

T H E
L I F E and C H A R A C T E R

O F T H E L A T E R E V E R E N D

Mr. *JONATHAN EDWARDS*,

PRESIDENT of the COLLEGE at NEW-JERSEY.

Together with a Number of his

S E R M O N S

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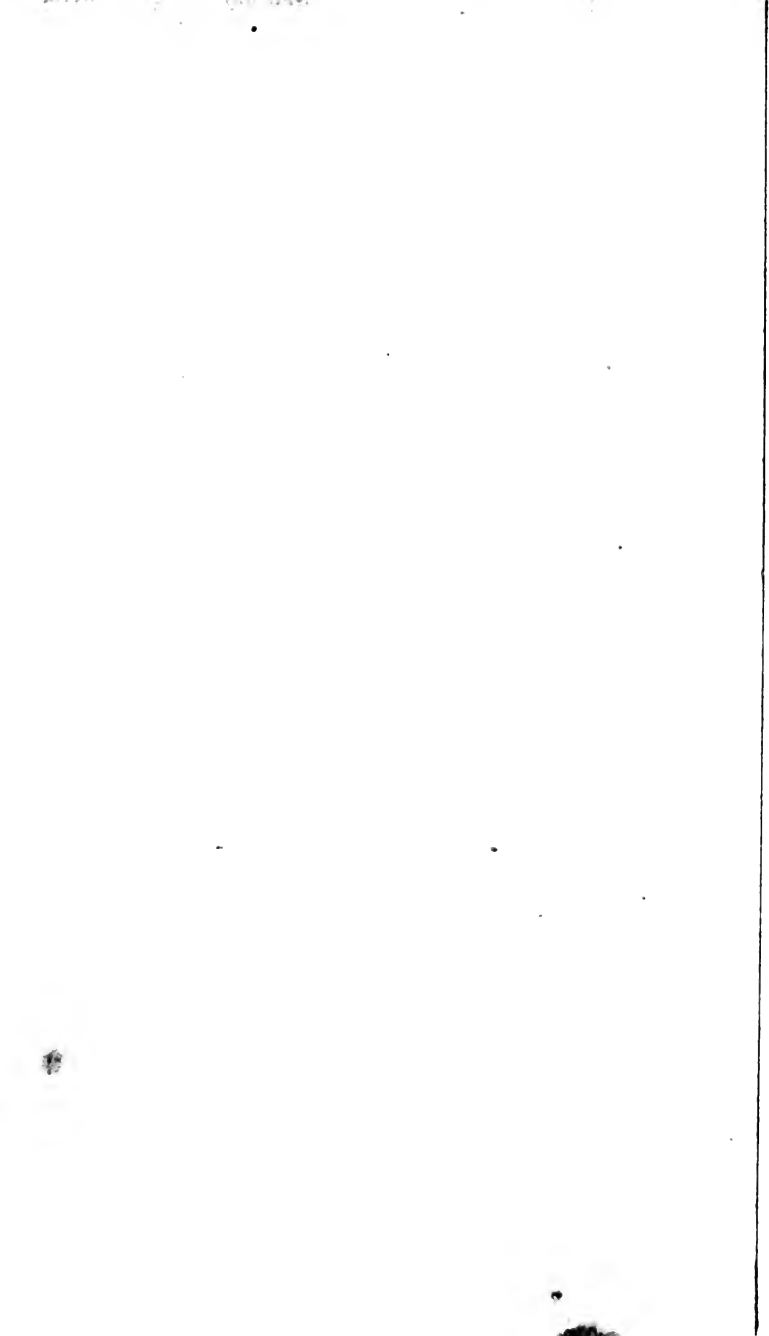
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T H E
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O F T H E

L A T E R E V E R E N D , L E A R N E D A N D P I O U S

M R . J O N A T H A N E D W A R D S ,

S o m e T i m e M I N I S T E R o f t h e G o s p e l a t *Northampton*,
i n *New-England*, a n d t h e n M I S S I O N A R Y t o t h e
I N D I A N S a t *Stockbridge*, a n d a f t e r t h a t P R E S I D E N T
o f N E W - J E R S E Y C O L L E G E .

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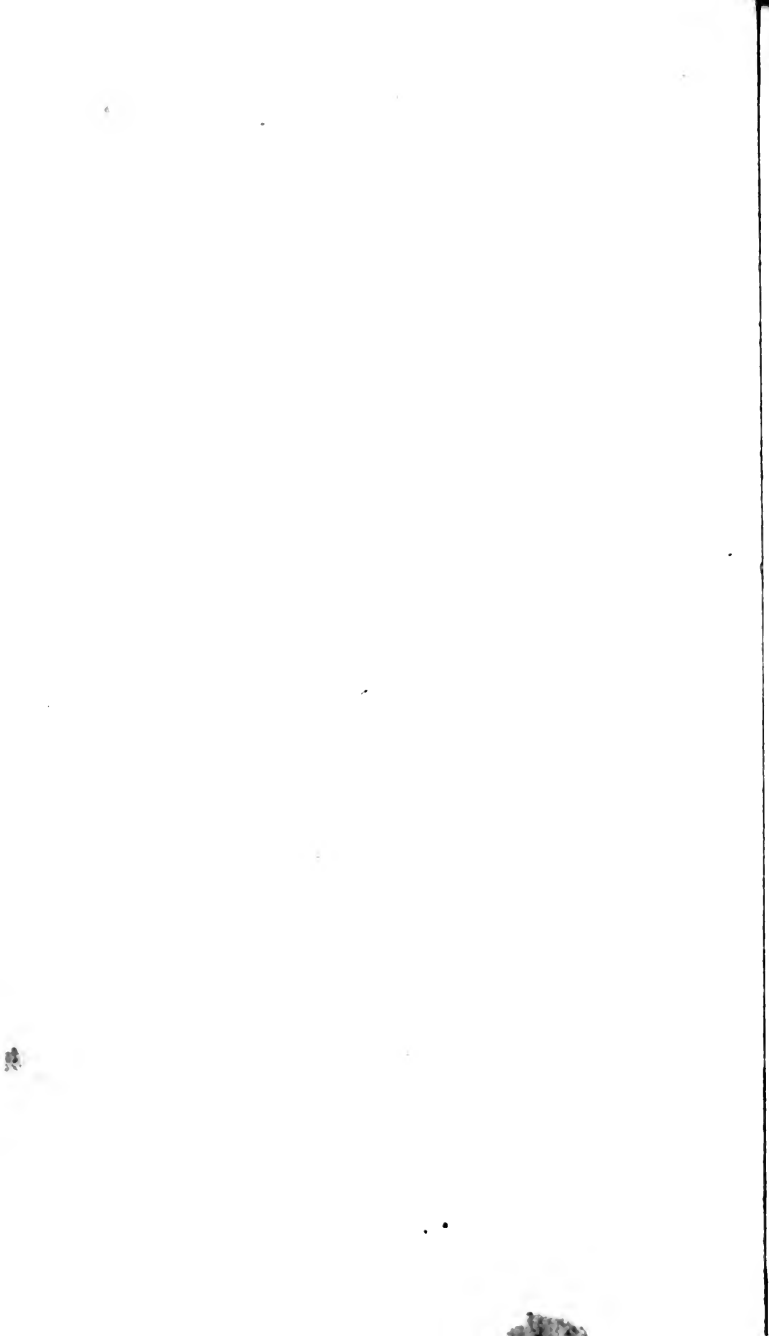
“ The sweet Remembrance of the Just
“ Shall flourish when he sleeps in Dust.

P S A L . 1 1 2 . 6

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The P R E F A C E.

PRESIDENT EDWARDS, in the esteem of all the judicious, who were well acquainted with him, either personally, or by his writings, was one of the greatest——best——and most useful of men, that have lived in this age.

He discover'd himself to be one of the greatest of divines, by his conversation, preaching and writings : One of remarkable strength of mind, clearness of thought, and depth of penetration, who well understood, and was able, above most others, to vindicate the great doctrines of christianity.

And no one perhaps has been in our day, more universally esteemed and acknowledged to be a bright christian, an eminently good man. His love to God and man ; his zeal for God and his cause ; his uprightness, humility, self-denial, and weanedness from the world ; his close walk with God ; his conscientious, constant and universal obedience, in all exact and holy ways of living : In one word, the goodness, the holiness of h's heart, has been as evident and conspicuous, as the uncommon greatness and strength of his understanding.

And that this distinguished light has not shone in vain, there are a cloud of witnesses. God who gave him his great talents, led him into a way of improving them, both by preaching and writing, which has doubtless proved the means of converting many from the error of their ways ; and of greatly promoting the

The P R E F A C E.

interest of Christ's church, both in America and Europe. And there is reason to hope, that tho' he is now dead, he will yet speak for a great while yet to come, to the great comfort and advantage of the church of Christ; that his publications will produce a yet greater harvest, as an addition to his joy and crown of rejoicing in the day of the Lord.

But the design of the following memoirs, is not merely to publish these things, and tell the world how eminently great, wise, holy and useful President Edwards was; but rather to inform in what way, and by what means he attained to such an uncommon stock of knowledge and holiness; and how, in the improvement of this, he did so much good to mankind; that others may hereby be directed and excited to go and do likewise.

The reader is therefore not to expect a meer encomium on the dead, but a faithful and plain narration of matters of fact, together with his own internal exercises, express'd in his own words; and is desired not to look on the following composition so much an act of friendship to the dead, as of kindness to the living; it being only an attempt to render a life that has been greatly useful, yet more so. And as this is designed for the reader's good he is desired to remember, that if he gets no benefit hereby; is not made wiser nor better, gains no skill or disposition to live an holy and useful life, all is in vain as to him.

*IN this world, so full of darkness and delusion, it is of great importance that all should be able to distinguish between true religion and that which is false. In this, perhaps none has taken more pains, or labour'd more successfully, than he whose life is set before the reader. And it is presumed that his religious resolutions, exercises and conduct here exhibited, will serve well to exemplify and illustrate all that he has wrote on
this*

The P R E F A C E.

this subject. Here pure and undefiled religion, in distinction from all counterfeits, appears in life and practice, exhibiting a picture which will tend to instruct, strengthen and comfort all those, who in their religious sentiments and exercises, are built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, of which Jesus Christ is the chief corner stone; while their hearts and practice in some measure answer to it, as in water, face answereth to face. And here, they who have hitherto unhappily been in darkness and delusion, in this infinitely important affair, may have matter of instruction and conviction.

*This is a point about which, above many other, the protestant world is in the dark, and needs instruction, as Mr. Edwards was more and more convinced, the longer he lived; and which he was wont frequently to observe in conversation. If therefore these his remains are adapted to answer this end, and may be considered as a word behind all to whom they shall come, "saying, **THIS IS THE WAY**, walk ye in it", and shall in this view, be blessed to many, it will be a relief under one of the greatest calamities that attend the christian world, and promote that important end, so worthy the attention and pursuit of all; and in which he from whom this mantle falls, was zealously engaged, and which he pursued to the end of his life.*

In this view especially, is the following life offered to the public, with an earnest desire that every reader may faithfully improve it to this purpose; while he candidly overlooks any improprieties and defects which he may observe to be chargeable on the compiler; who is he knows, in a great degree unequal to what is here attempted.

August 20. 1764.



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* * Many less mistakes and inaccuracies, which don't affect the sense, will need the candor of the learned reader.





T H E

L I F E

Of the Reverend

Mr. JONATHAN EDWARDS.



P A R T I.

Containing the History of his Life, from his
BIRTH, to his SETTLEMENT in the Work
of the MINISTRY.

JR. JONATHAN EDWARDS was born *October 5. 1703.*
at *Windsor*, a Town in *Connecticut*. His Father was
M the Rev. Mr. TIMOTHY EDWARDS, Minister of
the Gospel on the east Side of *Connecticut River* in
Windsor. He began to reside and preach at *Windsor*
in *November 1694.* but was not ordained till *July, 1696* He
died *Jan. 27. 1758.* in the 89th Year of his Age, not two
Months before this his SON. He was in the Work of the
Ministry above 59 Years : And from his first beginning to
reside and preach there, to his Death, are above 63 Years ;
and was able to attend on the Work of the Ministry and
preach constantly till within a few Years before his Death.
He was very universally esteemed & beloved as an upright,
pious, exemplary Man, and faithful Minister of the Gospel ;
and was greatly useful. He was born at *Hartford* in *Con-*
necticut, May 14 1669, received the Honours of the Col-
lege at *Cambridge* in *New-England,* by having the Degrees
of Batchelor and Master of Arts given him the same Day,
July 4. 1694, one in the Forenoon, and the other in the
Afternoon.

On the 6th Day of *November* 1694, he was married to Mrs. ESTHER STODDARD, in the 23d Year of her Age, the Daughter of the late famous Mr. SOLOMON STODDARD of *Northampton*; whose great Parts and Zeal for experimental Religion are well known in all the Churches in *America*; and will probably be transmitted to Posterity yet unborn, by his valuable Writings. They lived together in the married State above 63 Years. Mrs. EDWARDS was born *June* 2. 1672, and is now living in her 89th Year, remarkable for the little decay of her mental Powers at so great an Age.

THEY had eleven Children: All which lived to adult Years, viz ten Daughters, seven of whom are now living, and this their only Son and fifth Child.*

Mr.

* As the following more large and particular Account, of Mr. EDWARDS's Ancestors may gratify some Readers, 'tis inserted here in the Margin.

Mr. EDWARDS's Grandfather was Mr. RICHARD EDWARDS. His first Wife was Mrs. ELISABETH TUTTLE, Daughter of Mr. WILLIAM TUTTLE of *New-Haven* in *Connecticut*, and Mrs. ELIS. TUTTLE his Wife, who came out of *Northamptonshire* in *England*. His second Wife was Mrs. TALCOT, Sister to Governor TALCOT: By his first Wife he had seven Children, the oldest of which was the Rev. Mr. TIMOTHY EDWARDS of *Windsor*, his Father, before mentioned. By his second Wife Mrs. Talcot, he had six Children

The Father of Mr. RICHARD EDWARDS was Mr. WILLIAM EDWARDS, who came from *England* young and unmarried. His Wife, Mrs. AGNES EDWARDS, who also came out of *England*, had two Brothers in *England*, one of them Mayor of *Exeter*, and the other of *Barnstable*. Mr. Wm EDWARDS's Father was the Rev. Mr. RICH. EDWARDS, Minister of the Gospel in *London*. He lived in Queen ELIZABETH's Day, and his Wife Mrs. ANNE EDWARDS assisted in making a Ruff for the Queen. After the Death of Mr. EDWARDS she married to one Mr. JAMES COLE. She with her second Husband, and her Son Wm. EDWARDS came into *America*, and all died at *Hartford* in *Connecticut*.

Mr. EDWARDS's Grandfather, (Mr. SOLOMON STODDARD, and his Predecessor at *Northampton*) married Mrs. MATHIEP, the Relict of the Rev. Mr. MATHIEP his Predecessor, and the first Minister at *Northampton*. Her maiden Name was ESTHER

Mr. EDWARDS entered *Yale College* in the Year 1716, and received the Degree of Bachelor of Arts in *September* 1720, a little before he was 17 Years old. He had the Character of a sober Youth, and a good Scholar while he was a Member of the College. In his second Year at College, and thirteenth of his Age, he read *Locke* on the human Understanding, with great delight and profit. His

B, 2

uncommon

ESTHER WARHAM, Daughter and youngest Child of the Rev. Mr. JOHN WARHAM, Minister at *Windsor* in *Connecticut*, who came out of *England*, before which he was Minister in *Exeter* in *England*: He had four Children, all Daughters; and Mrs. WARHAM survived him, and had two Daughters by Mr. NEWBURY, her second Husband.

Mrs. ESTHER WARHAM had three Children by Mr. MATHER, viz. *Eunice*, *Warham* and *Eliakim*. And she had twelve Children by Mr. STODDARD, six Sons and six Daughters: Three of the Sons died in Infancy. The three that liv'd to adult Years were *Anthony*, *John* and *Israel*. *Israel* died in Prison in *France*. *Anthony* was the Rev. Mr. ANTHONY STODDARD, late Minister of the Gospel at *Woodbury* in *Connecticut*, who lived to a great Age, and was in the Work of the Ministry 60 Years: He died *Sept. 6. 1760*, in the 82d Year of his Age. *John* was the honourable JOHN STODDARD, Esq; who lived at *Northampton*, and who often, especially in his younger Years, served the Town as their Representative at the Great and General Court in *Boston*; and was long Head of the County of *Hampshire* as their chief Colonel, and chief Judge of the Court of Common Pleas: And he long served His Majesty, and the Province of the *Massachusetts-Bay*, as one of his Majesty's Council. He was remarkable as a Politician, and for his Spirit of Government; a wise Counsellor, an upright and skilful Judge, a steady and great Friend to the Interest of Religion. He was a great Friend and Admirer of Mr *Edwards*, and greatly strengthen'd his Hands in the Work of the Ministry while he lived. A more particular Account of the Life and Character of this truly great Man may be seen in the Sermon which Mr *Edwards* preach'd and published on the Occasion of his Death.

Mr STODDARD's Father was ANTHONY STODDARD, Esq; of *Boston*, a zealous congregational Man. He had five Wives, the first of which, Mr. STODDARD's Mother, was Mrs MARY DOWNING, Sister to Sir GEORGE DOWNING, whose other Sister married Governor BRADSTREET. Mr. SOLOMON STODDARD was their oldest Child.

uncommon Genius, by which he was, as it were by Nature, form'd for closeness of Thought and deep Penetration, now began to exercise and discover it self. Taking that Book into his Hand, upon some Occasion, not long before his Death, he said to some of his select Friends, who were then with him, That he was beyond Expresssion extertain'd and pleas'd with it, when he read it in his Youth at College; that he was as much engag'd, and had more Satisfaction and Pleasure in studying it, than the most greedy Miser in gathering up handfuls of Silver and Gold from some new discovered Treasure.

THO' he made good Proficiency in all the Arts and Sciences, and had an uncommon Taste for natural Philosophy, which he cultivated to the end of his Life, with that justness and accuracy of Thought which was almost peculiar to him; yet moral Philosophy or Divinity was his favourite Study. In this he early made great Progress.

HE lived at College near two Years after he took his first Degree, designing and preparing for the Work of the Ministry. After which, having pass'd the pre-requisite Trials, he was licenced to preach the Gospel as a Candidate. And being pitched upon, and applied to by a Number of Ministers in *New-England*, who were intrusted to act in Behalf of the English Presbyterians at *New-York*, as a fit Person to be sent to them, he complied with their Request, and went to *New York* the beginning of *August*, 1722; and preach'd there to very good Acceptance about eight Months. But by Reason of the Smallness of that Society, and some special Difficulties that attended it, he did not think they were in a Capacity to settle a Minister, with a rational Prospect of answering the good Ends propos'd. He therefore left them, the next Spring, and retired to his Father's Houſe; where he spent the Summer in close Study. He was indeed earnestly sollicit'd by the People he had been among at *New York* to return to them again; but for the Reason just mentioned, he could not think himself in the way of his Duty to gratify them.

In *September*, 1723, he received his Degree of Master of Arts; about which time he had Invitations from several Congregations to come among them in order to his Settlement

tlement in the Work of the Ministry ; but being chosen Tutor of *Yale-College* the next Spring in the Year 1724, being in the twenty first Year of his Age, he retired to the College, and attended the Business of Tutor there above two Years.

WHILE he was in this Place, he was applied to by the People at *Northampton*, with an Invitation to come and settle in the Work of the Ministry there, with his Grand-father STODDARD, who by Reason of his great Age, stood in need of Assistance. He therefore resigned his Tutorship, in *September*, 1726, and accepted of their Invitation ; and was ordained in the Work of the Ministry at *Northampton*, Colleague with his Grand-father STODDARD, *February* 15. 1727, in the twenty fourth Year of his Age, where he continued in the Work of the Ministry till *June* 22. 1750, twenty three Years and four Months.

BETWEEN the Time of his going to *New-York* and his Settlement at *Northampton*, he formed a Number of Resolutions, and committed them to Writing : the particular Time, and special Occasion of his making many of them, he has noted in his Diary which he then kept ; as well as many other Observations and Rules, which related to his own Exercises and Conduct. And as these Resolutions, together with the Things noted in his Diary, may justly be considered, as the Foundation and Plan of his whole Life, it may be proper here to give the Reader a Taste and Idea of them : which will therefore be done in the following Extracts.

P A R T II.

Containing EXTRACTS from his PRIVATE WRITINGS &c.

S E C T I O N I.

His R E S O L U T I O N S.

“**B**EING sensible that I am unable to do any thing without God’s Help, I do humbly intreat him by his Grace to enable me to keep these Resolutions, so far as they are agreeable to his Will, for Christ’s Sake.

Remember to read over these *Resolutions* once a Week.

1. Resolved, That I will do whatsoever I think to be most to God’s Glory, and my own Good, Profit and Pleasure, in the whole of my Duration, without any Consideration of the Time, whether now, or never so many Myriads of Ages hence. Resolved to do whatever I think to be my Duty, and most for the Good and Advantage of Mankind in general. Resolved to do this, whatever Difficulties I meet with, how many and how great soever.

2. Resolved, to be continually endeavouring to find out some new Invention and Contrivance to promote the fore-mentioned Things.

4. Resolved, never to do any manner of Thing, whether in Soul or Body, less or more, but what tends to the glory of God ; nor be, nor suffer it, if I can avoid it.

5. Resolved, never to loose one Moment of Time ; but improve it the most profitable Way I possibly can.

6. Resolved, to live with all my might, while I do live.

7. Resolved, never to do any Thing, which I should be afraid to do, if it were the last Hour of my Life.

9. Resolved, to think much on all Occasions of my own dying, and of the common Circumstances which attend Death.

11. Resolved, when I think of my Theorem in Divinity to be solved, immediately to do what I can towards solving it, if Circumstances don’t hinder,

13. Resolved

13. Resolved, to be endeavouring to find out fit Objects of Charity and Liberality.

14. Resolved, never to do any Thing out of Revenge.

15. Resolved, never to suffer the least Motions of Anger to irrational Beings.

17. Resolved, that I will live so as I shall wish I had done when I come to die.

18. Resolved, to live so at all Times, as I think is best in my devout Frames, and when I have clearest Notions of Things of the Gospel, and another World.

20. Resolved, to maintain the strictest Temperance in eating and drinking.

21. Resolved, never to do any Thing, which if I should see in another, I should count a just Occasion to despise him for, or to think any Way the more meanly of him.

24. Resolved, whenever I do any conspicuously evil Action, to trace it back, till I come to the original Cause; and then both carefully endeavour to do so no more, and to fight and pray with all my Might against the Original of it.

28. Resolved, to study the Scriptures so steadily, constantly and frequently, as that I may find, and plainly perceive my self to grow in the Knowledge of the same.

30. Resolved, to strive to my utmost every Week to be brought higher in Religion, and to a higher Exercise of Grace, than I was the Week before.

32. Resolved, to be strictly and firmly faithful to my Trust, that that in Prov. xx. 6. *A faithful Man who can find?* may not be partly fulfilled in me.

33. Resolved, always to do what I can towards making, maintaining and establishing Peace, when it can be without over-balancing Detriment in other Respects.

34. Resolved, in Narrations never to speak any Thing but the pure and simple Verity.

36. Resolved, never to speak Evil of any, except I have some particular good Call for it.

37. Resolved, to enquire every Night, as I am going to Bed, wherein I have been negligent, what Sin I have committed, and wherein I have denied my self: Also at the end of every Week, Month and Year.

38. Resolved, never to speak any Thing that is Ridiculous, or Matter of Laughter on the Lord's Day.

39. Resolved, never to do any Thing that I so much question the Lawfulness of, as that I intend, at the same Time, to consider and examine afterwards, whether it be lawful or no : except I as much question the lawfulness of the omission.

41. Resolved, to ask my self at the end of every Day, Week, Month and Year, wherein I could possibly in any Respect have done better.

42. Resolved, frequently to renew the Dedication of my self to God, which was made at my Baptism ; which I solemnly renewed, when I was received into the Communion of the Church ; and which I have solemnly re-made this twelfth Day of *January 1722,3.*

43. Resolved, never hence-forward, till I die, to act as if I were any way my own, but entirely and altogether God's, agreeable to what is to be found in *Saturday January 12.*

46. Resolved, never to allow the least Measure of any fretting Uneasiness at my Father or Mother. Resolved to suffer no Effects of it, to much as in the least alteration of Speech, or motion of my Eye : And to be especially careful of it, with respect to any of our Family.

47. Resolved, to endeavour to my utmost to deny whatever is not most agreeable to a good, and universally sweet and benevolent, quiet, peaceable, contented, easy, compassionate, generous, humble, meek, modest, submissive, obliging, diligent and industrious, charitable, even, patient, moderate, forgiving, sincere Temper ; and to do at all Times what such a Temper would lead me to. Examine strictly every Week, whether I have done so.

48. Resolved, constantly, with the utmost Niceness and Diligence, and the strictest Scrutiny, to be looking into the State of my Soul, that I may know whether I have truly an Interest in Christ or no ; that when I come to die, I may not have any Negligence respecting this to repent of.

50. Resolved, I will act so as I think I shall judge would have been best, and most prudent, when I come into the future World.

52. I frequently hear Persons in old Age say how they would live, if they were to live their Lives over again : Resolved, that I will live just so as I can think I shall wish I had done, supposing I live to old Age.

54. Whenever

54. Whenever I hear any thing spoken in Conversation of any Person, if I think it would be praise-worthy in me, Resolved to endeavour to imitate it.

55. Resolved, to endeavour to my utmost to act as I can think I should do, if I had already seen the Happiness of Heaven, and Hell Torments.

56. Resolved, never to give over, nor in the least to slacken my Fight with my Corruptions, however unsuccessful I may be.

57. Resolved, when I fear Misfortunes and Adversities, to examine whether I have done my Duty, and resolve to do it; and let it be just as Providence orders it, I will as far as I can, be concerned about nothing but my Duty and my Sin.

62. Resolved, never to do any thing but Duty; and then according to *Eph. vi. 6, 7, 8.* do it willingly and cheerfully as unto the Lord, and not to Man; knowing that whatever good Thing any Man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord.

65. Resolved, very much to exercise my self in this all my Life long, *viz.* with the greatest openness I am capable of, to declare my Ways to God, and lay open my Soul to Him: all my Sins, Temptations, Difficulties, Sorrows, Fears, Hopes, Desires, and every Thing, and every Circumstance; according to *Dr. Manton's 27th Sermon on the 119 Psalm.*

67. Resolved, after Afflictions, to inquire, what I am the better for them, what Good I have got by them, and what I might have got by them. *

* The Resolutions are seventy in Number. But part of them are here transcribed, as a Specimen of the whole. The Number here affixed to them, is that by which they are numbered in the original Manuscript; and retained here for the Sake of the References made to some of them in the Diary, as the Reader will presently see.

SECTION II.

Extracts from his PRIVATE DIARY.

“**S**aturday, December 22. 1722. This Day revived by God’s Spirit. Affected with the Sense of the excellency of Holiness. Felt more exercise of Love to Christ than usual. Have also felt sensible Repentance of Sin, because it was committed against so merciful and good a God. This Night made the 37th Resolution.

Sabbath Day-Night, Dec. 23. Made the 38th Resolution.

Monday, Dec. 24. Higher Thoughts than usual of the Excellency of Jesus Christ and his Kingdom.

Wednesday, January 2. 1722, 3. Dull. I find by Experience, that let me make Resolutions, and do what I will, with never so many Inventions, it is all nothing, and to no Purpose at all, without the Motions of the Spirit of God: for if the Spirit of God should be as much withdrawn from me always, as for the Week past, notwithstanding all I do, I should not grow; but should languish, and miserably fade away — There is no Dependence upon my self. It is to no Purpose to resolve, except we depend on the Grace of God; for if it were not for his meer Grace, one might be a very good Man one Day, and a very wicked one the next.

Sabbath-Day, Jan. 6. at Night. Much concerned about the improvement of precious Time. Intend to live in continual Mortification, without ceasing, as long as in this World.

Tuesday, Jan. 8. in the Morning. Higher Thoughts than usual, of the Excellency of Christ, and felt an unusual Repentance of Sin therefrom.

Wednesday, Jan. 9. at Night. Decayed. I am sometimes apt to think, I have a great deal more of Holiness than I have. I find now and then, that abominable Corruption which is directly contrary to what I read of eminent Christians. — How deceitful is my Heart! I take up a strong Resolution, but how soon does it weaken!

Thursday, Jan. 10. about Noon. Reviving. ’Tis a great Dishonour to Christ, in whom I hope I have an Interest, to be uneasy at my worldly State and Condition. When I see the Prosperity of others, and that all Things go easy with them; the World is smooth to them, and they are happy

happy in many Respects, and very prosperous, or are advanced to much Honour &c. to grudge and envy them, or be the least uneasy at it; to wish or long for the same Prosperity, and that it would ever be so with me. Wherefore concluded always to rejoyce in every one's Prosperity, and to expect for my self no Happiness of that Nature as long as I live; but depend upon Afflictions, and betake my self entirely to another Happiness.

I think I find my self much more sprightly and healthy, both in Body and Mind, for my Self-denial in eating, drinking, and sleeping.

I think it would be advantageous every Morning to consider my Business and Temptations; and what Sins I shall be exposed to that Day: and to make a Resolution how to improve the Day, and to avoid those Sins. And so at the beginning of every Week, Month and Year.

I never knew before what was meant by not setting our Hearts upon these Things. 'Tis, not to care about them, to depend upon them, to afflict our selves much with Fears of losing them, nor please our selves with Expectation of obtaining them, or hope of the Continuance of them. At Night made the 41st Resolution.

Saturday, Jan. 12. in the Morning. I have this Day solemnly renewed my baptismal Covenant and Self-Dedication, which I renewed when I was received into the Communion of the Church. I have been before God; and have given my self, all that I am and have to GOD, so that I am not in any Respect my own: I can challenge no Right in my self, I can challenge no Right in this Understanding, this Will, these Affections that are in me; neither have I any right to this Body, or any of its Members: No Right to this Tongue, these Hands, nor Feet: no Right to these Senses, these Eyes, these Ears, this Smell or Taste. I have given my self clear away, and have not retained any Thing as my own. I have been to GOD this Morning, and told Him that I gave my self *wholly* to him. I have given every Power to him; so that for the future I will challenge no Right in my self, in any Respect. I have expressly promised Him, and do now promise Almighty God, that by his Grace I will not. I have this Morning told Him, that I did take Him for my whole Portion and Felicity, looking on nothing else as any Part of my Happiness, nor acting as if it were; and his Law for the constant

Rule

Rule of my Obedience : and would fight with all my Might against the World, the Flesh, and the Devil, to the End of my Life. And did believe in Jesus Christ, and receive him as a Prince and a Saviour ; and would adhere to the Faith and Obedience of the Gospel, how hazardous and difficult soever the Profession and Practise of it may be. That I did receive the blessed Spirit as my Teacher, Sanctifier and only Comforter ; and cherish all his Motions to enlighten, purify, confirm, comfort and assist me. This I have done. And I pray God, for the sake of Christ, to look upon it as a Self-Dedication ; and to receive me now as entirely his own, and deal with me in all Respects as such ; whether he afflicts me or prospers me, or whatever he pleases to do with me, who am his. Now, henceforth I am not to act in any Respect as my own.— I shall act as my own, if I ever make use of any of my Powers to any thing that is not to the glory of God, and don't make the glorifying Him my whole and entire Business ; if I murmur in the least at Afflictions ; if I grieve at the Prosperity of others ; if I am any way uncharitable ; if I am angry because of Injuries ; if I revenge : If I do any thing, purely to please my self, or if I avoid any thing for the sake of my Ease : If I omit any thing because it is great Self denial : If I trust to my self : If I take any of the Praise of any Good that I do, or rather GOD does by me ; or if I am any way proud.

This Day made the 42d and 43d Resolutions.

Monday, Jan. 14 — The Dedication I made of my self to my God, on Saturday last, has been exceeding useful to me. I thought I had a more spiritual insight into the Scripture, reading the 8th Chapter to the *Romans*, than ever in my Life before.

Great Instances of Mortification are deep Wounds given to the Body of Sin, hard Blows that make him stagger and reel : we thereby get great Ground and footing against him.—While we live without great Instances of Mortification and Self denial, the old Man keeps whereabouts he was ; for he is sturdy and obstinate, and will not stir for small Blows. After the greatest Mortifications, I always find the greatest Comfort.

Supposing there was never but one compleat Christian, in all Respects of a right Stamp, having Christianity shining in its true Lustre, at a time in the World ; Resolved

to act just as I would do, if I strove with all my Might to be that One, that should be in my Time.

Tuesday, Jan. 15. It seemed Yesterday, the Day before and Saturday, that I should always retain the same Resolutions to the same Height, but alas, how soon do I decay ! O, how weak, how infirm, how unable to do any thing am I ! What a poor, inconsistent, what a miserable Wretch, without the assistance of God's Spirit ! While I stand, I am ready to think I stand in my own Strength, and upon my own Legs ; and I am ready to triumph over my Enemies, as if it were I my self that caused them to flee : when alas ! I am but a poor Infant, upheld by Jesus Christ ; who holds me up, and gives me Liberty to smile to see my Enemies flee, when he drives them before me ; and so I laugh, as tho' I my self did it, when it is only Jesus Christ leads me along, and fights Himself against my Enemies. And now the Lord has a little left me, and how weak do I find my self ! O, let it teach me to depend less on my self, to be more humble, and to give more of the praise of my Ability to Jesus Christ. The Heart of Man is deceitful above all Things, and desperately wicked, who can know it ?

Saturday, Febr. 16 I do certainly know that I love Holiness, such as the Gospel requires.

At Night. I have been negligent for the Month past in these three Things ; I have not been watchful enough over my Appetite in eating and drinking ; in rising too late a Mornings ; and in not applying my self with Application enough to the Duty of secret Prayer.

Sabbath Day, Febr. 17. near Sun-set. Renewedly promised, that I will accept of God, for my whole Portion ; and that I will be contented, whatever else I am denied. I will not murmur, nor be grieved, whatever Prosperity, upon any Account, I see others enjoy, and I am denied.

Saturday, March 2.—O, how much pleasanter is Humility than Pride ! O, that God would fill me with exceeding great Humility, and that he would evermore keep me from all Pride ! The Pleasures of Humility are really the most refined, inward and exquisite Delights in the World. How hateful is a proud Man ! How hateful is a Worm that lifts up it self with Pride ! What a foolish, silly, miserable, blind, deceived, poor Worm am I, when Pride works !

Wednesday,

Wednesday, March 6. near Sun-set. Felt the Doctrines of Election, Free Grace, and of our not being able to do any thing without the Grace of God ; and that Holiness is entirely, throughout, the Work of God's Spirit, with more Pleasure than before.

Monday Morning, April 1. I think it best not to allow my self to laugh at the Faults, Follies and Infirmities of others.

Saturday Night, April 7. This Week I found my self so far gone, that it seem'd to me, that I should never recover more. Let God of his Mercy return unto me, and no more leave me thus to sink and decay ! I know, O Lord, that without thy Help, I shall fall innumerable times, notwithstanding all my Resolutions, how often so ever repeated.

Saturday Night, April 14. I could pray more heartily this Night, for the Forgiveness of my Enemies, than ever before.

Wednesday, May 1. Forenoon. Last Night I came Home, after my melancholy parting from *New-York*.

I have always, in every different State of Life, I have hitherto been in, thought the Troubles and Difficulties of that State, to be greater than those of any other, that I propos'd to be in ; and when I have altered with assurance of mending my self, I have still thought the same ; yea, that the Difficulties of that State, are greater than those of that I left last. Lord, grant that from hence I may learn to withdraw my Thoughts, Affections, Desires and Expectations, intirely from the World, and may fix them upon the heavenly State ; where there is fulness of Joy ; where reigns heavenly, sweet, calm and delightful Love without Alloy ; where there are continually the dearest Expressions of their Love : where there is the Enjoyment of the Persons loved, without ever parting : where those Persons, who appear so lovely in this World, will really be inexpressibly more lovely, and full of Love to us. How sweetly will the mutual Lovers join together to sing the Praises of God and the Lamb ! How full will it fill us with Joy to think, this Enjoyment, these sweet Exercises, will never cease or come to an End, but will last to all Eternity.

Remember, after Journeys, Removes, Overturnings and Alterations in the State of my Life, to reflect and consider,
Whether

Whether therein I have managed the best Way possible, respecting my Soul? And before such Alterations, if foreseen, to resolve how to act.

Thursday, May 2.— I think it a very good Way to examine Dreams every Morning when I awake, what are the Nature, Circumstances, Principles and Ends of my imaginary Actions and Passions in them, to discern what are my chief Inclinations &c.

