

SERM. THIRD Particular, in which I am to set  
 XIV. forth the Consequence that will attend such  
 a State of Impenitence, or Perseverance in  
 Sin, (*viz.*) Death. *Why will ye die?* For  
 altho' God has no Pleasure at all that the  
 Wicked should die, tho' he had rather he  
 should return from his Ways and live; yet  
 it is his Decree that such as will not re-  
 turn, shall not live. And they who will  
 not serve his Purposes in the Way he best  
 likes, will be made the Instruments of his  
 Will in a more fatal and destructive Sense;  
 if his Mercy cannot triumph over them, his  
 Justice will; and they who refuse to glorify  
 him, as pardoned and reconciled Enemies,  
 must yet contribute to his Glory as conquered  
 Rebels. This is the natural Effect of Sin, the  
 appointed Wages of Unrighteousness; how  
 calm and undisturbed, how thoughtless soever  
 and free from Care, Men may be in a course  
 of Impiety, this will be the End that waits  
 them, this melancholy Subject still limits  
 their prospect: Beyond this they can hope  
 for no Comfort, but have enough of Horror,  
 Misery, and Despair in view. Life and  
 Death are proposed as the Reward of Good  
 and



and Evil, and he who is irreclaimably bent S E R M.  
and addicted to Evil, cannot think it strange XIV.  
if he meets with Death its inseparable Affo-   
ciate and Attendant.

By Death I do not mean a bare separation of Soul and Body, a cessation of the Vital Function, and Retirement into the cold and solitary Grave; for this is the common Fate of Righteous as well as Wicked Men, and both the one and the other must pass thro' this Door into Eternity. And tho' it does sometimes please the Almighty to serve some great and signal End of Providence by making even temporal Death the Reward of daring Guilt and outrageous Impiety; tho' he has sometimes destroyed by supernatural Means not only private and single Persons, but even whole Nations and Communities, and once a whole World of Sinners (a very few excepted) when their Offences were grown up to a monstrous and unusual size; nay tho' Death itself first entered into the World upon the first Sin that was committed in our Nature: Yet the Death that is here and elsewhere in Holy Scripture denounced as the sure and unavoidable Wages of unre-  
pent

SERM. XIV.  pented Sin, is of another kind, and has something in it far more severe and terrifying than a meer Privation of Being and Extirpation from the Land of the Living. The Agonies whereof will be far more racking and acute, its Horrors infinitely more piercing and insupportable, than those of a poor dying Wretch, that lyes labouring for Life, and groans, and pants, and gasps, and struggles to prevent, if possible, the fatal separation between the Mortal and Immortal Part. This second Death is not a transient Act, but a permanent State; and they who shall be doomed to that heavy Sentence, will die not once, but always: Each moment of a miserable Eternity will be more restless than the last uneasy Moments of this present Life; such Burnings will continually be felt, to which the Heat of a Fever or Calenture bears no proportion, ever raging and never intermitting, distorting Convulsions, inexpressible Anguish, and more than dying Pangs.

SUCH will be the Impenitent Sinner's Portion, this is the recompense provided for him by a justly incensed God: This Cup of Misery  
and

and Sorrow must he now drink, who refused so often that of Grace and Salvation: and will he then complain of the Severity of God? or will he not rather condemn himself, and accuse the heinousness of his own Sins? which were so provoking as to put the Almighty under a sort of Necessity of thus tormenting him, even against his Will, and contrary to the tendency of his Nature.

MAY he not justly say to thee, after so many Warnings and Opportunities offered by him, and by thee neglected, as he did once to the Jews, *O Israel, thy Destruction is of thy self*: has he not long born with thee as with the barren Fig-tree? has he not dug about thee, and dunged and watered thee, to see if at last thou wouldst bring forth fruits meet for Repentance? and if after so many Trials thou art still found useless and unprofitable, canst thou think much, if the Sentence, pronounced against the fruitless Tree, be thine: *Cut it down, why cumbereth it the Ground?*

GOD'S Spirit will not always strive with Man; tho' he is long suffering, he is not eternally so; there is a Degree of Provocation beyond the Endurance of Infinite Mercy, and there

SERM. there is a Time when the Day of Grace will  
 XIV. set, and that of Judgment will rise: he is  
 mighty to punish as well as to preserve, and  
 infinitely terrible as well as lovely. When  
 once his Vengeance is awakened, and his Re-  
 pentment stirred up, we shall feel what it  
 is to have wearied out such enduring Pa-  
 tience, and insulted such forgiving Good-  
 nefs.

THE conscious Remembrance of our ob-  
 stinate Folly and black Ingratitude, will one  
 Day stare us in the Face: And a thorough  
 Conviction that we have highly deserved  
 the worst that can be inflicted on us, will be  
 no inconsiderable Part of our Punishment,  
 since it will not leave us even the wretched  
 Comfort of complaining of the hardship of  
 our Sentence, and the Severity of our Judge,  
 but will oblige us, in despite of ourselves, to  
 confess what I am now going to prove in  
 the

IV<sup>th</sup> Place, that if we do finally miscarry,  
 and meet with eternal Death for our Portion,  
 we have no body to complain of but ourselves,  
 it is our own voluntary Choice, and we might  
 have

have prevented it if we would. *Why will ye* S E R M.  
*die?* The Misfortunes and Calamities of this XIV.  
World do indeed frequently overtake the  
most Provident and Industrious, and he that  
has used all Necessary Precaution to guard  
himself against Pain and Sicknes, Poverty  
and Disgrace, and other the Evils and Per-  
plexities of this Life, without any Fault  
or Mismanagement of his own, meet with  
Crosses and Disappointments, and be reduced  
to great Extremities by sudden and unfore-  
seen Accidents. But no Man can miscarry  
in his eternal Concern, and be made miserable  
in a Future State, but by his own Foolishness  
and ill Conduct. He cannot be ungodly by  
Chance, nor a Sinner against his Will:  
It is in the Power of ill Fortune to make  
him poor and despicable, but it can never  
make him wicked.

FOR tho' it must be granted, that we are  
set in the midst of many and great Dangers,  
they are neither more nor greater than every  
Man knows how to escape, if he will take  
Pains. We are exposed indeed to Tryals  
and Temptations, but no Temptation hath  
taken us but what is common to Men. God  
is

SERM. is faithful who will not suffer us to be tempted above what we are able, but will with the temptation make also a Way to escape it.