Saturday Night, May 4. Although I have in some Measure subdued a Disposition to chide and fret, yet I find a certain Inclination, which is not agreeable to Christian sweetness of Temper and Conversation: either by too much Dogmaticalness, too much of the Egotism; a Disposition to be telling of my own Dislike and Scorn; and freedom from those that are innocent, yea common Infirmities of Men; and many other such like Things. O that God would help me to discern all the Flaws and Defects of my Temper and Conversation, and help me in the difficult Work of amending them: And that he would fill me so full of Christianity, that the Foundation of all these disagreeable Irregularities may be destroyed, and the contrary Sweetnesses and Beauties may of themselves naturally follow.

Sabbath-Day, May 5. in the Morning. This Day made the 47th Resolution.

Sabbath-Day, May 12. I think I find in my Heart to be glad from the hopes I have that my Eternity is to be spent in spiritual and holy Joys, arising from the manifestation of God's Love, and the exercise of Holiness and a burning Love to Him.

Saturday Night, May 18. I now plainly perceive what great Obligations I am under to love and honour my Parents. I have great Reason to believe, that their Counsel and Education have been my making; notwithstanding, in the Time of it, it seemed to do me so little good. I have good Reason to hope that their Prayers for me, have been in many Things very powerful and prevalent; that God has in many Things, taken me under his Care and Guidance, Provision and Direction, in answer to their Prayers for me. I was never made so sensible of it as now.

Wednesday, May 22. in the Morning. *Memorandum.* To take special Care of these following Things; Evil Speaking,

ing, Fretting, Eating, Drinking and Sleeping, speaking simple Verity, joining in Prayer, slightness in secret Prayer, Listlessness and Negligence, and Thoughts that cherish Sin.

Saturday, May 25. in the Morning. As I was this Morning reading the 17th Resolution, it was suggested to me, that if I was now to die, I should wish that I had prayed more that God would make me know my State, whether it be good or bad; and that I had taken more Pains to see and narrowly search into this Matter. Wherefore, *Mem.* For the future most nicely and diligently to look into our old Divines Opinions concerning Conversion. Made the 48th Resolution.

Friday, June 1. Afternoon. I have abundant Cause, O my merciful Father, to love thee ardently, and greatly to bless and praise thee, that thou hast heard me in my earnest Request, and hast so answered my Prayer for Mercy to keep from decay and sinking. O, graciously, of thy meer Goodness, still continue to pity my Misery, by reason of my Sinsfulness. O my dear Redeemer, I commit my self, together with my Prayer and Thanksgiving into thine Hand.

Monday, July 1. Again confirmed by Experience of the happy Effects of strict Temperance, with respect both to Body and Mind. Resolved for the future to observe rather more of Meekness, Moderation and Temper in Disputes.

Thursday, July 18. near Sun-set. Resolved to endeavour to make sure of that Sign the Apostle *James* gives of a perfect Man, *Jam. iii. 2.* *If any Man offend not in Word, the same is a perfect Man, and able also to bridle the whole Body.*

Monday, July 22. I see there is danger of my being drawn into Transgression by the Power of such Temptations as a fear of seeming uncivil, and of offending Friends. Watch against it.

Tuesday, July 23. When I find those Groanings which cannot be uttered, the Apostle speaks of; and those Soul-breakings, for the longing it hath, the Psalmist speaks of, *Psal. cxix. 20.* to humour and promote them to the utmost of my Power, and be not weary of earnestly endeavouring to vent my Desires.

To count it all Joy when I have Occasion of great Self-denial, because then I have a glorious Opportunity of giving deadly Wounds to the Body of Sin, and greatly confirming and establishing the new Nature : I seek to mortify Sin, and increase in Holiness : these are the best Opportunities, according to *January 14.*

To improve Afflictions of all Kinds as blessed Opportunities of forcibly bearing on in my Christian Course, notwithstanding that which is so very apt to discourage me, and to damp the vigour of my Mind, and to make me lifeless : Also as Opportunities of trusting and confiding in God, and getting a Habit of that, according to the 57th Resolution. And as an Opportunity of rending my Heart off from the World, and setting it upon Heaven alone. To improve them as Opportunities to repent of, and bewail my Sin, and abhor my self. And as a blessed Opportunity to exercise Patience ; to trust in God, and divert my Mind from the Affliction, by fixing my self in religious Exercises. Also, let me comfort my self, that 'tis the very Nature of Afflictions to make the Heart better ; and if I am made better by them, what need I be concerned, however grievous they seem for the present ?

Friday Afternoon, July 26. To be particularly careful to keep up inviolable a Trust and Reliance, ease and entire Rest in God in all Conditions, according to 57th Resolution ; for this I have found to be wonderfully advantageous to me.

Monday, July 29. When I am concerned how I shall perform any thing to publick Acceptance, to be very careful that I have it very clear to me, that I do what is Duty and Prudence in the Matter.

Wednesday, July 31. — Never in the least to seek to hear sarcastical Relations of others Faults. Never to give Credit to any thing said against others, except there is very plain Reason for it ; nor to behave in any Respect the otherwise for it.

Wednesday, August 7. To esteem as some Advantage that the Duties of Religion are difficult, and that many Difficulties are some times to be gone through in the Way of Duty. Religion is the sweeter, and what is gained by Labour, is abundantly more precious : as a Woman loves her Child the better for having brought it forth with Travail. And even to Christ Jesus himself, his mediatorial

Glory, his Victory and Triumph, his Kingdom which he hath obtained ; how much more glorious is it, how much more excellent and precious, for his having wrought it out by such Agonies !

Friday, August 9.—One Thing that may be a good help towards thinking profitably in Time of Vacation is, when I light on a profitable Thought, that I can fix my Mind on, to follow it as far as possibly I can to Advantage.

Sabbath-Day, after meeting, August 11. Resolved always to do that which I shall wish I had done, when I see others do it. As for Instance, sometimes I argue with my self, that such an Act of good Nature, Kindness, Forbearance, or Forgiveness, &c. is not my Duty, because it will have such and such Consequences : yet, when I see others do it, then it appears amiable to me, and I wish I had done it ; and I see that none of those fear'd Inconveniencies follow.

Thursday, August 13. I find it would be very much to Advantage, to be thoroughly acquainted with the Scriptures. When I am reading doctrinal Books or Books of Controversy, I can proceed with abundantly more Confidence ; can see upon what Footing & Foundation I stand.

Thursday, August 29—The Objection my Corruptions make against doing whatever my Hand finds to do with my Might is, that it is a constant Mortification. Let this Objection by no means ever prevail.

Monday, September 2.—There is much Folly, when I am quite sure I am in the right, and others are positive in contradicting me, to enter into a vehement or long Debate upon it.

Monday, September 23. I observe that old Men seldom have any Advantage of new Discoveries ; because they are beside a Way of thinking, they have been so long used to. Resolved, if ever I live to Years, that I will be impartial to hear the Reasons of all pretended Discoveries, and receive them if rational, how long so ever I have been used to another Way of thinking.

Thursday, October 18. To follow the Example of Mr. B— who, tho' he meets with great Difficulties, yet undertakes them with a smiling Countenance, as tho' he thought them but little ; and speaks of them as if they were very small.

Thursday, November 26. 'Tis a most evil and pernicious Practice in Meditations on Afflictions, to sit ruminating

on the Aggravations of the Affliction, and reckoning up the evil, dark Circumstances thereof, and dwelling long on the dark Side; it doubles and trebles the Affliction. And so when speaking of them to others, to make them as bad as we can, and use our Eloquence to set forth our own Troubles, and are all the while making new Trouble, and feeding and pampering the old; whereas the contrary Practice would starve our Afflictions. If we dwelt on the light Side of Things in our Thoughts, and extenuated them all that possibly we could, when speaking of them, we should think little of them our selves; and the Affliction would really, in a great Measure, vanish away.

Thursday Night, December 12. If at any Time I am forced to tell others of that wherein I think they are something to blame; for the avoiding the important Evil, that would otherwise ensue, not to tell it to them, so that there shall be a Probability of their taking it as the effect of little, fretting, angry Emotions of Mind.

December 31. at Night. Concluded never to suffer nor express any angry Emotions of Mind more or less, except the Honour of God calls for it, in Zeal for him, or to preserve my self from being trampled on.

Wednesday, January 1. 1723, 4.

NOT to spend too much time in thinking even of important and necessary worldly Business. To allow every Thing it's Proportion of Thought, according to it's Urgency and Importance.

Friday, January 10. [After having wrote considerable in a short Hand, which he used when he would have what he wrote effectually concealed from every Body but himself, he notes the following Words in round Hand] Remember to act according to Prov. xii. 23. *A prudent Man concealeth Knowledge.*

Monday, Feb. 3. Let every Thing have the Value now, that it will have on a sick Bed: and frequently in my Pursuits of whatever Kind, let this come into my Mind; "How much shall I value this on my Death Bed?"

Wednesday, Feb. 5. Have not in Time past in my Prayers, enough insisted upon the glorifying God in the World, and the Advancement of the Kingdom of Christ, the Prosperity of the Church, and the good of Men. Determined that this Objection is without Weight, viz. That

'tis not likely that God will make great Alterations in the whole World, and Overturnings in Kingdoms and Nations, only for the Prayers of one obscure Person, seeing such Things used to be done in answer to the united, earnest Prayers of the whole Church: And if my Prayers should have some Influence, it would be but imperceptible and small.

Thursday, Febr. 6. More convinced than ever of the Usefulness of a free religious Conversation. I find by conversing on natural Philosophy, I gain Knowledge abundance faster, and see the Reasons of Things much clearer, than in private Study. Wherefore earnestly to seek at all times for religious Conversation; for those that I can with Profit and Delight and Freedom so converse with.

Sabbath-Day, Febr. 23—If I act according to my Resolution, I shall desire Riches no otherwise than as they are helpful to Religion. But this I determine, as what is really evident from many Parts of Scripture, that to fallen Man they have a greater Tendency to hurt Religion.

Saturday, May 23. How it comes about I know not; but I have remark'd it hitherto, that at those Times when I have read the Scripture most, I have evermore been most lively, and in the best Frames.

Saturday-Night, June 6. This Week has been a remarkable Week with me with Respect to Dependancies, Fears, Perp'lexities, Multitudes of Cares and Distraction of Mind; being the Week I came hither to *New-Haven*, in order to entrance upon the Office of Tutor of the College. I have now abundant Reason to be convinced of the Troublesomeness and Vexation of the World, and that it never will be another Kind of World.

Tuesday, July 7. When I am giving the Relation of a Thing, to abstain from altering either in the Matter or Manner of speaking, so much, as that if every one afterward should alter as much, it would at last come to be properly false.

Tuesday, Sept. 2. By a Sparingness in Diet, and eating, as much as may be, what is light and easy of Digestion, I shall doubtless be able to think clearer, and shall gain Time. 1st. By lengthening out my Life. 2^{dly}. shall need less Time for Digestion after Meals. 3^{dly}. shall be able to study closer without wrong to my Health. 4^{thly}. shall need less Time to Sleep. 5^{thly}. shall seldom be troubled with the Head-ach.

Sabbath-Day, Novemb. 22. Considering that By-standers always espy some Faults which we don't see our selves, or at least are not so fully sensible of : there are many secret Workings of Corruption which escape our Sight, and others only are sensible of : Resolved therefore, that I will, if I can by any convenient Means, learn what Faults others find in me, or what Things they see in me, that appear any Way blame-worthy, unlovely or unbecoming.

SECTION III.

REFLECTION on the foregoing EXTRACTS.

THE foregoing Extracts were wrote by Mr. EDWARDS in the 20th and 21st Years of his Age, as appears by the Dates. This being kept in Mind, the judicious Reader will make proper Allowance for some Things, which may appear a little Juvenile, or like a young Christian, as to the Matter, or Manner of Expression ; which would not have been found, had it not have been done in early Life. Which, indeed are no Blemishes, the whole being taken together : as by this, it appears more natural, and the Strength of his Resolution, and fervor of Mind ; and his Skill and Discerning in divine Things, so seldom found even in old Age, are the more striking. And in this View, we shall be led to admire his conscientious Strictness, his Zeal and Painfulness, his Experience and Judgment in true Religion, at so early an Age. For here are not only the most convincing Evidences of Sincerity and thorough Religion, of his engaging in a Life devoted to GOD in good earnest, so as to make Religion his only Business ; but thro' his great Attention to this Matter, he appears to have the Judgment and Experience of grey Hairs.

THIS is the Beginning of a Life so eminently holy & useful as Mr. EDWARDS's was. He who became one of the greatest Divines in this Age ; has had the Applause and Admiration of *America, Britain, Holland, & Germany*, for his Piety, and great Judgment & Skill in Divinity ; and has been honored above most others in the Christian World, in this Century ;

in his being made the Instrument of doing so much good : HE began his Life thus : He enter'd on a publick Life with such Views, such Exercises, such Resolutions.

THIS may serve as a Direction and Excitement to those who are Young, to devote themselves to GOD in good earnest, and enter on the Business of strict and thorough Religion without delay : especially those who are looking towards the Work of the Ministry, as they would take the most direct, the only Way to answer the good Ends which they profess to seek.

IT is to be lamented, that there is so much Reason to think, there are so few Instances of such early Piety in our Day. If the protestant World abounded with young Persons of this Stamp ; with young Men, who were preparing for the Work of the Ministry, with such a Temper, such Exercises, and such Resolutions, what a delightful Prospect would this afford, of the near approach of happier Days, than the Church of GOD has ever yet seen ! What pleasing Hopes that the great, the merciful Head of the Church, was about to send forth Labourers, faithful, successful Labourers into his Harvest ; and bless his People with "Pastors which shall teach them with Knowledge and Understanding !"

BUT if our Youth neglect all proper Improvement of the Mind ; are shy of Seriousness and strict Piety ; choose to live Strangers to it, and keep at a Distance from all Appearance of it ; are wanton, and given to carnal Pleasures ; what a gloomy Prospect does this afford ! If they who enter into the Work of the Ministry ; from a gay, careless, and what may justly be called a vicious Life, betake themselves to a little superficial study of Divinity, and soon begin to preach ; while all the external Seriousness and Zeal they put on, is only from worldly Motives ; they being without any inward, experimental Acquaintance with spiritual, divine Things, and even so much as any Taste for true Divinity ; no wonder if the Churches "suck dry Breasts" ; and there are many ignorant Watchmen

BUT, as the best Comment on the foregoing Resolutions and Diary ; and that the Reader may have a more particular, full and instructive View of Mr. EDWARDS's Entrance on a religious Life, and Progress in it, as consisting in the Views and Exercises of his Mind ; a brief Account thereof

thereof is here inserted, which was found among his Papers, in his own Hand-writing : and which, it seems, was wrote near twenty Years after, for his own private Advantage.

SECTION IV.

An Account of his CONVERSION, EXPERIENCES, and RELIGIOUS EXERCICES, given by himself.

I Had a variety of Concerns and Exercises about my Soul from my Childhood ; but had two more remarkable Seasons of Awakening, before I met with that Change, by which I was brought to those new Dispositions, and that new Sense of Things, that I have since had. The first Time was when I was a Boy, some Years before I went to College, at a Time of remarkable Awakening in my Father's Congregation. I was then very much affected for many Months, and concerned about the Things of Religion, and my Soul's Salvation ; and was abundant in Duties. I used to pray five times a Day in secret, and to spend much Time in religious Talk with other Boys ; and used to meet with them to pray together. I experienced I know not what Kind of Delight in Religion. My Mind was much engaged in it, and had much self-righteous Pleasure ; and it was my Delight to abound in religious Duties. I, with some of my School-mates joined together, and built a Booth in a Swamp, in a very secret and retired Place, for a place of Prayer. And besides, I had particular secret Places of my own in the Woods, where I used to retire by my self ; and used to be from time to time much affected. My Affections seemed to be lively and easily moved, and I seemed to be in my Element, when engaged in religious Duties. And I am ready to think, many are deceived with such Affections, and such a kind of Delight, as I then had in Religion, and mistake it for Grace.

“ BUT in process of Time, my Convictions and Affections wore off ; and I entirely lost all those Affections and Delights, and left off secret Prayer, at least as to any constant Performance of it ; and returned like a Dog to his Vomit, and went on in Ways of Sin.

“INDEED, I was at some Times very uneasy, especially towards the latter Part of the Time of my being at College. ’Till it pleas’d GOD, in my last Year at College, at a Time when I was in the midst of many uneasy Thoughts about the State of my Soul, to seize me with a Pleurisy; in which he brought me nigh to the Grave, and shook me over the Pit of Hell.

“BUT yet, it was not long after my Recovery, before I fell again into my old Ways of Sin. But God would not suffer me to go on with any Quietness; but I had great and violent inward Struggles: ’till after many Conflicts with wicked Inclinations, and repeated Resolutions, and Bonds that I laid my self under by a kind of Vows to God, I was brought wholly to break off all former wicked Ways, and all Ways of known outward Sin; and to apply my self to seek my Salvation, and practise the Duties of Religion: But without that kind of Affection and Delight, that I had formerly experienced. My Concern now wrought more by inward Struggles and Conflicts, and Self-reflections. I made seeking my Salvation the main Business of my Life. But yet it seems to me, I sought after a miserable manner: Which has made me some times since to question, whether ever it issued in that which was saving; being ready to doubt, whether such miserable seeking was ever succeeded. But yet I was brought to seek Salvation, in a manner that I never was before. I felt a Spirit to part with all Things in the World, for an Interest in Christ. My Concern continued and prevailed, with many exercising Things and inward Struggles; but yet it never seemed to be proper to express my Concern that I had, by the Name of Terror.

“FROM my Childhood up, my Mind had been wont to be full of Objections against the Doctrine of GOD’s Sovereignty, in choosing whom he would to eternal Life, and rejecting whom he pleased; leaving them eternally to perish, and be everlastingly tormented in Hell. It used to appear like a horrible Doctrine to me. But I remember the Time very well, when I seemed to be convinced, and fully satisfied, as to this Sovereignty of God, and his Justice in thus eternally disposing of Men, according to his sovereign Pleasure. But never could give an Account, how, or by what Means, I was thus convinced; not in the least imagining, in the Time of it, nor a long Time after, that
there

there was any extraordinary Influence of God's Spirit in it : but only that now I saw further, and my Reason apprehended the Justice and Reasonableness of it. However, my Mind rested in it ; and it put an end to all those Cavils and Objections, that had 'till then abode with me, all the preceding part of my Life. And there has been a wonderful Alteration in my Mind, with respect to the Doctrine of God's Sovereignty, from that Day to this ; so that I scarce ever have found so much as the rising of an Objection against God's Sovereignty, in the most absolute Sense, in shewing Mercy on whom he will shew Mercy, and hardening and eternally damning whom he will. God's absolute Sovereignty, and Justice, with respect to Salvation and Damnation, is what my Mind seems to rest assured of, as much as of any Thing that I see with my Eyes ; at least it is so at Times. But I have often times since that first Conviction, had quite another Kind of Sense of God's Sovereignty, than I had then. I have often since, not only had a Conviction, but a *delightful* Conviction. The Doctrine of God's Sovereignty has very often appeared, an exceeding pleasant, bright and sweet Doctrine to me : and absolute Sovereignty is what I love to ascribe to God. But my first Conviction was not with this.

“ THE first that I remember that ever I found any thing of that Sort of inward, sweet Delight in GOD and divine Things, that I have lived much in since, was on reading those Words, 1 *Tim.* i. 17. “ Now unto the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise GOD, be Honor and Glory for ever and ever, Amen.” As I read the Words, there came into my Soul, and was as it were diffused thro' it, a Sense of the Glory of the Divine Being ; a new Sense, quite different from any Thing I ever experienced before. Never any Words of Scripture seemed to me as these Words did. I thought with my self, how excellent a Being that was ; and how happy I should be, if I might enjoy that GOD, and be wrapt up to GOD in Heaven, and be as it were swallowed up in Him. I kept saying, and as it were singing over these Words of Scripture to my self ; and went to Prayer, to pray to GOD that I might enjoy him ; and prayed in a manner quite different from what I used to do ; with a new sort of Affection. But it never came into my Thought, that there was any thing spiritual, or of a saving Nature in this.

“ FROM about that Time, I began to have a new Kind of Apprehensions and Ideas of Christ, and the Work of Redemption, and the glorious Way of Salvation by him. I had an inward, sweet Sense of these Things, that at times came into my Heart ; and my Soul was led away in pleasant Views and Contemplations of them. And my Mind was greatly engaged, to spend my Time in reading and meditating on Christ ; and the Beauty and Excellency of his Person, and the lovely Way of Salvation, by free Grace in him. I found no Books so delightful to me, as those that treated of these Subjects. Those Words *Cant. ii. 1.* used to be abundantly with me : *I am the Rose of Sharon, the Lilly of the Valleys.* The Words seemed to me, sweetly to represent, the Loveliness and Beauty of Jesus Christ. And the whole Book of Canticles used to be pleasant to me ; and I used to be much in reading it, about that time. And found, from Time to Time, an inward Sweetness, that used, as it were, to carry me away in my Contemplations ; in what I know not how to express otherwise, than by a calm, sweet Abstraction of Soul from all the Concerns of this World ; and a kind of Vision, or fix'd Ideas and Imaginations, of being alone in the Mountains, or some solitary Wilderness, far from all Mankind, sweetly conversing with Christ, and wrapt and swallowed up in GOD. The Sense I had of divine Things, would often of a sudden as it were, kindle up a sweet burning in my Heart ; an ardor of my Soul, that I know not how to express.

“ NOT long after I first began to experience these Things, I gave an Account to my Father, of some Things that had pass'd in my Mind. I was pretty much affected by the Discourse we had together. And when the Discourse was ended, I walked abroad alone, in a solitary Place in my Father's Pasture, for Contemplation. And as I was walking there, and looked up on the Sky and Clouds ; there came into my Mind, a sweet Sense of the glorious Majesty and Grace of GOD, that I know not how to express. I seemed to see them both in a sweet Conjunction : Majesty and Meekness join'd together : it was a sweet and gentle, and holy Majesty ; and also a majestick Meekness ; an awful Sweetness ; a high, and great, and holy Gentleness.

“ AFTER

“ AFTER this my Sense of divine Things gradually increased, and became more and more lively, and had more of that inward Sweetness. The Appearance of every thing was altered : there seem'd to be, as it were, a calm, sweet Cast, or Appearance of divine Glory, in almost every Thing. God's Excellency, his Wisdom, his Purity and Love, seem'd to appear in every Thing ; in the Sun, Moon and Stars ; in the Clouds, and blue Sky ; in the Grass, Flowers, Trees ; in the Water, and all Nature ; which us'd greatly to fix my Mind. I often us'd to sit & view the Moon, for a long time ; and so in the Day-time, spent much time in viewing the Clouds & Sky, to behold the sweet Glory of GOD in these Things : in the mean Time, singing forth with a low Voice, my Contemplations of the Creator & Redeemer. And scarce any Thing, among all the Works of Nature, was so sweet to me as Thunder and Lightning. Formerly, nothing had been so terrible to me. I us'd to be a Person uncommonly terrified with Thunder : and it us'd to strike me with Terror, when I saw a Thunder-storm rising. But now, on the contrary, it rejoiced me. I felt GOD at the first Appearance of a Thunder-storm. And us'd to take the Opportunity at such Times, to fix my self to view the Clouds, and see the Lightnings play, and hear the majestick & awful Voice of God's Thunder : which often times was exceeding entertaining, leading me to sweet Contemplations of my great and glorious GOD. And while I viewed, us'd to spend my time, as it always seem'd natural to me, to sing or chant forth my Meditations ; to speak my Thoughts in Soliloquies, and speak with a singing Voice.

“ I felt then a great Satisfaction as to my good Estate. But that did not content me. I had vehement Longings of Soul after GOD and CHRIST, and after more Holiness ; wherewith my Heart seem'd to be full, and ready to break : which often brought to my Mind, the Words of the Psalmist, Psal. cxix. 28. *My Soul breaketh for the Longing it hath.* I often felt a mourning and lamenting in my Heart, that I had not turned to GOD sooner, that I might have had more time to grow in Grace. My Mind was greatly fix'd on divine Things ; I was almost perpetually in the Contemplation of them. Spent most of my Time in thinking of divine Things, Year after Year. And us'd to spend abundance of my Time, in walking alone in the Woods, and solitary Places, for Meditation, Soliloquy and Prayer, and
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Converse with GOD. And it was always my Manner, at such times, to sing forth my Contemplations. And was almost constantly in ejaculatory Prayer, wherever I was. Prayer seem'd to be natural to me; as the Breath, by which the inward Burnings of my Heart had vent.

“THE Delights which I now felt in Things of Religion, were of an exceeding different Kind, from those forementioned, that I had when I was a Boy. They were totally of another Kind; and what I then had no more Notion or Idea of, than one born blind has of pleasant and beautiful Colours. They were of a more inward, pure, Soul-animating and refreshing Nature. Those former Delights, never reached the Heart; and did not arise from any Sight of the divine Excellency of the Things of GOD; or any Taste of the Soul-satisfying, and Life-giving Good, there is in them.

“My sense of divine Things seem'd gradually to increase, till I went to preach at *New-York*; which was about a Year and a half after they began. While I was there, I felt them, very sensibly, in a much higher Degree, than I had done before. My Longings after GOD & Holiness, were much increased. Pure and humble, holy and heavenly Christianity, appeared exceeding amiable to me. I felt in me a burning Desire to be in every Thing a compleat Christian; and conformed to the blessed Image of Christ: and that I might live in all Things, according to the pure, sweet and blessed Rules of the Gospel. I had an eager thirsting after Progress in these Things. My Longings after it, put me upon pursuing and pressing after them. It was my continual Strife Day and Night, and constant Inquiry, How I should be more holy, and live more holily, and more becoming a Child of God, and Disciple of Christ. I sought an encrease of Grace and Holiness, and that I might live an holy Life, with vastly more Earnestness, than ever I sought Grace, before I had it. I used to be continually examining my self, and studying and contriving for likely Ways and Means, how I should live holily, with far greater diligence and earnestness, than ever I pursued any thing in my Life: But with too great a Dependence on my own Strength; which afterwards proved a great Damage to me. My Experience had not then taught me, as it has
done

done since, my extream Feebleness and Impotence, every manner of Way; and the innumerable and bottomless Depths of secret Corruption and Deceit, that there was in my Heart. However, I went on with my eager pursuit after more Holiness; and sweet conformity to Christ.

“ THE Heaven I desired was a Heaven of Holiness; to be with GOD, and to spend my Eternity in divine Love, and holy Communion with Christ. My Mind was very much taken up with Contemplations on Heaven, and the Enjoyments of those there; and living there in perfect Holiness, Humility and Love. And it used at that Time to appear a great Part of the Happiness of Heaven, that there the Saints could express their Love to Christ. It appear'd to me a great Clog and Hindrance and Burden to me, that what I felt within, I could not express to GOD, and give vent to, as I desired. The inward ardor of my Soul, seem'd to be hinder'd and pent up, and could not freely flame out as it would. I used often to think, how in Heaven, this sweet Principle should freely and fully vent and express itself. Heaven appeared to me exceeding delightful as a World of Love. It appear'd to me, that all Happiness consisted in living in pure, humble, heavenly, divine Love.

“ I remember the Thoughts I used then to have of Holiness. I remember I then said sometimes to my self, I do certainly know that I love Holiness, such as the Gospel prescribes. It appeared to me, there was nothing in it but what was ravishingly lovely. It appeared to me, to be the highest Beauty and Amiableness, above all other Beauties: that it was a *divine* Beauty; far purer than any thing here upon Earth; and that every thing else, was like Mire, Filth and Defilement, in Comparison of it.

“ HOLINESS, as I then wrote down some of my Contemplations on it, appeared to me to be of a sweet, pleasant, charming, serene, calm Nature. It seem'd to me, it brought an inexpressible Purity, Brightness, Peacfulness & Ravishment to the Soul: and that it made the Soul like a Field or Garden of GOD, with all manner of pleasant Flowers; that is all pleasant, delightful & undisturbed; enjoying a sweet Calm, and the gently vivifying Beams of the Sun. The Soul of a true Christian, as I then wrote my Meditations, appear'd like such a little white Flower, as we see in the Spring of the Year;

low and humble on the Ground, opening it's Bosom, to receive the pleasant Beams of the Sun's Glory ; rejoicing as it were, in a calm Rapture ; diffusing around a sweet Fragrancy ; standing peacefully and lovingly, in the midst of other Flowers round about ; all in like Manner opening their Boloms, to drink in the Light of the Sun.

“ THERE WAS NO Part of Creature-Holiness, that I then, and at other Times, had so great a Sense of the Loveliness of, as Humility, Brokenness of Heart and Poverty of Spirit : and there was nothing that I had such a Spirit to long for. My Heart as it were panted after this, to lie low before GOD, and in the Dust ; that I might be nothing, and that GOD might be all ; that I might become as a little Child.

“ WHILE I was there at *New-York*, I sometimes was much affected with Reflections on my past Life, considering how late it was, before I began to be truly religious ; and how wickedly I had lived till then : and once so as to weep abundantly, and for a considerable time together.

“ ON *January 12. 1722, 3.* I made a solemn Dedication of my self to GOD, and wrote it down ; giving up my self, and all that I had to GOD ; to be for the future in no Respect my own ; to act as one that had no right to himself, in any Respect. And solemnly vowed to take GOD for my whole Portion and Felicity ; looking on nothing else as any Part of my Happiness, nor acting as if it were : and his Law for the constant Rule of my Obedience : engaging to fight with all my Might, against the World, the Flesh and the Devil, to the End of my Life. But have Reason to be infinitely humbled, when I consider, how much I have fail'd of answering my Obligation.

“ I had then abundance of sweet religious Conversation in the Family where I lived, with Mr. *John Smith*, and his pious Mother. My Heart was knit in Affection to those, in whom were Appearances of true Piety ; and I could bear the Thoughts of no other Companions, but such as were holy, and the Disciples of the blessed JESUS.

“ I had great Longings for the Advancement of Christ’s Kingdom in the World. My secret Prayer used to be in great Part taken up in praying for it. If I heard the least hint of any thing that happened in any Part of the World, that appear’d to me, in some Respect or other, to have a favourable Aspect on the Interest of Christ’s Kingdom, my Soul eagerly catch’d at it ; and it would much animate and refresh me. I used to be earnest to read publick News-Letters, mainly for that End ; to see if I could not find some News favourable to the Interest of Religion in the World.

“ I very frequently used to retire into a solitary Place, on the Banks of *Hudson’s River*, at some Distance from the City, for Contemplation on Divine Things, and secret Converse with GOD ; and had many sweet Hours there. Sometimes Mr. *Smith* and I walked there together, to converse of the Things of GOD ; and our Conversation used much to turn on the Advancement of Christ’s Kingdom in the World, and the glorious Things that GOD would accomplish for his Church in the latter Days.

“ I had then, and at other Times, the greatest Delight in the holy Scriptures, of any Book whatsoever. Oftentimes in reading it, every Word seemed to touch my Heart. I felt an Harmony between something in my Heart, and those sweet and powerful Words. I seem’d often to see so much Light, exhibited by every Sentence, and such a refreshing ravishing Food communicated, that I could not get along in reading. Used often-times to dwell long on one Sentence, to see the Wonders contained in it ; and yet almost every Sentence seemed to be full of Wonders.

“ I came away from *New-York* in the Month of *April*, 1723, and had a most bitter parting with Madam *Smith* and her Son. My Heart seemed to sink within me, at leaving the Family and City, where I had enjoyed so many sweet and pleasant Days. I went from *New-York* to *Wethersfield* by Water. As I sail’d away, I kept Sight of the City as long as I could ; and when I was out of Sight of it, it would affect me much to look that Way, with a kind of Melancholly mixed with Sweetness. However, that Night after this sorrowful parting, I was greatly comforted in GOD at *Westchester*, where we went ashore to lodge :

Judge : and had a pleasant Time of it all the Voyage to *Saybrook*. It was sweet to me to think of meeting dear Christians in Heaven, where we should never part more. At *Saybrook* we went ashore to lodge on Saturday, and there kept Sabbath ; where I had a sweet and refreshing Season, walking alone in the Fields.

“ AFTER I came home to *Windsor*, remained much in a like Frame of my Mind, as I had been in at *New-York* ; but only some times felt my Heart ready to sink, with the Thoughts of my Friends at *New-York*. And my Refuge and Support was in Contemplations on the heavenly State ; as I find in my Diary of *May 1. 1723*. It was my Comfort to think of that State, where there is fulness of Joy ; where reigns heavenly, sweet, calm and delightful Love, without Alloy ; where there are continually the dearest Expressions of this Love ; where is the Enjoyment of the Persons loved, without ever parting ; where these Persons that appear so lovely in this World, will really be inexpressibly more lovely, and full of love to us. And how sweetly will the mutual Lovers join together to sing the Praises of GOD and the LAMB ! How full will it fill us with Joy, to think, that this Enjoyment, these sweet Exercises will never cease or come to an End ; but will last to all Eternity !

“ CONTINUED much in the same Frame in the general, that I had been in at *New-York*, till I went to *New-Haven*, to live there as Tutor of the College ; having one special Season of uncommon Sweetness : particularly once at *Bolton*, in a Journey from *Boston*, walking out alone in the Fields. After I went to *New-Haven*, I sunk in Religion ; my Mind being diverted from my eager and violent Pursuits after Holiness, by some Affairs that greatly perplexed and distracted my Mind.

“ IN *September, 1725*, was taken ill at *New-Haven* ; and endeavouring to go home to *Haver*, was so ill at the North Village, that I could go no further : where I lay sick for about a Quarter of a Year. And in this Sickness, GOD was pleased to visit me again with the sweet Influences of his Spirit. My Mind was greatly engaged there on divine, pleasant Contemplations, and Longings of Soul!

I observed that those who watched with me, would often be looking out for the Morning, and seemed to wish for it. Which brought to my Mind those Words of the Psalmist, which my Soul with Sweetness made it's own Language. *My Soul waiteth for the Lord, more than they that watch for the Morning, I say, more than they that watch for the Morning.* And when the Light of the Morning came, and the Beams of the Sun came in at the Windows, it refreshed my Soul from one Morning to another. It seemed to me to be some Image of the sweet Light of GOD's Glory.

“ I remember, about that Time, I used greatly to long for the Conversion of some that I was concerned with. It seem'd to me, I could gladly honor them, and with Delight be a Servant to them, and lie at their Feet, if they were but truly holy.

BUT some Time after this, I was again greatly diverted in my Mind, with some temporal Concerns, that exceedingly took up my Thoughts, greatly to the wounding of my Soul : and went on through various Exercises, that it would be tedious to relate, that gave me much more Experience of my own Heart, than ever I had before.

“ SINCE I came to this Town, * I have often had sweet Complacency in GOD, in Views of his glorious Perfections, and the Excellency of Jesus Christ. GOD has appeared to me, a glorious and lovely Being, chiefly on the account of his Holiness. The Holiness of GOD has always appeared to me the most lovely of all his Attributes. The Doctrines of God's absolute Sovereignty, and free Grace, in shewing Mercy to whom he would shew Mercy ; and Man's absolute Dependance on the Operations of God's Holy Spirit, have very often appeared to me as sweet and glorious Doctrines. These Doctrines have been much my Delight. GOD's Sovereignty has ever appeared to me, as great Part of his Glory. It has often been sweet to me to go to GOD, and adore Him as a sovereign GOD, and ask sovereign Mercy of Him.

“ I have loved the Doctrines of the Gospel : They have been to my Soul like green Pastures. The Gospel has seem'd to me to be the richest Treasure ; the Treasure

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* Northampton.

that I have most desired, and longed that it might dwell richly in me. The Way of Salvation by CHRIST, has appeared in a general Way, glorious and excellent, and most pleasant and beautiful. It has often seem'd to me, that it would in a great Measure spoil Heaven, to receive it in any other Way. That Text has often been affecting and delightful to me, *Isai. xxxii. 2. A Man shall be an hiding Place from the Wind, and a Covert from the Tempest &c.*

“ It has often appear'd sweet to me, to be united to CHRIST; to have Him for my Head, and to be a Member of his Body: and also to have CHRIST for my Teacher and Prophet. I very often think with Sweetness and Longings and Pantings of Soul, of being a little Child, taking hold of CHRIST, to be led by Him through the Wilderness of this World. That Text, *Matth. xviii.* at the Beginning, has often been sweet to me, *Except ye be converted, and become as little Children &c.* I love to think of coming to CHRIST, to receive Salvation of him, poor in Spirit, and quite empty of Self; humbly exalting Him alone; cut entirely off from my own Root, and to grow into, and out of CHRIST: to have GOD in CHRIST to be all in all; and to live by Faith on the Son of GOD, a Life of humble, unfeigned Confidence in Him. That Scripture has often been sweet to me, *Psal. cxv. 1. Not unto us, O LORD, not unto us, but unto thy Name give Glory, for thy Mercy, and for thy Truth's sake.* And those Words of Christ, *Luk x. 21. In that Hour Jesus rejoiced in Spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of Heaven and Earth, that thou hast hid these Things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto Babes: Even so Father, for so it seemed good in thy Sight.* That Sovereignty of GOD that Christ rejoiced in, seem'd to me to be worthy to be rejoiced in; and that rejoicing of CHRIST, seem'd to me to shew the Excellency of CHRIST, and the Spirit that he was of.

“ SOMETIMES only mentioning a single Word, causes my Heart to burn within me: or only seeing the Name of CHRIST, or the Name of some Attribute of GOD. And GOD has appeared glorious to me, on account of the TRINITY. It has made me have exalting Thoughts of GOD, that he subsists in three Persons; FATHER, SON, and HOLY GHOST.

THE sweetest Joys and Delights I have experienced, have not been those that have arisen from a Hope of my own good Estate ; but in a direct View of the glorious Things of the Gospel. When I enjoy this Sweetness, it seems to carry me above the Thoughts of my own safe Estate. It seems at such Times a Loss that I cannot bear, to take off my Eye from the glorious, pleasant Object I behold without me, to turn my Eye in upon my self, and my own good Estate.

“ My Heart has been much on the Advancement of Christ’s Kingdom in the World. The Histories of the past Advancement of Christ’s Kingdom, have been sweet to me. When I have read Histories of past Ages, the pleasantest Thing in all my reading has been, to read of the Kingdom of Christ being promoted. And when I have expected in my reading, to come to any such thing, I have lotted upon it all the Way as I read. And my Mind has been much entertained and delighted, with the Scripture Promises and Prophecies, of the future glorious Advancement of Christ’s Kingdom on Earth.

“ I have sometimes had a Sense of the excellent Fulness of Christ, and his Meetness and Suitableness as a Saviour ; whereby he has appeared to me, far above all, the chief of ten Thousands. And his Blood and Atonement has appeared sweet, and his Righteousness sweet ; which is always accompanied with an Ardency of Spirit, and inward Strugglings and Breathings and Groanings, that cannot be uttered, to be emptied of my self, and swallowed up in CHRIST.

“ ONCE, as I rid out into the Woods for my Health, *Anno 1737* ; and having lit from my Horse in a retired Place, as my Manner commonly has been, to walk for divine Contemplation and Prayer ; I had a View, that for me was extraordinary, of the Glory of the SON OF GOD ; as Mediator between GOD and Man ; and his wonderful, great, full, pure and sweet Grace and Love, and meek and gentle Condescension. This Grace, that appear’d to me so calm and sweet, appear’d great above the Heavens. The Person of CHRIST appear’d ineffably excellent, with an Excellency great enough to swallow up all Thought and Conception. Which continued, as near as I can judge,

about an Hour ; which kept me, the bigger Part of the Time, in a Flood of Tears, and weeping aloud. I felt withal, an Ardency of Soul to be, what I know not otherwise how to exprefs, than to be emptied and annihilated ; to lie in the Duft, and to be full of Christ alone ; to love him with a holy and pure Love ; to trust in him ; to live upon him ; to ferve and follow him, and to be totally wrapt up in the Fullnefs of Christ ; and to be perfectly sanctified and made pure, with a divine and heavenly Purity. I have feveral other Times, had Views very much of the fame Nature, and that have had the fame Effects.

“ I have many Times had a Senfe of the Glory of the third Perfon in the Trinity, in his Office of Sanctifier ; in his holy Operations communicating divine Light and Life to the Soul. GOD in the Communications of his Holy Spirit, has appear'd as an infinite Fountain of Divine Glory and Sweetnefs ; being full and fufficient to fill and fatisfy the Soul : pouring forth it felf in fweet Communications, like the Sun in its Glory, fweetly and pleafantly diffufing Light and Life.

“ I have fometimes had an affecting Senfe of the Excellency of the Word of GOD, as a Word of Life ; as the Light of Life ; a fweet, excellent, Life-giving Word : accompanied with a thirfting after that Word, that it might dwell richly in my Heart.

“ I have often fince I lived in this Town, had very affecting Views of my own Sinfulnefs and Vilenefs ; very frequently fo as to hold me in a kind of loud Weeping, fometimes for a confiderable time together : fo that I have often been forced to fhut my felf up. I have had a vastly greater Senfe of my own Wickednefs, and the Badnefs of my Heart, fince my Converfion, than ever I had before. It has often appeared to me, that if GOD fhould mark Iniquity againft me, I fhould appear the very worft of all Mankind ; of all that have been fince the beginning of the World to this time : and that I fhould have by far the loweft Place in Hell. When others that have come to talk with me about their Soul Concerns, have expreffed the Senfe they have had of their own Wickednefs, by faying that it feem'd to them, that they were as bad as the
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Devil himself; I thought their Expressions seemed exceeding faint and feeble, to represent my Wickedness. I thought I should wonder, that they should content themselves with such Expressions as these, if I had any Reason to imagine, that their Sin bore any Proportion to mine. It seemed to me, I should wonder at my self, if I should express my Wickedness in such feeble Terms as they did.

“MY Wickedness, as I am in my self, has long appear'd to me perfectly ineffable, and infinitely swallowing up all Thought and Imagination; like an infinite Deluge, or infinite Mountains over my Head. I know not how to express better, what my Sins appear to me to be, than by heaping Infinite upon Infinite, and multiplying Infinite by Infinite. I go about very often, for this many Years, with these Expressions in my Mind, and in my Mouth, “Infinite upon Infinite. Infinite upon Infinite!” When I look into my Heart, and take a view of my Wickedness, it looks like an Abyss infinitely deeper than Hell. And it appears to me, that were it not for free Grace, exalted and raised up to the infinite Height of all the fulness and glory of the great JEHOVAH, and the Arm of his Power and Grace stretched forth, in all the Majesty of his Power, and in all the Glory of his Sovereignty; I should appear sunk down in my Sins infinitely below Hell it self, far beyond Sight of every Thing, but the piercing Eye of God's Grace, that can pierce even down to such a Depth, and to the bottom of such an Abyss.

“AND yet, I ben't in the least inclined to think, that I have a greater Conviction of Sin than ordinary. It seems to me, my Conviction of Sin is exceeding small, and faint. It appears to me enough to amaze me, that I have no more Sense of my Sin. I know certainly, that I have very little Sense of my sinfulness. That my Sins appear to me so great, don't seem to me to be, because I have so much more Conviction of Sin than other Christians, but because I am so much worse, and have so much more Wickedness to be convinced of. When I have had these Turns of weeping and crying for my Sins, I thought I knew in the Time of it, that my Repentance was nothing to my Sin.

“I have greatly longed of late, for a broken Heart, and to lie low before GOD. And when I ask for Humility of
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GOD, I can't bear the Thoughts of being no more humble, than other Christians. It seems to me, that tho' their Degrees of Humility may be suitable for them; yet it would be a vile Self-exaltation in me, not to be the lowest in Humility of all Mankind. Others speak of their longing to be humbled to the Dust. Tho' that may be a proper Expression for them, I always think for my self, that I ought to be humbled down below Hell. 'Tis an Expression that it has long been natural for me to use in Prayer to God. I ought to lie infinitely low before GOD.

“IT is affecting to me to think, how ignorant I was, when I was a young Christian, of the bottomlets, infinite Depths of Wickedness, Pride, Hypocrisy and Deceit left in my Heart.

I Have vastly a greater Sense, of my universal, exceeding Dependence on God's Grace and Strength, and meer good Pleasure, of late, than I used formerly to have; and have experienced more of an Abhorrence of my own Righteousness. The Thought of any Comfort or Joy, arising in me, on any Consideration, or Reflection on my own Amiability, or any of my Performances or Experiences, or any Goodness of Heart or Life, is nauseous and detestable to me. And yet I am greatly afflicted with a proud and self-righteous Spirit; much more sensibly, than I used to be formerly. I see that Serpent rising and putting forth it's Head, continually, every where, all around me.

“THO' it seems to me, that in some Respects I was a far better Christian, for two or three Years after my first Conversion, than I am now; and lived in a more constant Delight and Pleasure: yet of late Years, I have had a more full and constant Sense of the absolute Sovereignty of GOD, and a delight in that Sovereignty; and have had more of a Sense of the Glory of CHRIST, as a Mediator, as revealed in the Gospel. On one Saturday Night in particular, had a particular Discovery of the Excellency of the Gospel of CHRIST, above all other Doctrines; so that I could not but say to my self; “This is my chosen Light, my chosen Doctrine:” and of Christ, “This is my chosen Prophet.” It appear'd to me to be sweet beyond all Expression, to follow Christ, and to be taught and enlighten'd and instructed by him; to learn of him, and live to him.

“ ANOTHER Saturday Night, *January 1738, 9.* had such a Sense, how sweet and blessed a Thing it was, to walk in the Way of Duty, to do that which was right and meet to be done, and agreeable to the holy Mind of GOD; that it caused me to break forth into a kind of a loud weeping, which held me some Time; so that I was forced to shut my self up, and fasten the Doors. I could not but as it were cry out, “ How happy are they which do that which is right in the Sight of GOD! They are blessed indeed, they are the happy ones!” I had at the same time, a very affecting Sense, how meet and suitable it was that GOD should govern the World, and order all Things according to his own Pleasure; and I rejoiced in it, that GOD reigned, and that his Will was done.”

P A R T III.

Containing a History of his Life from his ENTERING on the Work of the Ministry, unto his DEATH.

S E C T I O N I.

HIS GENERAL MANNER of LIFE.

MR. EDWARDS made a Secret of his private Devotion, and therefore it cannot be particularly known: tho' there is much Evidence, that he was punctual, constant and frequent in secret Prayer, and often kept Days of Fasting and Prayer in secret; and set a part Time for serious, devout Meditations on spiritual and eternal things, as part of his religious Exercise in secret. It appears by his Diary that in his Youth he determined to attend secret Prayer more than twice a Day, when Circumstances would allow. He was, so far as it can be known, much on his Knees in secret, and in devout reading God's Word, & Meditation upon it. And his constant, solemn converse with GOD in these Exercises of secret Religion made his Face, as it were, to shine before others. His Appearance, his Countenance, Words and whole Demeanour, (tho' without any thing of

affected Grimace and sour Austerity) was attended with a Seriousness, Gravity and Solemnity, which was the natural genuine Indications and Expression of a deep, abiding Sense of divine Things on his Mind, and of his living constantly in the fear of God.

AGREEABLE to his Resolutions, he was very careful and abstemious in eating and drinking; as doubtless it was necessary so great a Student, and a Person of so delicate and tender a bodily make as he was, should be, in order to be comfortable and useful. When he had, by careful Observation, found what kind, and what quantity of Diet, best suited his Constitution, and render'd him most fit to pursue his Work, he was very strict and exact in complying with it; and in this respect *lived by Rule*; and herein constantly practis'd great Self-denial: Which he also did in his constant early rising, in order to redeem Time for his Study. He us'd himself to rise by four or between four and five in the Morning.

THO' he was of a tender and delicate Constitution, yet few Students are capable of close Application more Hours in a Day than he. He commonly spent thirteen Hours every Day in his Study. His most usual Diversion in the Summer was riding on Horseback and walking. He would commonly, unless diverted by Company, ride two or three Miles after Dinner to some lonely Grove, where he would dismount and walk a while. At which times he generally carried his Pen and Ink with him, to note any Thought that should be suggested, which he chose to retain and pursue, as what promised some Light on any important Subject. In the Winter he was wont almost daily to take an Ax and chop Wood moderately for the space of half an Hour or more.

HE had an uncommon thirst for Knowledge, in the pursuit of which, he spared no Cost nor Pains. He read all the Books, especially Books of Divinity, that he could come at, from which he could hope to get any help in his pursuit of Knowledge. And in this, he confin'd not himself to Authors of any particular Sect or Denomination; yea took much pains to come at the Books of the most noted Writers, who advance a Scheme of Divinity most contrary to his own Principles. But he studied the BIBLE more than all other Books, and more than most other Divines do. His uncommon acquaintance with the Bible appears in his Sermons, and in most of his Publications: and his great pains in
studying

studying it are manifest in his Manuscript Notes upon it; of which a more particular Account may be given hereafter. He took his religious Principles from the Bible, and not from any human System or Body of Divinity. Tho' his Principles were *Calvinistic*, yet he called no Man, Father. He thought and judged for himself, and was truly very much of an Original. This is evident by what he published in his Life-time, and is yet more so by his MS. Many Volumes of which he has left; and the Reader may expect a more particular Account of them in the Sequel. For reading was not the only Method he took to improve his Mind; but he did this much by Writing; without which, 'tis probable no Student can make Improvements to the best Advantage. Agreeable to Resolution 11th, he applied himself with all his Might to find out the Truth: He searched for Understanding and Knowledge, as for Silver, and digged for it, as for hid Treasures. Every thought on any Subject, which appear'd to him worth pursuing and preserving, he pursued, as far as he then could, with his Pen in his Hand. Thus he was all his Days, like the busy Bee, collecting from every opening Flower, and storing up a Stock of Knowledge, which was indeed sweet to him, as the Honey & the Honey-comb. And as he advanced in Years and in Knowledge, his Pen was more and more employed, and his Manuscripts grew much faster on his Hands.

HE was thought by some, who had but a slight Acquaintance with him to be stiff & unfociable; but this was owing to want of better Acquaintance. He was not a Man of many Words indeed, and was somewhat reserved among Strangers, and those on whose Candor and Friendship he did not know he could rely. And this was probably owing to two Things. First, the strict Guard he set over his Tongue from his Youth, which appears by his Resolutions, taking great Care never to use it in any way that might prove mischievous to any; never to *sin with his Tongue*; or to improve it in idle, trivial and impertinent Talk, which generally makes up a great Part of the Conversation of those who are full of Words in all Companies. He was sensible that in the multitude of Words there wanteth not Sin; and therefore refrained his Lips, and habituated himself to *think* before he *spoke*, and to propose some good End even in all his Words; which led him to be above many others, agreeable to St. James's Advice, *slow to speak*. Secondly,

this was in Part the effect of his bodily Constitution. He possessed but a comparative small Stock of animal Life: his animal Spirits were low, and he had not Strength of Lungs to spare, that would be necessary in order to make him what would be called, an affable, facecious Gentleman, in all Companies. They who have a great flow of animal Spirits, and so can speak with more Ease and less Expence, may doubtless lawfully practice free Conversation in all Companies for a lower End, (e. g. to please and render themselves acceptable) than he, who has not such a Stock to expend upon. It becomes *him* to reserve what he has, for higher and more important Service. Besides, the want of animal Spirits lays a Man under a *natural* inability to that freedom of Conversation, at all times, and in whatever Company he is; which those of more Life naturally go into; and the greatest Degree of a sociable Disposition, Humility and Benevolence, will not remove this Obstacle.

HE was not forward to enter into any Dispute among Strangers, and in Companies where were Persons of different Sentiments; as he was sensible that such Disputes are generally unprofitable, and often sinful and of bad Consequence; and he tho't he could dispute to the best Advantage with his Pen in his Hand: Yet he was always free to give his Sentiments on any Subject proposed to him; and remove any Difficulties or Objections offered by way of Enquiry, as lying in the Way of what he looked upon to be the Truth. But how groundless the imputation of *stiff* and *unsociable* was, his known and tried Friends best knew. They always found him easy of access, kind and condescending; and tho' not talkative, yet affable and free. Among such whose Candor and Friendship he had experienced, he threw off the Reserve, and was most open and free; quite patient of Contradiction, while the utmost Opposition was made to his Sentiments, that could be by any plausible Arguments or Objections. And indeed, he was on all Occasions, quite sociable and free with all, who had any special Business with him.

IN his Conduct in his Family he practised that conscientious exactness which was perspicuous in all his Ways. He maintained a great esteem and regard for his amiable and excellent Consort. Much of the tender and kind was expressed in his Conversation with her and conduct towards

wards her. He was wont frequently to admit her into his Study, and converse freely with her on Matters of Religion. And he used commonly to pray with her in his Study, at least once a Day, unless something extraordinary prevented. The time in which this used to be commonly attended, was just before going to Bed, after Prayers in the Family. As he rose very early himself, he was wont to have his Family up in season in the Morning; after which, before the Family entered on the Business of the Day, he attended on Family Prayers. When a Chapter in the Bible was read, commonly by Candle-light in the Winter; upon which he asked his Children Questions according to their Age and Capacity; and took Occasion to explain some Passages in it, or enforce any Duty recommended &c. as he thought most proper.

HE was careful and thorough in the Government of his Children; and, as a Consequence of this, they revered, esteemed and loved him. He took special care to begin his Government of them in Season. When they first discovered any considerable degree of Will and Stubbornness, he would attend to them till he had thoroughly subdued them and brought them to submit. And such prudent thorough Discipline, exercised with the greatest Calmness, and commonly without striking a Blow, being repeated once or twice, was generally sufficient for that Child; and effectually established his parental Authority, and produced a cheartful Obedience ever after.

HE kept a watchful Eye over his Children, that he might admonish them of the *first* wrong Step, and direct them in the right Way. He took Opportunities to treat with them in his Study, singly and particularly about their own Soul's Concerns; and to give them Warning, Exhortation and Direction, as he saw Occasion. He took much Pains to instruct them in the Principles of Religion; in which he made use of the *Assembly's Shorter Catechism*: not merely by taking care that they learned it by Heart; but by leading them into an understanding of the Doctrines therein taught, by asking them Questions on each Answer, and explaining it to them. His usual time to attend this was on the Evening before the Sabbath. And as he believed that the Sabbath or holy Time began at Sun-set the Evening before the Day, he order'd his Family to finish all their secular

secular Business by that time or before ; when they were all called together, and a Psalm was sung and Prayer attended, as an Introduction to the sanctifying the Sabbath. This care and exactness effectually prevented that intruding on holy Time, by attending on secular Business, too common in Families where the Evening before the Sabbath is pretended to be observed.

HE was a great Enemy to young People's unseasonable Company-keeping and Frolicking, as he look'd upon it a great Means of corrupting and ruining Youth. And he thought the Excuse many Parents make for tolerating their Children in it, (viz. that it is the Custom, and others Children practise it, which renders it difficult, and even impossible to restrain them) was insufficient and frivolous : and manifested a great Degree of Stupidity, on supposition the practice was hurtful and pernicious to their Souls. And when some of his Children grew up he found no difficulty in restraining them from this pernicious Practice ; but they cheerfully complied with the will of their Parents herein. He allowed not his Children to be from home after nine o'Clock at Night, when they went abroad to see their Friends and Companions. Neither were they allowed to sit up much after that Time, in his own House, when any came to make them a visit. If any Gentleman desired Acquaintance with his Daughters ; after handsomely introducing himself, by properly consulting the Parents, he was allowed all proper Opportunity for it ; a Room and Fire, if needed : but must not intrude on the proper Hours of Rest and Sleep, or the Religion and Order of the Family.

HE had a strict and inviolable regard to Justice in all his dealings with his Neighbours, and was very careful to provide for Things honest in the sight of all Men ; so that scarcely a Man had any Dealings with him, that was not conscious of his uprightness. He appeared to have a sacred regard to truth in his Words, both in Promises and Narrations, agreeable to his Resolutions. This doubtless was one Reason why he was not so full of Words as many are. No Man feared to rely on his Veracity.

HE was cautious in chusing his *intimate Friends*, and therefore had not many that might properly be called such. But to them he shewed himself friendly in a peculiar manner.

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He was indeed a faithful Friend, and able above most others to keep a Secret. To them he discover'd himself more than to others, led them into his Views and Ends in his Conduct in particular Instances : by which they had abundant Evidence that he well understood human Nature ; and that his general Reservedness, and many particular Instances of his Conduct, which a Stranger might impute to ignorance of Men, were really owing to his uncommon Knowledge of Mankind.

His Conversation with his Friends was always savory and profitable : In this he was remarkable, and almost singular.—He was not wont to spend his time with them, in Scandal, Evil-speaking and Back-biting, or in foolish Jestings, idle chat, and telling Stories : But his Mouth was that of the Just, which bringeth forth Wisdom, and his Lips dispersed Knowledge. His Tongue was as the Pen of a ready Writer, while he conversed about important, heavenly, divine Things, which his Heart was so full of, in such a natural and free manner, as to be most entertaining and instructive : so that none of his Friends could enjoy his Company without Instruction and Profit, unless it was by their own fault.

His great Benevolence to Mankind discovered it self, among other ways, by the uncommon regard he shewed to Liberality, and Charity to the Poor and Distressed. He was much in recommending this, both in his publick Discourses and private Conversation. He often declared it to be his Opinion, that professed Christians, in these Days are greatly deficient in this Duty ; and much more so, than in most other Parts of external Christianity. He often observed how much this is spoken of, recommended and encouraged in the holy Scripture, especially in the New-Testament. And it was his Opinion, that every particular Church ought by frequent and liberal Contributions, to maintain a publick Stock, that might be ready for the poor and necessitous Members of that Church : and that the principal Business of Deacons is to take care of the Poor in the faithful and judicious Distribution and Improvement of the Church's temporals, lodged in their Hands. And he did not content himself with only recommending Charity to others, but practis'd it much himself : Tho', according to his Master's Advice, he took great

great Care to conceal his Deeds of Charity ; by which Means doubtless most of his Alms-deeds will be unknown till the Resurrection, which if known, would prove him to be as great an Instance of Charity as any that can be produced in this Age. This is not meer Conjecture, but is evident many ways. He was forward to give on all publick Occasions of Charity, tho' when it could properly be done, he always conceal'd the Sum given. And some Instances of his giving more privately have accidentally come to the Knowledge of others, in which his Liberality appeared in a very extraordinary Degree. One of the Instances was this. Upon hearing that a poor obscure Man, whom he never saw, or any of his kindred, was by an extraordinary bodily Disorder, brought to great Straits ; he, unasked, gave * to a Friend to be delivered to the distressed Person ; having first required a Promise of him, that he would let neither the Person, who was the Object of his Charity, nor any one else know by whom it was given. This may serve both as an Instance of his extraordinary Charity, and of his great Care to conceal it. †

Mr. EDWARDS had the most universal Character of a *good Preacher* of almost any Minister in this Age. There were but few that heard him, who did not call him a good Preacher, however they might dislike his religious Principles, and be much offended at the same Truths when delivered by others : And most admired him above all that ever they heard. His Eminency as a Preacher seems to be owing to the following Things.

First, The great Pains he took in composing his Sermons, especially in the first Part of his Life. As by his early rising, and constant attention to his Study, he had more time than most others ; so he spent more time in making his Sermons. He wrote most of his Sermons all out, for near twenty Years after he first began to preach ; tho' he did not wholly confine himself to his Notes in his delivering them.

Secondly,

* A considerable Sum.

† As both the giver, and the Object of his Charity are dead, and all the Ends of the proposed secrecy are answered ; 'tis thought not inconsistent with the above mentioned Promise, to make known the Fact, as it is here related.

Secondly, His great acquaintance with Divinity, his study and knowledge of the Bible. His extensive and universal Knowledge, and great clearness of Thought, enabled him to handle every Subject with great Judgment and Propriety, and to bring out of his Treasury things new and old. Every Subject he handled was instructive, plain, entertaining and profitable; which was much owing to his being Master of the Subject, and his great skill to treat it in a most natural, easy, and profitable Manner. None of his Compositions were dry Speculations, or unmeaning Harangues, or Words without Ideas. When he dwelt on those Truths which are much controverted and opposed by many, which was often the Case, he would set them in such a natural and easy Light, and every Sentiment from Step to Step, would drop from his Lips, attended with such clear and striking Evidence, both from Scripture and Reason, as even to force the assent of every attentive Hearer.

Thirdly, His excellency as a Preacher was very much the Effect of his great Acquaintance with his own Heart, his inward Sense and high Relish of divine Truths, and the high Exercise of true, experimental Religion. This gave him a great insight into human Nature: He knew what was in Man, both the Saint and the Sinner. This helped him to Skill, to lay Truth before the Mind, so as not only to convince the Judgment, but touch the Heart and Conscience; and enabled him to speak out of the abundance of his Heart, what he knew, and testify what he had seen and felt. This gave him a taste and discerning, without which he could not have been able to fill his Sermons, as he did, with such striking, affecting Sentiments, all suited to solemnize, move, and rectify the Heart of the Hearer. His Sermons were well connected, not usually long, and commonly a large Part taken up in the Improvement; which was closely connected with the Subject, and consisted in Sentiments naturally flowing from it.

BUT no Description of his Sermons will give the Reader the Idea of them which they have who sat under his Preaching, or have even read some of his Discourses which are in print. There is a great Number now in Manuscript, which are probably as worthy the view of the Publick, and at least tend as much to instruct and quicken Christians, as most that have been published in this Century.

HIS Appearance in the Desk was with a good Grace, and his delivery easy, natural and very solemn. He had not a strong, loud Voice ; but appear'd with such gravity and solemnity, and spake with such distinctness, clearness and precision ; his Words were so full of Ideas, set in such a plain and striking Light, that few Speakers have been so able to demand the Attention of an Audience as he. His Words often discover'd a great degree of inward fervor, without much Noise or external Emotion, and fell with great weight on the Minds of his Hearers. He made but little Motion of his Head or Hands in the Desk, but spake so as to discover the Motion of his own Heart, which tended in the most natural and effectual manner to move and affect others.

As he wrote his Sermons out at large for many Years, and always wrote a considerable part of most of his publick Discourses ; so he carried his Notes into the Desk with him, and read the most that he had wrote ; yet he was not so confined to his Notes, when he had wrote at large, but that, if some Thoughts were suggested while he was speaking, which did not occur when writing, and appeared to him pertinent and striking, he would deliver them ; and that with as great propriety and fluency, and oftner with greater pathos, and attended with a more sensible good effect on his Hearers, than all he had wrote.

THO', as has been observed, he was wont to read so considerable a part of what he delivered ; yet he was far from thinking this the best way of preaching in general ; and look'd upon his using his Notes so much as he did, a Deficiency and Infirmary. And in the latter part of his Life was inclined to think it had been better, if he had never accustomed himself to use his Notes at all. It appeared to him that preaching wholly without Notes, agreeable to the Custom in most Protestant Countries, and what seems evidently to have been the manner of the Apostles and primitive Ministers of the Gospel, was by far the most natural way ; and had the greatest tendency on the whole, to answer the End of Preaching : and supposed that none who had Talents equal to the Work of the Ministry, was incapable of speaking Memoriter, if he took suitable Pains for this Attainment from his Youth. He would have the young Preacher write all his Sermons, or at least most of them, out at large ; and instead of reading
them

them to his Hearers, take pains to commit them to Memory. Which, tho' it would require a great deal of Labour at first, yet would soon become easier by use, and help him to speak more correctly and freely, and be of great Service to him all his Days.

His Prayers were indeed *extempore*. He was the farthest from any appearance of a Form, as to his Words & manner of Expression, of almost any Man. He was quite singular and inimitable in this, by any who have not a Spirit of real and undissembled Devotion. Yet he always expressed himself with Decency & Propriety. He appeared to have much of the Grace and Spirit of Prayer; to pray with the Spirit and with the Understanding: and he perform'd this part of Duty much to the acceptance and edification of those who joined with him. He was not wont, in ordinary Cases to be long in his Prayers: an error which he observed was often hurtful to publick and social Prayer, as it tends rather to damp than promote true Devotion.

HE kept himself quite free from worldly Cares. He gave himself wholly to the Work of the Ministry, and entangled not himself with the Affairs of this Life. He left the particular Oversight and Direction of the temporal Concerns of his Family, almost entirely to Mrs. *Edwards*; who was better able than most of her Sex to take the whole Care of them on her Hands. He was less acquainted with most of his temporal Affairs than many of his Neighbours; and seldom knew when and by whom his Forrage for Winter was gathered in, or how many milk Kine he had; whence his Table was furnished &c.

HE did not make it his Custom to visit his People in their own Houses, unless he was sent for by the Sick; or he heard that they were under some special Affliction. In stead of visiting from House to House, he used to preach frequently at private Meetings in particular Neighbourhoods; and often call the young People and Children to his own House: when he used to pray with them & treat with them in a manner suited to their Years & Circumstances. And he catechized the Children in publick every Sabbath in the Summer. And he used sometimes to propose Questions to particular young Persons in writing, for them to answer after a proper

time given to them to prepare. In putting out these Questions, he endeavoured to suit them to the Age, Genius and Abilities of those to whom they were given. His Questions were generally such as required but a short Answer; and yet could not be answered without a particular Knowledge of some historical Part of the Scripture; and therefore led, and even obliged Persons to study the Bible.

HE did not neglect visiting his People from House to House, because he did not look upon it, in ordinary Cases, to be one Part of the Work of the Gospel Minister. But he supposed that Ministers should, with respect to this, consult their own Talents and Circumstances, and visit more or less, according to the degree in which they could hope hereby to promote the great Ends of the Gospel Ministry. He observed, that some Ministers had a talent at entertaining and profiting by occasional Visits among their People. They have Words at Will, and a knack at introducing profitable, religious Discourse in a free, natural, and, as it were undesigned way. He supposed such had a call to spend a great deal of their time in visiting their People. But he looked on his Talents to be quite otherwise. He was not able to enter into a free Conversation with every Person he met with, and in an easy manner turn it to what Topick he pleased, without the help of others, and, as it may be, against their Inclination. He therefore found that his visits of this kind must be in a great degree unprofitable. And as he was settled in a great Town, it would take up a great part of his Time to visit from House to House; which he thought he could spend in his Study to much more valuable Purposes, and so as much better to promote the great Ends of his Ministry. For it appeared to him, that he could do the greatest good to Souls, and most promote the interest of Christ by preaching and writing, and conversing with Persons under religious Impressions in his Study; where he encouraged all such to repair; where, they might be sure, in ordinary Cases, to find him: and to be allowed easy access to him, and where they were treated with all desirable tenderness, kindness & familiarity. In times therefore of the out-pouring of God's Spirit, and the revival of Religion among his People, his Study was throng'd with Persons to lay open their spiritual Concerns to him, and seek his Advice and Direction: whom he received and conversed with, with great freedom and pleasure, and had

had the best Opportunity to deal in the most particular manner with each one.

HE was a skilful Guide to Souls under spiritual Difficulties. And was therefore sought unto not only by his own People, but by many who lived scores of Miles off. He became such an able Guide, partly by his own experimental acquaintance with divine things, and unwearied study of God's Word ; and partly by his having so much concern with Souls under spiritual Troubles. For he had not been settled in the Work of the Ministry many Years before the Spirit of GOD was wonderfully poured out on his People, by which a great Concern about their Souls became almost universal ; and a great Number were hopefully the Subjects of saving Conversion. This was principally in the Year 1734. A particular Account of which has been wrote by him, entitled, *A faithful Narrative of the surprizing Work of GOD in the Conversion of many hundred Souls in Northampton.* Which has been printed in England, Germany and America ; to which the Reader must be refer'd.

AND there was another remarkable Time of the out-pouring of GOD's Spirit in the Years 1740, & 1741. in which *Northampton* partook largely ; tho' not exclusive of most other Parts of the Land. Mr. EDWARDS in this time had to deal not only with his own People, but with Multitudes of others. The hearing that the same things were at *Northampton* some Years before, and the same Mr. EDWARDS had for Knowledge, Piety, and a great Acquaintance with experimental Religion, naturally led both Ministers and People, in almost all Parts of *New-England*, to look to him for Direction and Assistance, in this extraordinary time. Being in this time earnestly solicited by the Ministers & People of many Places to come and preach among them, he went to many ; tho' he was not able to gratify all who desired him. And his preaching was attended with great Success.

AND as many of the Ministers & People in *New-England* had been unacquainted with such things as then appeared, they were greatly exposed to *run wild*, as it were, and actually did, by the subtle Temptations of the Devil, tak-

ing Advantage of the Ignorance and Wickedness of Men's Hearts, go into great Extrems both as Opposers & Friends to the Work of GOD. Mr. EDWARDS was greatly helpful by his Direction and Assistance against the two opposite Extremes, both in Conversation, Preaching and Writing. His Publications on this Occasion were especially of great and extensive Service. Of which it may be proper to give some Account here.

The first is a Sermon preached at *New-Haven, Sept. 10. 1741. On the distinguishing Marks of the Spirit of GOD &c.*

In the Year 1742, he published a Book of five Parts, intitled, *Some Thoughts concerning the present Revival of Religion in New-England, and the Way in which it ought to be acknowledged and promoted &c.*

In the Year 1746, he published a *Treatise on Religious Affections*. All which might be justly considered by the Church of Christ as a Voice behind them saying, "This is the Way, walk therein." Especially the last mentioned Book, which has been esteemed by many the best that has been wrote on that Subject; setting the distinction between true and false Religion in the most clear and striking Light.

To the same Purpose, is *The Life of the Rev. Mr. DAVID BRANIERD, with Reflections and Observations thereon*; published by Mr. EDWARDS in the Year 1749.

Mr. EDWARDS was what by some is called a rigid *Calvinist*. Those Doctrines of Calvinism, which have been most objected against, and given the greatest Offence, appeared to him as scriptural, reasonable and important as any; and he thought that to give them up, was in effect to give up all. And therefore he looked upon those who called themselves *Calvinists*, that were for palliating the Matter, by, as it were, trimming off the Knots of Calvinism, that they might conform it more to the taste of those who are most disposed to object against it, were really giving up and betraying the Cause they pretended to espouse: and were paving the way not only to Arminianism, but to Deism. For if these Doctrines, in the whole length and breadth of them were relinquished, he did not see, where a Man could set his Foot down with consistency and safety, short of Deism, or even Atheism it felt; or rather universal Scepticism.

HE judg'd that nothing was wanting, but to have these Doctrines properly stated and judiciously and well defended, in order to their appearing most agreeable to Reason and common Sense, as well as the Doctrines of Revelation; and that this therefore was the only effectual Method to convince, or silence and shame the opposers of them. All will be able to satisfy themselves of the truth of this, by reading his Treatise on *Justification*, and his two last Books on the *Freedom of the Will*, and *Original Sin*.

IN this view of Things, he thought it of Importance that Ministers should be very critical in examining Candidates for the Ministry, with Respect to their *Principles*, as well as their religious Disposition and Morals. And on this Account he met with considerable Difficulty and Opposition in some Instance. His Opinion was, that an erroneous or unfaithful Minister was likely to do more hurt than good to the Church of Christ; and therefore he could not have any Hand in introducing a Man into the Ministry, unless he appeared *sound in the Faith*, and manifested to a Judgment of Charity, a *Disposition to be faithful*.

SECTION II.

His DISMISSION from *Northampton*, with the *Occasion and Circumstances* of it.

MR. EDWARDS was very happy in the esteem and love of his People for many Years, and there was the greatest Prospect of his living and dying so. He was the last Minister almost in *New-England* that would have been pitched upon to be opposed and renounced by his People. But by what has come to pass with respect to this, we have an instructive Lesson on the instability of all human Affairs, and the unreasonableness of trusting in Man.

IN the Year 1744. Mr. EDWARDS was informed that some of the young Persons in Town, who were Members of the Church, had Books in keeping, which they improved to promote lascivious and obscene Discourse among

the young Poople. And upon inquiring, a Number of Persons were found to testify, that they had heard one and another from time to time talk obscenely ; as what they were led to by reading a Book or Books, which they had among them. Upon which Mr. EDWARDS thought the Brethren of the Church ought to look into the Matter. And in order to introduce it, he preach'd a Sermon from *Heb. xii. 15, 16.* "Looking diligently, lest any Man fail of
 " the Grace of GOD, lest any Root of bitterness springing
 " up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled : lest there
 " be any Fornicator, or profane Person as Esau &c." After Sermon, he desired the Brethren of the Church to stay, and told them what Information he had got ; and propos'd whether they thought proper to take any Measures to examine into the Matter. They with one consent, and much Zeal, manifested it to be their Opinion, that it ought to be enquired into. And proceeded to chose a Number of Men, to assist their Pastor in examining into the Affair. Upon which Mr. EDWARDS appointed the time for their meeting at his House : and then read a Catalogue of the Names of young Persons, whom he desired to come to his House at the same time. Some were the accused, and some Witnesses ; but it was not then declared of which Number any particular Person was.

WHEN the Names were published, it appeared, that there were but few of the considerable Families in Town, to which none of the Persons named did belong, or were nearly related. Whether this was the Occasion of the alteration or not, before the Day appointed came, a great Number of Heads of Families altered their Minds (yea many condemned what they had done, before they got home to their own Houses) and declared, they did not think proper to proceed as they had done ; that their Children should not be called to an Account in such a way for such things &c. &c. And the Town was suddenly all on a Blaze. This strengthen'd the Hands of the accused, and some refused to appear, and others that did appear, behaved unmannerly, and with a great Degree of Insolence, and contempt of the Authority of the Church. And little or nothing could be done further in the Affair.