XIV.

THAT the sharpest of these Tryals is not insuperable, we make it evidently appear, by our cheerful and vigorous Resistance of them, whenever they stand in competition with our worldly Interests and Designs.

'TIS easy for Men to make some plausible Pretences, and alledge very specious Arguments to colour the Immorality of their Actions; they may urge in their defence the alluring Pleasures of Sense, and the irresistible bent of Nature to close with these Allurements; that the Vices forbidden us are of absolute Necessity, and the Virtues commanded as absolutely impracticable. But yet there is scarce any one that has not had so much Trial of his Faculties, as to be convinced that he can upon occasion abstain from the most alluring Acts of Sin, and perform the most difficult Achievements, and severest Duties the Gospel requires of its Professors.

I DO not assert that every particular *Christian* has performed every positive and negative

gative Precept on a religious Account, and S E R M. XIV. in pure Conformity to the Will of God (not but that I hope and am persuaded that there are very few who have not at some time or other of their Lives submitted to the far greatest Part of them, merely on Principles of Conscience) but this I dare affirm with greater certainty, that there is scarce a Man to be found, but what on some human and prudential consideration, and to serve some secular end at least, has cheerfully and readily accomplished the most tedious and ungrateful of those Actions, which when really and sincerely intended to the Glory of God, may justly be denominated Virtues; which is as substantial an Argument against the Plea of natural Incapacity, as if they were religious Actions indeed.

FOR which, I would fain know, of all the Duties of Religion is it, be our Aversion to it never so strong, which we cannot and do not surmount for the sake of our worldly Interest and Advantage? What Lust so craving and importunate, that we cannot and do not refuse to gratify, rather than hazard our Lives, ruin our Fortune or expose

SERM. pose our Reputations? There is no Passion  
 XVI. so exorbitant, no Affection so ardent, no  
 ~~~~~ Inclination so deep-rooted which we do not  
 daily tear from our Breasts and sacrifice to
 these Idols, whatever Weakness and Inability
 we pretend, when required to part with
 them for the sake of God.

To be more particular: Is it a pain to
 be Pious and Devout? Is it a toilsome and
 unreasonable Task to frequent Religious
 Assemblies and join in the Publick Worship
 God? Alas! How much more than this
 will the formal Hypocrite perform, mere-
 ly to make a show of Religion, without
 the Substance and Reality, and consequently
 without the Reward of it? And shall we do
 less for the Praise of God, than he for the
 Praise of Men? or is the Approbation of
 our Almighty Judge less worthy to be re-
 garded, than the false and mistaken Applause
 of our fellow Criminals?

AGAIN: Is it a Punishment to be restrain-
 ed from cursing and blaspheming, to be
 obliged to check our unmannerly Wit, and
 irreverent Buffoonry, and to confine our
 selves even in times of greatest Liberty to an
 innocent

innocent Mirth and inoffensive Freedom? S E R M.
As great a Restraint as it is, yet sometimes XIV.
the most petulant and profane, the most
hardened and habitual Swearers, in compliance with common Decency, and respect to the Company they are in, can put a Bridle on their Tongues, and abstain from such offensive and shocking Raillery.


Is Civility and good Breeding so much a more prevailing Principle than the Love of God? Has the Presence of a Man so much Awe upon us, and the Presence of God none?

Is it a severe and unreasonable Task to be obliged to mortify our fleshly Lusts, to deny the importunate Cravings of Nature, and abstain from the Enjoyment of unlawful Pleasure, though solicited by never so vehement Desires, and invited by never so fair Opportunities? This indeed is what too many are apt to complain of, as a very grievous and insupportable Yoke, as a rigid and merciless Imposition and Invasion of their natural Right. And yet this is nothing, if compared with those voluntary Severities which these very Murmurers in-

SERM. flit upon themselves. For where can there
 XIV. be any Self-denial equal to that of the pe-
 nurious wretched Miſer, who, to ſcrape to-
 gether an uſeleſs Treafure, foregoes all the Plea-
 ſures and Enjoyments of Life, ſubmits to the
 moſt vile and ſordid Shifts, denies himſelf
 not only Conveniences, but even Neceſſaries
 too, and is half-famiſhed in the miſt of
 Plenty?

NOR is the ambitious Man leſs eager in
 the purſuit of empty Honour. For this he
 does not ſcruple to expoſe himſelf to num-
 berleſs Hazards and Fatigues; he is not at
 all diſcouraged with the Hazard of Life or
 Loſs of Limbs, but makes it his Choice,
 when he might indulge himſelf in Eaſe and
 Quiet, to freeze in a Camp, or ſtarve in a
 Garrifon.

THESE, and a hundred other Inſtances
 which might be produced, are a ſufficient
 Confirmation how far the mere Power of
 Nature can go in reſiſting Temptation, in
 enabling us to defy both Pleaſure and Pain,
 and fortifying us as well againſt the Soft-
 neſſes and Blandiſhments of prosperous, as
 againſt the Tryals and Extremities of ad-
 verſe Fortune. If then by our natural
 Strength alone we are able to do and ſuffer

so much, with how much greater Ease may S E R M.
we undergo the same discipline on a religious XIV.
Account, where we are sure of the Assistance 
of Grace as well as of Nature? So that in
order to our becoming truly pious and good
Christians, it is not necessary for us, in
many Cases, to act any otherwise than we
do already, but only to perform the same
Action on better Principles; and sure, bare-
ly to intend and mean well, is no such hard
and rigorous Imposition.

LET us but be as temperate and sober, and
as moderate in the use of corporal Refresh-
ments, for the sake of God and a good Con-
science, as many of us are to escape a Fever,
and others on the score of good Husbandry,
and to save the Charges of a Debauch. Let
us mortify our carnal Lusts, and abstain from
fleshly Gratifications, not so much to pre-
serve our Health and Reputation (though
they also ought to be regarded) as to secure
our Title to Heaven, from the Inheritance
whereof all Whore-mongers and Adulterers
shall be for ever excluded. In fine, let us be
affectionately devout and zealous in God's
Service, not that we may gain the Applause
of Men, but that we may approve and re-
commend ourselves to our Heavenly Father,

SERM. *who seeth in secret, and will not fail to re-*
 XIV. *ward us openly.* For sure, there can be no

Endeavours so vain, no Labour so foolishly misplaced, as that of the Hypocrite, who with half the Pains he takes to appear a good Man, might be one in reality and good earnest.

THERE is nothing then so difficult in Religion, but what may be overcome by a willing Mind and settled Resolution; we all are furnished with sufficient Capacities to discharge our Duty to God as we ought, which requires nothing more of us, except a good Intent, than what we daily and customarily practise. Whatever our Obstructions and Discouragements are, 'tis certain our Assurances are as great. If we have spiritual Enemies to encounter, we have spiritual Armour to fortify us against them, if we will but be at the pains to put it on.

IN short, we know what our Duty is; we feel within ourselves a Power of performing it, through the Divine Assistance, which will never be wanting to such as faithfully implore it, and we know what will be the Consequence if we do not. So that in Case of our miscarriage after all, we must be looked upon as the Authors and Contrivers of our own Ruin; our Destruction

is of our selves, and if we will perish, we must. God himself has provided no Remedy for inveterate Obstinacy: And if his Calls and Invitations, his Threats and Promises, his Admonitions and Entreaties have none of them any Effect on us, we may thank our selves for what is like to befall us hereafter, and may charge all our Sufferings on our own incorrigible Stubborness and Perversity.


I HAVE now gone thro' the several Particulars I propos'd to treat of, the Reflection whereon might furnish us with divers very useful Inferences, which the Time not allowing me to insist on at large, I shall but just propose them as very proper and suitable Subjects for your private Meditations.

FROM the long-suffering of God then, and bearing with so many Indignities and Affronts before he proceeds to make us the Examples of his Justice, we may very naturally infer our Obligation to a like Deportment toward our offending Brethren. This is the only Condition on which we presume to ask for Pardon our selves; we desire our Heavenly Father to forgive us, but to the same Degree that we forgive others: And you know what became of that

SERM.hard hearted Servant, who after his Lord
 XIV. had freely remitted to him a very great and
 heavy Debt, had no compassion on his Fellow
 Servant, but caught him by the Throat, re-
 quired instant Payment, and, notwithstanding
 the Entreaties and Promises of the other,
 would allow him no time, but immediately
 cast him into Prison.

FROM this admirable Patience and Lenity
 of God, we may farther learn to avoid De-
 spair. Tho' every the least Sin is in its own
 Nature mortal, and renders us liable to eter-
 nal Vengeance, and tho' our own Sins are
 more in Number than the Hairs of our Head,
 and every one of them of a prodigious size;
 still let us not sink into Despondency and
 Dejection, nor give ourselves over for lost and
 reprobate. We have still a Refuge and Re-
 treat, and so long as there is Grace enough
 left in us to ask for Pardon, there is Good-
 ness enough in God to grant it.

AND as the consideration of the Slowness
 of God's Judgments may sufficiently arm us
 against Despair, so the Sureness of them may
 caution us against Presumption; 'tis dangerous
 trespassing too far even on Divine Goodness;
 'tis extreme Folly as well as inexcusable In-
 gratitude to irritate and defy, to slight and
 trifle

trifle with our Almighty Judge, in confidence S E R M.
of his long suffering and forbearance and with XIV.
an intended reserve of making him amends 
by a late Repentance and Submission. How
uncertain these Opportunities are and how
seldom embraced when offered, we very well
know: And surely then no wise Man will
build his everlasting Hopes on so sandy a
Foundation. It is possible indeed to work
out our Salvation, so long as we have the
Day before us, but no one knows how soon
the Night may overtake him, *in which no
Man can work.*

LET us remember the Argument St. Pe-
ter uses to some who he was aware would
flatter themselves, and draw some deceitful
Conclusions from the delay of God's Judg-
ments: *Beloved, says he, be not ignorant of
this one thing, that one Day is with the Lord
as a thousand Years, and a thousand Years
as one Day.* Tho' we Men are obliged to
watch Times and Opportunities, which,
when once slipped by, can never be recalled,
yet God is limited by no Time, and can ac-
complish his Purposes as well some Millions
of Ages hence, as at this present Moment.
All eternity to come is his proper Season,
the present Minute alone is securely ours,

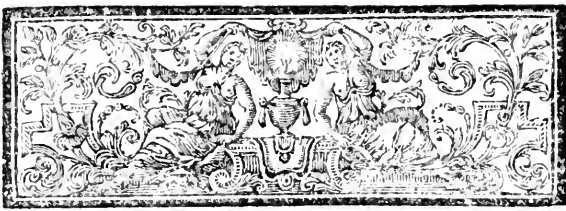
SERMON which we may improve to our everlasting
 XIV Salvation.

LECTURE V, from this Expostulation of God with sinful Man, *Why will ye die?* we may assuredly conclude that we are under no absolute, irresistible Decree of Reprobation. What we will, we chuse; now Choice implies a Power of refusing, or otherwise it is no Choice; and if we can indifferently either take or leave a thing, how can we be said to be absolutely and unconditionally determined to either? Would the Almighty thus reason the Case with us, and demand of us why we would do a thing which he himself had made it impossible for us not to do?

IF we do die then eternally, it is because we will; he has offered us the refusal of a far better Portion; and if we think fit, we may embrace it.

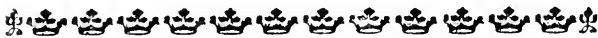
THAT we all may be so wise as to chuse the good Part that cannot be taken from us, and to remember the things that belong to our Peace, before they are hid from our Eyes,

God of his Infinite Mercy grant, &c.



S E R M O N XV.

No real Security in the World, without the Fear of God. Preached on the Thirtieth of *January*.



G E N. XX. II.

And Abraham said, Because I thought, surely the Fear of God is not in this Place, and they will slay me for my Wife's sake.




HIS is the Reply of *Abraham* to *Abimelech* King of *Gerar*, in whose Country he was now sojourning, and whom he had like to have betrayed into a fatal Error, by causing his

S E R M.
XV.

SERM. his Wife *Sarah* to pass under the Notion
 XV. of his Sister; upon which the King took
 her home to his House, with no dishonour-
 able Design, but believing her to be un-
 engaged by any conjugal Tie, and at li-
 berty to become his Wife.

BUT being warned of God in a Dream,
 that he was going to invade anothers Right,
 and he and his Kingdom threatned with
 severe Plagues, if he did not restore her
 untouched to her lawful Husband; he
 readily obeys the Divine Admonition, and,
 without violating her Honour, gives her
 back to the Patriarch again, with whom he
 thus expostulates; *What hast thou done
 unto us? And what have I offended thee,
 that thou hast brought on me and on my King-
 dom a great Sin? What sawest thou, that
 thou hast done this thing?* To which *Abra-
 ham* replies, in the Words of the Text;
*Because I thought, surely the Fear of God is
 not in this Place, and they will slay me for
 my Wife's sake.*

WHETHER the holy Patriarch did not in
 this Proceeding depart from that Faithful-
 ness and Sincerity which were peculiar to
 his Character, I shall not now inquire;
 this

this is certain, that as the best Men were not S E R M.
without their Failings, so the holy Pen-men XV.
were seldom backward in recording them, 
in order to destroy the Boast of sinless Per-
fection, and mortify the Pride of Pharisaical
Pretenders.

NOR does it sufficiently appear what it
was that induced him to pass so severe a
Censure on the Country in which he was
sojourning, as to conclude with himself, *that*
the Fear of God was not in that Place.

THE King himself (whose good or ill
Manners have usually no small Influence on
the Subjects) one would judge by the Story,
to have been a good Man: At least he was
so in this particular Case; in confidence
whereof he in this manner justifies himself
before God: *In the Integrity of my Heart*
and Innocence of my Hands have I done
this. And God, we see, admitted of his
Plea so far as to make him this Reply;
Yea, I know that thou didst this in the In-
tegrity of thy Heart; for I also withheld
thee from sinning against me; therefore suf-
fered I thee not to touch her.


NOR does King *Abimelech* vindicate his
own Innocence only, but that of his Peo-
ple

SERM. ple too; *Lord, says he, wilt thou slay an*
 XV. *innocent Nation?* And when he arose in the
 Morning, and declared to his Servants what
 God had said to him, we are told *the Men*
were sore afraid.

THESE things, I say, considered, it is
 not so evident whether *Abraham* had suf-
 ficient Reason to conclude as he did, that
the Fear of God was not in that Place.

It may indeed be alledged on the other
 hand, that the Men were Idolaters, as the
 generality of the World at that Time were;
 that this nocturnal Vision, wherein the Al-
 mighty was pleased to reveal himself to *Abi-*
melech, might possibly be the very first Notice
 he had ever had of the true God; that the
 Conversion of his Subjects was subsequent
 to his own, and both to *Abraham's* Obser-
 vation of their being without the Fear of
 God, which, at the time when he made it,
 might have been very true.

BUT whether his Observation was just or
 not, the Consequence he infers from it,
 was undoubtedly so; for admitting it to be
 true, that *the Fear of God was not in that*
Place, he had all the Reason in the World
 to conclude as he did, *that they would*
have

have slain him, for his Wife's sake. For SERM.
thus we may suppose the good Man to have XV.
reasoned within himself: 

“ I am going to dwell in a strange
“ Country, and in the midst of an Idolatrous
“ People: I have no Friend nor Interest in
“ the Place, nor any other Security to trust
“ to, but the Conscience and Uprightness
“ of the Inhabitants: But that they have
“ any great share of either of these, their
“ barbarous Manners, their profane Way
“ of Living, and the small Regard they have
“ for Religion, give me little Encourage-
“ ment to expect; so that I shall not only
“ be exposed myself, but all that is dear to
“ me; and which is dearer than all, my
“ virtuous and loyal Consort; the Desire of
“ my Eyes, and the Partner of my Hopes,
“ who is now pregnant with the promised
“ Heir, through whom all Nations of the
“ Earth are to be blessed. That she has
“ such a Beauty on which even a Prince
“ may be enamoured, I have formerly ex-
“ perienced in the Court of *Pharaoh*, nor
“ do I perceive it yet declining, notwith-
“ standing her advancement in Years. If
“ therefore (as 'tis not improbable) the very
“ same

SERM. “ same Case should fall out here, which
 XV. “ once befel me in *Egypt*; what shall
 ~~~~~ “ hinder a Man in Power, that fixes his  
 “ Inclinations on her, and sees me standing  
 “ between him and his Desires, to dispatch  
 “ a hated Rival, and deprive me at once of  
 “ my Life and her? ”