THIS was the Occasion of weakening Mr. EDWARDS's Hands in the Work of the Ministry, especially among the young People ; with whom by this Means he greatly lost his Influence ! This seemed in a great Measure to put an end to Mr. EDWARDS's Usefulness at *Northampton*, and doubtless laid a Foundation, and will help to account for the surprizing Events which will by and by be related. To be sure he had no great visible Success after this ; but the Influences of God's Spirit were greatly with-held, and security and carnality much increased among them. That great and singular degree of visible religion and good order which had been found among them, soon began gradually to decay : and the youth have since been more wanton and dissolute.

Mr. STODDARD, Mr. EDWARDS's grand-father and predecessor in the work of the ministry, was of the opinion, that unconverted persons had a right in the sight of God, or consider'd as such, to the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ; that therefore it was their duty to come to that ordinance, tho' they knew they had no true goodness, or gospel holiness. He maintain'd, that visible christianity does not consist in a profession or appearance of that wherein true holiness or real christianity consists. That therefore the profession which persons make in order to be received as visible Members of Christ's Church, ought not to be such as to express or imply a real compliance with, or consent to the terms of the covenant of grace, or a hearty embracing the gospel. So that they who really reject Jesus Christ, and dislike the gospel way of salvation in their hearts, and know that this is true of themselves, may make the profession without lying and hypocrisy. Accordingly, he endeavoured to form a short profession for persons to make in order to be admitted into the church and come to the sacrament, answerable to this principle. And it took place and was practis'd upon in *Northampton* ; and persons were admitted into the church, and to the sacrament, not under the notion of their being true saints, or that they had any real goodness.

Mr. STODDARD's appearing to maintain this principle made a great noise in the country ; and he was oppos'd as introducing something contrary to the principles and

practice of almost all the churches in *New-England*. And the matter was publickly controverted between him and Dr. INCREASE MATHER of *Boston*. However, thro' Mr. STODDARD's great influence & ascendance over the People at *Northampton*, it was introduced there, tho' not without Opposition. And his principles by degrees spread very much among Ministers & People in that county, and in other parts of *New England*; tho' no church except *Northampton* publickly and professedly acted upon this principle, by altering the profession that thole made, who were admitted to the Sacrament, to suit it to such a notion: but required of all who joined to the church a profession of that wherein true christianity, or real godliness consists. And of late years his opinion that persons who have no real goodness, but are in a christless state, and know themselves to be so, may make a christian profession and come to the Sacrament, without lying and hypocrisy; and that they have a right, and 'tis their duty so to do, has greatly spread in the country.

Mr. EDWARDS had some hesitation about this matter when he first settled at *Northampton*, and afterwards; but did not receive such a degree of conviction, that the admitting persons into the church, who made no pretence to real godliness was wrong, as to prevent his practising upon it with a good conscience, for some years. But at length his doubts about the matter greatly increased, which put him upon examining it more thoroughly than he had ever before done, by searching the Scripture, and reading and examining such books, as were written to defend the admission of persons to sacraments, without a profession of saving faith. And the result was a full conviction that it was wrong, and that he could not practise upon it with a good Conscience. He was fully convinced that to be a *visible Christian* was to put on the visibility or appearance of a real christian; that the profession of christianity was a profession of that, wherein real christianity consists; was therefore a profession of true respect of Christ, and a hearty embracing the gospel &c. That therefore no person who rejected Christ in his heart, could make such a profession consistent with truth. And therefore, as the Ordinance of the Lord's Supper was instituted for none but visible professing christians, none but those who are real christians have a real right in the sight of God to come to that ordinance:

nance : and that none ought to be admitted thereto, who do not make a profession of real christianity, and so cannot be received in a judgment of charity as true friends to Jesus Christ, or real saints. ||

WHEN Mr. EDWARDS's sentiments were known, in the spring of the year 1744, it gave great offence, and the town was put into a great ferment : and before he was heard in his own defence, or it was known by many what his principles were, the general cry was to have him dismissed, as what alone would satisfy them. This was evident from the whole tenor of their conduct, as they neglected and oppos'd the most proper means of calmly considering, and so understanding the matter in dispute, and persisted in a refusal to attend to what Mr. EDWARDS had to say in defence of his principles. And from beginning to end oppos'd the measures which had the best tendency to compromise and heal the difficulty ; and with much zeal pursued those, which were calculated to make a separation certain and speedy.

Mr. EDWARDS thought of preaching on the subject, that they might know what were his sentiments, and what were the grounds of them, (of both which he was sensible the most of them were quite ignorant) before they took any step for a separation between him and his people. But that he might do nothing to increase the tumult, but on the contrary take all those steps, which he could with a good conscience, that tended to peace, he first proposed the thing to the church's standing committee ; supposing that if he entered on the subject publickly with their consent, it would prevent the ill consequences which otherwise he fear'd would follow. But the most of them by no means consent to it, but strenuously opposed it. Upon which he gave it over for the present, as what in such circumstances would rather raise a tumult, and blow the fire up to a greater height, than answer the good ends proposed.

Mr.

|| THEY who have a desire more fully to understand this controversy, and know if it is justly represented here, may do it by reading what Mr. Edwards wrote on this occasion, in order to explain and vindicate his principles ; together with the Rev. Mr. Williams's answer, and Mr. Edwards's reply to him. And if they please they may consult what Dr. Mather, and Mr. Stoddard before wrote on this subject.

Mr. EDWARDS being sensible that his principles were not understood, and much misrepresented thro' the country; and finding that his people were in too much of a heat calmly to attend to the matter in controversy then; and were in a disposition even to refuse to hear him preach upon it, propos'd to print what he had to say on the point; as this seem'd to be the only way left him to have a fair hearing. Accordingly his people consented to put off the calling a council, till what he should write was published. But they manifest'd great uneasiness in waiting, before it came out of the press. And when it was published, it was read but by very few of them. Mr. EDWARDS being sensible of this, renew'd his proposal to preach upon it, and at a meeting of the brethren of the church ask'd their consent in the following terms: "I desire that the brethren
 " would manifest their consent, that I should declare the
 " reasons of my opinion relating to full communion in the
 " church, in lectures appointed for that end: Not as an
 " act of authority, or as putting the power of declaring
 " the whole counsel of God out of my hands; but for
 " peace sake, and to prevent occasion of strife."

But it pass'd in the negative.

Mr. EDWARDS then propos'd that it should be left to a few of the neighbouring ministers, whether it was not, all things consider'd, reasonable that he should be heard in this matter from the pulpit, before the affair should be brought to an issue. But this also pass'd in the negative.

HOWEVER, he having had the advice of the ministers and messengers of the neighbouring churches, who met at *Northampton* to advise them under their difficulties, proceed'd to appoint a lecture, in order to preach on the subject, proposing to do so weekly till he had finish'd what he had to say. On Monday there was a precinct or society meeting, in which a vote was pass'd to choose a committee to go to Mr. EDWARDS, and desire him not to preach lectures on the subject in controversy, according to his declaration and appointment. And accordingly, proceed'd to choose a committee of three men for this purpose, who waited on him; and did their errand. However, Mr. EDWARDS thought proper to proceed according to his proposal, and accordingly preach'd a number of Sermons till he had finish'd
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what he had to say on the subject. These lectures were very thinly attended by his own people : but great numbers of strangers from the neighbouring towns attended them, so many as to make above half the congregation. This was in *February and March 1750.*

THE calling a decisive council to determine the matter of difference between pastor and people, or rather to dismiss the pastor from his church and people, (for the delay of which a great deal of impatience had been publicly manifested) was now more particularly attended to by Mr. EDWARDS and the church.

Mr. EDWARDS had before this insisted upon it from time to time, that they were by no means ripe for such a procedure ; (as they had not yet given him a fair hearing in defence of his cause : which if they would do, perhaps the need of such a council would be superseded. And besides, he thought there was abundant publick evidence, that they were not yet in a temper suited to attend on, and be active in such a transaction, as the dissolving the relation between them and their pastor ; which would, as things then stood, probably be the event. He observed, “ That it was exceeding unbecoming churches of the Lamb of God to manage their religious affairs of greatest importance in a ferment and tumult, which ought to be managed with great solemnity, deep humiliation, and submission to the awful frowns of heaven, humble dependence on God, and with fervent prayer and supplication to him. That therefore for them to go about such an affair, in such a manner as they did, would be most unbecoming the Gospel, greatly to the dishonor of God and religion, and a way in which a people cannot expect a blessing. That such a great affair as this should be gone about with calm consideration ; but that such a temper as the people were then in, was wholly inconsistent with this.”

BUT having used all means which he could think of within his Power to bring them to a more calm and charitable temper, and to hear and weigh what he had to say in his own defence, with attention and candor ; and finding that nothing prevailed ; but rather the tumult and up-

roar was increased ; he consented that a decisive council should be called without any further delay.

BUT a difficulty attended the choice of a council, which was for some time insuperable. It was agreed that the council should be mutually chosen, one half by the pastor, and the other half by the church : but the people insisted upon it that he should be confined to the county in his choice. Mr. EDWARDS thought this an unreasonable restraint on him, as it was known that the ministers and churches in that county were almost universally against him in the controversy that divided him and his people, and made the two parties. He indeed did not suppose that the business of the proposed council would be to determine whether his opinion which was the occasion of the difficulty between him and his people was right or no ; or that what they were to judge of, depended upon this. But their business would be — to see and determine whether any possible way could be devised for an accommodation between pastor and people, and to use their wisdom and endeavour in order to this. And if they found this impracticable, they must determine, whether things were now ripe for a separation ; whether what ought in justice to be previous to a separation had already actually been done, so that there was nothing further in justice to be demanded by either of the parties concerned, before a separation should take place. And if he was dismissed by them, it would be their business to set forth to the world in what manner and for what cause he was dismissed : how far he was innocent, and whether he might yet be employed in the work of the ministry &c. All which were matters of great importance to him, and required upright and impartial judges. And considering the great influence a difference in religious opinions has to prejudice men one against another ; and the close connection of the point, in which most of the ministers and churches in the county differ'd from him, with the matter to be judged of, he did not think they could be reasonably looked upon so impartial judges, as that the matter ought to be wholly left to them. Besides, he thought the case being so new and extraordinary, required the ablest judges in the land. For these, and some other reasons, which he offered, he insisted upon liberty to go out of the county for

for those members of the proposed council, in which he was to have a choice. In this, as was just now said, the people strenuously and obstinately opposed him. They at length agreed to leave the matter to a council consisting of the ministers and messengers of the five neighbouring churches: who, after they had met twice upon it, and had the case largely debated before them, were equally divided, and therefore left the matter undetermined.

HOWEVER, they were all agreed, that Mr. EDWARDS ought to have liberty to go out of the county for *some* of the council. And at the next church meeting, which was on the 26th of *March*, Mr. EDWARDS offer'd to join with them in calling a council, if they would consent that he should chuse *two* of the churches out of the county, in case the council consisted of but *ten* churches. The church however refused to comply with this at one meeting after another repeatedly; and proceeded to warn a church meeting and choose a moderator, in order to act without their pastor.

BUT, to pass by many particulars, at length at a meeting of the church, warned by their pastor, *May* 3d. they voted their consent to his proposal of going out of the county for two of the churches, should be applied to. And then they proceeded to make choice of the ten ministers & churches, of which the council should consist. Accordingly, the churches were sent to, and the council convened on the 19th of *June*. Who, after they had made some fruitless attempts for a composition between the pastor and church, pass'd a resolve, by the majority of one voice † only, to the following purpose: "That 'tis expedient that the pastoral relation between Mr. EDWARDS and his church be immediately dissolved, if the people still persist in desiring it." And it being publickly put to the people, whether they still insisted on Mr. EDWARDS's dismissal from the pastoral office over them? A great majority (above two hundred against twenty) zealously voted for his dismissal. And he was accordingly dismissed *June* 22, 1750.

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† One of the churches which Mr. *Edward's* chose did not see fit to join the council. However, the minister of that church being at *Northampton* at the sitting of the Council, was desired by Mr. *Edward's* and the Church to sit in Council and act, which he did. But there being no messenger from the Church, the council was not full, and there was a disparity; by which means doubtless, there was *One* vote more for an immediate dismissal, than against it.

THE dissenting part of the council, enter'd their protest against this proceeding, judging that it was too much in a hurry, as they were by no means ripe for a separation, considering the past conduct, and present temper of the people. And some of that part of the council that were active, expressed themselves surprized at the uncommon zeal and engagedness of spirit, publickly manifested by the people in their voting for a dismissal; which evidenced to them, and all observing spectators, that they were far from a temper of mind becoming such a solemn and awful transaction, considered in all its circumstances.

BEING thus dismissed, he preached his farewell Sermon on the first of *July*, from *2 Cor. i. 14*. The doctrine he observed from the words was this, "Ministers and the people that have been under their care, must meet one another before Christ's tribunal, at the day of Judgment." It was a remarkably solemn and affecting discourse, and was published at the desire of some of the hearers.

AFTER Mr. EDWARDS was dismissed from *Northampton*, he preached there some times occasionally when they had no other preacher to supply the pulpit; till at length a great uneasiness was manifested by many of the people, at his preaching there at all. Upon which, the committee for supplying the pulpit, call'd the town together, to know their minds with respect to that matter: when they voted that it was not agreeable to their minds, that he should preach among them. Accordingly, when Mr. EDWARDS was in town, and they had no other minister to preach to them, they carried on publick worship among themselves, and without any preaching, rather than to invite Mr. EDWARDS!

EVERY one must be sensible that this was a great trial to Mr. EDWARDS. He had been near twenty four years among that people; and his labours had been, to all appearance, from time to time greatly blessed among them: and a great number looked on him as their spiritual father, who had been the happy instrument of turning them from darkness to light, and plucking them as brands out of the burning. And they had from time to time professed that they looked upon it as one of their greatest priviledges to have such a minister,

minister, and manifested their great love and esteem of him, to such a degree; that, (as *St. Paul* says of the *Galatians*) if it had been possible, they would have pluck'd out their own eyes, and given them to him. And they had a great interest in *his* heart: He had borne them on his heart and carried them in his bosom for many years; exercising a tender concern and love for them: for their good he was always writing, contriving, labouring; for them he had poured out ten thousand fervent prayers; in their good he had rejoiced as one that findeth great spoil; and they were dear to him above any other people under heaven.

Now to have *this people* turn against him, and thrust him out from among them, in a great tumult and heat, with haste, and a great degree of violence; like the Jews of old stoping their ears and runing upon him with furious zeal, not allowing him to defend himself by giving him a fair hearing; and even refusing so much as to hear him preach; many of them surmising and publicly speaking many ill things as to his ends and designs! To have the tables turned so suddenly and the voice so general and loud against him. This surely must come very near to him, and try his spirit. The words of the psalmist seems applicable to this case, "It was not an enemy that reproach-
 " ed me, then I could have borne it; neither was it he
 " that hated me, that did magnify himself against me, then
 " I would have hid my self from him. But it was THOU—
 " my guide and mine acquaintance. We took sweet coun-
 " sel together, and walked unto the house of God in com-
 " pany.

LET us therefore now *behold the man!*

THE calm and sedateness of his mind; his meekness and humility in great and violent opposition, and injurious treatment; his resolution and steady conduct thro' all this dark and terrible storm, were truly wonderful, and cannot be set in so beautiful and affecting a light by any description, as they appeared in to his friends, who were eye-witnesses.

Mr. EDWARDS had a numerous and chargeable family, and little or no income, exclusive of his salary; and considering how far he was advanced in years; the general disposition

disposition of people who want a minister to prefer a young man who has never been settled, to one who has been dismissed from his people; and what misrepresentations were made of his principles thro' the country, it looked to him not at all probable that he should ever have opportunity to be settled again in the work of the ministry, if he was dismissed from *Northampton*: And he was not inclined or able to take any other course, or go into any other business to get a living. So that beggary as well as disgrace stared him full in the face, if he persisted in his principles. To be sure, he viewed himself as taking the most direct way to these, according to the natural course of things, by discovering and adhering to his principles, in the situation he then was. For he forsook all this, before it came upon him; and therefore had the opportunity and the temptation to escape it, by concealing his principles. When he was fixed in his principles, and before they were publickly known, he told some of his friends, that if he discovered and persisted in them, it would most likely issue in his dismissal and disgrace; and the ruin of himself and family, as to their temporal interests. He therefore first sat down and counsell'd the cost, and deliberately took up the cross, when it was set before him in its full weight and magnitude; and in direct opposition to all worldly views and motives. And therefore his conduct in these circumstances, was a remarkable exercise and discovery of his conscientiousness; and his readiness to deny himself, and forsake all that he had, to follow Christ.

A man must have a considerable degree of the spirit of a martyr, not to flinch in such a case as this; but go on with the steadfastness & resolution with which he did. He, as it were, put his life in his hand, and ventur'd on where truth and duty appear'd to lead him, unmov'd at the threatening dangers on every side.

HOWEVER, God did not forsake him. As he gave him those inward supports by which he was able in patience to possess his soul, and calmly and courageously row on in the storm, as it were, in the face of boisterous winds, beating hard upon him, and in the midst of gaping waves threatening to swallow him up: so he soon appear'd for him,

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in his providence, even beyond all his expectations. His correspondents and other friends in Scotland, hearing of his dismissal, and fearing it might be the means of bringing him into worldly straits, generously contributed a handsome sum, and sent it over to him.

AND God did not leave him without tender, valuable friends at *Northampton*. For a small number of his people who oppos'd his dismissal from the beginning, and some who acted on neither side, who joined with him after his dismissal, and adhered to him, under the influence of that great esteem and love of Mr. EDWARDS, were willing and thought themselves able to maintain him: and insisted upon it that it was his duty to stay among them, as a distinct and separate congregation from the body of the town, who had rejected him.

Mr. EDWARDS could not see it to be his duty to stay among them, as circumstances were; as this would probably be a means of perpetuating an unhappy division in the town; and there was to him no prospect of doing the good there, which would counterbalance the evil. However, that he might do all he could to satisfy his tender and afflicted friends; and because in the multitude of counsellors there is safety, he consented to ask the advice of an ecclesiastical council. Accordingly, a council was called, and convened at *Northampton* on the 15th of *May* 1751.

THE town on this occasion was put into great tumult and fire. They who were active in Mr. EDWARDS's dismissal supposed, tho' without any ground, and contrary to truth, that he was contriving and attempting with his friends, again to introduce himself at *Northampton*. They drew up a remonstrance against their proceedings, and laid it before the council (tho' they would not acknowledge them to be an ecclesiastical) containing many heavy, tho' groundless, insinuations and charges against Mr. EDWARDS, and bitter accusations of the party who had adhered to him: But refused to appear and support any of their charges, or so much as to give the gentlemen of the council any opportunity to confer with them, about the affair depending; tho' it was diligently sought.

THE council having heard what Mr. EDWARDS, and they who adher'd to him, and any others who desired to be heard, had to say, advised, agreeable to Mr. EDWARDS's judgment and expectation, that he should leave *Northampton*, and accept of the Mission to which he was invited at *Sturbridge*; of which a more particular account will be given presently.

MANY other facts relative to this sorrowful, strange, surprizing affair (the most, to doubtless of any of the kind, that ever happened in *New-England*; and perhaps, in any part of the christian world) might be related; but as this more general history of it, may be sufficient to answer the ends proposed, viz. to rectify some gross misrepresentations that have been made of the matter, and discover the great trial Mr. EDWARDS had herein, 'tis thought best to suppress other particulars. As a proper close to this melancholy story; and to confirm, and further illustrate what has been related, the following letter from JOSEPH HAWLEY, Esq; (a gentleman who was well acquainted with, and very active in the transactions of this whole affair, and very much a head and leader in it,) to the rev. Mr. Hall of *Sutton*, published in a weekly News-Paper in *Boston*, May 29, 1760. is here inserted.

To the Rev. M^r. HALL of Sutton.

Esq; Sir,

Northampton, May 9. 1760.

I Have often wish'd that every Member of the two ecclesiastical councils that formerly sat in *Northampton* upon the unhappy differences between our former most worthy and reverend pastor Mr. *Edwards* and the church here; whereof you was a member; I say, Sir, I have often wish'd every of them truly knew my real state of my own conduct in the affairs that the one and the other of said councils are privy to; and as I have long apprehended it to be my duty not only to humble my self before God for what was unchristian and sinful, in my conduct before said councils, but also to confess my faults to them, and take shame to my self, therefor before them. I have often studied with my self in what manner it was practicable for me to do it; and when I understood that you Sir, and Mr. *Eaton* were to be at *Cold Spring* at the time of their late council, I resolv'd to improve the opportunity fully to open my mind there to you and him thereon; and thought that probably some method might be then thought of in which my reflections on my self touching the matters above hinted

at, might be communicated to most if not all the gentlemen aforesaid, who did not reside in this county : but you know, *Sir*, how difficult it was for us to converse together by our selves when at *Cold Spring*, without giving umbrage to that people : I therefore proposed writing to you upon the matters which I had then opportunity only most summarily to suggest ; which you *Sir*, signified would be agreeable to you : I therefore now undertake what I then proposed, in which I humbly ask the divine aid ; and that I may be made most freely willing, fully to confess my sin and guilt to you and the world in those instances which I have reason to suppose fell under your notice, as they were publick and notorious transactions, and on account whereof, therefore, you *Sir*, and all others who had knowledge thereof, had just cause to be offended at me.

And in the first place *Sir*, I apprehend that with the Church and People of *Northampton*, I sinned and erred exceedingly in consenting and labouring that there should be so early a dismission of *Mr Edwards* from his pastoral relation to us, even upon the supposition that he was really in a mistake in the disputed point : not only because the dispute was upon matters so very disputable in themselves and at the greatest remove from fundamental, but because *Mr Edwards* so long had approved himself a most faithful and painful pastor to said church ; and also changed his sentiments in that point wholly from a tender regard to what appeared to him to be truth ; and had made known his sentiments with great moderation and upon great deliberation, against all worldly motives, and from mere fidelity to his great master, and a tender regard to the souls of his flock, as we had the highest reason to judge : which considerations now seem to me sufficient ; and would (if we had been of a right spirit) have greatly endeared him to his people, and made us to the last degree, reluctant to parting with him, and disposed us to the exercise of the greatest candour, gentleness and moderation : how much of the reverse whereof appeared in us. I need not tell you *Sir*, who was an eye witness of our temper and conduct.

And altho' it does not become me to pronounce decisively on a point so disputable as what was then in dispute ; yet I beg leave to say, that I really apprehend that it is of the highest moment to the body of this church, and to me in particular, most solicitously to enquire, whether like the Pharisees and Lawyer in *John Baptist's* time we did not reject the counsel of God against our selves, in rejecting *Mr Edwards* and his doctrine : which was the ground of his dismission. And I humbly conceive that it highly imports us all of this church, most seriously and impartially to examine what that most worthy and able divine abut that time published in support of the same, whereby he being dead yet speaketh.

But there were three things *Sir*, especially in my own particular conduct before the first council, which have been justly matter of great grief and much trouble to me almost ever since, *to wit*.

In the first place I confess *Sir*, that I acted very immodestly and abusively to you, as well as injuriously to the church and my self, when with much zeal and unbecoming assurance, I moved the council that they would interpose to silence and stop you in an address you was making one morning to the people, wherein you was, if I don't misremember, briefly exhorting them to a tender remembrance of the former affection and harmony that had long subsisted between them and their reverend pastor, and the great comfort and profit which they had apprehended that they had received from his ministry; for which *Sir*, I heartily ask your forgiveness; and I think, that we ought instead of opposing an exhortation of that nature, to have received it with all thankfulness.

Another particular of my conduct before that council, which I now apprehend was criminal, and was owing to the want of that tender affection and reverend respect and esteem for Mr. *Edwards* which he had highly merited of me, was my strenuously opposing the adjournment of the matters submitted to that council, for about two months; for which I declare my self unfeignedly sorry; and I with shame remember, that I did it in a peremptory, decisive, vehement and very immodest manner.

But *Sir*, the most criminal part of my conduct at that time, that I am conscious of was my exhibiting to that council a set of arguments in writing, the drift whereof was to prove the reasonableness and necessity of Mr. *Edward's* dismissal in case no accommodation was then effected with mutual consent; which tract by clear implication contained some severe, uncharitable, and if I don't misremember, groundless and slanderous imputations on Mr. *Edwards* and expressed in bitter language; and altho' the original draft thereof was not done by me, yet I foolishly and sinfully consented to copy it; and as agent for the church, to read it and deliver it to the council, which I could never have done, if I had not had a wicked relish for perverse things: which conduct of mine, I confess was very sinful; and perswaded was highly provoking to God, and for which I am ashamed, confounded, and have nothing to answer.

As to the church's remonstrance (as it was called) which their committee preferred to the last of said councils, to all which I was consenting, and in the composing whereof I was very active, as also in bringing the church to their vote upon it: I would in the first place only observe, that I don't remember any thing in that small part of it which was plainly discursive of the expediency of Mr. *Edward's* re- settlement here as pastor to a part of the church,

church, which was very exceptionable; but as to all the residue, which was much the greatest part thereof (and I am not certain that any part was wholly free) it was every where larded with unchristian bitterness, sarcastical and unmannerly insinuations, contained divers direct grievous and criminal charges and allegations against Mr. *Edwards*; which I have since good reason to suppose were all founded on jealous & uncharitable mistakes and so were really gross slanders, also many heavy and reproachful charges upon divers of Mr. *Edwards's* adherents, and some severe censures of them all indiscriminately; all of which (if not wholly false and groundless) yet were altogether unnecessary, and therefore highly criminal. Indeed I am fully convinced, that the whole of that composition, excepting the small part thereof abovementioned, was totally unchristian, a scandalous, abusive, injurious libel, against Mr. *Edwards* and his particular friends; especially the former, and highly provoking and detestable in the sight of God; for which I am heartily sorry and ashamed; and pray I may remember it with deep abasement and penitence all my days. Nor do I now think that the church's conduct in refusing to appear and attend before that council to support the charges and allegations in said remonstrance against Mr. *Edwards* and said brethren, which they demanded, was ever vindicated by all the subtle answers that were given to said demand; nor do I think that our conduct in that instance was capable of a defence, for it appears to me, that by making charges of scandalous matters against them before said council, we necessarily so far gave that council jurisdiction; and I own with sorrow and regret, that I zealously endeavoured, that the church should perseveringly refuse to appear before said council for the purpose aforesaid; which I humbly pray God to forgive.

Another part of my conduct, *Sir*, of which I have long repented, and for which I hereby declare my hearty sorrow, was my obstinate opposition to the last council's having any conference with the church; which said council earnestly and repeatedly moved for, and which the church finally denied (as you know) I think it discovered a great deal of pride and vain sufficiency in the church, and shewed them to be very opiniative, especially the chief sticklers, one of whom I own I was, and think it was running a most presumptuous risk, and acting the part of proud scornfuls, for us to refuse hearing and candidly and seriously considering what that council could say or propose to us; among whom there were divers justly in great reputation for grace and wisdom.

In these instances, *Sir*, of my conduct, and others (to which you was not privy) in the course of that most melancholy contention with Mr. *Edwards*, wherein I now see that I was very much influenced by vast pride, self sufficiency, ambition and vanity. I

appear to my self vile, and doubtless much more so to others who are more impartial; and do in the review thereof, abhor my self, and repent sorely: and if my own heart condemns me it behoves me solemnly to remember, that God is greater, and knoweth all things: and I hereby own, Sir, that such treatment of Mr. *Edwards's*, as is herein before mentioned, wherein I was so deeply concerned and active, was particularly and very aggravatedly sinful and ungrateful in me, because I was not only under the common obligations of each individual of the society to him, as to a most able, diligent and faithful pastor; but I had also received many instances of his tenderness, goodness, and generosity to me, as a young kinsman, whom he was disposed to treat in a most friendly manner.

Indeed, Sir I must own, that by my conduct in consulting and acting against Mr. *Edwards* within the time of our most unhappy disputes with him, and especially in and about that abominable remembrance I have so far symbolized with *Balaam*, *Ahitophel* and *Judas*, that I am confounded and filled with terror oftentimes when I attend to the most painful similitude.

And I freely confess, that on account of my conduct above-mentioned, I have the greatest reason to tremble at those most solemn and awful words of our Saviour, *Matth. 18. 6.* and these in *Luke 10. h.* at the 16. n.: and I am most sorely sensible that nothing but that infinite grace and mercy which saved some of the betrayers and murderers of our blessed Lord and the persecutor of his martyrs, can pardon me; in which alone I hope for pardon, for the sake of Christ, whose blood (blessed be God) cleanseth from all sin. On the whole, Sir, I am convinced, that I have the greatest reason to say as *David*, "Have mercy upon me O God, according to thy loving kindness, according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions, wash me throughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin, for I acknowledge my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me: hide thy face from my sin, and blot out all mine iniquities: create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me; cast me not away from thy presence, and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free spirit."

And I humbly apprehend that it greatly concerns the church of *Northampton* most seriously to examine whether the many hard speeches, spoken by many particular members against their former pastor, some of which the church really countenanced, and especially these spoken by the church as a body, in that most vile remembrance, are not so odious and ungodly, as to be utterly incapable of defence: and whether said church were not guilty of great sin in being so willing and disposed for so slight a cause, to go forth with so faithful and godly a minister as Mr. *Edwards* was.

And

And whether ever God will hold us guiltless 'till we cry to him for Christ's sake to pardon and save us from that judgment which such ungodly deeds deserve, and publicly humble and take shame to our selves therefor. And I most heartily wish and pray that the town and church of *Northampton* would seriously and carefully examine whether they have not abundant cause to judge that they are now lying under great guilt in the sight of God; and whether those of us who were concerned in that most awful contention with Mr *Edwards*, can ever more reasonably expect God's favour and blessing, 'till our eyes are opened, and we become thoroughly convinced that we have greatly provoked the most High, and been injurious to one of the best of men; and until we shall be thoroughly convinced that we have dreadfully persecuted Christ by persecuting and vexing that just man and servant of Christ; until we shall be humble as in the dust therefor, and till we openly in full terms, and without baulking the matter, confess the same before the World, and most humbly and earnestly seek forgiveness of God, and do what we can to honor the memory of Mr. *Edwards*, and clear it of all the aspersions which we unjustly cast upon him; since God has been pleas'd to put it beyond our power to ask his forgiveness. Such terms I am perswaded the great and righteous God will hold us to, and that it will be in vain for us to hope to escape with impunity in any other way. This I am convinced of with regard to my self, and this way I most solemnly propose to take to my self (if God in his mercy shall give me opportunity) that so by making free confession to God & man of my sin and guilt, and publicly taking shame to my self therefor, I may give glory to the God of Israel, and do what in me lies, to clear the memory of that venerable man from the wrongs and injuries I was so active in bringing on his reputation and character; and I thank God that he has been pleas'd to spare my life and opportunity therefor to this time, and am sorry that I have delayed the affair so long.

Altho' I made the substance of almost all the foregoing reflections in writing, but not exactly in the same manner to Mr. *Edwards* and the brethren who adhered to him, in Mr. *Edwards*'s life, and before he removed from *Stuckbridge*, and I have reason to believe that he, from his great candour and charity, heartily forgave me and pray'd for me: yet because that was not generally known, I look on my self obliged to take further steps; for while I kept silence, my bones waxed old, &c.

For all these my great sin therefore, in the first place, I humbly and most earnestly ask forgiveness of God; next, of the relatives and near friends of Mr. *Edwards*. I also ask the forgiveness of all those who were called Mr. *Edwards*'s adherents; and of all the members of the ecclesiastical councils above mentioned; and lastly, of all christian people, who have had any knowledge of the matters abovesaid, or any of them.

I have no desire, Sir, that you should make any secret of this letter; but desire you would communicate the same to whom you shall judge proper, and I purpose (if God shall give me opportunity) to procure it to be published in some one of the public newspapers; for I can conceive any other way of making known my sentiments of the foregoing matters to all who ought to be acquainted therewith, and therefore I think I ought to do it, whatever remarks I may foresee will be made thereon.

Probably when it comes out, some of my acquaintance will pronounce me quite over-run with vapours; others will be furnished with matter for mirth and pleasantry; others will curiously pass it over as relating to matters quite stale: but some I am persuaded will rejoice to see me brought to a sense of my sin and duty; and I my self shall be conscious that I have done something of what the nature of the case admits, towards undoing what is, and long has been, to my greatest remorse and trouble that it was ever done.

Sir, I desire that none would entertain a thought from my having spoken respectfully of Mr. *Edwards*, that I am disaffected to our present pastor; for the very reverse is true; and I have a reverend esteem, real value, and hearty affection for him, and trust God, that he has notwithstanding all our unworthiness, given us one to succeed Mr. *Edwards*, who, (as I have reason to hope) is truly faithful.

I conclude this long letter, by heartily desiring your prayers, that my repentance of my sins above mentioned may be unfeigned and genuine, and such as God in infinite mercy to Christ's sake will accept: and I beg leave to subscribe myself,

*Sir, your real, tho' very unworthy friend,
and obedient servant,*

JOSEPH HAWLEY.

SECTION III.

His MISSION to the INDIANS at *Stockbridge*
&c.

THE Indian Mission at *Stockbridge* (a Town in the western part of the Province of the *Massachusetts-Bay*, sixty Miles from *New-England*) being vacant by the death of the late reverend Mr. SERGEANT, the Honoured and reverend Commissioners for Indian affairs, in *Boston*, who have the care and direction of it, applied to him, as the most suitable person they could think of to trust with that

that mission. And he was at the same time invited by the inhabitants of *Stockbridge*; and being advised by the council, above mentioned, to accept of the invitation, he repair'd to *Stockbridge*; and was introduced and fixed as missionary to the Indians there by an ecclesiastical council call'd for that purpose, *August 8. 1751.*

WHEN Mr. EDWARDS first engaged in the mission, there was a hopeful prospect of it's being extensively serviceable, under his care and influence; not only to that tribe of Indians which was settled at *Stockbridge*, but among the *Six Nations*: some of whom were coming to *Stockbridge* to settle, and bring their own, and as many of their neighbours children as they could get; to be educated and instructed there. For this end, a house for a boarding school, which was projected by Mr. SERGEANT, was erected on a tract of land appropriated to that use by the Indians at *Stockbridge*: where the Indian Children, male and female were to be educated, by being cloath'd and fed, and instructed by proper persons in useful learning. And the boys to be learned husbandry or mechanic trades, and the girls all sorts of women's work. For the encouragement of which, some generous subscriptions were made both in *England* and *America*. And the great and general Court of the Province of the *Massachusetts-Bay*, did much to promote the affair, and provided lands for the Mohocks to settle on, who should incline to come. And the generous Mr. HOLLIS, to encourage the thing, order'd twenty four indian Children to be educated on the same footing, wholly at his cost. Also the Society in *London*, for propagating the Gospel among the Indians in and about *New-England*, directed their Commissioners in *Boston* to do considerable towards this design.

BUT partly by reason of some unhappy differences that took place among those who had the chief management of this affair at *Stockbridge*, of which a particular account would not be proper in this place; and partly by the war's breaking out between *England* and *France*, which is generally very fatal to such affairs among Indians, this hopeful prospect came to nothing.

Mr. EDWARDS's labours were attended with no remarkable visible success while at *Stockbridge*: tho' he perform'd the business of his mission to the good acceptance of the inhabitants in general, both English and Indians, and of the Commissioners, who supported him honorably, and confided very much in his judgment and wisdom in all matters relating to the mission.

STOCKBRIDGE proved to Mr. EDWARDS a more quiet, and, on many accounts, a much more comfortable situation than he was in before. It being so much in one corner of the country, his time was not so much taken up with company, as it was at *Northampton*, tho' many of his friends, from almost all parts of the land, often made him pleasant and profitable visits. And he had not so much concern and trouble with other churches as he was obliged to have when at *Northampton*, by being frequently sought to for advice, and call'd to assist in ecclesiastical councils. Here therefore he followed his beloved study more closely, and to better purpose than ever. In these six years he doubtless made swifter advances in knowledge than ever before, and added more to his Manuscripts than in any six Years of his life.

AND this was probably as useful a part of his life as any. For in this time he wrote the two last books that have been published by him (of which a more particular account will be given hereafter) by which he has doubtless greatly served the church of Christ, and will be a blessing to many thousands yet unborn.

THUS, after his uprightnes and faithfulness had been sufficiently tried at *Northampton*, his kind master provided for him a quiet retreat, which was render'd the more sweet by the preceding storm; and where he had a better opportunity to pursue and finish the work GOD had for him to do.

S E C T. IV.

His being made PRESIDENT of New-Jersey College; his SICKNESS and DEATH.

ON the 24th of *September* 1757. the Rev. Mr. AARON BURR President of *New-Jersey* College died. — And at the next meeting of the Trustees, Mr. EDWARDS was chosen his successor. The news of which was quite unexpected, and not a little surprizing to him. He looked on himself in many respects so unqualified for that business, that he wonder'd that Gentlemen of so good judgment, and so well acquainted with him, as he knew some of the Trustees were, should think of *him* for that place. He had many objections in his own mind against undertaking the business, both from his unfitness, and his particular circumstances; yet could not certainly determine that it was not his duty to accept. The following extract of a letter which he wrote to the Trustees, will give the reader a view of his sentiments and exercises on this occasion, as well as of the great designs he was deeply engaged in, and zealously prosecuting.