THESE, I say, we may suppose to have been his Thoughts, and (if we allow for his Forgetfulness of Providence in the Case, which could have interposed to his Rescue, had the Danger that threatned him been far greater than it was) they must be allowed to have been very just ones.

FOR this I take to be an undoubted Truth, and shall make it the Business of my present Discourse to prove it so, and to confirm it, as by other Instances, so particularly by that consummate and unexampled Villany, which was perpetrated on this Day; the Foundation whereof I shall shew to have been laid in the rank Infidelity of the principal Authors of it, notwithstanding other specious and hypocritical Pretences, with which it was varnished over: I will engage, I say, to make good the Truth of this Position, that where there is no Fear of  
 God,

God, nor Sense of Religion, no Man's Life SERM.  
or Property can be secure: Without this, XV.  
Men would live like Beasts of Prey, on Spoil and Rapine; they would perpetually be plundering, or supplanting, or slaying one another, for their Wive's sake, or for their Inheritance sake, or for their Preferments sake, or whatsoever else one Man possesses, that is desirable by another, who has either the Strength or the Cunning to get it from him.

WHAT any Man loves, he naturally desires to possess, and does not fail to get it into his Power, unless restrained by some very prevalent Motives; and a strong one indeed it must be, that can oblige a Man to so high a Piece of Self-denial, as to abstain from the Enjoyment of what he most eagerly desires, when an Opportunity of enjoying it, is put into his Hands.

CONSIDERING then how there can be nothing valuable in my Esteem, but what may be so in my Neighbours too: how there is nothing which one Man thinks worth the keeping, but another may think worth the getting: Considering again how much one Man is in the Power of another; how many

SERM. many private and clandestine ways they  
 XV. might invent to dispossess one another of  
 their Right, if they were not withheld  
 by the Checks of Conscience and the Fear  
 of an After-reckoning; these things, I  
 say, considered, 'tis apparent that all the  
 Security we enjoy is wholly owing to  
 Religion; which once destroyed, no pub-  
 lick or private Faith could be any longer  
 binding: All Government must be, of  
 course, unhinged, all Societies dismembered,  
 and Mankind be reduced to the utmost Dis-  
 order and Confusion.

ALL that can be pretended in opposition  
 to this Assertion is, That there are other  
 Principles which would suffice to keep the  
 World in order, and prevent that mutual  
 Decay of Confidence, and the final Dissolu-  
 tion of Commonwealths, tho' all Religion  
 were laid aside, tho' we had no notion at all  
 of another World, nor of a God that pre-  
 sides in this.

BUT how far this Plea will hold good,  
 we shall soon perceive, after I have examin-  
 ed those other Principles which may be sup-  
 posed to supply the place of Religion, and  
 represented to you what Influence they  
 would



would have in the Government of human Affairs, if the other were once discarded.

SERM.  
XV.  


Now there are but three Pretences to this Effect, that can with any Colour be alledged; first, the Terror of human Laws, next a Sense of Honour or moral Honesty; and thirdly, the Necessity of mutual Convenience. But that either or all of these would be very insufficient for the Purposes before-mentioned, it will be no difficult Task to prove. And

FIRST I shall shew, that Human Laws alone, without the additional Restraint of the Fear of God, would be a very insufficient Fence for Property against the Insults and Irruptions of such as are minded to invade it.

HERE then (to give the Objection all possible Advantage) we will suppose a System of the best and wisest Laws, that the most renowned Legislators of all Ages and Nations have enacted: By these our imaginary Commonwealth shall be established, by these the Manners of the People shall be regulated; nay, we will farther allow the Execution of them to be in the Hands of most prudent and discerning Statesmen.


SERM. BUT then, on the other hand, we are to  
 XV. suppose no Fear of God in the place, no  
 ~~~~~ Conscience directing the People to be sub-  
 ject, nor the Magistrates to rule with Equi-
 ty and Justice: The one paying Obedience
 because they must, and the others ruling
 with Moderation, because they dare not do
 otherwise: so long I mean, as there is an
 equal Balance of Power between them:
 But as either of them happened to gain upon
 the other, the Natural Consequence of such
 an Encrease of Power would be, Sedition
 on the one hand, or Tyranny on the other.
 For such an exorbitant Power, wherever
 lodged, is above the Law, and consequent-
 ly can never be restrained by it.

WHAT a weak and insignificant Refuge
 would it be, to oppose Ink and Parchment
 to Fire and Sword? what a jest of an Argu-
 ment to talk of Right and Property, and
 quote Statutes and Records against such a
 prevailing Power, as is able to cancel the
 old Laws, and impose new ones at its Plea-
 sure? It is to some Purpose indeed to shew
 the Evidences of a Man's Title, and to urge
 the Plea of rightful Possession by Inheritance
 or Purchase, or any other legal Acquisi-
 tion

tion, to such as have a Notion of Right and Wrong, and who live in a settled belief of an over-ruling Power, that is a Hater of all Iniquity, and first or last will be a strict Avenger of it. But, we are now supposing the Invader of his Neighbour's Property to be void of any such Principles, to have no Sense of Religion or Remorse of Conscience, and withal to be arrived at the height of Power, so as to be uncontroulable by any Human Laws.


WHO, in that Case, could presume to call any thing his own; who should have the Misfortune to live under such a lawless Dominion? What must he not tamely and submissively surrender, tho' ever so dear to him, however necessary to his Subsistence, tho' his Right to it be ever so clear and evident, when once it is demanded of him by an absolute over-bearing Might, that will hearken to no Reason, and allow of no Contradiction?

OR let us suppose such an exorbitant Power to be lodged in the Hands, not of a single Person, but of a Number of ungodly Men: Who shall dare to oppose their destructive Measures, or hinder them from

SERM. proceeding to the utmost Degree of Oppression that the Dictates of Ambition, Malice, XV.  Revenge, or Sensuality, or any other unruly Passion may suggest to them?

UNDER both these Kinds of Arbitrary Sway, both of a single Tyrant, and a confederated Band of Tyrannical Oppressors, did this poor Nation groan, for near twenty Years together, at that unhappy Time, the Miseries whereof we are now deploring, and which brought forth that black and never to be forgotten Tragedy, our hearty Detestation and Abhorrence whereof we are this Day met to testify.

THE insolent and audacious Upstart, who for several Years governed under the Name of a Protector, but with a far more than Regal Power, gave a full Demonstration, after once he had got the Reins into his Hands, how little he regarded either Human or Divine Laws, tho' before his Advancement he had been one of the loudest in his Pretences to a wonderful Zeal for the Preservation both of Religion and Liberty. His shew of a Concern for the pure worship of God, and of a Love for his Country, were the Steps by which he climbed to that unnatural Height; but after he

he was risen, his Behaviour from that Time S E R M.
 abundantly convinced the World, how far he XV.
 was from being acted by either of those Prin- 
 ciples: since wickeder Maxims of Policy
 were never prescribed by *Machiavel* himself,
 than those he had Recourse to, both in the
 Acquisition and the Exercise of his Autho-
 rity: Whatever Commandments of God
 stood in the Way of his Designs, he charged
 through them all without Reluctance:
 Blood and Slaughter, Rapine and Plunder,
 Falshood and Diffimulation, Sedition, Trea-
 son, and even Regicide itself were innocent
 and commendable Practices with him. Nay
 according to his hypocritical Grimace and
 the Cant of the Times, all this was doing
 a godly Work, and serving the Lord's Cause.

WILL it be alledged that this at least
 was an Acknowledgment of a Divine Be-
 ing, and consequently ought to acquit him
 of the Charge of Infidelity, how criminal
 soever we allow him to have been in other
 Respects? I answer, that they who make
 so free with such sanctified Expressions,
 and take the Divine Name in their Mouths,
 only to patronize their Transgression of the
 Divine Will, and in Vindication of such

SERM. Deeds, as, according to all the Notions we
 XV. have of a supreme Being, are most odious
 and offensive to him; do but add Hypocri-
 sify to their Irreligion, and give no better
 a Proof of their being true Believers, than
 wicked and profligate Swearers, who call
 upon God indeed by Name, but 'tis only
 to breath Defiance to him by their profane
 Oaths and Curfes.

SURELY a Man that could wade through
 such a Depth of Wickedness, with so lit-
 tle Compunction as the Usurper did, and
 overleap all the Bars and Fences that Religion
 has placed in our Way to keep us within
 due Bounds, may without Breach of Cha-
 rity be presumed not to have been governed
 by that Principle in the Conduct of his
 Actions.

AND as little Influence had the Love of
 his Country upon him, which was another
 of his plausible Pretences. He appeared in-
 deed at the beginning of the Troubles a-
 mong the clamorous and discontented, set
 up for a Patriot, complained of Misgovern-
 ment and evil Counsellours, called aloud
 for redress of Grievances, and took up
 Arms

Arms in the popular Cause of Liberty and Property. SERM.
XV.

BUT when, in the Course of that great Rebellion, he had clamoured, cajoled, intrigued, and (to allow him that which in Justice cannot be denied him) fought himself up from one Degree of military Promotion to another, till at last the Management of all Affairs, and intire Disposal of all Promotions, Military, Civil, and Ecclesiastical, centred in himself alone; did he then remember his former Professions, did he behave himself with such a tender regard to the Rights of the Subjects, did he refrain from all Acts of Violence, and make the Laws of the Land the Rule and Measure of his Administration?

NOTHING of all this: No Ties or Obligations were strong enough to hold him; he broke through all the Fundamentals of our Constitution, and treated the great Charter of the Kingdom (the great and known Bulwark of *English* Liberty) in the most opprobrious and contemptuous Terms: Not contented with the barbarous and execrable Murder of his Royal Master, the best and most gracious of Princes, driving his

SERM. Royal Progeny into Exile, and seeking the
 XV. total Extirpation of his Race, by many
 ~~~~~  
 cruel and unnatural Devices; he cut off  
 many of his old Accomplices, when they  
 offered to stop short, and refused to go his  
 length, put whom he pleased in Prison or  
 to Death; raised Taxes, levied Troops,  
 made Laws, all by his own Authority, or  
 sometimes (for Form's Sake) with the Con-  
 currence of a nominal Parliament, entirely  
 devoted to his Will; or whom, if they pre-  
 tended to contradict his Measures, he ca-  
 shiered with as little Ceremony, as he  
 would have used to the meanest of his Do-  
 mesticks.