Stockbridge, 19th October 1757.

Reverend and Honored Gentlemen,

“I Was not a little surprized, on receiving the unexpected Notice of your having made choice of me to succeed the late president BURR, as the Head of Nassau Hall — I am much in doubt whether I am called to undertake the business, which you have done me the unmerited honour to choose me for— If some regard may be had to my outward comfort, I might mention the many Inconveniencies and great detriment, which must be sustained, by my removing with my numerous family, so far from all the estate I have in the world (without any prospect of disposing of it, under present circumstances, without losing it, in great part) now when we have scarcely got over the trouble and damage sustained by our removal from Northampton, and have but just begun to have our affairs in a comfortable situation for a subsistence in this place; and the expence I must immediately be at to put my self into circumstance tolerably comporting with the needful support of the honor of the office I am invited to; which will not well consist with my ability, — But this is not my main objection: The chief

chief difficulty in my mind, in the way of accepting this important and arduous office, are these two : First my own defects, unfitting me for such an undertaking, many of which are generally known ; besides other, which my own heart is conscious to.— I have a constitution in many respects peculiar unhappy attended with fluid solids, vapid sive and scarce fluids, & a low tide of spirits ; often occasioning a kind of childish weakness and incomprehensibility of speech, presence and demeanor ; with a disagreeable dulness and stiffness, much unfitting me for conversation, but more especially for the government of a college.— This poorness of constitution makes me shrink at the thoughts of taking upon me, in the decline of life, such a new and great business, attended with such a multiplicity of cares, and requiring such a degree of activity, alertness and spirit of government ; especially as succeeding one, so remarkably well qualified in these respects, giving occasion to every one to remark the wide difference. I am also deficient in some parts of learning, particularly in Algebra, and the higher parts of Mathematicks, and in the Greek : I assicks ; my Greek learning having been chiefly in the new Testament.— The other thing is this ; that my engaging in this business, will not well consist, with those views, and that course of employ in my study, which have long engaged, and swallowed up my mind, and been the chief entertainment and delight of my life.—

And here, honored Sir, (emboldned by the testimony, I have now received of your unmerited esteem, to rely on your candor) I will with freedom open my self to you.

My method of study, from my first beginning the work of the ministry, has been very much by writing ; applying my self in this way, to improve every important point ; pursuing the clew to my utmost, when any thing in reading, meditation or conversation, has been suggested to my mind, that seemed to promise light in any weighty point.— Thus penning what appeared to me my best thoughts, on innumerable subjects, for my own benefit. — The longer I prosecuted my studies in this method, the more habitual it became, and the more pleasant and profitable I found it.— The further I travelled in this way, the more and wider the field opened, which has occasioned me laying out many things, in my mind, to do in the manner, if God should spare my life, which my heart hath been much upon ; particularly many things against most of the present errors of the present day, which I cannot with any patience be maintained (to the utter subverting of the gospel of Christ) with to high a hand, and so long continued a triumph, with to little controul, when it appears so evident to me, that there is really no foundation for any of this glorying and insult.— I have already published something on one of the main points in dispute, between the Arminians and Calvinists ; and have it in view, God willing, to publish already signified to the public)

public) in like manner to consider all the other controverted points, and have done much towards a preparation for it— But besides these, I have had on my mind and heart (which I long ago began, not with any view to publication) a great work, which I call a *History of the Work of Redemption*, a Body of Divinity in an entire new method, being thrown into the form of an history, considering the affair of christian Theology, as the whole of it, in each part, stands in reference to the great work of redemption by Jesus Christ; which I suppose is to be the grand design of all God's designs, and the summum and ultimum of all the divine operations and degrees; particularly considering all parts of the grand scheme in their historical order.—The order of their existence, or their being brought forth to view, in the course of divine dispensations, or the wonderful series of successive acts & events; beginning from eternity and descending from thence to the great work and successive dispensations of the infinitely wise God in time, considering the chief events coming to pass in the church of God, and revolutions in the world of mankind, affecting the state of the church and the affair of redemption, which we have account of in history or prophecy; 'till at last we come to the general Resurrection, last Judgment, and consummation of all things; when it shall be said, *It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End.* Concluding my Work, with the consideration of that perfect state of things, which shall be finally settled, to last for eternity.——This history will be carried on with regard to all three Worlds, Heaven, Earth and Hell: considering the connected, successive events and alterations, in each so far as the scriptures give any light; introducing all parts of divinity in that order which is most scriptural and most natural: which is a method which appears to me the most beautiful and entertaining, wherein every divine doctrine, will appear to greatest advantage in the brightest light, in the most striking manner, shewing the admirable contexture and harmony of the whole.

I have also for my own profit and entertainment, done much towards another great work, which I call *the Harmony of the old and new Testament* in three Parts—The first considering the prophecies of the Messiah, his Redemption and Kingdom; the Evidences of their References to the Messiah &c. comparing them all one with another, demonstrating their agreement and true scope and sense; also considering all the various particulars wherein these prophecies have their exact fulfilment; shewing the universal, precise, and admirable correspondence between predictions and events. The second Part: Considering the Types of the old testament, shewing the evidence of their being intended as representations of the great things of the gospel of Christ: and the agreement of the type with the antitype.—The third and great Part, considering the harmony of the old and new testament, as to doctrine and precept.—In the course of this work, I find there

will be occasion for an explanation of a very great part of the holy scripture; which may, in such a view be explained in a method, which to me seems the most entertaining and profitable, best tending to lead the mind to a view of the true spirit, design, life and soul of the scriptures, as well as to their proper use and improvement.

I have also many other things in hand, in some of which I have made great progress, which I will not trouble you with an account of — Some of these things, if divine providence favour I should be willing to attempt a publication of — So far as I myself am able to judge of what talents I have, for benefiting my fellow creatures by word, I think I can write better than I can speak.

My heart is so much in these studies, that I cannot find it in my heart to be willing to put myself into an incapacity to pursue them any more, in the future part of my life, to such a degree as I must, if I undertake to go thro' the same course of employ, in the office of a President, that Mr. Burr, did, instructing in all the languages, and taking the whole care of the instruction of one of the Classes in all parts of learning, besides his other labours — If I should see light to determine me to accept the place offered me, I should be willing to take upon me the work of a President, so far as it consists in the general inspection of the whole society and subservient to the school, as to their order and methods of study and instruction, assisting myself in immediate instruction in the arts and sciences (as discretion should direct and occasion serve, and the state of things require) especially the senior class: and added to all should be willing to do the whole work of a professor of divinity, in publick and private lectures, proposing questions to be answered, and some to be discussed in writing and free conversation, in meetings of graduates and others, appointed in proper seasons for these ends — It would be now out of my way, to spend time, in a constant teaching of the languages; unless it be the Hebrew tongue, which I should be willing to improve myself in, by instructing others.

On the whole, I am much at a loss, with respect to the way of my duty in this important affair: I am in doubt, whether if I should engage in it, I should not do what both you and I should be sorry for afterwards. Nevertheless, I think the greatness of the affair, and the regard due to so worthy and venerable a body, as that of the Trustees of *Nassau Hall*, requires my taking the matter into serious consideration: And unless you should appear to be discouraged by the things which I have now represented, as to any further expectation from me, shall proceed to ask advice, of such as I esteem most wise, friendly and faithful: if after the mind of the Commissioners in *Boston* is known, it appears that they consent to leave me at liberty, with respect to the business they have employed me in here.

IN this suspense he determined to ask the advice of a number of gentlemen in the ministry, on whose judgment and friendship he could rely, and to act accordingly. Who upon his, and his people's desire, met at *Stockbridge*, *January 4. 1758.* And having heard Mr. EDWARDS's representation of the matter, and what his people had to say by way of objection against his removal, determined it was his duty to accept of the invitation to the presidency of the College.

WHEN they published their judgment and advice to Mr. EDWARDS and his people, he appear'd uncommonly mov'd and affected with it, and fell into tears on the occasion; which was very unusual for him, in the presence of others; and soon after said to the gentlemen, who had given their advice, that it was matter of wonder to him, that they could so easily, as they appear'd to do, get over the objections he had made against his removal, to be the head of a college; which appear'd great and weighty to him. But as he thought it his duty to be directed by their advice, he should now endeavour cheerfully to undertake it, believing he was in the way of his duty.

ACCORDINGLY, having had, by the application of the Trustees of the College, the consent of the Commissioners to resign their mission; he girded up his loins, and set off from *Stockbridge* for *Prince-Town* in *January.* He left his family at *Stockbridge*, not to be removed till Spring. He had two daughters at *Prince-town*, Mrs. BURR, the Widow of the late President BURR, and his oldest daughter that was unmarried.

His arrival at *Prince-town* was to the great satisfaction and joy of the college. And indeed all the greatest friends to the college, and to the interest of religion, were highly satisfied and pleas'd with the appointment of Mr. EDWARDS to the Presidency of that College, and had their hopes and expectations greatly rais'd hereby. And his correspondents and friends, and well-wishers to the College in *Scotland*, greatly approv'd of it.

THE Corporation met as soon as could be with conveniency, after his arrival at the College, when he was by them fixed in the president's chair.

WHILE

WHILE at *Prince-town*, before his sickness, he preach'd in the College-hall from Sabbath to Sabbath, to the great acceptance of the hearers : but did nothing as president, un'less it was to give out some questions in divinity to the senior class, to be answer'd before him ; each one having opportunity to study and write what he thought proper upon them. When they came together to answer them, they found so much entertainment and profit by it, especially by the light and instruction Mr. EDWARDS communicated in what he said upon the questions, when they had deliver'd what they had to say, that they spoke of it with the greatest satisfaction and wonder.

DURING this time, Mr. EDWARDS seem'd to enjoy an uncommon degree of the presence of GOD. He told his daughters, he had had great exercise, concern and tear, relative to his engaging in that business ; but since it now appeared, so far as he could see, that he was call'd of God to that place and work, he did cheerfully devote himself to it, leaving himself and the event with God, to order what seem'd to Him good.

THE Small-pox had now become very common in the country, and was then at *Prince-town*, and likely to spread. And as Mr. EDWARDS had never had it, and Inoculation was then practis'd with great success in those parts, he propos'd to be inoculated, if the physician should advise to it, and the corporation would give their consent.

Accordingly, by the advise of the physician, and consent of the corporation, he was inoculated *February 13*. He had it favourably, and it was thought all danger was over : But a secondary fever set in ; and by reason of a number of pustles in his throat, the obstruction was such, that the medicines necessary to stench the fever, could not be administer'd. It therefore raged till it put an end to his life on the 22d of *March 1758*, in the 55th Year of his Age.

AFTER he was sensible that he should not survive that sickness, a little before his death, he call'd his daughter to him, who attend'd him in his sickness, and address'd her in a few words, which were immediately taken down in writing, as near as could be recollected, and are as follows, —

‘ DEAR LUCY, it seems to me to be the will of GOD
 “ that I must shortly leave you ; therefore give my kindest
 “ love to my dear wife, and tell her, that the uncommon
 “ union, which has so long subsisted between us, has been of
 “ such a nature, as I trust is spiritual, and therefore will con-
 “ tinue for ever : And I hope she shall be supported under
 “ so great a trial, & submit cheerfully to the will of GOD.
 “ And as to my children, You are now like to be left father-
 “ less, which I hope will be an inducement to you all to seek
 “ a Father, who will never fail you. And as to my fune-
 “ ral, I would have it to be like Mr. BURR’s ; and any
 “ additional sum of money that might be expected to be
 “ laid out that way, I would have it dispos’d of to cha-
 “ ritable uses.”*

HE said but very little in his sickness ; but was an admirable instance of patience and resignation to the last. Just at the close of his life, as some persons, who stood by, and expected he would breath his last in a few minutes, were lamenting his death not only as a great frown on the college, but as having a dark aspect on the interest of religion in general ; to their surprize, not imagining that he heard, or would ever speak another word, he said, “TRUST IN GOD, AND YE NEED NOT FEAR.” These were his last words. And what could have been more suitable to the occasion ! And what need of more ! In these is as much matter of instruction and support, as if he had wrote a volume. This is the only consolation to his be-
 G reaved

* President BURR order’d on his death-bed, that his funeral should not be attended with that pomp and cost, by procuring and giving away a great number of costly mourning scarfs &c. and the consumption of a great quantities of spiritous liquors ; which is an extravagance that is become too customary in those parts especially at the funerals of the great and the rich : and that nothing should be expended, but what was agreeable to the dictates of christian decency. And that the sum which must be expended at a *modish* funeral, over and above the necessary cost of a *decent* one, should be given to the poor, out of his estate.

It is to be wished and hoped, that the laudable example of these two worthy Presidents, in which they bear their dying testimony against a practice so unchristian, and of such bad tendency so many ways, will have some good effect.

reaved friends, who are sensible of the loss they, and the church of Christ have sustain'd in his death; *GOD is all-sufficient, and still has the care of his church.*

HE appear'd to have the uninterrupted use of his reason to the last, and died with as much calmness and composure, to all appearance, as that with which one goes to sleep.

THE physician who inoculated and constantly attended him in his sickness, has the following words in his letter to Mrs. *Edwards* on this occasion: "Never did any mortal man more fully and clearly evidence the sincerity of all his professions, by one continued, universal, calm, cheerful resignation and patient submission to the divine will, thro' every stage of his disease, than he. Not so much as one discontented expression, nor the least appearance of murmuring through the whole. And never did any person expire with more perfect freedom from pain: not so much as one distorted hair, but in the most proper sense of the words, he really fell asleep."

P A R T IV.

Containing an Account of his *MANUSCRIPTS*,
and the *BOOKS* published by him.

S E C T I O N I.

His *MANUSCRIPTS*.

MR. EDWARDS has left a great many Volumes in manuscript, which he wrote in a miscellaneous way on almost all subjects in divinity; which he did, not with any design they should ever be published in the form in which they are; but for the satisfaction and improvement of his own mind, and that he might retain the thoughts, which appear'd to him worth preserving. Some idea of the progress he had made, and the materials he had collected in this way, he gives in the foregoing let-

ter to the Trustees of *Nassau-Hall*, † He has wrote much on the prophecies of the MESSIAH, Justification, the Divinity of Christ, and the eternity of Hell Torments. He wrote a great deal on the Bible, in the same way, by opening his thoughts on particular passages of it, as they occur'd to him in reading or meditation; by which he has cast much light on many parts of the bible, which has escap'd other interpreters. And by which his great and painful attention to the Bible, and making it the only rule of his faith, are manifest.

IF the publick was willing to be at the cost, and publishing books of divinity met with as much encouragement now, as it has sometimes, there might be a number of volumes published from his manuscripts, which would afford a great deal of new light and entertainment to the church of Christ: tho' they would be more imperfect, than if he himself had prepar'd them for publick view.

As the method he took to have his miscellaneous writings in such order, as to be able with ease to turn to any thing he had wrote upon a particular subject, when he had occasion, is perhaps as good as any, if not the best that has been propos'd to the publick; some account of it will here be given, as what may be of advantage to young students, who have not yet gone into any method, and are dispos'd to improve their minds by writing.

HE *numbered* all his miscellaneous writings. The first thing he wrote is No. 1. the second No. 2. and so on. And when he had occasion to write on any particular subject, he first set down the Number, and then wrote the Subject in capitals or large character, that it might not escape his eye, when he should have occasion to turn to it. As for instance, if he was going to write on the happiness of Angels, and his last No. was 148, he would begin thus—149. ANGELS, their HAPPINESS. — And when he had wrote what he design'd at that time on that subject, he would turn to an alphabetical table which he kept, and under the letter A, he would write, Angels, their happiness, if this was not already in his alphabet; and then set down the Number, 149, close at the right hand of it. And if he had occasion to write any new thoughts on this same subject;

if the Number of his miscellanies was increased, so that his last Number was 261, he would set down the Number 262, and then the subject, as before. And when he had done writing for that time, he turn'd to his table, to the word Angels; and at the right hand of the Number 149, set down 162. By this means he had no occasion to leave any chasms; but began his next subject where he left off his last. The number of his miscellaneous writings rang'd in this manner, amounts to above 1400. And yet by a table contain'd on a sheet or two of paper, any thing he wrote can be turned to, at pleasure.

S E C T. II.

HIS PUBLICATIONS.

MR. EDWARDS was greatly esteemed and fam'd as an AUTHOR, both in Europe and America. His publications naturally rais'd in the reader of taste and judgment, an opinion of his greatness and piety. His books met with a good reception in Scotland especially, and procur'd him great esteem and applause there. A gentleman of note there for his superior genius and talents, has the following words concerning Mr. EDWARDS, in a letter to one of his correspondents in America. "I look'd on him as incomparably the greatest divine and philosopher in Britain or her Colonies; and rejoiced that one so eminently qualified for teaching divinity was chosen President of New-Jersey College." And in another letter the same gentleman says, "Ever since I was acquainted with Mr. EDWARDS's writings, I have look'd upon him as the greatest divine this age has produced. And a rev. gentleman lately from Holland, says, That Mr. EDWARDS's writings, especially on the *Freedom of the Will*, were had in great esteem there: that the professors of the celebrated academy, presented their compliments to PRESIDENT EDWARDS. Several members of the Classis of Amsterdam gave their thanks, by him, to pious Mr. EDWARDS, for his just observations on Mr. *Brainerd's* life; which book was translated in Holland, and was highly approved of by the University of Utrecht—"

A brief Account of what he published is therefore here subjoined.

A Sermon preach'd at *Boston*, on 1 Cor. i. 29, 30, 31. With a Preface by one of the Ministers of *Boston*.

A Sermon preach'd at *Northampton*, in the year 1734, from Math. xvi. 17. intitled, A divine and supernatural Light immediately imparted to the Soul by the Spirit of GOD.

The Narrative which has been mention'd, wrote Nov. 6. 1736. which was first printed in London, and recommended by Dr. WATTS, and Dr. GUYSE; and had two Editions there. And then it had another Edition in *Boston*, in the year 1738. recommended by four of the senior Ministers in *Boston*. To which were prefixed five Discourses on the following Subjects.

I. Justification by Faith alone. II. Pressing into the Kingdom of GOD. III. Ruth's Resolution. IV. The Justice of GOD in the Damnation of Sinners. V. The Excellency of JESUS CHRIST.

Deliver'd at *Northampton*, chiefly at the time of the wonderful pouring out of the Spirit of GOD there.

The Discourse on Justification by Faith alone, may be recommended as one of the best things that has been wrote on that Subject; setting this truth in a most plain, scriptural, and convincing light; and as well worthy the careful perusal of all christians; especially candidates for the ministry. The other Discourses are excellent, having much divinity in them, and tending above most that are published, to awaken the conscience of the sinner, and instruct and quicken the christian.

A Sermon preach'd at *Enfield*, July 8. 1741. intitled, Sinners in the Hands of an angry GOD. Preach'd at a time of great awakenings there; and attended with remarkable impressions on many of the hearers.

A Sermon on the distinguishing Marks of a work of the Spirit of GOD, preach'd at *New-Haven*, Sept. 10. 1741. from 1 Joh. iv. 1. published with great enlargements. This was re-printed in *Scotland*.

Some thoughts concerning the present revival of religion in *New-England*, and the way in which it ought to be acknowledged and promoted, humbly offered to the public, in a treatise on that subject, in five parts. Published in the year 1742. This had a second edition in *Scotland*.

A Treatise concerning religious Affections. Published in the year 1746. These three last have been mentioned before, with the particular occasion and design of their publication. *

A treatise intitled, An humble attempt to promote explicit agreement, and visible union of GOD's people in extraordinary prayer, for the revival of religion &c. Recommended by five of the principal ministers in *Boston*. Published in 1747. In which he shews his great acquaintance with scripture, and his attention to, and good understanding of the prophetic part of it.

An account of the life of the rev. Mr. *David Brainerd*, minister of the gospel and missionary to the Indians &c. with reflections and observations thereon. Published in the year 1749.

An enquiry into the qualifications for full communion in the visible church. Published in the year 1749. intended as an explanation and vindication of his principles in the matter, which occasioned his dismission from *Northampton*.

A reply to the rev. Mr. *William's* answer to the fore-mentioned inquiry. Published in the year 1752.

A Sermon preach'd at *Newark*, before the Synod, Sept. 28. 1752. from *Jam. ii. 19.* intitled, True grace distinguished from the experience of Devils.

A careful and strict inquiry into the modern prevailing notion of that freedom of will, which is supposed to be essential to moral agency &c. Published in the year 1754.

This is justly thought by good judges to be one of the greatest efforts of the human mind, that has appear'd, at least, in this century. In which the author shews that
 see an I. strength of mind, that judgment, penetration and
 accuracy

accuracy of thought, that justly intitles him to the character of one of the greatest genius's of this age. This treatise doubtless goes further towards settling the main points in controversy between Calvinists and Arminians, than any thing that has been wrote: he having herein abundantly demonstrated the chief principles on which Arminians build their whole scheme, to be false and most absurd. Whenever therefore this book comes to be generally attended to, it will doubtless prove fatal to Arminian and Pelagian Principles. This was re-printed in *London* Anno 1762: and has been introduced by the Rev. T. CLAP, PRESIDENT of Yale College, to be recited there by the Students.

The great christian doctrine of Original Sin defended; evidences of its truth produced, and arguments to the contrary answered. Containing, in particular, a reply to the objections and arguings of Dr. JOHN TAYLOR &c. Published in the year 1758. This was in the press when he died.

Besides these, he published, several Ordination Sermons, and some others, preach'd upon particular occasions.

A P P E N D I X, N^o. I.

Containing a brief A C C O U N T of Mrs. ESTTER BURR, and some Extracts of LETTERS wrote by her.

MRS. BURR and her children were inoculated at the same time her father was, and were recovered when he died. But after she was perfectly recovered to all appearance, she was suddenly seized with a violent disorder, which carried her out of the world in a few days : and which the physician said he could call by no name but that of *A Messenger sent, suddenly to call her out of the world.* She died *April 7. 1758.* sixteen days after her father, in the 27th year of her age. She was married to Mr. Burr, June 29. 1752. By him she had two children, a son and a daughter.

Mrs. BURR exceeded most of her sex in the beauty of her person ; and in a decent and easy gesture, behaviour and conversation : not stiff and starch on the one hand, nor mean and indecent on the other, in her unaffected, natural freedom with persons of all ranks, with whom she conversed. Her genius was much more than common. She had a lively, sprightly imagination, a quick and penetrating thought, and a good judgment. She had a peculiar smartness in her make and temper, which yet was consistent with pleasantness & good nature : and she knew how to be pleasant & facetious without trespassing on the bounds of gravity, or strict and serious religion. In short, she seem'd to be form'd to please, and especially to please one of Mr. Burr's taste and talents, in whom he was exceeding happy. But what crown'd all her excellencies, and was her chief glory, was her RELIGION. She was hopefully converted when she was 7 or 8 years old ; and she made a publick profession of religion when she was about 15 years of age ; and her conversation and conduct to her death,

was exemplary and as becometh godliness. But as her religious sentiments and exercises, will best be understood by those who were strangers to her, by her own words; the following extracts are made from letters which she wrote not long before her death.

THE following is an extract from a Letter she wrote to her Mother, not long after Mr. Burr's death, dated at *Prince-ton October 7. 1757.* After giving some account of Mr. Burr's death, and representing the sense she had of the greatness of the loss she and her children had sustained, she writes in the following words,

“ NO doubt dear Madam, it will be some comfort to you, to hear that GOD has not utterly forsaken, altho' he has cast down. I would speak it to the glory of God's name, that I think he has in an uncommon degree discovered himself to be an all-sufficient GOD, a full fountain of all good. Altho' all streams were cut off, yet the fountain is left full.

“ I think I have been enabled to cast my care upon him, and have found great peace and calm in my mind, such as this world cannot give, nor take.

“ I have had uncommon freedom, and nearness to the throne of grace. GOD has seemed sensibly near in such a supporting and comforting manner, that I think I have never experienced the like.

“ GOD has helped me to review my past and present mercies, with some heart-affecting degree of thankfulness.

“ I think GOD has given me such a sense of the vanity of the world, and uncertainty of all sublunary enjoyments, as I never had before. The world vanishes out of my sight. Heavenly and eternal things appear much more real and important than ever before. I feel myself to be under much greater obligations to be the Lord's, than before this sore affliction.

“ THE way of salvation by faith in Jesus Christ has appeared more clear and excellent; and I have been constrained to venture my All upon Him; and have found great peace of soul, in what I hope has been actings of faith.—Some parts of the Psalms have been very comforting and refreshing to my soul.

“ I hope GOD has helped me to eye his hand in this
 “ awful dispensation ; and to see the infinite right he has
 “ to his own, and to dispose of them as he pleases.

“ Thus, dear Madam, I have given you some broken
 “ hints of the exercises and supports of my mind, since
 “ the DEATH of HIM, whose memory and example, will
 “ ever be precious to me as my own life.

“ O dear Madam ! I doubt not but I have your, and
 “ my honored father's prayers daily for me ; but give me
 “ leave to intreat you both to request earnestly of the Lord,
 “ that I may never despise his chastenings, nor faint un-
 “ der this his severe stroke ; which I am sensible there is
 “ great danger of, if GOD should only deny me the sup-
 “ ports, that he has hitherto graciously granted.

“ O, I am afraid I shall conduct so as to bring dishonor
 “ on my GOD, and the religion which I profess ! — No,
 “ rather let me die this moment, than be left to bring
 “ dishonor on GOD's holy name. — I am overcome —
 “ I must conclude with once more begging, that as my
 “ dear parents remember themselves, they would not for-
 “ get their greatly afflicted daughter, (now a lonely widow)
 “ nor her fatherless children.

“ My duty to my ever dear and honored parents, love
 “ to my brothers and sisters. From, dear Madam,

your dutiful and affectionate daughter,

ESTHER BURR.

“ To my ever honored Father.

Prince-ton, Nov. 2. 1757.

“ Honored Sir,

“ YOUR most affectionate, comforting letter by my
 “ brother, — was exceedingly refreshing to me,
 “ altho' I was something damp'd by hearing that I
 “ should not see you until spring.† But 'tis my comfort
 “ in this disappointment, as well as under all my afflictions,
 “ that GOD knows what is best for me, and for his
 “ own

† When Mr. Edwards wrote the Letter she refers to, he did not think of going to Prince-ton till spring ; but he afterwards determin'd otherwise, and went in January, as is before related.

“ own glory. Perhaps I lotted too much on the company
 “ and conversation of such a near and dear and affection-
 “ nate father and guide. I can’t doubt but all is for the
 “ best, and I am satisfied that GOD should order the
 “ affair of your removal as shall be for his glory, what-
 “ ever comes of me.

“ SINCE I wrote my mother’s letter, GOD has carried
 “ me thro’ new trials, and given me new supports. My
 “ little son has been sick with the slow fever, ever since
 “ my brother left us, and has been brought to the brink
 “ of the grave. But I hope in mercy God is bringing him
 “ up again. I was enabled to resign the child (after a se-
 “ vere struggle with nature) with the greatest freedom.
 “ GOD shewed me that the child was not my own, but
 “ his ; and that he had a right to recall what he had lent,
 “ whenever he thought fit ; and I had no reason to com-
 “ plain, or say GOD was hard with me. This silenced
 “ me.

“ BUT O, how good is GOD ! He not only kept me
 “ from complaining, but comforted me by enabling me
 “ to offer up the child by faith, I think, if ever I acted faith.
 “ I saw the fulness there was in Christ for little Infants,
 “ and his willnigness to accept of such as were offer’d to
 “ Him. “ Suffer little children to come unto me, and
 “ forbid them not ;” were comforting words.

“ GOD also shewed me in such a lively manner, the
 “ fullness there was in himself of all spiritual blessings,
 “ that I said, Altho’ all streams were cut off, yet so long
 “ as my GOD lives, I have enough. He enabled me to
 “ say, “ Altho’ thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee.”

“ IN this time of trial, I was led to enter into a re-
 “ newed and explicit covenant with GOD, in a more
 “ solemn manner than ever before ; and with the greatest
 “ freedom and delight. After much self-examination
 “ and prayer, I did give up my self and children to GOD,
 “ with my whole heart. Never until now, had I a sente-
 “ of the priviledge we are allowed in covenanting with
 “ God ! This act of soul left my mind in a quiet and
 “ steady trust in GOD.

“ A few days after this, one evening, in talking of the
 “ glorious state my dear departed husband must be in, my
 “ soul was carried out in such longing desires after this
 “ glorious

“ glorious state, that I was forced to retire from the family
 “ to conceal my joy. When alone, I was so transported,
 “ and my soul carried out in such eager desires after per-
 “ fection, and the full enjoyment of GOD, and to serve
 “ him uninterruptedly, that I think my Nature would not
 “ have born much more. I think, dear sir, I had that night,
 “ a foretaste of heaven. This frame continued in some
 “ good degree the whole night. I slept but little, and
 “ when I did, my dreams were all of heavenly and divine
 “ things. Frequently since, I have felt the same in kind,
 “ tho’ not in degree. Thus a kind and gracious GOD
 “ has been with me in six troubles, and in seven.

“ BUT O Sir, what cause of deep humiliation and abase-
 “ ment of soul have I, on account of remaining corruption ;
 “ which I see working continually, especially pride ! O,
 “ how many shapes does pride cloke it self in !

“ SATAN is also busy shooting his darts ; but, blessed
 “ be GOD, those temptations of his, that used to over-
 “ throw me, as yet, have not touched me. O, to be de-
 “ livered from the power of satan, as well as sin ! I can’t
 “ help hoping the time is near. GOD is certainly fitting
 “ me for himself ; and when I think it will be soon that
 “ I shall be called hence, the thought is transporting.”

A P P E N D I X, N^o. II.

Containing a short Sketch of Mrs. EDWARDS'S
LIFE and CHARACTER.

MRS. SARAH EDWARDS, the amiable consort of pre-
 sident EDWARDS, did not long survive him. In
 September she set out in good health on a journey
 to Philadelphia, to take care of her two orphan grand-
 children, which were now in that city ; and had been,
 since the death of Mrs. Burr. As they had no relations
 in those parts, Mrs. EDWARDS proposed to take them into
 her own family. She arrived there by the way of Prince-
 ton Sept. 21. in good health, having had a comfortable
 journey.

journey. But in a few days she was suddenly seized with a violent dysentery, which put an end to her life on the fifth day, October 2. 1758, in the 49th Year of her age. She said not much in her sickness; being exercised most of the time with violent pain. On the morning of the day she died, she apprehended her death was near: when she expressed her entire resignation to GOD, and desire that GOD might be glorified in all things; and that she might be enabled to glorify him to the last: and continued in such a temper, calm and resigned till she died.

HER remains were carried to *Princeton*, which is about 40 miles from Philadelphia, and deposited with Mr. EDWARDS's. Thus they who were in their lives remarkably lovely and pleasant, in their death were not much divided. Here lie the Father and Mother, the Son and Daughter: who are laid together in the grave, within the space of a little more than a year, tho' a few months before their dwelling was more than 150 miles apart. Two presidents of the same College, and their consorts, than whom it will doubtless be hard to find *four* persons more valuable and useful; in a few months are cut off from the earth forever; and by a remarkable providence are put, as it were, into one grave! And we the survivors are left under the gloomy apprehension that these righteous are taken away from the evil to come!

SURELY *America* is greatly emptied by these deaths! How much knowledge, wisdom and holiness is gone from the earth for ever! And where are they who shall make good their ground!

Mrs. EDWARDS was born in New-Haven, in Connecticut, Jan. 9. 1709, 10. Her father was the rev. Mr. JAMES PIERPOINT, who was long an eminently godly and useful minister of the gospel at New-Haven. † She was married to Mr. EDWARDS, July 20. 1727. in the 18th year of her age.

THO'

† He was the eldest son of Mr. *John Pierpoint* of Roxbury, who came out of England. Her mother was Mrs. *Mary Pierpoint*, eldest daughter of the rev. Mr. *Samuel Hooker*, minister of the gospel at Farmington in Connecticut, and son of the rev. Mr. *Thomas Hooker*, once minister of the gospel at Hartford, and famous as a divine, thro' all the churches in New-England.

THO' Mrs. EDWARDS's full character will not be attempted here, yet it is thought proper to mention a few things, in which she excelled, and set an example worthy the imitation of all.

SHE remember'd her creator in the days of her youth, and became truly and remarkably religious at about five years old. Was a more than ordinary beautiful person; of a pleasant, agreeable countenance; of an amiable, courteous conversation and behaviour: the law of kindness was in her tongue.

She was eminent for her piety and experimental religion. Religious conversation was much her delight; and this she promoted in all companies as far as was proper and decent for her: and her discourse shew'd her understanding in divine things, and the great impression they had on her mind. The friends of true religion, and they who were ready to engage in religious conversation, and delighted in that which was most essential and practical in true religion; were her peculiar friends and intimates. To whom she would open her mind freely, and tell them the exercises of her own heart; and what God had done for her soul, for their encouragement, and excitement in the ways of God. Her mind appear'd, to them who were most conversant with her, constantly to attend to divine things, even on all occasions, and in all business of life.

THE religious duties of the closet, she was a great friend to, and took much delight in them. She highly prized social worship. Was wont to attend the private meetings for religious worship, which were kept up at *Northampton*, while Mr. EDWARDS lived there. And promoted and attended meetings of persons of her own sects only, in order for prayer and religious conversation. She was a constant attender on publick worship; and behaved with great gravity and seriousness in the house of GOD.

SHE paid proper deference to Mr. EDWARDS, and treated him with decency and respect at all times. As he was of a weakly, infirm constitution, and was peculiar and exact in his diet, she was a tender nurse to him; cheerfully attending upon him at all times, and ministering to his comfort: and spared no pains to conform to his inclinations, and make things agreeable and comfortable to him.

SHE accounted it her greatest glory, and that wherein she could best serve God and her generation, in being a

means of promoting Mr. EDWARDS's comfort and usefulness in this way. And no person of discerning could be conversant in the family without observing and admiring the great harmony and mutual love and esteem that subsisted between them.

WHEN she her self labour'd under bodily disorders and pains, which was often the case, she was not wont to be full of her complaints, and put on a dejected or sour countenance, being out of humour with every body and every thing, as if *she* was disregarded and neglected: but she would bare up under them with patience, and a kind of cheerfulness and good humour.

SHE was a good œconomist, managing her household affairs with discretion; in which she was laborious and diligent. She was very careful that nothing should be wasted and lost. And often, when she did any thing to save a small matter, or directed her children to do it in any instance, or saw them waste any thing; she would mention the words of our Saviour; which, she said, she often tho't of, as containing a maxim worth remembering: when, as the reason why his disciples should gather up the fragments, he says, THAT NOTHING BE LOST. She took almost the whole care of the temporal affairs of the family, without doors and within; and in this she was peculiarly suited to Mr. EDWARDS's disposition, who chose to have no care of any worldly business.

SHE had an excellent way of governing her children: she knew how to make them regard and obey her cheerfully without loud, angry words, or heavy blows. She seldom strook her children a blow; and in speaking to them used mild, gentle and pleasant words. If any correction was needful, it was not her manner to give it in a passion. And when she had occasion to reprove and rebuke, she would do it in few words, without heat and noise, with all calmness and gentleness of mind. And in her directions or reproofs, in any matters of importance, she would address herself to the reason of her children, that they might not only know her inclination and will, but at the same time, be convinced of the reasonableness of it. She need speak but *once*; she was cheerfully obeyed; murmuring and answering again was not known among them. And the kind & gentle treatment they had from their mother, while she strictly & punctually maintain'd her parental authority;

thority, seem'd naturally to beget and promote a filial regard and respect; and lead them to a mild, tender treatment of each other; for quareling and contention, as it frequently takes place among children, was not known among them. She carefully observed the first appearances of resentment and ill-will towards any, in her young children; and did not connive at it and promote it, as many who have the care of children do, but was careful to shew her displeasure at it, and suppress it to her utmost: not by angry, wrathful words and blows, which often provoke children to wrath, and stir up and confirm their irascible passions, rather than abate and suppress them.

As she was sensible that in many respects, the chief care of forming children by government and instruction, naturally lies on mothers; as they are most with their children in their most pliable age, when they commonly receive impressions by which they are very much form'd for life: so she was very careful to do her part in this important business. And when she met with any special difficulty in this matter, or foresaw any, she was wont to apply to Mr. *Edwards* for advice and assistance: and on such occasions they would both attend to it, as a matter of great importance.