WHO does not see that Laws so made,  
 and so executed, were far worse than none,  
 and that it was an high Aggravation of the  
 Miseries the poor People endured, to be  
 mocked with being told, that they were  
 dealt with according to Law; when it was  
 obvious to their Eyes, that unless they paid  
 the most unlimited and slavish Obedience to  
 an arbitrary Will, the Law would afford  
 them no Relief, whatever Damages they  
 sustained; that they might meet with a  
 Storm, where they fled for Shelter from a  
 Shower,



Show, and if they sought a Redress of their Grievances, be more heavily aggrieved for seeking it? SERM.  
XV.

AND thus we see of how little Effect the municipal Laws of any Country are toward the good Government of it, or to the curbing of an over-grown Oppressor, where the Fear of God and Influences of Religion are wanting.

BUT let us now suppose such an unruly Power to be in the Hands, not of a single Tyrant, but of a number of Miscreants banded together for ungodly Purposes. Can any Laws of Man's devising keep them within their Bounds? Not in the least, as we may judge by the other Conspirators of those Times, those especially who signed the bloody Warrant for the Execution of the Royal Martyr, who were Men as completely wicked as the Instigations of Satan could make them.

WAS not their Proceeding an open and bare-faced Opposition to the known Laws of the Land? Was not their High-Commission-Court itself illegal, and every Instance of Violence they used toward the King, an Act of Treason and Rebellion, if  
the

SERM. the Law could have taken Place against  
XV. them?

~ BUT what are Laws to Men that govern by the Sword, and execute all their Purposes by brutal Force? They were linked together by a Community of Guilt, and had gone too far already not to proceed farther. They continued so united, till mutual Distrusts and underhand Practises among them, whilst each had it in his Thoughts to have the largest share of Power (which 'tis natural to expect in such a Confederacy, where there is no cement of Religion) set them at Variance. However they tyrannized it long enough, under one Form of Government or other, to convince the World that they had as little Religion as they had Loyalty; that their affected Patriotism was but Ambition, and their Godliness nothing but Gain; they made the unhappy Subjects feel the Weight of their usurped Dominion, and taught them, by costly Experience, to reflect on their own Infatuation, in lying down so tamely under those real and substantial Grievances from the Hands of their fellow Subjects, at the Shadow of which they had started, under

der the Government of an unquestionably SERM.  
rightful Sovereign. XV.

I WILL conclude this Head with one Ob-  
servation, that will fully make good my  
Point of Insufficiency of Human Laws to-  
ward the keeping Mankind in Order and  
Subjection, where they are not enforced by  
the Fear of God.

SUPPOSE then I have sustained some great  
and intolerable Injury from my Neighbour,  
or a Succession of injurious Acts, and live still  
under the constant Apprehension of suffering  
farther at his Hands: Where shall I seek  
my Redress; or what Course shall I take in  
order to obtain Satisfaction for what is past,  
and Security from future Wrongs? Seek your  
Remedy at Law, you will say. But how shall  
I prove my Damage? By the Testimony of  
Neighbours. Suppose he brings more Evi-  
dence to attest the contrary? They must an-  
swer upon Oath. True, but suppose the  
Men have no belief of a God, nor any Sense  
of Religion, what signifies an Oath to them?  
'Tis like swearing a *Jew* by the Contents  
of the New Testament, of which he profes-  
ses not to believe a Syllable.

THIS

SERM. THIS then is the plain State of the Case,  
 XV. that if all Religious Notions were once to be  
 laid aside, human Laws would lose all their  
 Force, and could afford us no Relief, as  
 being deprived of the only Method they  
 have, of arriving at the sure Knowledge of  
 Facts, in order to form a righteous Judg-  
 ment, namely, the Confirmation of an  
 Oath, which is a Religious Act. But


SECONDLY, it may be farther alledged,  
 that in Supply of this Defect, we have a-  
 nother Security to trust to, keeping Religion  
 still out of the Question; and that is, the  
 Sense of Honour or Moral Honesty: That  
 noble and generous Minds, without being  
 affected by the belief of any invisible Power,  
 and tho' never so safe from the Cogni-  
 zance of the civil Magistrate, will not on-  
 ly refrain from all Acts of Violence and Op-  
 pression, but willingly depart from their own  
 Right, will do many courteous, condescend-  
 ing and self denying things, from a certain  
 innate Principle of Benignity, and a delight  
 in contributing to the Happiness of others.  
 That Men would do good Offices and re-  
 frain from ill ones, because it is decent and  
 reputable

reputable and agreeable to the Dictates of S E R M.  
right Reason. XV.