BUT this was not all, in which she express'd her care for her children. She thought that parents had great and important duty to do towards their children before they were capable of government and instruction. For them she constantly and earnestly pray'd, and bore them on her heart before God, in all her secret and most solemn addresses to him; and that even before they were born. The evidence of her pregnancy, and consideration that it was with a rational, immortal creature, which came into existence in an undone, and infinitely dreadful state, was sufficient to lead her to bow before God daily for his blessing on it; even redemption, and eternal life by Jesus Christ. So that thro' all the pain, labour and sorrow, which attended her being the mother of children, she was in travail for them, that they might be born of GOD by having Christ formed in them.

As the law of kindness was in her tongue, so her hands were not withheld from beneficence and charity. She was always a friend and patroness of the poor and helpless; and much in acts of charity, as well as recommending it to others on all proper occasions.

SHE was remarkable for her kindness to her friends and visitants, who resorted to Mr. EDWARDS's. She would spare no pains to make them welcome, and provide for their convenience and comfort. And she was peculiarly kind to strangers, who came to her house. She would take such kind and special notice of such, and so soon get acquainted with them, as it were, and shew such regard and concern for their comfort, and so kindly offer what she thought they needed, as to discover she knew the heart of a stranger, and well understood how to do it good; and so as to oblige them to feel in some measure as if they were at home.

SHE made it her rule to speak well of all, so far as she could with truth, and justice to herself and others. She was not wont to dwell with delight on the imperfections and failings of any; and when she heard persons speaking ill of others, she would say what she thought she could with truth and justice in their excuse; or divert the obloquy by mentioning those things that were commendable in them. Thus she was tender of every one's character, even of theirs who injured and spoke evil of her; and carefully guarded against the too common vice of evil speaking and backbiting. She could bear injuries and reproach with great calmness & patience, without any disposition to render evil for evil; but on the contrary, was ready to pity and forgive those who appear'd to be her enemies.

SHE had long told her intimate friends that she had, after long struggles and exercises, obtain'd, by God's grace, an habitual willingness to die her self, or part with any of her most near relatives. That she was willing to bring forth children for death; and resign up him whom she esteemed so great a blessing to her & her family, her nearest partner, to the stroke of death, whenever GOD should see fit to take him. And when she had the greatest trial in the death of Mr. EDWARDS, she found the help and comfort of such a disposition. Her conversation and conduct on this occasion was even to the admiration of her friends. It was such as discover'd that she was sensible of the great loss, she and her children had sustain'd in his death; and at the same time shewed, that she was quiet and resigned, and had those invincible supports and comforts by which she could trust in GOD with quietness, hope and humble joy.

THEY lived together in the married state above thirty years. In which time they had eleven children ; all which are now living, except the second daughter, who died Febr. 14. 1748. (of whom the publick have some account in the life of Mr. *Brainerd*, p.251.) and their third daughter, Mrs. *Burr*, before mentioned ; and their youngest daughter, named *Elizabeth*, who died since her parents. The surviving children are three sons, and five daughters.

T H E E N D.



S E R M O N S

O N

Various important

S U B J E C T S.

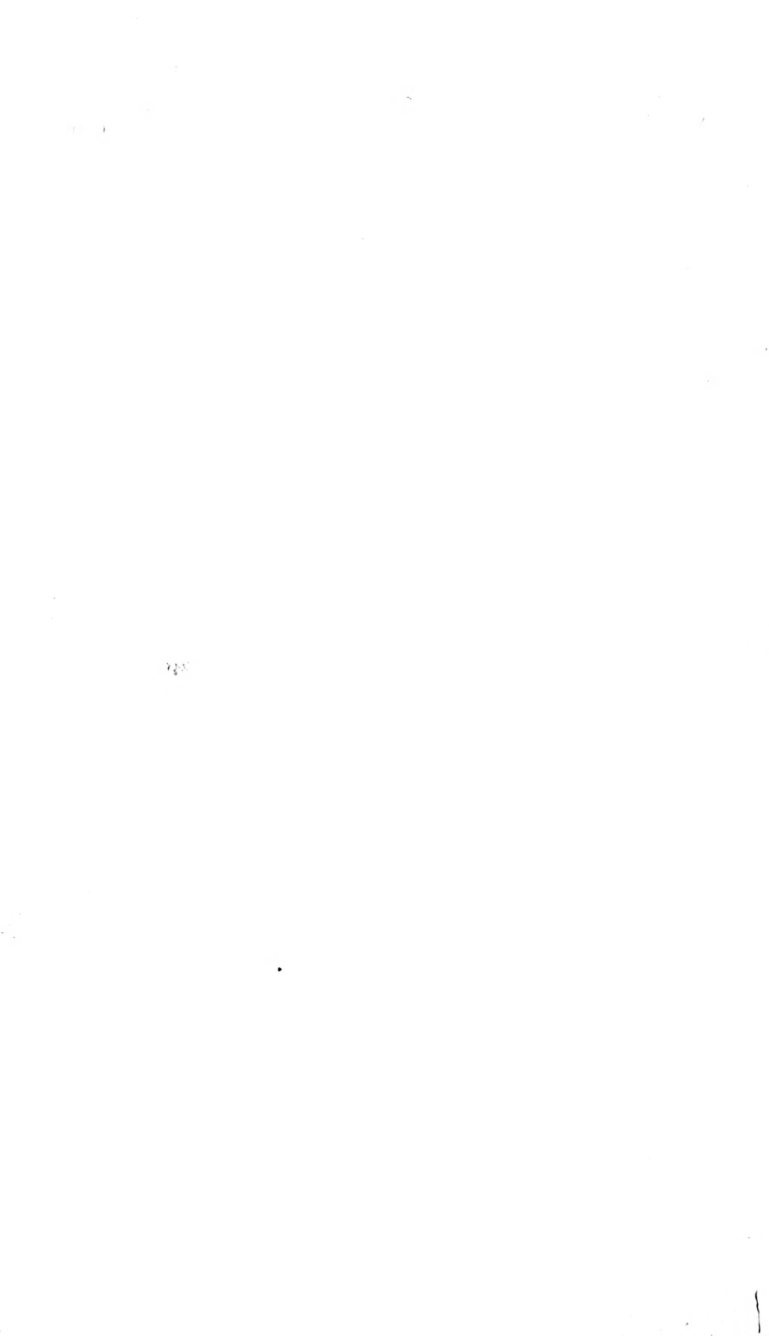
Being some of the Remains of the late
Reverend and Learned

Mr. *JONATHAN EDWARDS*,

PRESIDENT of the COLLEGE at NEW-JERSEY.

B O S T O N :

Printed and Sold by S. KNEELAND, in Queen-Street.
M, DCC, LXV.





The P R E F A C E



UCH was the true character of the pious & learned author of the ensuing Sermons, as that the lovers of pure religion, and unaffected learning, who were intimately acquainted with him, and free from prejudice, need nothing further to invite their attentive perusal of the following sheets, than only to be informed that they were written by the late **PRESIDENT EDWARDS**.

These Sermons indeed appear under considerable disadvantages : The author composed them only to be preach'd to a congregation in a country-town, where he stately labour'd in the work of the gospel ministry, for a course of years, probably without the least design, or so much as even any distant view of their ever making an appearance, by way of the press, before the world. For this, the candid will make a generous allowance.

The P R E F A C E.

IF the author had published them himself, or had revised them near the close of his life, with a view to their public appearance, 'tis not at all likely they would have appeared as they do at present ; but the difference in some respects at least, must have been considerable. In several places, enlargements would have been made ; various parts would have been brightned with new illustrations ; the stile in a number of instances would have been alter'd, and the dress made more agreable. And, in a word, the whole, taken together, would have appear'd in a much more advantageous light, more instructive, and entertaining.

This might have been reasonably expected, from the author's masterly and distinguished genius, which prompted him eagerly to pursue truth, even in her most secret recesses. Especially, if it be considered, that the greater part of these Sermons were penn'd more than twenty years before his death, in which space of time, he made swift & amazing advances in divine knowledge, in branches almost numberless. The same thing may be inferr'd from the author's manner : Some Sermons, that he formerly published, received

great

The P R E F A C E.

great enlargements under his last and finishing hand; and however engaging and entertaining they were in the delivery, they appear'd much ampler from the press, than the pulpit.

Besides, 'tis some unhappiness, thro' a mistake, the subjects are not placed in that natural and advantageous order, which was design'd.

Nevertheless, under all their disadvantages, the Sermons, 'tis apprehended, will be well receiv'd by the candid, intelligent christian reader: And that every person that is possessed of a happy degree of sound judgment, and good taste, who shall seriously peruse them, will find that justness and clearness of thought; that natural & lively representation of divine things; that vein of piety and solid religion running through the whole; that extensive knowledge, that commanding pungency, and spiritual savor, which may serve in a measure to point out the author, and at the same time, to instruct, entertain and quicken the reader.

The public may be assured that the Sermons are faithfully copied from the original manuscripts. And where sentences, or paragraphs were found unfinished,

THE P R E F A C E.

ed, as there were various such instances, in most of the Sermons, mark'd with a stroke of the pen, thus ——— which the author used to supply in the delivery, — the editor has not taken the liberty to compleat them, except an instance or two, in the Sermons upon the wisdom of God — where the words added, are carefully included in crotchets. Wherever therefore, the reader finds such a stroke — he is hereby notified, that something is left unexpress'd, which his own mind is to supply.

The date, at the beginning of the Sermons, marks the time when they were compos'd and preach'd.

These Sermons being some of the remains of an eminent man of God, & friend to men, are heartily recommended to the candid acceptance, and faithful improvement of all into whose hands they may fall; and to the blessing of him who is ALL and IN ALL, the great disposer of all events, who was pleas'd signally to distinguish his servant, when living, with gifts and graces, and to crown his labours with unusual success.

April 25. 1765.

The Editor.



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By reason of the editor's distance from the press, the errors of it are various: Some of which are pointed out in the following

E R R A T A.


PAge 13 line 6 from the bottom, for *and* read *as*. p. 24. l. 8 f. bot. f. *anr* on p. 32. C del. not p. 37. l. 7. f. *notion*. r. *inclination* p. 40. l. 11. cele *first* p. 41. l. 13. fr. bot. f. *oner*. be p. 42. l. 13. f. *hursful*. l. 15. r. *conceived*. p. 44. l. 10 fr. bot. r. *the* r. p. 47. l. 8. f. *anti* gr. *adling*. l. 12. r. *degrees* after *and* r. *adng*. p. 48. r. l. d p. 51. l. 1 f. *hitherto* r. *formerly* l. 12 fr. bot. f. *a most* r. *the most*. p. 51. l. 5 f. *is* r. *are*. p. 54. l. 13. fr. bot. f. *that* r. *it*. p. 76. l. 8. f. *juries* r. *fracer* p. 79. l. 14 r. *effect* p. 92. l. 5 *dece* *been* p. 105. l. 21 f. *four* r. *souls*. p. 113. l. 3 fr. bot. r. *inuperable* p. 119. l. 2. fr. bot. f. *100*. *for*. p. 138. l. 2 r. *ell*. p. 166. l. 12 fr. bot. f. *manifest* r. *manifera* p. 196 fr. bot. r. *deubly* p. 198. l. 19 f. *er* r. *tho'* p. 204. l. 16 after *to* add *by*. p. 216. l. 10. f. *Christ* r. *Christ*. p. 216. l. 16. r. *curr*.

* Other mistakes which may have been overlook'd, are submitted to the reader's candor.



JESUS CHRIST gloriously ex-
alted above all Evil, in the
Work of Redemption.

[LECTURE *August* 1738]




S E R M O N I.



I CORINTHIANS xv. 25, 26.

*For he must reign, till he hath put all Enemies
under his Feet. The last Enemy that shall be
destroyed, is Death.*



THE Apostle in this Chapter does particularly oppose some among the christian Corinthians, who denied the Resurrection of the Dead, and much molested and infected the Church of Corinth with their Doctrine. There were two sorts of Persons in that Age, who were especially great Opposers of the Doctrine of the Resurrection: one among the Jews, and the other among the Heathen. Those among the Jews were the Sadducees; of whom we read, Acts xxiii. 8 *For the Sadducees say, that there is no Resurrection, neither Angel nor Spirit.* And we have the same Account in other Places. Those among the Heathen that were

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the chief Opposers of this Doctrine, were their Philosophers. The Doctrine of the Resurrection of the Dead, was not consistent with their Philosophy; by the Principles of which it was impossible that one who was deprived of the Habit of Life, should ever receive it again. And therefore they ridiculed the Doctrine when the Apostle preached it among them at Athens. † It probably was chiefly from these latter that the Church at Corinth received this Corruption, the Philosophers, and not the Sadducees. For Corinth was near to Athens, which was the Place of the chief Resort of the Philosophers of all the Cities of that learned Country of Greece.

THE Apostle in opposing this Error, first insists on Christ's Resurrection from the Dead; and next on the Resurrection of all the Saints at the end of the World. And in the Verses next before the Text, shews how both are connected, or that one arises or follows from the other. And then adds. *Then cometh the End, when he shall have delivered up the Kingdom to God even the Father, when he shall have put down all Rule, and all Authority, & Power. For he must reign till he hath put all Enemies under his Feet. The last Enemy that shall be destroyed is Death.*

'Tis to my present Purpose to observe these two Things in the Words of the Text.

I. HERE is something mentioned, as one Thing wherein appears the Glory of that Exaltation and Dominion, that Christ has as our Redeemer, viz. that it issues in the Subjection of all Enemies under his Feet. It is not said all *his* Enemies, possibly because those that shall be put under his Feet, are not only his Enemies; but also the Enemies of his Father, and of his People. Their being under his Feet denotes their being perfectly vanquished and subdued, and brought exceeding low under him, and his being gloriously exalted over them. It shall be thus with respect to God's.

and

and his, and his People's Enemies universally, not one excepted: Which Universality is signified here two Ways. (1.) In the universal Terms that are used *All* Enemies. (2) In that here is an Account of the subjecting of the *very last* Enemy: When there shall be *but one* Enemy left, that shall also be put under his Feet.

2. WE may learn what is here meant by Enemies, by the particular Instance here given by the last that shall be destroyed, viz. Death. Which shews that by Enemies, is not only meant Persons that set themselves in Opposition to God and his People; but *Evils*; whatever is any Way against God and his People, and does oppose or molest Christ or his Saints, are here called Enemies, whether they be Persons or Things.

Hence the

D O C T R I N E.

Our LORD JESUS CHRIST, in the Work of Redemption, gloriously appears above all Evil.

In handling this Doctrine, I propose to shew,

I. How Evil of all Kinds has prevailed, and highly exalted itself in the World.

II. THAT tho' Evil has so greatly prevailed, and how high soever it has exalted itself, Christ appears gloriously above it, in the Work of Redemption.

I. EVIL of all Kinds has risen to an exceeding height in the World, and highly exalted itself against God and Christ, and the Church.

This will appear by the following Particulars.

I. SATAN has highly exalted himself, and greatly prevailed. Satan is one who is vastly superior, in his natural Capacity and Abilities, to Mankind. He was originally one of the highest Rank of Creatures, being

a mighty Angel. He proudly exalted himself in Rebellion against God in Heaven. For we are told that *Pride was the Condemnation of the Devil.** He became proud of his own superior Dignity and mighty Abilities, and the Glory which his Creator had put upon him; and probably thought it too much to submit to the Son of God, and attempted to exalt his Throne above the Throne of Christ. And he prevailed to draw away vast Multitudes, many Thousands and Millions of the heavenly Hosts, into an open Rebellion against God.

AND after he was cast down from Heaven, he proudly exalted himself in this World, and prevailed to do great Things here. By his subtil Temptations he procur'd the fall of our first Parents, and so brought about the Ruin of the whole Race of Mankind. He procur'd their Ruin in Body and Soul, and the Death of both; and that they should be expos'd to all Manner of Calamity in this World, and to eternal Ruin hereafter. He so far prevailed, that he drew Men off from the Service of their Maker, and set up himself to be the God of this World; and in a little Time drew the World into that almost universal Corruption, which brought on the Flood of Waters, by which it was destroyed. And after that, he again in a little Time drew all Nations, except the Posterity of Jacob, off from the Worship of the true God, and darkened all the World with the darkness of Heathenism; and held them under this Darkness for a great many Ages: he himself being worshiped as God almost all over the World: the Nations of the Earth offered Sacrifices to him; and Multitudes offered up their Children in Sacrifice to him. And during that Time, he often so far prevailed against the People of God, that he had almost swallowed them up. The Church was often brought to the very Brink of Ruin.

AND

* 1 Tim. iii. 6.

AND when Christ himself appeared in the World, how did he exalt himself against him ! and prevailed so far, as to influence Men to hate and despise him all the Days of his Life. And at last perswaded one of his own Disciples to betray him ; and brought it to pass, that he was delivered into the Hands of Men, to be mocked, buffeted and spit upon, and treated with the greatest ignominy that unrestrained Malice could devise : and at last procured that he should be put to the most cruel, ignominious kind of Death that was in use in the World. And since that, he has greatly exalted himself against the Gospel and Kingdom of Christ : has procured that the Church, for the most Part, has been the Subject of great Persecution ; has often brought it to the brink of utter Destruction : Has accomplished great Works in setting up those great Kingdoms of Antichrist and Mahomet ; and darkened great Part of the World, that was once enlightened with the Gospel of Christ with worse than heathen Darknes. And has infected the christian World with Multitudes of Heresies and false Ways of Worship, and greatly promoted Atheism and Infidelity. Thus highly has the Devil exalted himself against God and Christ, and the Elect ; and so far has he prevailed.

2. **GUILT** is another Evil which has come to a great height in the World. All Guilt is an Evil of a dreadful Nature : the least Degree of it is enough utterly to undo any Creature. It is a Thing that reaches unto Heaven, and cries to God, and brings down his Wrath. The guilt of any one Sin is so terrible an Evil, that it prevails to bind over the guilty Person to suffer everlasting Burnings : and so is an Evil that is in some Respect infinite, in that it obliges to that Punishment which has no end ; and so is infinitely terrible. But this kind of Evil has risen to a most amazing height in this World ; where not only some Persons are guilty, but all in all Nations and Ages are naturally guilty.

guilty Wretches. And they who live to act any time in the World are not only guilty of *one* Sin, but of *Thousands* and *thousands of Thousands*. What multitudes and what aggravated Sins are some Men guilty of! What Guilt lies on some particular Persons! how much more on some particular populous Cities! How much more still on this wicked World! How much does the Guilt of the World transcend all Account; all Expression; all Powers of Numbers or Measures! And above all, how vast is the Guilt of the World, in all Ages of it, from the beginning of the World to the end of it! To what a Pitch has Guilt risen in the World; The World being, as it were, on every Side, loaded with it, as with Mountains heaped on Mountains, above the Clouds and Stars of Heaven.

AND Guilt, when it was imputed to Christ, greatly prevailed against him; tho' in himself innocent, and the eternal Son of God; even so as to hold him Prisoner of Justice for a while; and to open the Flood-gates of God's Wrath upon him, and bring all his Waves and Billows over him.

3. CORRUPTION and Wickedness of Heart, is another Thing that has risen to an exceeding height in the World. Sin has so far prevailed in the World that it has become universal: All Mankind that are meer Men, are become sinful and corrupt Creatures. Let us attend to St. Paul's Description of the World † *Jews and Gentiles are all under Sin. As it is written, There is none Righteous, no not one: there is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the Way, they are together become unprofitable, there is none that doth Good, no not one.* And not only is every one corrupt; but they are *all over* corrupt, in every Power, Faculty & Principle; every Part is depraved. Which is here represented by the several Parts of the Body being corrupt, as the Throat, the Tongue, the Lips,

the

the Mouth, the Feet. “ Their *Throat* is an open Sepulchre, with their *Tongues* they have used Deceit, the Poison of Asps is under their *Lips* : whose *Mouth* is full of cursing and bitterness : their *Feet* are swift to shed Blood.” And not only is every Part *corrupt* but *exceeding corrupt* ; being possessed with dreadful Principles of Corruption, horribly evil Dispositions and Principles of Sin, that may be represented by the Poison of Asps ; which makes Men like filthy Beasts like Vipers and Devils : Principles of all Uncleanness, Pride, Deceit, Injustice, Enmity, Malice, Blasphemy, Murder, Here their *Throats* are compared to an open Sepulchre, and their Mouth said to be “ full of cursing and bitterness,” and Destruction and Misery are said to be in their Ways.

AND there are not only those Principles of Sin that are very bad, but every Kind : here is no Sort of Wickedness, but there is a Seed of it in Men. — And these Seeds and Principles have not only a Being in Men’s Hearts, but are there in great Strength : they have the absolute Possession and Dominion over Men, so that they are sold under Sin. Yea, wicked Principles, and those only, are in the Heart. The Imagination of the Thoughts of their Heart is evil and *only* evil. There are bad Principles *only*, and no good ones. “ There is no fear of God before their Eyes.” Thus the Hearts of all Men are “deceitful and desperately wicked.” ||

AND if we look not only at the natural Corruption of the Heart, but the contracted Habits of Sin, that Men are commonly under the Power of, by wicked Education and Customs, how full shall we find the World of Wickedness, in this Respect ! How have Men by bad Customs in Sinning, broken down all Restraints upon natural Corruption, and as it were abandon’d themselves to Wickedness ! So far has Corruption and Wickedness

ness prevailed in the World, and so high has it risen, that it is become a great & universal Deluge, that overtops all Things, and prevails with that Strength, that it is like the raging Waves of the tempestuous Ocean; which are ready to bear down all before them.

4 MANY of the Devil's Instruments have greatly prevail'd, and have been exalted to an exceeding height in the World. It has been so in almost all Ages of the World. Many of the Devil's Instruments have prosper'd and prevail'd 'till they have got to the Head of great Kingdoms and Empires, with vast Riches and mighty Power.

THOSE four great heathen Monarchies that rose in the World before Christ, † are spoken of in Scripture as Kingdoms set up in opposition to the Kingdom of Christ. So they are represented in the Interpretation of *Nebuchadrezzar's* Dream, wherein he saw a great Image; the Head of Gold, his Breasts and his Arms of Silver, his Belly and his Thighs of Brasses, his Legs of Iron, &c. * These Monarchies were exceeding powerful. The two last ruled over the bigger Part of the then known World. And the last especially, viz. the Roman Empire, was exceeding mighty: so that it is said to be divers from all Kingdoms; and that it should devour the whole Earth, and tread it down, and break it in Pieces. † And is represented by the fourth Beast, which was dreadful and terrible; and strong exceedingly; and had great iron Teeth, that devoured and break in Pieces, and stamped the residue with his Feet. These four Kingdoms all persecuted the Church of God in their Turns: and especially the last, viz. the Roman. One of the Governors of this Monarchy put Christ to Death. And afterwards one Emperor after another, made dreadful Havock of the Church; destroying Thousands & Millions; making a Business of

† the Babylonian, Persian, Grecian & Roman Monarchies.

* Dan. ii. 31, 32; I. ii. vii. 23. || Dan. vii. 7.

of it with the Force of all the Empire, to torment and destroy the Christians; endeavouring if possible, to root out the Christian Name from under Heaven.

AND in these latter Ages, how have those two great Instruments of the Devil, viz Antichrist and Mahomet, prevail'd, and to what a Pitch of Advancement have they arriv'd; ruling over vast Empires, with mighty Wealth, Pride and Power: so that the Earth has been, as it were, subdued by them. Antichrist has set up himself as the Vicar of Christ; and has for many Ages usurped the Power of God, "sitting in the Temple of God, and shewing himself that he is God; and exalting himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped." And how dreadfully has he ravaged the Church of God, being drunk with the Blood of the Saints, and the Martyrs of Jesus! And has often, as it were deluged the World in Christian Blood, shed with the utmost cruelty that human Wit and Malice could invent.

AND at this Day, many other Instruments of the Devil, many Hereticks, Atheists and other Infidels, are exerting themselves against Christ and his Church, with great Pride and Contempt.

5. AFFLICTION and Misery have also prevailed and risen to an unspeakable Height in the World. The spiritual Misery which the Elect are naturally in is great. They are miserable Captives of Sin and Satan, and under Obligations to suffer eternal Burnings. This Misery all Mankind are naturally in. And spiritual Troubles & Sorrows have often risen to a great Height in the Elect. The Troubles of a wounded Spirit and guilty Conscience, have been felt with intolerable and insupportable Weight. "A wounded Spirit who can bear? † And the Darkness that has risen to God's People after Conversion, through the Temptations & Buffetings of the Devil, and the Hidings of God's Face, and Manifestations

† Prov. xviii. 14.

festations of his Anger, have been very terrible. And temporal Afflictions have often risen exceeding high. The Church of God has, for the most Part all along, been a Seat of great Affliction and Tribulation. The Trouble and Distress the Church has undergone, under those cruel Persecutions that have often been and have been long continued, are such as we cannot have a full Conception of, who have always enjoyed such Liberty and Peace.

BUT the height to which the Evil of Affliction has risen, no where appears so much as in the Afflictions that Christ suffered. The evil of Affliction & Sorrow exalted itself so high, as to seize the Son of God himself, and to handle him after such a Manner as to cause him to be all in a bloody Sweat, and made his Soul exceeding sorrowful even unto Death; and caused him to cry out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Affliction never prevailed to such a Degree in this World, as in Christ, whose Soul was, as it were, overwhelmed in an Ocean, and consumed as in a Furnace of it.

6. DEATH is an Evil which has greatly prevailed, and made dreadful Havock in this World. How does it waste and devour Mankind one Age after another; sparing none, high or low, rich or poor, good or bad! Wild Beasts have destroyed many; many cruel Princes have taken away the Lives of Thousands, and laid waste whole Countries: but Death devours *all*; none are suffered to escape. And the Bodies of the Saints as well as others, fall a Prey to this great Devourer. Yea so high did this Enemy rise, that he took hold on Christ himself, and swallowed him among the rest. He became the Prey of this great, insatiable Monster. By his Means, was his bodily Frame destroyed, and laid dead in the dark and silent Grave. And Death still goes on destroying Thousands every Day. And therefore

fore the Grave is one of those Things which, *Agur* says, never has enough. *

So have Evils of every Kind prevailed; and to such a Degree have they exalted themselves in the World.

I come now,

II. To shew, how our Lord Jesus Christ, in the Work of Redemption, gloriously appears above all these Evils.

IT was not the Will of the infinitely wise and holy Governor of the World, that Things should remain in this Confusion; thus under the Reign of Evil, which had prevailed and exalted it self to such an Height. But he had a Design of subduing it; and delivering an elect Part of the World from it, and exalting them to the Possession of the greatest Good, and to reign in the highest Glory, out of a State of Subjection to all these Evils. And he pitch'd upon his Son as the Person most fit for this great Undertaking, that was infinitely too great for any meer Creature: and he has undertaken it in the Work of our Redemption. And tho' these Evils are so many and so great, and have prevailed to such a Degree, and have risen to such an exceeding height, and have been as it were, all combined together: yet wherein they have exalted themselves, Christ in the Work of Redemption, appears above them. He hath gloriously prevailed against them all, and brings them under his Feet; and rides forth, in the Chariots of Salvation, over their Heads; or leading them in triumph at his chariot Wheels. He appears in this Work infinitely higher and mightier than they, and sufficient to carry his People above them, and utterly to destroy them all.

CHRIST gloriously appears above all these Evils — In his procuring Redemption, by what he did and suffered, when he was in his State of Humiliation — In his

* Prov, xxx. 16.

his rising from the Dead, and Ascension into Heaven—
 In the work of his Spirit in the Souls of the Elect in this
 World— In glorifying the Souls of Saints in Heaven—
 In his Providence that he exercises towards the World,
 as Head of the Church— In the Consummation of the
 Work of Redemption, at the End of the World.

I. CHRIST appears gloriously above all Evil in what
 he did to procure Redemption for us in his State of Humi-
 liation, by the Righteousness he wrought out, and the
 Atonement he made for Sin there; and especially in his
 Suffering. The Evils which have been spoken of,
 never seemed so to prevail against him as in these Suffer-
 ings: But *in them*, the Foundation was laid for their
 overthrow. *In them* he appeared above Satan. Tho'
 Satan never exalted himself so high, as he did in pro-
 curing these Sufferings of Christ; yet *then* Christ laid
 the Foundation for the utter overthrow of his King-
 dom. He slew Satan, as it were, with his own Wea-
 pon: The spiritual *David* cut off this Goliath's Head
 with his own sword; and he triumphed over him in
 his Cross. "Having spoiled Principalities & Powers,
 he made a Shew of them openly triumphing over them
 in it." * i. e. in his Cross, mention'd in the preceding
 Words. Then the Wisdom of Christ appeared glori-
 ously above the subtilty of Satan. Satan, the old
 Serpent, used a great deal of Subilty to procure Christ's
 Death; and doubtless, when he had accomplished it,
 thought he had obtained a compleat Victory; being
 then ignorant of the Contrivance of our Redemption.
 But so did the Wisdom of Christ order Things, that
 Satan's Subilty and Malice, should be made the very
 Means of undermining the Foundations of his King-
 dom: and so he wisely led him into the Pit that he
 had digg'd.

In this also Christ appeared gloriously above the
 Guilt of Men. For he offered that Sacrifice, that was
 sufficient

* Coloss. ii. 15.

sufficient to do away all the Guilt of the whole World. Tho' the Guilt of Man was like the great Mountains, whose Heads are lifted up to the Heavens; yet his dying Love, and his Merits in this, appeared as a mighty Deluge that over-flowed the highest Mountains; or like a boundless Ocean that swallows them up; or like an immense Fountain of Light that with the fulness and redundance of its Brightness, swallows up Men's greatest Sins, as little Moles are swallowed up and hidden in the Disk of the Sun.

IN this Christ appeared above all the Corruption of Man, in that hereby he purchased Holiness for the chief of Sinners.

AND Christ in undergoing such extreme Affliction, got the Victory over all Misery; and laid a Foundation for its being utterly abolished, with Respect to his Elect. In dying he became the Plagues and Destruction of Death. When Death slew him, it as it were, slew it self: For Christ through Death, destroyed him that had the Power of Death, even the Devil * By this he laid the Foundation of the glorious Resurrection of all his People to an immortal Life.

2. CHRIST appears gloriously exalted above all Evil, in his Resurrection and Ascension into Heaven. When Christ arose from the Dead, then it appeared that he was above Death, in that Death, tho' it had taken him Captive, could not hold him.

THEN he appeared above the Devil. Then this Leviathan that had swallowed him, was forced to vomit him up again; and the Philistines that had taken captive the Ark, were forced to return it; Dagon being fallen before it, with his Head and Hands broken off, and only the Stumps left.

THEN he appeared above our Guilt: For he was justified in his Resurrection. †

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* Heb. ii. 14. † Rom. iv. iv. 25. 1 Tim. iii. 16.

IN his Resurrection he appear'd above all Affliction. For tho' he had been subje&ct to much Affliction, and overwhelmed in it; he then emerged out of it, as having gotten the Victory over it, never to conflict with any more Sorrow.

WHEN he ascended up into Heaven, he rose far above the Reach of the Devil and all his Instruments, who had before had him in their Hands. And now has he sat down at the Right hand of God, as being made Head over all Things to the Church in order to a compleat and perfect Victory over Sin, Satan, Death and all his Enemies. It was then said to him, "Sit thou on my Right-hand, until I make thine Enemies thy Footstool." *

HE entered into a State of Glory, wherein he is exalted far above all these Evils, as the Fore runner of his People; and to make Intercession for them till they also are brought to be with him, in like Manner exalted above all Evil.

3 CHRIST appears gloriously above all Evil, in his Work in the Hearts of the Elect, in their Conversion and Sanctification. This is what the Application of Redemption, so far as it is applied in this World, consists in; which is done by the Holy Ghost as the Spirit of Christ. In this Work of Christ in the Hearts of his Elect, he appears glorious above Satan. For the strong Man armed is overcome, and all his Armour wherein he trusted, is taken from him, and his Spoil divided. In this Work, the Lamb is by the spiritual *David*, taken out of the Mouth of the Lion and Bear: the poor Captive is delivered from his mighty and cruel Enemies.

IN this Christ appears gloriously above the Corruption and Wickedness of the Heart; above its natural Darkness in dispelling it, and letting in Light; and above its Enmity and Opposition, by prevailing over it, drawing it powerfully and irresistably to himself, and

turning

* Psal. cx. 1.

turning an Heart of Stone into an Heart of Flesh : above the obstinacy and perverseness of the Will, by making them willing in the Day of his Power. In this he appears above all their Lusts For all Sin is mortified in this Work, and the Soul is delivered from the Power and Dominion of it.

IN this Work the Grace of Christ does gloriously triumph over Men's Guilt He comes over the Fountains of their Sins and visits them with his Salvation.

AND God is wont often in this Work either in the beginning of it in Conversion or progress of it, to give his People those spiritual Comforts, in which he gloriously appears to be above all Affliction and Sorrow : and often gives them to triumph over the Devil, and his powerful and cruel Instruments. Many Saints, by Influences of Christ's Spirit on their Hearts, have rejoiced and triumphed, when suffering the greatest Torments and Cruelties of their Persecutors And in this Work Christ sometimes gloriously appears above Death, in carrying his People far above the fears of it, and making them to say to it, " O Death, where is thy Sting ? O Grave, where is thy Victory ? "

4. CHRIST gloriously appears above all these fore-mentioned Evil, in his glorifying the Souls of departed Saints in Heaven. In this he gives a glorious Victory over Death. Death by it proves to be turned from an Enemy into a Servant ; and their Death, by the glorious Change that passes in the State of their Souls, is become a Resurrection, rather than a Death. Now Christ exalts the Soul to a State of Glory, wherein it is perfectly delivered from Satan, and all his Temptations, and all his Instruments : and from all remains of Sin and Corruption ; and from all Affliction : " They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the Sun light on them, nor any Heat— and God shall wipe away all Tears from their Eyes." †

5. CHRIST

† Rev. vii. 16, 27.

5. CHRIST appears gloriously above these Evils, in what he doth in his Providence in the World, as Head and Redeemer of his Church. He appears gloriously above Satan and all his Instruments in upholding his Church even from it's first Establishment hitherto, thro' all the powerful Attempts that have been made against it by Earth and Hell: hereby fulfilling his Promise, that the Gates of Hell should never prevail against it.

CHRIST gloriously triumphed over these his Enemies, in that remarkable Success that there was of his Gospel, soon after his Ascension, when many Thousands in Jerusalem, and all Parts of the World, were so soon turned from Darkness unto Light, and from the Power of Satan unto God: and in causing his Word to go on and prosper, and his Church to increase and prevail against all the Opposition of the heathen World, when they united all their Power to put a Stop to it, and root it out. So that, in spite of all that the Philosophers and wise Men and Emperors and Princes could do, the Gospel in a little Time, overthrew Satan's old heathenish Kingdom in the whole Roman Empire, which was then the main Part of the World. And so brought about the greatest and most glorious Revolution that ever was in the World: when instead of one single Nation, that were God's People, as it formerly had been, now the greater Part of the Nations of the known World were become God's People, instead of being the professed People of the Devil, as they used to be.

AND Christ's exaltation above all Evil in his Government of the World in his Providence, as the Redeemer of his People, has since gloriously appeared in reviving his Church by the Reformation from Popery, after it had for many Ages lain in a great Measure hid, and dwelt in a Wilderness, under antichristian Persecution.

AND

AND he will yet far more gloriously triumph over Satan and all his Instruments, in all the mighty Kingdoms that have been set up in Opposition to the Kingdom of Christ. at the Time of the fall of Antichrist, and the beginning of those glorious Time so much spoken of in Scripture Prophecy. Then shall the Stone that has been cut out without Hands smite all these Kingdoms, and break them to Pieces; and they shall become like the Chaff of the Summer threshing Floors, and the Wind shall carry them away, that no Place shall be found for them; and the Stone which smote them shall become a great Mountain, and fill the whole Earth. † Then shall the God of Heaven set up a Kingdom, which shall never be destroyed; and it shall break in Pieces, and consume all these Kingdoms, and it shall stand forever. † And then the Kingdoms of this World shall become the Kingdoms of our Lord and of his Christ, and he shall reign for ever and ever.* However great and mighty Empires have been set up, one after another in the World, in opposition to the Kingdom of Christ, during the Succession of so many Ages; yet then Christ's Kingdom shall be the last and the universal Kingdom, which he shall have given him, as the Heir of the World. Whatever great Works Satan has wrought; the final Issue and Event of all, in the winding up of Things in the last Ages of the World, shall be the glorious Kingdom of Christ through the World; a Kingdom of Righteousness and Holiness, of Love & Peace, established every where. Agreeable to the ancient Prediction, *I saw in the Night Visions, and behold, one like the Son of Man, came with the Clouds of Heaven, and came to the Ancient of Days, and they brought him near before him. And there was given him Dominion and Glory, and a Kingdom, that all People, Nations and Languages should serve him: his Dominion is an everlasting Dominion, which shall not pass away,*

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† Dan. ii. 34. 35. † ver. 44. * Rev. x. 10.

away, and his Kingdom that which shall not be destroyed. And the Kingdom and Dominion, and the greatness of the Kingdom under the whole Heaven, shall be given to the People of the Saints of the most High, whose Kingdom is an everlasting Kingdom, and all Dominions shall serve and obey him. ||

THEN shall Christ appear gloriously exalted indeed above all Evil : And then shall all the Saints in Earth and Heaven gloriously triumph in him, and sing, *Hallelujah, Salvation, and Glory, and Honour, & Power unto the Lord our God : for true & righteous are his Judgments ; for he hath judged the great Whore, which did corrupt the Earth with her Fornication, and hath avenged the Blood of his Servants at her Hand. Hallelujah : for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. †*

6. CHRIST will appear gloriously above all Evil in the Consummation of the Redemption of his elect Church at the End of the World. Then will be completed the whole Work of Redemption with Respect to all that Christ died for, both in it's Impetration & Application; and not till then. And then will Christ's Exaltation above all Evil be most perfectly and fully manifest. Then shall the Conquest and Triumph be completed with respect to all of them. Then shall all the Devils, and all their Instruments be brought before Christ, to be judged and condemned. And then shall be completed their Destruction in their consummate and everlasting Misery ; when they shall be all cast into the Lake of Fire, no more to range and usurp Dominion in the World ; or have liberty to make Opposition against God and Christ : they shall for ever be shut up, thenceforward only to suffer. Then shall Death be totally destroyed. All the Saints shall be delivered everlastingly from it. Even their Bodies shall be taken from being any longer the Subjects of the Power of Death, by a glorious Resurrection.

THEN

THEN shall all Guilt, and all Sin and Corruption, and all Affliction, all Sighs and Tears, be utterly and eternally abolished, concerning every one of the Elect; they being all brought to one compleat Body, to their consummate and immutable Glory. And all this as the Fruit of Christ's Blood, and as an Accomplishment of his Redemption.

THEN all that Evil, which has so prevailed, and so exalted itself, and usurped & raged, and reigned, shall be perfectly and for ever thrust down and destroyed, with respect to all the Elect: and all will be exalted to a State wherein they will be for ever immensely above all these things. *And there shall be no more Death, neither sorrow nor crying, neither shall there be any more Pain: for the former Things are passed away.* †

A P P L I C A T I O N.

My Subject has led me to such a length in the doctrinal part, I have room left but just, as it were, to hint at two or three, of the many Uses, that may be copiously insisted on from it.

1. In this we may see how the Glory of the Lord Jesus Christ appears in the Work of Redemption. It was because the Father had from Eternity a Design of exceedingly glorifying his Son, that he appointed him to be the Person, that should thus triumph over the Evil in the World. The Work of Redemption is the most glorious of all the Works of God that are made known to us. The Glory of God does most remarkably shine forth in it. And this is one thing wherein the Glory of it does eminently appear, that therein Christ appears so gloriously exalted above Satan & all his Instruments; above all Guilt, all Corruption, all Affliction, and above Death; above *all* Evil. And more especially, because Evil hath so exalted itself in the

World, as we have heard ; and exalted itself against CHRIST in particular.

SATAN has ever had a peculiar Enmity against the Son of God. Probably his first Rebellion, which was his Condemnation, was his proudly taking it in Disdain, when God declared the Decree in Heaven, that his Son in Man's Naure, should be the King of Heaven ; and that all the Angels should worship him. However that was, yet it is certain that his Strife has ever been especially against the Son of God. The Enmity has always been between the Seed of the Woman, and the Serpent. And therefore that War which the Devil maintains against God, is represented by the Devil and his Angels fighting against Michael and his Angels. * This Michael is Christ. †

GOD had appointed his Son to be the Heir of the World ; but the Devil has contested this Matter with him, and has strove to set himself up as God of the World, in opposition to Christ. And how exceedingly has the Devil exalted himself against Christ ! How did he oppose him as he dwelt among the Jews, in his Tabernacle and Temple ! And how did he oppose him when on Earth ! And how has he opposed him since his Ascension ! What great and mighty Works has Satan brought to pass in the World ; how many Babels has he built up to Heaven, in his opposition to the Son of God ! How exceeding proud and haughty has he appeared in his Opposition ! How has he and his Instruments, and that Sin and Affliction and Death that he is the Father of, raged against Christ ! But yet Christ in the Work of Redemption appears infinitely above them all. In this Work he triumphs over them, however they have dealt proudly ; and they all appear under his Feet. In this the Glory of the Son of God in the Work of Redemption, remarkably appears.

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* Rev. xii. 7. † Dan. x. 21. & xii. 1.

THE Beauty of Good appears with greatest Advantage, when compar'd with it's contrary Evil. And the Glory of that which is excellent, then especially shews it self, when it triumphs over it's contrary, and appears vastly above it, in it's greatest Height.

THE Glory of Christ in this glorious Exaltation over so great Evil, that has so exalted it's self against him, does the more remarkably appear, in that he is thus exalted out of so low a State. Tho' he appeared in the World, as it were a little Child; yet how does this Child of God triumph over the most gigantick Enemies of God and Men! He who was "a Man of Sorrows, and acquainted with Grief," is a Man of War, and triumphed over his Enemies in all their Power. He who was meek and lowly of Heart, has triumphed over those *proud* Foes. And he is exalted over them all, in that which appears most despicable, even his CROSS.

2. HERE is Matter of exceeding great Encouragement for all sinful, miserable Creatures in the World of Mankind, to come to Christ. For let them be as sinful as they will, and never so miserable; Christ in the Work of Redemption is gloriously exalted above all their Sin and Misery.

How high soever their Guilt has risen, tho' Mountains have been heaping on Mountains all the Days of their Lives, till the Pile appears towering up to Heaven, and above the very Stars; yet Christ in the Work of Redemption appears gloriously exalted above all this Height.

THO' they are overwhelmed in a mighty Deluge of Woe and Misery; a Deluge that is not only above their Heads, but above the Heads of the highest Mountains; and they don't see how it is possible that they should escape; yet they have no Reason to be discouraged from looking to Christ for help; who in the Work of Redemption, appears gloriously above the Deluge of Evil.

THO' they see dreadful Corruption in their Hearts ; tho' their Lusts appear like Giants, or like the raging Waves of the Sea ; yet they need not despair of help ; but may look to Christ who appears, in the Work of Redemption, gloriously above all this Corruption.

If they apprehend themselves to be miserable Captives of Satan ; and find him too strong an Adversary for them ; and the Devil is often tempting them, and buffeting them, and triumphing over them with great cruelty. If it seems to them that the Devil has swallowed them up, and has got full Possession of them, (as the Whale had of *Jonah* ; yet there is Encouragement for them to look again, as *Jonah* did, towards God's holy Temple, and to trust in Christ for Deliverance from Satan, who appears so gloriously exalted above him in the Work of Redemption.

If they are ready to sink with that Darknes and those Sorrows which they meet with ; that Duties of Conscience, or those Frowns of God upon them ; so that God's Waves and Billows seem to pass over them ; yet they have Encouragement enough to look to Christ for Deliverance. These Waves & Billows have before exalted themselves against Christ ; and he appeared to be infinitely above them.

If they are afraid of Death ; if it looks exceeding terrible to them ; as if it was an Enemy that would swallow them up ; yet let them look to Christ who has appear'd so gloriously above Death ; and their Fears will turn into Joy and Triumph.

3. WHAT Cause have they who have an Interest in Christ, to glory in their Redeemer ! They are often beset with many Evils, and many mighty Enemies surround them on every Side, with open Mouth ready to devour them : But they need not fear any of them. They may glory in Christ, the Rock of their Salvation, who appears so gloriously above them all. They may triumph

triumph over Satan, over this evil World, over Guilt, and over Death. For as their Redeemer is mighty, and is so exalted above all Evil ; so shall they also be exalted in him. They are *now*, in a Sense, so exalted : for nothing can hurt them. Christ carries them, as on Eagles Wings, high out of the Reach of all Evils, so that they cannot come near them, so as to do them any real Harm. And in a little time, they shall be carried so out of their Reach, that they shall not be able even to molest them any more for ever.



B 4 S E R M O N





JOSEPH'S great Temptation, and gracious Deliverance.

— 1738.



S E R M O N II.



GENESIS xxxix. 12.

— *And he left his Garment in her Hand, and fled, and got him out.*

WE have an account here and in the Context, of that remarkable Behaviour of *Joseph* in the House of *Potiphar*, that was the Occasion, both of his great Affliction, and also afterwards of his high Advancement and great Prosperity in the Land of *Egypt*. The Behaviour that I speak of, is that which was an Occasion of the Temptation that his Mistress laid before him to commit *Unchastity* with her.

WE read in the beginning of the Chapter, how *Joseph* after he had been so cruelly treated by his Brethren, and sold into *Egypt* for a Slave, was advanced in the House of *Potiphar*, who had bought him. *Joseph* was one that feared GOD, and therefore GOD was with him; and wonderfully ordered Things for him.

him. and so influenced the Heart of *Potiphar* his Master, that instead of keeping him as a meer Slave, to which Purpose he was sold, he made him his Steward and Overseer over his House, and all that he had was put into his Hands : in so much, that we are told, *Gen. 39. 6* that he left all that he had in his Hand ; and that he knew not ought that he had, save the Bread which he did eat :— While *Joseph* was in these prosperous Circumstances, he met with a great Temptation in his Master's House : so we are told, that he being a goodly Person, and well favoured, his Mistress cast her Eyes upon and lusted after him, and used all her Art to tempt him to commit *Uncleanness* with her.

Concerning this Temptation, and his Behaviour under it, many Things are worthy to be noted.

WE may observe, how great the Temptation was, that he was under. It is to be considered, *Joseph* was now in his *Youth* : a Season of Life, when Persons are most liable to be overcome by Temptations of this Nature. And he was in a State of unexpected Prosperity in *Potiphar's* House ; which has a tendency to lift Persons up, especially young Ones, whereby commonly they more easily fall before Temptations.

AND then, the Superiority of the Person that laid the Temptation before him, render'd it much the greater. She was his *Mistress*, and he a *Servant under her*. And the Manner of her tempting him. She did not only carry her self so to *Joseph*, as gave him Cause to suspect that he might be admitted to such criminal Converse with her, that yet might be accompanied with some Apprehension, that possibly he might be mistaken, and so deter him from adventuring on such a Proposal ; but she directly propos'd it to him ; plainly manifesting her Disposition to it. So that here was no such Thing as a Suspicion of her unwillingness to deter him, but a Manifestation of her desire to entice him to it. Yea, she appear'd greatly engag'd in the Matter.

Matter. And there was not only her Desire manifested to entice him, but her *Authority* over him to enforce the Temptation. She was his *Mistress*, and he might well imagine, that if he utterly refus'd a Compliance, he should incur her Displeasure: and she, being his *Master's Wife*, had Power to do much to his disadvantage, and to render his Circumstances more uncomfortable in the Family.

AND the Temptation was the greater, in that she did not only tempt him once, but frequently, *Day by Day*, y. 10. And at last became more violent with him. -- She caught him by his Garment, saying, *Lie with me*: as in the Ver. of the Text.

HIS Behaviour was very remarkable under these Temptations. He absolutely refused any Compliance with them: he made no Reply that manifested as tho' the Temptation had gained at all upon him; so much as to hesitate about it, or at all to deliberate upon it. He complied in no Degree, either to the gross Act, she proposed, or any thing tending towards it, or that should in a lesser Degree be gratifying to her wicked Inclination. And he persisted *resolute* and *unshaken* under her continual Sollicitations, y. 10. *And it came to pass as she spake to Joseph Day by Day, that he hearkened not unto her, to lie by her, or to be with her.* He to his utmost avoided so much as being where she was. And the Motives and Principles, from which he acted, manifested by his Reply to her Sollicitations, are remarkable.

HE first sets before her, how injuriously he should act against his Master, if he should comply with her Proposal: *Behold my Master — hath committed all that he hath to my Hand; there is none greater in this House than I; neither hath he kept back any thing from me, but thee, because thou art his Wife.* But he then proceeded to inform her of that, which above all things, deter'd him from a Compliance, viz. that

that it would be great Wickedness, and Sin against GOD.—*How shall I do this, and sin against GOD!* He would not do any such thing, as he would not injure his Master; but that which influenced more than *all* on this Occasion, was the fear of sinning against GOD. On this Account he persisted in his Resolution to the last.

IN the Text we have an Account of his Behaviour under the last and greatest Temptation that he had from her. This Temptation was great, as we are told it was at a Time when there was no Body in the House, but he and his Mistress *v. 11.* there was an Opportunity to commit the Fact with the greatest secrecy. And at this Time it seems that she was more violent than ever before. She caught him by the Garment &c. She laid hold on him, as tho' she were resolute to attain her Purpose of him.

UNDER these Circumstances he not only refused her, but fled from her, as he would have done from one that was going to assassinate, or murder him; he escap'd, as for his Life. He not only would not be guilty of such a Fact, but neither would he by any Means be in the House with her, where he should be in the Way of her Temptation.

THIS Behaviour of *Joseph* is doubtless recorded for the Instruction of all. Therefore from the Words I shall observe this

D O C T R I N E.

IT is our Duty, not only to avoid those Things that are themselves sinful; but also, as far as may be, those Things that lead and expose to Sin.

THUS did *Joseph*: He not only refused actually to commit *Uncleanness* with his Mistress, who enticed him; but refused to be *there*, where he should be in the Way of Temptation, *v. 10.* He refused to lie by her,

her, or be *with* her. And in the Text we are told, *He fled, and got him out*; would by no Means be in her Company. Tho' it was no Sin, in it self, for *Joseph* to be in the House where his Mistress was; but under these Circumstances it would expose him to Sin. *Joseph* was sensible he had *naturally* a corrupt Heart, that tended to betray him to Sin; and therefore he would by no Means be in the *Way* of Temptation; but with haste he fled, he run from the dangerous Place. In as much as he was expos'd to Sin in that House where he was, he fled out of it with as much haste as if the House had been *all of a light Fire*; or full of Enemies, who stood ready with drawn Swords, to *stab* him to the very Heart. When she took him by the *Garment*, he *left* his Garment in her Hands: he had rather *lose* his Garment, than stay a Moment there, *where* he was in such Danger of *losing* his CHASTITY.

I say in the *Doctrine*, that Persons should avoid things that expose to Sin, *as far as may be*, because the Case may be so, that Persons may be called to expose themselves to Temptation; and when it is so, they may hope for *divine* Strength and Protection under Temptation.

THE Case may be so, that it may be a Man's indispensable Duty to undertake an Office, or Piece of Work, that is attended with a great deal of Temptation. Thus, altho' ordinarily a Man ought not to run into that Temptation, of being exposed to Persecution for the true Religion; lest the Temptation should be too hard for him; but should avoid it, as much as *may be*; (Therefore CHRIST thus directs his Disciples, Mat. x. 23. *When ye be persecuted in one City, flee to another.*) Yet, the Case may be so, that a Man may be called not to flee from Persecution; but to run the venture of such a trial, trusting in GOD to uphold him under it. Ministers and Magistrates may be obliged to continue with their People in such Circumstances:

cumstances; as *Nehemiah* says, Neh. vi. 11.—*Should such a Man as I flee?* So the *Apostles*.—

Yea they may be called to go into the midst of it; to those Places, where they can't reasonably expect but to meet with such Temptations. So sometimes the *Apostles* did. *Paul* went up to Jerusalem, when he knew before hand, that *there, Bonds and Afflictions awaited him*, Acts xx. 23.

So in some other Cases, the Necessity of Affairs may call upon Men to engage in some Business that is peculiarly attended with Temptations. But when it is so, Men are indeed in this Way, least expos'd to Sin; for they are always safest in the Way of Duty. Prov. x. 9. *He that walketh uprightly, walketh surely.* And tho' there be many Things by which they may have extraordinary Temptations, in the Affairs they have undertaken, yet if they have a clear Call to it, it is no Presumption to hope for divine Support and Preservation in it.

BUT for Persons needlessly to expose themselves to Temptation, and to do those Things that tend to Sin, is unwarrantable; and contrary to that excellent Example, we have set before us in the Text. And that we ought to avoid not only those Things that are in themselves sinful, but also those Things that lead and expose to Sin, is manifest by the following Arguments.

I. *IT is a Thing very evident and manifest, that we ought to use our utmost Endeavours to avoid Sin: which is inconsistent with needlessly doing those Things, that expose and lead to Sin.* That we ought to do our utmost to avoid Sin is manifest, that being the greatest Evil: And the greater any Evil is, the greater Care, and the more earnest Endeavours does it require to avoid it. This is plain, and what we by our practice shew that we are all sensible of the truth of. Those Things that appear to us very great and dreadful Evils, do we use proportionably great Care to avoid.

And

And therefore the greatest Evil of all, requires the greatest and utmost Care to avoid it.

SIN is an infinite Evil, because committed against an infinitely great and excellent BEING, and so a Violation of infinite Obligation: Therefore however great our Care be to avoid Sin, it cannot be more than proportionable to the Evil we would avoid. Our care and endeavour cannot be infinite, as the Evil of Sin is infinite; but yet it ought to be to the utmost of our Power; we ought to use every Method that tends to the avoiding of Sin. This is manifest to Reason.

AND not only so, but this is positively required of us in the Word of GOD. Josh. xxii. 5. *Take diligent heed to do the Commandment and the Law, which Moses the Servant of the LORD charged you, to love the Lord your GOD, and to walk in all his Ways, and to keep his Commandments, and to cleave unto him, and to serve him with all your Soul.* Deut. iv. 15, 16. *Take ye therefore good heed unto yourselves, lest ye corrupt yourselves.* Chap. xii. 30. *Take heed to thyself, that thou be not snared, &c.* Luk. xi. 36. *Take heed and beware of Covetousness.* 1 Cor. x. 12. *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.* Deut. iv. 9. *Take heed to thyself, keep thy Soul diligently.* These and many other Texts of Scripture, plainly require of us, the utmost possible Diligence and Caution to avoid Sin.

BUT how can he be said to use the utmost possible diligence and caution to avoid Sin, that voluntarily does those Things, that naturally expose and lead to Sin? How can he be said with the utmost possible Caution to avoid an Enemy, that voluntarily lays himself in his way? How can he be said to use the utmost possible Caution to preserve the Life of his Child, that suffers it to go on the Edge of Precipices or Pits; or to play on the Borders of a deep Gulph; or to wander in a Wood, that is haunted by Beasts of Prey?

II. *IT is evident that we ought to avoid those Things that expose and lead to Sin ; because a due Sense of the Evil of Sin, and a just hatred of it, will necessarily have this Effect upon us, to cause us so to do.*

IF we were duly sensible of the Evil and dreadful Nature of *Sin*, we should have an exceeding dread of it upon our Spirits. We should hate it worse than *Death*, and should fear it worse than the Devil himself : and dread it even as we dread *Damnation*. But those Things that Men have an exceeding dread of upon their Spirits, they naturally and necessarily keep at a great distance from ; and avoid those Things that they apprehend expose to them. As a Child that has been greatly terrified by the sight of any wild Beast ; will by no Means be persuaded to go any where, where it apprehends that it shall be exposed to it, or fall in it's Way.

SIN in it's own Nature is infinitely hateful, so in it's natural tendency, it is infinitely dreadful. It is the tendency of all Sin, eternally to undo the Soul. Every Sin naturally carries *Hell* in it. Therefore, *all Sin* ought to be treated by us, as we would treat a Thing that is infinitely *terrible*. If it be not so that any *one* Sin, yea the *least Sin*, don't necessarily bring eternal Ruin with it ; it is owing to nothing but the free Grace and Mercy of GOD to us, and not to the Nature and Tendency of *Sin* it self. But certainly, we ought not to take the less care to avoid *Sin*, or all that tends to it, for the freeness and greatness of God's Mercy to us, through which there is hope of Pardon ; for that would be a most ungrateful and vile abuse of Mercy indeed. If it were so, that it were made known to us, that if we ever voluntarily committed any particular Act of *Sin* we should be damned without any Remedy or Escape, should we not exceedingly dread the commission of such Sins ? Should we not be very watchful and
careful

careful to stand at the greatest Distance from that Sin : and from every thing that might expose us to it ; and that has any tendency to stir up our Lusts, or to betray us to such an Act of Sin ? Let us then consider that if it be not so, that the next voluntary Act or known Sin, shall not necessarily and unavoidably issue in certain *Damnation* ; yet it will certainly deterre it : We shall thereby really deserve to be cast off, without any Remedy or Hope : and it can only be owing to free Grace, that it will not certainly and remedilessly be followed with such a Punishment. And shall we be guilty of such a vile Abuse of GOD's Mercy to us, as to take Encouragement from it, the more boldly to expose our selves to Sin ?

III. *IT is evident that we ought not only to avoid Sin but Things that expose and lead to Sin ; because this is the Way we act in Things that pertain to our temporal Interest.*

MEN do not only avoid those Things that are themselves the hurt and ruin of their temporal Interest, but also the Things that tend or expose to it. Because they love their temporal Lives, they will not only actually avoid killing themselves, but they are very careful to avoid those Things that bring their Lives into Danger ; tho' they do not certainly know but they may escape. They are careful not to pass Rivers and deep Waters on rotten Ice, tho' they do not certainly know that they shall fall thro' and drown : So they will not only avoid those Things that would be in themselves the ruin of their Estates ; such as the setting their own Houses on Fire, and burning them up with their Substance ; their taking their Money, and throwing it into the *Sea*, &c. but they carefully avoid those Things by which their Estates are exposed. They are watchful, and have their Eyes about them ; are careful who they deal with ; they are watchful,
that

that they be not over reached in their Bargains ; that they do not lay themselves open to Knaves and fraudulent Persons.

IF a Man be sick of a dangerous Distemper, he is careful to avoid every thing that tends to increase the Disorder ; not only what he knows to be mortal in his Situation, but other Things that he fears the Consequence of, or that may be prejudicial to him. Men are in this Way wont to take care of their temporal Interest, as what they have a great Regard for. And therefore if we are not as careful to avoid Sin, as we are to avoid Injury in our temporal Interest, it will shew a regardless Disposition with Respect to Sin and Duty ; or that we do not much care tho' we do sin against GOD. God's Glory is surely a Thing of as much Importance and Concern as our temporal Interest. Certainly we should be as careful not to be exposed to sin against the MAJESTY of Heaven and Earth, as Men are wont to be of a few Pounds ; yea, the latter are but meer Trifles, compared with the *former*.

IV. *WE are wont to do thus by our dear earthly Friends.*

WE not only are careful of those Things wherein the Destruction of their Lives, or their Hurt and Calamity in any Respect do directly consist ; but are careful to avoid those Things that do but remotely tend to it. We are careful to prevent and cut off all Occasions of their Loss or Damage, in any Respect ; and are watchful against that, which tends in any wise, to deprive them of their Comfort or good Name ; and the Reason is, because they are very dear to us. In this Manner, Men are wont to be careful of the good of their own Children, and dread the Approaches of any Mischief that they apprehend they are, or may be exposed to. And we should take it hard if our Friends did not do thus by us.

AND surely we ought to treat GOD as a dear FRIEND : We ought to act towards Him, as those that have a sincere Love and unfeigned Regard to Him ; and so ought to watch and be careful against all Occasions of that which is contrary to his Honor & Glory. If we have not a Temper and Desire so to do, it will shew that whatever our Pretences are, we are not God's sincere Friends, and have no true love to Him.

IF we should be offended at any that have profess'd Friendship to us, if they treated us in this manner, and were no more careful of our Interest ; surely GOD may justly be offended, that we are no more careful of his Glory.

V. WE would have GOD in his Providence towards us, not order those Things that tend to our hurt, or expose our Interest : therefore certainly we ought to avoid those Things that lead to sin against him.

WE desire and love to have God's Providence such toward us, as that our Welfare may be well secured. No Man loves to live in exposed, uncertain and dangerous Circumstances. While he is so, he lives uncomfortably, in that he lives in continual fear. We desire that GOD would so order Things concerning us, that we may be safe from *fear* of Evil : and that no Evil may come nigh our Dwelling ; and that because we dread Calamity. So we do not love the Appearance and Approaches of it ; and love to have it at a *great* Distance from us. We desire to have GOD to be to us as a *Wall of Fire round about us*, to defend us ; and that he would surround us, as the Mountains do the Vallies, to guard us from every Danger, or Enemy ; that so no Evil may come nigh us.

Now this plainly shews, that we ought in our Behaviour towards GOD, to keep at a great Distance from
Sin,

Sin, and from *all* that exposes to it; as we desire GOD in his Providence to us, should keep Calamity and Misery at a great Distance from us, and not order those Things that expose our Welfare.

VI. *Seeing we are to pray we may not be led into Temptation; certainly we ought not to run our selves into it.*

THIS is one Request that Christ directs us to make to GOD in that Form of Prayer, which he taught his Disciples — *Lead us not into Temptation.* And how inconsistent shall we be with our selves if we pray to GOD, not to order it so in his Providence, that we should be led into Temptations; and yet at the same Time, we are not careful to avoid Temptation; but bring our selves into it, by doing those Things that lead and expose to Sin. What Self-Contradiction is there in it, for a Man to pray to GOD that he may be kept from that, which he takes no care to avoid? By praying that we may be kept from Temptation, we profess to GOD, that being in Temptation, is a Thing that is to be avoided; but by running into it, shew that we chuse the contrary, viz. *not* to avoid it.

VII. *The Apostle directs us to avoid those Things that are in themselves lawful, but tend to lead others into Sin; surely then we should avoid what tends to lead our selves into Sin.*

THE Apostle directs to this, 1 Cor. viii. 9. — *Take heed lest—this Liberty of your's become a stumbling-block to them that are weak.* Rom. xiv. 13. — *That no Man put a stumbling Block, or an Occasion to fall in his Brother's Way.* Ver. 15. *But if thy Brother be grieved with thy Meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy Meat.—Ver. 20. 21. For Meat destroy not the Work of GOD. All Things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that Man*

who eateth with Offence. It is good neither to eat Flesh, nor to drink Wine, nor any Thing whereby thy Brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.

Now if this Rule of the Apostle be agreeable to the Word of CHRIST, as we must suppose, or expunge what he says out of the Canon of the Scripture; then a like Rule obliges more strongly in those Things that tend to lead our selves into Sin.

VIII. *THERE are many Precepts of Scripture, that do directly and positively imply, that we ought to avoid those Things that tend to Sin.*

THIS very Thing is commanded by CHRIST, Mat. xxvi. 41. where he directs us to *watch* lest we enter into Temptation. But certainly running our selves into Temptation, is the reverse of watching against it.

Again, We are commanded to abstain from all Appearance of Evil; i.e. do by Sin, as a Man does by a Thing he hates the Sight or Appearance of; and therefore will avoid any Thing that favors of it, or looks like it; and will not come near it, or in Sight of it.

Again, CHRIST commanded to separate from us, those Things that are stumbling Blocks, or Occasions of Sin, however dear they are to us. Matth. v. 29. *If thy right Eye offend thee, pluck it out and cast it from thee.* Ver. 30. *And if thy right Hand offend thee, cut it off*— By *the right Hand offending us*, is not meant it's paining us; but the Word in the *original*, signifies, being a stumbling Block; if thy right Hand prove a stumbling Block, or occasion to fall; i. e. an Occasion to Sin. Those Things are called Offences or stumbling Blocks in the *New Testament*, that are the Occasions of falling into Sin. We ought to avoid running up against stumbling Blocks; i.e. we should avoid those Things that expose us to fall into Sin.

Yea CHRIST tells us, we must avoid them, however dear they are to us, tho' as dear as our right Hand or right Eye. If there be any Practice that we have been accustomed to, that naturally tends and exposes us to Sin, we must have done with it; tho' we love it never so well; and are never so loth to part with it; tho' it be as contrary to our Notion, as to cut off our right Hand, or pluck out our own right Eye; and that upon pain of *Damnation*, for it is intimated that if we do not, we must go with two Hands and two Eyes into *Hell-Fire*.

AND again: GOD took great Care to forbid the Children of Israel those Things that tended to lead them into Sin. For this Reason, he forbid them marrying *strange Wives*, (Deut. vii. 3, 4.) *neither shalt thou make Marriages with them,— for they will turn away thy Son from following me, that they may serve other Gods.* For this Reason they were commanded to destroy all those Things, that the Nations of Canaan had used in their Idolatry; and if any were enticed over to *Idolatry*, they were to be destroyed without Mercy; tho' ever so near and dear Friends. They were not only to be parted with, but *stoned with Stones*; yea they themselves were to fall upon them, and put them to Death, tho' Son or Daughter, or their *Bosom Friend* (Deut. xiii. 6 &c.) *If thy Brother—or thy Son, or thy Daughter, or the Wife of thy Bosom, or thy Friend, which is as thine own Soul, entice thee secretly, saying, let us go and serve other Gods — thou shalt not consent unto him — neither shall thine Eye pity him, neither shalt thou spare, neither shalt thou conceal him. But thou shalt surely kill him; thine Hand shall be first upon him to put him to Death.*

Again, THE wise Man warns us to avoid those Things that tend and expose us to Sin; especially the Sin of Uncleanness. Prov. vi. 27. *Can a Man take Fire in his Bosom, and his Clothes not be burnt? Can*

one go upon hot Coals, and his Feet not be burnt?—*So—whosoever touches her, shall not be innocent.* This is the Truth held forth; avoid those Customs and Practices, that naturally tend to stir up Lust. And there are many Examples in Scripture, which have the force of Precept; and recorded, as not only worthy, but demand our Imitation. The Conduct of *Joseph* in the Text is one; and that recorded of *KING DAVID*, is another. *Psal. xxxix. 1. 2. I said I will take heed to my Ways, that I sin not with my Tongue: I will keep my Mouth with a Bridle, while the Wicked is before me. I was dumb with Silence, I held my Peace, even from good—*even from good—that is, he was so watchful over his Words, and kept at such a great Distance from speaking what might in any Way tend to Sin; that he avoided, in certain Circumstances, speaking what was in it self lawful; lest he should be betrayed into that which was sinful.

IX. A prudent Sense of our own weakness, and exposedness to yield to Temptation, obliges us to avoid that which leads or exposes to Sin.

WHOEVER knows himself and is sensible how weak he is; and his constant exposedness to run into Sin; how full of Corruption his Heart is, which like Fuel, is exposed to catch Fire, and bring Destruction upon him; how much he has in him to incline him to Sin; and how unable he is to stand of himself; who is sensible of this, and has any Regard of his Duty, but will be very watchful against every thing that may lead and expose to Sin? On this Account Christ directed us, (*Mat. xxvi. 41.*) *to watch and pray lest we enter into Temptation.* The Reason there is added, *The Flesh is weak!* He that in Confidence of his own Strength, boldly runs the venture of sinning by going into Temptation, manifestly great Presumption, and a sottish Insensibility

sensibility of his own Weakness. *He that trusteth in his own Heart is a Fool*, Prov. xxviii. 26.

THE wisest and strongest, and some of the most holy Men in the World, have been overthrown by such Means. So was *David*: So was *Solomon*.—His Wives turned away his Heart. If such Persons, so eminent for Holiness, were this Way led into Sin, surely it should be a warning to us. *Let him that thinketh he standeth, take heed lest he fall.*



S E R M O N, III.



GENESIS xxxix. 12.

— *And he left his Garment in her Hand, and fled, and got him out.*

D O C T R I N E.

IT is our Duty, not only to avoid those Things that are themselves sinful; but also, as far in us lies, those Things that lead and expose to Sin.

THE Doctrine has been explained and proved in the foregoing Discourse. I now proceed to the

A P P L I C A T I O N.

In one Use of EXHORTATION.

Exhort all to a Compliance with their Duty in this Respect, not only to avoid Sin, but those Things that lead and expose to Sin.

IF it be made out clearly and evidently from Reason and the Word of GOD, to be our Duty so to do,

this would be enough with *all* Christians. Will a Follower of CHRIST stand objecting and disputing against a Thing, that is irrefragably proved and demonstrated to be his Duty ?

BUT here some may be ready to inquire: How shall we know what Things do lead and expose to Sin ? Let a Man do what he will, he cannot avoid sinning, as long as he has such a corrupt Heart within him. And there is nothing a Man can do, or turn his Hand to, but that he may find some Temptation in it. And tho' it be true, as it is said in the first Doctrine, that a Man ought, as far as may be, to avoid those Things that lead and expose to Sin. And it is evident by the Arguments that have been brought, that those Things that have special tendency to expose Men to Sin, are what we ought to shun, as much as in us lies: yet *how* shall we judge and determine, what Things they are, that have a natural tendency to Sin ; or do especially lead to it ?

I would answer in some Particulars, which are plain and easy ; and which cannot be deny'd without the greatest Absurdity.

Ans. 1. *That which is bordering on those Sins, that the Lusts of Men's Hearts strongly incline them to, is of this Sort.* Men come into the World with many strong and violent Lusts in their Hearts, and are exceeding prone of themselves to *transgress* ; even in the safest Circumstances they can be placed in. And surely so much the nearer they are to that Sin, which they are naturally strongly inclined to ; so much the more are they exposed. If any of us that are Parents, should see our Children near the Brink of some deep Pit ; or close by the edge of the Precipice of an high Mountain ; and not only so, but the Ground upon which the Child stood, slippery, and steeply descending directly toward the Precipice. Should we not rec-

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kon a Child exposed in such a Case? Should we not be in haste to remove the Child from it's very dangerous Situation?

IT was the manner among the *Israelites*, to build their Houses with flat Roofs, so that Persons might walk on the Tops of their Houses. And therefore God took care to make it a Law among them, that every Man should have Battlements upon the Edges of their Roofs; lest any Person should fall off and be killed. Deut. xxii. 8. *When thou buildest a new House, then thou shalt make a Battlement for thy Roof, that thou bring not Blood upon thine House, if any Man fall from thence.* And certainly we ought to take the like care that we don't fall into Sin; which carries in it eternal Death. We should as it were, fix a Battlement, a Guard to keep us from the Edge of the Precipice. Much more ought we to take care, that we don't go upon a Roof that is not only without Battlements, but when it is steep, and we shall naturally incline to fall.

MEN'S Lusts are like strong Enemies, endeavouring to draw them into Sin. If a Man stood upon a dangerous Precipice, and had Enemies about him, pulling and drawing him, endeavouring to throw him down; would one, in such a Case, chuse, or dare to stand near the Edge? Would he look upon himself safe close on the Brink? Would he not endeavour for his own safety, to keep at a Distance?

2. *THOSE Things that tend to feed Lusts in the Imagination, are of this Kind.*

They lead and expose Men to Sin. Those Things that have a natural tendency to excite in the Mind, the Idea or Imagination of that which is the Object of the Lust, certainly tend to feed and promote that Lust. What can be more plain and evident, than that a presenting the Object, tends to stir up the Appetite? Reason and Experience teach this.

Therefore

THEREFORE, *all Things*, whether they be Words or Actions, have a tendency and expose to *Sin*, that tend to raise and uphold in the Mind's Imaginations or Ideas, those Things which the Lust tends to. It is certainly wrong and unlawful to feed a Lust even in the Imagination. It is quite contrary to the holy Rules of God's Word. (Prov. xxiv. 9) *The Thought of foolishness is Sin.* (Mat. v. 28. *Whoever looketh on a Woman to lust after her, hath committed Adultery—*. A Man by gratifying his Lusts in his Imagination and Thoughts, may make his Soul in the Sight of GOD, to be a *Hold of foul Spirits*; and like a *Cage of every unclean and hurtful Bird*. And sinful Imaginations tend to sinful Actions and outward Behaviour in the End. Lust is always first contrived in the Imagination, and then brought forth in the outward Practice. You may see the Progress of it in, Jam. i. 15. *Then when Lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth Sin.*

THEREFORE for a Man to do those Things that tend to excite the Objects of his Lusts in his Imagination, he does that which has as natural a tendency to Sin, as a Conception has to a Birth. And such Things are therefore abominable in the Sight of a pure and holy GOD. We are commanded to keep at the greatest Distance from spiritual Pollution; and to hate even the very *Garment spotted with the Flesh*, Jude 23.

3. *THOSE things that the Experience and Observation of Mankind shew to be ordinarily attended or followed with Sin, are of this Sort.*

Experience is a good Rule to determine by in things of this Nature. How is it we know the natural tendency of any thing, but only by Observation and Experience? Men observe and find, time after time, that such Things are commonly attended and followed with such other things. And hence Mankind pronounce of them, that they have a natural tendency to them. We have no other Way to know the tendency of
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of any thing. Thus Men by Observation and Experience know that the warmth of the Sun, and showers of Rain, are attended with the growth of Plants of the Earth : and hence they learn, that they have a tendency to it. So they find by Experience, that the bite of some Kinds of Serpents, is commonly followed with Illness ; and often with Death. Hence they learn, that the bite of such Serpents has a natural tendency to bring Disorder upon the Body, and exposes to Death.

AND so, if Experience and common Observation shews, that any particular Practice or Custom is commonly attended with that which is very sinful, we may safely conclude that such a Practice tends to Sin ; that it leads and exposes to it.