To which I answer: First, that this Expedient comes with an ill Grace from the Mouth of an Unbeliever, and one who professedly contends for the Cause of Irreligion: As being directly opposite to the Fundamental Doctrine of his great Master *Hobbes*, who allows of no such thing as moral Honesty, but asserts, that in the State of Nature, before Necessity taught Men to unite into Societies, and to agree in the Observation of certain Laws, under certain Penalties, all was a State of War, that every Man was naturally every other Man's Foe, that Self-preservation and Self-love were the only innate Principles, that each individual Person is strongly inclined to keep what he can, and get what he can, and that nothing else withholds him from carving for himself to his own Heart's content, but the Awe of the Magistrate's Sword, *i. e.* in short, that every Man would be a Villain if he durst. Which Principle of his, tho' it is very wicked and injurious, in ascribing all that Abstinence from Mischief, that might be done and is not done in the World, solely to his  
*Levi-*

SERM. *Leviathan* of Common-wealth, *i. e.* to the  
 XV. Laws of the State, without allotting any Part  
 of that Merit to the Dread of an Almighty  
 Being, which in Justice ought to claim the  
 much larger Share of it; yet if he had divided  
 the Effect between the two Causes, he  
 might have come much nearer the Truth.

FOR if I knew a Man, that I was sure  
 had no regard to the Laws of God, and  
 could easily elude those of Man, I must  
 freely confess I should be willing to place but  
 small Confidence in his Moral Honesty, as  
 resting on no settled and established Rule.  
 Some Men, it is true, are cast in a softer  
 Mold, and are, by their natural Frame, of  
 a more tender and delicate Disposition than  
 others; they are more prone to Compassion,  
 and more ready to melt at the Sight of  
 a miserable Object. Some again are born  
 with an unconquerable Bashfulness, and o-  
 thers have strong Impressions of Fear upon  
 their Spirits, which restrain them from some  
 faulty Liberties that are taken by the more  
 audacious and undaunted. To such as these  
 we may ascribe somewhat of a complexional  
 Virtue, and that's the most that can be made  
 of it, if none of their Actions proceed from  
 a Sense

a Sense of Duty, and they have no Aim or S E R M.  
Desire of pleasing God, when they either do XV.  
Good or refrain from Ill. 


BUT the number of these is but small, in proportion to the Bulk of Mankind, and may be reckoned among those weak ones, of whom the stronger would make a Prey, not barely as Mr. *Hobbes* affirms, if it were not for the restraint of Laws, which is but half the Truth, but, which is the whole Truth, if there were neither Law nor Conscience to restrain them.

IN a word; If there be such a thing as mere moral Honesty, wholly abstracted from any formal Belief of a God, or a future State; it must at least take its rise from a former habitual Persuasion of those necessary Truths, not yet so thoroughly obliterated and effaced, as the Unbeliever himself imagines.

I WILL confirm the Doctrine of this Head likewise, (as I did that of the former) by an Instance drawn from the History of the Day. You have seen already, how neither the Laws of God nor Man were able to check the Fury of those blood-thirsty Parricides; they had stifled their Belief of the one, and  
I were

SERM. were Masters of the other. And what  
 XV. then could be sufficient to withstand their  
 Force? Could such feeble Restraints as Honour or moral Honesty keep those back from their wicked Purpose, who could not be stopped in their Career by Discouragements so much more cogent? Would they be held by a Hair, who had broke a Cable? Could they be expected to blush at the thought of an Action's being indecent, who did not shrink at the Thought of its being damnable? Could they be shocked upon the Recollection of their Undutifulness to their King, who had cast off their Allegiance to the King of Kings? They were grown hard in Wickedness by the frequent and familiar Practice of it, and were past relenting: The Sight of distressed Majesty, and suffering Innocence joined together, might raise Compassion in common Breasts, but only served to whet their Rage and strengthen their Resolutions. They had now their Prince at Mercy, who had been treacherously betrayed into their Hands, and were backed with such a Force, as enabled them to deal with him as they pleased; they were conscious of what they had done




to provoke him, and, as it is the natural SERM.  
Effect of guilty Fear, to make Men despe- XV.  
rately cruel, they concluded there could be   
no Security for them, whilst he remained  
alive. They hated his Person, they affected  
his Power; they had loosened themselves  
from the Apprehensions of future Venge-  
ance from that All-sovereign and All-tre-  
mendous Being, by whom Kings reign,  
and whom they were going most daringly  
to insult in the Person of his anointed Vice-  
gerent. They were impatient to share a-  
mong themselves the Spoils and Wreck of  
over-turned Monarchy.


AND if in the Height of these Expecta-  
tions, some latent Sparks of Shame or Ho-  
nour, or Gratitude, or any softer Principle,  
were still unextinguished in any of their  
Breasts, and gently whisper'd them: "Let the  
" Mischiefs already done, and the Blood al-  
" ready spilled be sufficient; but let us forbear  
" the shedding of Royal Blood, and commit-  
" ting such an outrage, as the World will be-  
" hold with Horror and Detestation:" If, I  
say, any such recoiling Sentiments were stir-  
ing in any of their Breasts; what wonder is it,  
if that still Voice was not heard, when drown-

SERMON. ed by the louder Cries of Avarice and Ambition, which thundred in their Ears: *Come XV. let us kill him, and the Inheritance will be ours?*

BUT I mentioned a third Expedient or Principle, that might be urged by the Advocates for Infidelity, as sufficient to keep the World in order, and prevent the Dissolution of Civil Society, even admitting the several Members of which the Society consists, to be altogether unaffected by any religious Sentiments; and that is Necessity, or mutual Convenience, the Validity of which Plea is now to be considered. What Occasion is there, these Unbelievers may say, for calling in the Aid of an Invisible Power, and the Terrors of another World, to induce Men to be honest and social and Promoters of the common Good, or restrain them from Acts of Violence and Oppression, since those deeper rooted and more affecting Principles of Self-Interest and Self-Preservation, together with their Experience and Observations on what passes in the World, and on the Nature of Mankind, will answer the same End full as well, and soon convince them that they must act in such a manner

ner as to encourage the Peace and Prosperity SERM.  
of that Community where their Lot is fal- XV.  
len, and not be Disturbers of it, if they   
desire to live in Ease and Security, and  
maintain their Title to what they are  
possessed of? Such Persons may alledge that  
a small Degree of Logick will bring a Man  
to such Conclusions as these. “ If I do no  
“ good to my Neighbours, my Neighbours  
“ will do none to me: If I bear a share of  
“ no other Man’s Burden, no one will bear  
“ a share of mine: If I oppress or invade  
“ another’s Property, I must expect to be  
“ oppressed in my turn, and to have my  
“ own Property invaded: If I do not con-  
“ tribute in my Proportion to the common  
“ Cause, others will withdraw themselves,  
“ as well as I, and all must of necessity go  
“ to Confusion.” That a Reflection on  
such Consequences, and a Sense of these  
Self-evident Truths, will suffice to hold  
the Members of Bodies Politick together,  
as by a sort of tacit Compact, and prevent the  
decay of Common-wealths.

BUT, in Answer to this, let us see now,  
how precarious every Man’s Estate would  
be, if this were the only governing Prin-

SERM. ciple. The Goods of Fortune, as the  
 XV. World now stands, are known to be very  
 unequally distributed; some are very scantily, some not at all provided for, whilst others have large Possessions, either derived from their Ancestors, or of their own accumulating; and this unequal Distribution is cheerfully acquiesced in, by those in the lowest Circumstances and Conditions, so long as they have the Fear of God before their Eyes, and are taught, by Religion, to respect their Superiors, and be contented with their Lot.


BUT if once the Generality of the meaner Sort, were to lay aside all Notions of a future State, and Infidelity were to extend as far, as some, no less impolitically than impiously, are labouring to spread it: If Husbandmen and Mechanicks were to become as Free-thinkers as some Gentlemen of the Age; would they not, do you believe, become very soon as free Actors? Would they not feel their own Strength, and be sensible that the Weight of their Numbers would procure for them a more ample and comfortable Provision, upon a Supposition that Right and Wrong were empty Names and a frivolous Distinction? Now

Now suppose a powerful Confederacy S E R M,  
of such Mutineers and Levellers to enter, XV.  
with an armed Force, into the Possessions  
of a Man of plentiful Fortunes, and demand to have the sharing his Effects among them; how would he endeavour to divert them from their Purpose? Would he tell them they ought to forbear such Encroachments, with respect to that mutual Convenience, without which Society could not be upheld? Might they not, in such a Case, be expected to answer: It may be for your Convenience, who live in Ease and Plenty, and enjoy all that your Heart can wish, that Matters should continue as they are, and nothing disturb the present Tranquillity: But 'tis for ours to procure an Alteration, with a new Partition and Allotment of Property, by which we may be very great Gainers, and can be no Losers?

CONSIDER only, for how short a Space any Crew of *Banditti* or *Buccaneers*, or other publick Robbers have been united and held together by the Force of this Principle, and on how ill Terms they have subsisted, whilst the abler bodied and more athletic  
among

SERM. among them. has used as little Ceremony  
 XV. in taking what he liked from such of his own  
 Band as were unable to cope with him, as  
 the whole combined Fraternity have done,  
 with regard to honest People that have fal-  
 len into their Hands; and you will soon be  
 convinced, that the Notion of mutual Con-  
 venience, and of the necessity of adhering  
 to the common Cause, will go but a little  
 Way in the Regulation of human Affairs,  
 and is but a poor *Succedaneum* to the aw-  
 ful Remonstrances of Conscience, and the  
 Dread of an avenging Deity.

THE Murderers of this Day may serve  
 as an Instance on this Head likewise. If  
 ever there was a Number of Men, whose  
 common Interest it was to stick close to-  
 gether, and unite in the same Measures, it  
 was that infamous Pack of Regicides, who  
 had gone such Lengths in Treason and Re-  
 bellion, and whose Hands had been so deep  
 in Blood: They could hope for no other  
 Event from a Dis-union among themselves,  
 but that their rightful Prince should, in the  
 End, take the Advantage of their Divisions,  
 and be restored to his just Inheritance. But  
 instead of consulting this their mutual  
 Convenience,

Convenience, the mutual Distrusts they SERM.  
entertained of each other, and the separate XV.  
Views they inwardly cherished, very dif-   
ferent from their open and avowed Maxims,  
drove them on to many and great Incon-  
sistencies in Politicks, to frequent Shiftings  
and Variations in their Conduct, till by  
their subsequent Acts and Declarations they  
exposed, and made both odious and ridi-  
culous their former Measures, and contri-  
buted at last to that End, which they least  
intended and were most averse to, the hap-  
py Restoration.

UPON the whole, I think it has been  
made sufficiently evident, that the Fear of  
God is the only sure Band of Society, and  
that all other Ties, when Religion is gone,  
are but Fetters of Straw, and Ropes of  
Sand.

FOR the good of the Community there-  
fore, as well as for the Sake of our own  
everlasting Welfare, let us hold fast to our  
Principles, and look upon the Divine Pro-  
tection as our best Support, and not be  
drawn aside by the Chimerical Schemes of  
those refined Politicians, who dream of a  
World without a God, and of Government  
without Religion.

SERM. OR whatever fashionable Tenets, to keep  
 XV. in Countenance fashionable Vices, are im-  
 ported from abroad, by fluttering and un-  
 thinking Travellers, who, that they may  
 not be said to have brought home nothing,  
 return with Poison and Infection; whatever  
 loose Notions I say, are propagated by them  
 elsewhere, let us at least keep these Fountains  
 of Religion and Learning clear and unpol-  
 luted. Let no such Apostates from the  
 Faith, be found or suffered among us, as, in-  
 stead of cultivating and planting, are per-  
 versely industrious, in rooting up and de-  
 stroying the good Seed that is here sown,  
 and who seem to have no greater Ambition  
 than to turn these Seminaries of Piety and  
 sound Erudition, into Nests of Debauchery  
 and Factories for the Devil.

THAT all such ungodly Purposes may  
 be defeated and come to nothing,

*God of his Infinite Mercy grant, &c.*

END of the FIRST VOLUME.