THUS we may determine that Tavern-haunting and Gaming, are things that tend to Sin ; because common Experience and Observation shew, that those Practices are attended with a great deal of Sin and Wickedness. The Observation of all Ages and all Nations, with one Voice declares it. It shews, where Taverns are much frequented, for drinking and the like, they are especially Places of Sin, of Prophaneness and other Wickedness : and it shews, that those Towns, where there is much of this, are Places where no Good generally prevails. And it also shews, that those Persons that are given much to frequenting Taverns, are most commonly vicious Persons. And so of Gaming ; as playing at Cards, Experience shews, that those Persons that practice this, do generally fall into much Sin. Hence these Practices are become infamous among all sober virtuous Persons.

4. *ANOTHER way by which Persons may determine of some Things, that they lead and expose to Sin, is by their own Experience, or what they have found in themselves.*

IF Persons have found in themselves, from time to time, that they have actually led them into Sin, this surely is enough to convince them, that such things do actually lead and expose to Sin : For what will convince Men, if their own Experience will not ? Thus if Men have found by undeniable Experience, that any Practice or Custom stirs up Lust in them, and has betray'd them into foolish and sinful Behaviour, or sinful Thoughts ; they may determine, that they lead and expose to Sin. Or if they upon examining themselves, must own that such a Custom or Practice, has time after time, had that Effect upon them, as to dispose them to Sins of Omission of known Duty ; such as secret Prayer ; and make them more backward to it : and also to indispose them to reading and religious Meditation : and they, after they have been doing such or such a thing, have found this has commonly been the Effect of it, that they have been more apt to cast off Prayer ; or has had a tendency to the neglect of Family Prayer. Or if it seems to lead to unwatchfulness ; they find since they have complied with such a Custom, they are less watchful of their Hearts, less dispos'd to any thing that is serious ; that the frame of their Mind is more light, and their Hearts less on the things of another World, and more after Vanity ; those are sinful Effects ; and therefore if Experience shews a Custom or Practice to be attended with these things, then Experience shews that they lead and expose to Sin.

5 *WE may determine whether a thing be of an evil tendency or not, by the Effect that an out-pouring of the Spirit of GOD, and a general flourishing of Religion, has with respect to it.*

IF a pouring out of the Spirit of GOD on a People, puts a stop to any Practice or Custom, and roots

it out ; surely it argues, that *that* Practice or Custom is of no good tendency. For if there be no hurt in it and it tends to no hurt, why should the Spirit of GOD destroy it ? The Spirit of GOD has no tendency to destroy any thing that is neither sinful, nor has any tendency to sin. Why should it ? Why should we suppose, that the Spirit of GOD should be an enemy to that which has no hurt in it ; nor has any tendency to that which is hurtful ?

THE flourishing of *Religion* has no tendency to abolish or expel any thing that is no way against *Religion*. That which is not against *Religion*, *Religion* will not appear against. *Religion* has no tendency to destroy any Custom or Practice, that has no tendency to destroy that. It is a Rule that holds in all contraries and opposites : the Opposition is equal on both Sides. So contrary as Light is to Darknes, so contrary is Darknes to Light. It is equal both Ways. So, just so contrary as the flourishing of *Religion* is to any Custom, just so contrary is that Custom to the flourishing of *Religion*. That Custom that *Religion* tends to destroy, that Custom, if it prevail, tends also to destroy *Religion*. Therefore, if the flourishing of *Religion* and the out-pouring of the Spirit of GOD, tends to overthrow any Custom, that takes Place or prevails, we may surely determine, that *that* Custom is either in it self sinful, or tends and exposes to Evil.

6. *WE* may determine by the Effect that a general decay of *Religion* has with respect to them, whether they be Things of a sinful tendency or not.

If they be Things that come with a decay of *Religion*, that creep in as *that* decays, we may determine they are things of no good tendency. The withdrawing of Good, don't let in Good but Evil. 'Tis Evil, not Good, comes in, as Good gradually ceases. What is it but Darknes that comes in, as Light withdraws.

Therefore

Therefore if there be any decay of Religion in the Town, or in particular Persons, and upon this, any certain Customs or Practices take Place and are allowed, which were wholly abstained from & renounced, when Religion was in a more flourishing State; we may safely conclude that such Customs and Practices are contrary to the Nature of true Religion: and therefore in themselves sinful, or tending to Sin.

7. *WE* may in many things determine whether any Custom be of a good tendency, by considering what the Effect would be, if it was openly and universally owned and practiced.

THERE are many things that some Persons practice somewhat secretly, and are partly hidden in; and that they plead to be not hurtful; which, if they had suitable Consideration to discern what the Consequence would be, if every Body openly practiced the same, it would soon shew that the Consequence would be Confusion, and a most woful State of things. If therefore there be any Custom, that is of such a Nature, that it will not bear universal open Practice and Profession; but if it should come to *that*, the least Consideration will shew that the Consequence would be lamentable; we may determine that *that* Custom is of an ill tendency. For if there is no hurt in it, and it is neither sinful in it self, nor tends to any thing sinful, then it is no matter how open and universal the World is in it; for we need not be afraid of that Custom's being too prevalent and universal, that has no ill tendency in it.

Thus I have mentioned some general Rules, by which to determine and judge, what things are of a bad and sinful tendency. And these things are so plain, that for a Person to deny them, would be absurd and ridiculous.

I would now, in the Name of GOD, warn all Persons to avoid such things, as appear by these Rules to lead and expose to Sin. And particularly, I would now take Occasion to warn our young People, as they would approve themselves Fearing of GOD, to avoid all such things in Company, that being try'd by these Rules, will appear to have a tendency or lead to Sin. Avoid all such Ways of talking and eating as have a tendency to this; and follow the Example of *Joseph* in this.

NOT only the most gross Acts of Uncleanness, but all Degrees of Lasciviousness, both in talking and eating, are strictly forbidden in Scripture; as what should not be so much as once named among Saints or Christians. (Gal. v. 9) *Now the Works of the Flesh are manifest, Adultery, Fornication, Uncleanness, Lasciviousness.* (Eph. v. 3, 4, 5.) *But Fornication, and all Uncleanness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh Saints: neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient:—for this ye know, that no Whoremonger, nor unclean Person,—hath any Inheritance in the Kingdom of CHRIST, and of GOD.* We should hate even the Garments spotted with the Flesh, i. e. should hate and shun all that in the least approaches to any such thing, or favours of it.

AND I desire that certain Customs that are common among young People in the Country, and have been so a long time, may be examined by those Rules that have been mentioned. That Custom in particular, of young People of different Sexes lying in Bed together; however light is made of it, and however ready Persons may be to laugh at it's being condemned: if it be examined by the Rules that have been mentioned, it will appear, past all Contradiction, to be one of those things that lead and expose to Sin: And I believe what Experience and Fact will shew of the Consequence
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and Event of it, does abundantly bear Witness to it. And whoever wisely considers the Matter, must say, that this Custom of this Country (to which it seems to be peculiar, among People that pretend to uphold their Credit) has been one main thing that has lead to that growth of Uncleanness, that has been in the Land. And so there are other Customs and Liberties that are customarily used, among young People in Company, that they that use them know that they lead to Sin.— They know that they tend to stir up their Lusts — that it does do it—and this is the very End for which they do it, to gratify their Lusts in some Measure. Little do such Persons consider, what a holy GOD they are soon to be judged by, that now make a *mock at Sin*; who abominates the Impurities of their Hearts.

IF therefore they do actually stir up and feed Lust, then certainly they tend to further Degrees and more gross Acts. That which stirs up Lust, makes it more violent, and does therefore certainly the more expose Persons to be overcome by it. How evident and undeniable are these things; and how strange that any should cavil against them, or make a Derision of them!

Possibly you may be confident of your own Strength; and may think with your self, that you are not in Danger, that there is no Temptation in these things, but what you are able easily to overcome. But you should consider that the most self-confident are most in danger. *Peter* was very confident, that he should not deny *CHRIST*, but how dreadfully otherwise was the Event! If when others that have fallen into gross Sins, should be inquired of, and should declare how it was with them; doubtless they would say, that they at first tho't there was no danger; they were far from the Thought that ever they should commit such Wickedness; but yet by venturing further and further, they fell at last into the foulest and grossest Transgressions.

And

And Persons may long withstand Temptation, and be suddenly overcome at last. None so much in danger, as the most bold. *They* are most safe, that are most sensible of their own Weakness; and most distrustful of their own Hearts; and most sensible of their continual need of restraining Grace. Young Persons, with respect to the Sin of Uncleanness, are dealt with by the Devil, just as some give an account of some sort of Serpents charming of Birds, and other Animals down into their Mouths—if the Serpent takes them with his Eyes; tho' they seem to be affrighted by it; yet will not flee away; but will keep the Serpent in Sight, and approach nearer and nearer to him, till they fall a Prey.

ANOTHER Custom that I desire may be examined by the forementioned Rules, is that of young People of both Sexes getting together in the Night, in those Companies for Mirth and Jollity, that they call Frolicks; so spending the time together 'till late in the Night, in their Jollity. I desire our young People to suffer their Ears to be open to what I have to say upon this Point; as I am the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts to them; and not determine that they will not hearken, before they have heard what I shall say. I hope there are but few Persons among us so abandoned, as to determine that they will go on in a Practice, whether they are convinced that it is unlawful or not; or tho' it should be proved to them to be unlawful by undeniable Arguments.

Therefore let us examine this Custom and Practice by what has been said. It has been proved undeniably, that we ought not to go on in a Practice that leads and exposes to Sin; and Rules have been laid down to judge what does thus expose and lead to it, that I think are plain and undeniable.

Therefore now let us try this Custom by these Rules, and see whether it will bear the Test or not.

Certainly a *Christian* will not be unwilling to have his Practices examined and tried by the Rules of Reason and God's Word ; but will rather rejoice in it.

AND I desire particularly that the Practice may be tried by that sure Touch-stone of Experience. Let it be tried by the Consideration of what is experienced in fact abroad in one Town and Place and another. This is one of the Rules of Trial that have been mentioned, that *that Custom that the Experience and Observation of Mankind shews to be ordinarily attended or followed with Sin, may be determined and concluded to be unlawful.* And if we look abroad in the Country, I doubt not but these two things will be found.

1. THAT as to those Towns, where there is most of this carried on among young People, (as there is more of it in some Places than others) it will be found, as a thing that universally holds, that they the young People there are commonly a loose, vain and irreligious Generation ; little regarding GOD, Heaven or Hell, or any thing but vanity. And that commonly in those Towns where is most frolicking carried on, there are the most frequent breakings out of gross Sins ; Fornication in particular.

2. IF we try it by Persons. If we go thro' the Country, we shall for the most Part find, that those Persons that are the greatest Frolickers, and are most addicted to this Practice, which we are speaking of ; they are the Persons furthest from serious Thought, and are the vainest and loosest upon other Accounts. And whence should this be, if such a Practice was not sinful. or had not a natural tendency to lead Persons into Sin.

AND furthermore, I appeal to the Experience of you here present, as to what you have found in your selves. I desire those of you that have made Preferences of serious Religion, and saving Piety, and have
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hitherto pretended to keep up Religion in your Closets, and your own Souls ; that *you* would seriously ask your selves whether or no you have not found, that this Practice has indispos'd you to serious Religion, and taken off your Minds from it ? Has it not tended to your neglect of secret Prayer ? Have you not found, that after you have been to a Frolick, you have been more backward to that Duty ? And if you have not wholly neglected it, have you not found that you have been abundantly more slighty, and ready to turn it off in any Manner, and glad to have it done with ? And more backward to reading and serious Meditation, and such things ? And that your Mind has been exceedingly diverted from Religion, and that for some time ?

I don't send you far off to find out whether this Custom be not of bad tendency —not beyond the Sea, to some distant Country : I send you no further than to your own Breast to examine your own Experience in this Matter ; let the Matter be determined by that.

AND then again, let us try this Custom, by the Effect the Out-pouring of the Spirit of GOD on a People has with Respect to it. This we are under great Advantage to do ; because there has lately been here in this Place, a most remarkable out-pouring of the Spirit of GOD, that ever has been in NEW-ENGLAND, and it may be in the WORLD ; since the Apostles Days. And 'tis known, that before this, that Custom of young People's Frolicking did prevail in the Town. And here we all know the Effect it had. It put an end to it.—It was a Custom that was wholly done with— It was altogether laid aside ; and was so for several Years.

IT has been already shewn that there is no account can be given why the Spirit of GOD, and the flourishing of Religion should abolish such a Custom, unless

it be because that Custom, is either in its Nature or Tendency an Enemy to the Spirit of GOD, and Religion.

THE Fruits of the Spirit of GOD are good, and I hope there is none that have the Blasphemy to say otherwise. And therefore it is good that this Custom should be removed; for this is plainly one of the Effects of the Spirit of GOD. And if so, 'tis because the Custom is bad, either in it's Nature or Tendency; otherwise there would be no good in its being removed. The Spirit of GOD abolished this Custom for this Reason, because if it had been kept up in the Town, it would have had a direct tendency to hinder that Work that the Spirit was about to do amongst us. This was undeniably the Reason.

Supposing such a Custom had been begun and set up, by the young People all over the Town, in the midst of the Time of the late out-pouring of the Spirit, all of a sudden; would any wise Persons, that have truly the Cause of Religion at Heart; rejoiced at it? Would not every one at first Thought have concluded, without any hesitation, that it was a thing that look'd darkly upon the Interest of Religion; and that there was great Danger that it would take off People's Minds from Religion, and make them vain; and so put an end to the flourishing of Religion? Would not every considerate Person in this Town have thought thus of it? And if such a Custom would have had an ill tendency then, so it will now.

Objection. THE TOWN is not in such Circumstances now, as it was then. And tho' it might have done hurt then, by putting an end to the great Concern; yet now it may do no hurt: for there is now no such great Concern to be put an end to by it.

Answer. Tho' the Town is not in such Circumstances now as it was then, yet it ought to be; there ought to be as much Engagem^t of Mind about Religion:

ligion ; as much Concern among Sinners, and as much Engagedness among the godly, as then : and it is to our Shame that there is not. And if such a Practice would have tended to destroy such a religious Concern, then it certainly tends to prevent it now. It is a Rule that will hold, That *that* which has a tendency to destroy a Thing when it is, tends to prevent it when it is not. And are we not praying from Sabbath to Sabbath, and from Day to Day, for such a Concern again ? And do not those of you that pretend to be converted, that have lately set up this Custom, pray for the same ? Are you a Convert, a Saint, and yet not desire that there should be any more pouring out of the Spirit of GOD ? The Town has Cause to be ashamed of such Converts, if it has any such ? And if you do, why do you do what tends to prevent it ?

Again, LET this Practice be tried by the Effect that a general Decay of Religion has with respect to it. Now we have a trial : it is now a Time that Religion is greatly decay'd amongst us ; and the Effect is, that this Custom comes in with this Decay. Young People begin again to set up their old Custom of Frolicking, and spending great Part of the Night in it, to the violation of Family Orders. What is the Reason, if this Custom is not bad, either in its Nature or Tendency, that it did not come in before, when Religion was lively ? Why does it stay 'till it can take the Advantage of the withdrawment of Religion ? This is a sign that it is a Custom that shuns a Spirit of lively Religion, as Darkness shuns the Light, and never comes in 'till Light withdraws.

AND here again, I would send Persons to their own Experience. How did this Practice come in with you in particular : *you*, that two or three Years ago, seem'd to be so engag'd in Religion ? Did it not come in, did you not begin to practice it, as the sense of Religion wore off ? And what is the matter ? Why did not

you set up the Practice *then*, when your Heart was taken up about reading, Meditation, and secret Prayer to GOD? If *this* do not at all stand in the Way of them, and is no hindrance to them, why was you not engaged in both together? What account can you give of it? Why did you leave off this Practice and Custom, or abstain from it? To what Purpose is this changing? One while it must be avoided as evil, and another while practised and pleaded for as good? The making such an alteration does not look well, nor will it be for the honor of Religion in the Eye of the World. For whether the Practice be lawful or no, yet such a thing will surely be improved to our disadvantage. For your avoiding of it *then*, has this appearance, in the Eye of the Country; that *then* you condemned it: and therefore your now returning to it, will appear to them as backsliding in you. Such Changelings are ever more, in the Eye of the World, greatly to the dishonour of the Profession they are of, let it be what it will.

Indeed, this Custom as it is practised, does not only tend to *Sin*, but is in it self very disorderly, sinful and shameful. For it is attended late in the Night, and in the dead of the Night, to the neglect of Family Prayer, and violating all family Order; which is Disorder and Profaneness. Is that lawful to rob GOD of his ordinary Sacrifices, for the sake of your Pleasure, Diversion, and Jollity? Are you of that Mind, that it is a decent thing, that the stated Worship of the great GOD, should give Way to your Mirth, and your Diversions? Is this the Way of GOD's holy Children, to talk after this Manner? Those Works that are commonly done in the dead of the Night, seem to have a black Mark set upon them, by the Apostle, and Christians are exhorted to avoid them, Rom. xiii. 12, 13.—*Let us cast off the Works of Darkness, and let us put on the Armour of Light. Let us walk honestly, as in the Day;*
not

not in Rioting and Drunkenness ; not in Chambering and Wantonness —. The Word here rendered, *rioting* is of far different Signification from the term, as used in our Laws : for the forcible doing an unlawful Thing, by three or more Persons assembled together for that Purpose. Words as they are terms in the Law, are often used very much beside their common Signification. But the Word here properly signifies, a disorderly Convention of Persons to spend their time together in Pleasure and Jollity. So the Word is commonly used in Scripture, (Prov. xxiii. 20.) *Be not amongst riotous eaters of Flesh.* (Prov. xxviii. 7.) — *He that is a Companion of riotous Men, shameth his Father.* (Luk xv. 13) — *wasted his Substance with riotous living.*

Again, a black Mark seems to be set on such in Scripture, (as in 1 Thess. v. 5, 6, 7, 8.) *Ye are all Children of the Light, and the Children of the Day : we are not of the Night, nor of Darkness. Therefore let us not sleep as do others ; but let us watch and be sober. For they that sleep, sleep in the Night ; and they that be drunk, are drunken in the Night.*

MANY of you that have lately set up this Practice of frolicking and jollity, profess to be Children of the Light and of the Day ; and not to be the Children of Darknes. Therefore walk as in the Day : and do not those Works of Darknes, that are commonly done at unseasonable Hours of the Night.

Such things are not only condemned by the Apostle, but are looked upon infamous thro' the World in all Ages among soberer sort of People ; and all past Writings shew it. Therefore it is a thing of bad Report, and so forbidden (Phil. iv. 8) — *Whatsoever things are of good Report ; if there be any Virtue — any Praise, think on these Things.*

Objection. 1. But the wise Man allows of this Practice, when he says, Eccles. iii.4. *There is a time to mourn, and a time to dance.*

Answer. This is nothing to the Purpose ; for the utmost that any can pretend that it proves, is denying it to be lawful, and allowing it may be used under some Circumstances : but not at all, that *dancing* and other things used by our young People in their Frolicks are lawful, in those Circumstances ; any more than what is said in the same Chapter, x. 3. — *there is a time to kill*, proves that it is lawful for a Man to commit Murder.

To deny that dancing under any Circumstances whatever, was lawful, would be absurd : for there was a religious dancing in the Jewish Church, that was a way of expressing their spiritual Mirth. So *David* danced before the LORD. And he calls upon others to praise GOD in the dance. So there may be other Circumstances wherein dancing may not be unlawful. But all this makes nothing to the present Purpose ; to prove that this particular Custom, that we have been speaking of amongst our young People, is not of a bad tendency. And besides, when the wise Man says, there is *a time to dance*, that does not prove, that the dead of the Night is the time for it. The same wise Man don't justify carnal Mirth, but condemns it. *Eccles. ii. 2. I said of Laughter it is mad ; and of Mirth, what doeth it ?*

Object. 2. If we avoid all such things, it will be the way for our young People to be ignorant how to behave themselves in Company.

Answer. But consider what this Objection comes to. It certainly comes to this, viz. That the pouring out of the Spirit of GOD upon a People, tends to banish all good Conduct, good Breeding and decent Behaviour from among them ; and to sink them down into Clownishness

Clownishness and Barbarity. And if such a pouring out of the Spirit of GOD, as has been amongst us, should be continued, it would tend to have *this* Effect; for that we have seen by Experience. The Spirit of GOD did actually put an end to this Practice amongst us.

BUT who is it amongst us that is not ashamed to make such an Objection? Will any of our young Converts talk thus? Will you that think you was converted by the late pouring out of the Spirit of GOD, and are made holy Persons, Heirs of eternal Life, talk so blasphemously of it?

IF our young People are resolute still to go on, notwithstanding all that has been said, I hope that those of them that call themselves converted, will first find out some rational, satisfying Answer to the Arguments that have been used against it. This at least may be reasonably expected of them, seeing they make such a Profession. You have this Day been partaking of the Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*, and therein solemnly renewed your Profession ———

If after such Light set before you, and such Mercy given, you will go on, BE IT KNOWN TO YOU, that your eating now, and at other times, will prove only an eating and drinking *Judgment* to your selves.

AND I desire Heads of Families, if they have any Government over their Children; or any command of their own Houses; would not tolerate their Children in such Practices, nor suffer such Conventions in their Houses.

I don't desire that young People should be abridg'd of any lawful and proper Liberties. ——— But this Custom can be of no Benefit or Service in the World: it tends only to Mischief. ———

SATAN doubtless would be glad to have such an Interest amongst us as he used to have; and is therefore

fore striving to steal in, while we are sleeping : But let us rouse up our selves, and vigorously oppose his Encroachments.

I shall repeat those Words of the Apostle, *Rom. xiii. 12, 13, 14.* and leave them to the serious Consideration of all Persons, old and young : *The Night is far spent, the Day is at Hand : Let us therefore cast off the Works of Darkness, and let us put on the Armour of Light. Let us walk honestly as in the Day, not in Rioting and Drunkenness, not in Chambering and Wantonness, not in Strife and Envy. But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no Provision for the Flesh, to fulfill the Lusts thereof.*



S E R M O N





Man's natural Blindness in the Things of Religion.

[February 1740.]



S E R M O N, IV.



P S A L M xciv. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Understand, ye brutish among the People : and ye Fools, when will ye be wise ? He that planted the Ear, shall he not hear ? he that formed the Eye, shall he not see ? He that chastiseth the Heathen, shall he not correct ? he that teacheth Man Knowledge, shall he not know ? The Lord knoweth the Thoughts of Man, that they are vanity.

IN these Words the following Things are to be observed. 1. A certain spiritual Disease charged on some, viz. Darkness and blindness of Mind, appearing in their Ignorance and Folly. 2. The great Degree of this Disease ; so as to render the Subjects of it *Fools*. “Ye Fools, when will ye be wise ?” And so as to reduce them to a Degree of Brutishness. “Ye brutish among the People.” This Ignorance and Folly was to such a Degree, as to render Men like Beasts.

3. The

3. The obstinacy of this Disease ; express'd in that Interrogation, when will ye be wise ? Their blindness and folly was not only very great ; but deeply rooted and established, resisting all manner of cure. 4. Of what Nature this blindness is. It is especially in things pertaining to God. They were strangely ignorant of his Perfections, like Beasts : and had foolish Notions of him, as tho' he did not see, nor know ; and as tho' he would not execute Justice, by chastising and punishing wicked Men. 5. The unreasonableness and foolishness of the Notion they had of God, that he did not hear, did not observe their Reproaches of him and his People, is shewn by observing that he planted the Ear. 'Tis very unreasonable to suppose that he who gave Power of perceiving Words, to others, should not perceive them himself. And the foolishness of their being insensible of God's all-seeing Eye, and particularly of his seeing their wicked Actions, appears, in that God is the Being who formed the Eye, and gave others a Power of seeing. The foolishness of their Apprehension of GOD, as tho' he did not know what they did, is argued from his being the Fountain and Original of all Knowledge. The unreasonableness of their expecting to escape God's just Chastisements & Judgments for Sin, is set forth by his chastising even the Heathen, who did not sin against that Light, or against so great Mercies, as the Wicked in Israel did ; nor had ever made such a Profession as they. 6. We may observe, that this dreadful Disease is ascribed to Mankind in general. " The Lord knoweth the Thoughts of Man, that they are vanity." The Psalmist had been setting forth the vanity and unreasonableness of the Thoughts of some of the Children of Men ; and immediately upon it observes, that this vanity and foolishness of Thought is common and natural to Mankind.

D O C T R I N E.

THERE is an extreme and brutish Blindness in Things of Religion, which naturally possesses the Hearts of Mankind.

This Doctrine is not to be understood as any Reflection on the Capacity of the human Nature; for God hath made Man with a noble and excellent Capacity. The Blindness I speak of, is not a merely negative Ignorance; such as is in Trees and Stones, that know nothing. And no wonder; for they have no Faculties of Understanding and Perception, whereby they should be capable of any Knowledge. And such as is in inferior Animals, who tho' they have sensitive Perception, yet are not capable of any intellectual Views. There is no fault to be found with Man's natural Faculties. God has given Men those Faculties that are very noble and excellent; well capable of true Wisdom and divine Knowledge.

Nor is the blindness I speak of merely negative, in the manner in which the Ignorance of a new-born Infant is so. Tho' this dont arise from want of Faculties; yet it arises from want of necessary Opportunity to exert these Faculties.

The blindness that is in the Heart of Man, which is spoken of in the Text and Doctrine; is neither for want of Faculties, nor opportunity to know; but from some positive Cause. There is a positive Principle in the Heart, of a blinding & besotting Nature, that hinders such Exercises of his Faculties about the things of Religion, as God has made them well capable of, and gives him abundant Opportunity for. There is a Principle which may be called, a positive Principle of Ignorance and Blindness; a Proneness or Inclination in the Heart of Man to such fortifaness in these great things.

In order to make it appear, that such an extream brutish blindness, with respect to the things of Religion, does naturally possess the Hearts of Men, I shall,

1. Shew how this is manifest in those things that appear in Men's open Profession.

2. I shall shew, how it is manifest in those Things that are found by inward Experience, and are visible in Men's Practice.

I. I would shew, how it is manifest that there is a sottish and brutish Blindness in the Hearts of Men in the things of Religion, by those things which appear in Mens open Profession.

1. It appears in the grossness of that Ignorance and those Delusions, which have appeared among Mankind. Man has Faculties given him whereby he is well capable of arguing the being of the Creator, from the Creatures : For the invisible things of God are very plainly and clearly to be seen by the things that are made : and the Perfections of the Divine Being, his eternal Power and God-head, are very manifest in the Works of his Hands. And yet grossly absurd Notions concerning the God-head have prevailed in the World. Instead of acknowledging and worshipping the true GOD, they have fallen off to the worship of Idols. In stead of acknowledging the one only true GOD, they have made a Multitude of Deities. Instead of worshipping a GOD, who is an Almighty, infinite, alwise and holy Spirit, they have worshipped the Hosts of Heaven, the Sun, Moon and Stars ; and the Works of their own Hands, Images of Gold & Silver, Brass and Iron, Wood and Stone ; Things without Life ; Gods that can neither hear nor see, nor walk, nor speak, nor do, nor know any thing. Some in the shape of Men, others in the shape of Oxen and Calves : some in the shape of Serpents, others of Fishes, &c.

THE sottishness of Men in thus worshipping the lifeless Images which they themselves have made, is elegantly

elegantly represented by the Prophet *Isaiah*. *The Smith with the Tongs both worketh in the Coals, and fashioneth it with Hammers, and worketh it with the Strength of his Arms. Yea he is hungry, and his Strength faileth ; he drinketh no Water and is faint. The Carpenter stretcheth out his Rule : he marketh it out with a Line : he fitteth it with Planes, and he marketh it out with the Compass, and maketh it after the Figure of a Man, according to the beauty of a Man, that it may remain in the House. He heweth him down Cedars, and taketh the Cypress and the Oak, which he strencheneth for himself among the Trees of the Forest : he planteth an Ash, and the Rain doth nourish it. Then shall it be for a Man to burn ; for he will take thereof and warm himself ; yea, he kindleth it, and baketh Bread ; yea, he maketh a god, and worshipeth it : he maketh it a graven Image, and falleth down thereto. He burneth part thereof in the Fire : with Part thereof he eateth Flesh : he roseth rost and is satisfied : yea, he warmeth himself, and saith, Aha, I am warm, I have seen the Fire. And the residue thereof he maketh a god, even his graven Image : he falleth down unto it, and worshipeth it, and prayeth unto it, and saith, Deliver me, for thou art my god. They have not known, nor understood : for he hath shut their Eyes, that they cannot see ; and their Hearts, that they cannot understand. And none considereth in his Heart, neither is there knowledge nor understanding to say, I have burned part of it in the Fire, yea, also I have baked Bread upon the Coals thereof : I have rosted Flesh, and eaten it, and shall I make the residue thereof an Abomination ? shall I fall down to the Stock of a Tree ? †*

† *Isai. xlv. 12.-----19.*

Many of the Images which the Heathen worshiped were made in the most monstrous and terrible Shapes they could devise; and the more hideous and frightful they appeared, the better they supposed they would serve their turn for gods. Some of their Images were made so as to be the most unclean Representations; Images of Men openly exposing their Nakedness. These unclean Images they judged appear'd in a godlike manner, and worthy to be worshiped.

Many, instead of worshiping a holy and good God, and infinitely perfect Being, ascribed many Vices to many of the Gods which they worshiped. One god they reckoned notorious for Drunkenness; others notorious for Uncleaness: to others, they ascribed Lying and Stealing; to others Cruelty; and yet looked upon them worthy to be worshiped as Gods.

Many worshiped Devils, who appeared to them; which they themselves reckoned to be evil Spirits: but yet built Temples to them, and offered Sacrifices to them, because they were afraid of them.

Many worshiped Beasts and Birds and Fishes; and the most hateful and loathsome Animals were most worshiped, as particularly Serpents were more commonly worshiped, than any other Beast. Many worshiped Rivers and Trees and Mountains. They worshiped many Diseases. There is scarce any thing that Men have not made gods of.

And so far has that Principle of Blindness with respect to the things of Religion prevailed, that it has in a great Measure extinguished all Light in the Minds of many, even in Matters of Morality and Civility, and things that have but a distant Relation to Religion. So that many whole Nations have professedly approved of many things directly contrary to the Light of Nature; and the most horrid Vices and Immoralities have been esteemed harmless, yea accounted Virtues among them: such as Revenge, Cruelty and Incest. Many

Nations have openly allowed the Practice of Sodomy, And with some it has been accounted commendable to marry their nearest Relations. Many have even worshipped their gods in their Temples with Acts of Drunkenness and Whoredom, and the most abominable Lewdness. And the more filthy they were in their Uncleaness; they thought their gods the more pleased and delighted with it.

Many Nations have been so under the Influence of this blindness of Mind which we are now speaking of, that they have been void of all Civility, and have been reduced to a State very little above the Beasts in their common Customs, and ordinary way of living; and in a great many Things far below the Beasts: being, if I may so speak, much more beastly than the Beasts themselves.

Now this has not been, because these Men and Nations, with whom this has been the Case, have not had the same Faculties that we have. That we be not as ignorant as they, is not because we have better natural Understandings, or that our Minds are by Nature more clear, and Eyes more discerning; or that our Hearts be not naturally so inclined to Sottishness & Delusion as their's. But only because God has not left us so much to our selves, as he has them. He has given us more Instruction to help us against our Delusions. GOD has so ordered it in his Providence, that we should have his good Word to instruct us; and has caused that we should grow up from our Infancy in christian Instruction.

2. The extreme blindness and sottishness in things of Religion, which is naturally in the Hearts of Men, appears not only in embracing and professing those Errors that are very great, but also those that are so unnatural. They have not only embraced Errors which are very contrary to Truth, but very contrary to Humanity: not only against the Light of Nature. but against the more innocent Inclinations of Nature.

Such has been, and is the blindness of many Nations in the World, that they embrace those Errors which do not only exclude all true Vertue, all holy Dispositions; but those that have swallowed up the more harmless Inclinations of human Nature. Their blindness has led them to many things that are most unnatural, and what the very Nature of Man by its more innocent tendency, seems to shrink at exceedingly.

Thus they have embraced many gross Delusions, that are as contrary as possible to natural Affection. Such as offering up their own Children in Sacrifice to their Idol; which has been a common thing in the heathen World. And the Parents have not only offered them up to Death; but they have brought them, and offer'd them up to the most cruel and tormenting Deaths: as to be burnt alive; to be scalded to Death in burning Brass: which was the Way of offering up Children to Moloch. The Image of the Idol being made of Brass, in a horrid shape; was heat red hot; and the poor Child was laid naked in this burning Brass, and so burnt to Death. And the Parents themselves brought the Child to this offering, however sweet and pleasant a Child it might be. And thus the innocent Child was tormented till it died, without any regard to it's piteous Cries. And it has been the manner of some Nations, to offer in Sacrifice the fairest and likeliest, and best beloved Child that they had. And thus many Thousands of poor Babes have been offer'd up. So strong has been the tendency of the Hearts of Men to Delusion, that it has thus overcome those strong natural Affections which Men have to the Fruit of their own Bodies.

And many of the Delusions which Men have embraced, have been against Nature also, as they have been against Men's natural Love of their own Ease, and aversion to Pain. Many have worshiped their Idols, and do so to this Day, with such Rites as are most
painful

painful and tormenting : cutting and gashing, and mangling, their own Flesh. Thus they sottishly worshipped Baal of old. “And they cried aloud, and cut themselves after their manner with Knives and Lancets, till the Blood gushed out upon them.”† And it is still the Custom in some Nations grievously to torment themselves : to kindle a Fire to scorch their own Bodies in a most miserable manner : and to put themselves to various and long continued Torments to please their Idols. And it is the manner in some Nations for many, on some Occasions, to kill themselves : yea, to put themselves to cruel Deaths ; to cast themselves into great Fires, and there burn themselves to Death. How strong must be the Delusions of Men’s Minds, and how strong the tendency of the Heart of Man to Delusion, to carry them such a Length, and so to overcome such strong Inclinations of human Nature !

3. The extreme blindness of the Mind of Man will appear further, if we consider how general gross Ignorance and Delusion has been. It has for the most part prevailed through the greater Part of the World. For most of the time from *Noah’s* Flood to the coming of Christ, all Nations, except the Children of Israel, were overspread with gross heathenish Darknes; being given up to the most vain and ridiculous Notions, and all manner of Superstitious, barbarous, absurd and unnatural Practices. And for the bigger Part of the time since that, the much greater Part of the Nations of the World, have been covered with gross Darknes.

It is so at this Day. Many Nations are under popish Darknes, and are in such gross Delusions that they worship the Virgin Mary, and a great Multitude of dead Men, whom their Church has canonized for Saints : some real Saints, and others abominably wicked Men. So they worship the Bread in the Sacrament, and ac-

count it not only the real Body of Christ, but real Christ in Body and Soul, and Divinity. They carry a Wafer, a small piece of Bread in Procession, and fall down before it and adore it, and account it Christ himself, both in his divine and human Nature : and yet believe that the Body of Christ is in Heaven, and in ten thousand different Places on Earth at the same time. They think they can do Works of Supererogation : that is, more good Works than they are obliged to do, whereby they bring God into Debt to them. They whip themselves, and put themselves to other ridiculous Penances and Sufferings, whereby they think they appease the Anger of GOD for their Sins. And they pay Money to the Priests, to buy the Pardon of their Sins : yea, they buy Indulgencies for future Crimes, or Pardon for Sins before they commit them. They think they defend themselves from evil Spirits, by sprinkling holy Water. They pay Money to buy the Souls of their departed Friends out of Purgatory : They worship the Relicks of dead Saints ; such as pieces of their Bones, their Teeth, their Hair, pieces of their Garments, and the like. And innumerable other such foolish Delusions they are under.

A great Part of the Nations of the World are Mahometans : many of the Articles of whose Belief are too childish and ridiculous to be publicly mentioned in a solemn Assembly.

But the bigger Part of the Inhabitants of the World are to this Day gross, barbarous Heathens, who have not the Knowledge of the true GOD, but worship Idols and Devils, with all manner of absurd & foolish Rites and Ceremonies ; and are destitute of even common Civility : Multitudes of Nations being like Beasts in human Shape.

Now this barbarous Ignorance and gross Delusion, being of such great extent and continuance ; of such extent thro' so many Ages, even the bigger part of the
Time

Time from *Noah's* Flood to this Day, shews the Cause is general, and the defect is in the corrupt Nature of Mankind ; and the natural blindness of Man's Mind, and proneness of his Heart to Delusion.

4. The sottish blindness and folly of the Heart of Men appears in their being so prone to fall into such gross Delusions, soon after they have been favoured with clear Light. Were not the Minds of Men exceeding dark, they never would entertain such absurd Notions at all ; for they are as contrary as possible to Reason : Much less would they fall into them, after they had once been instructed in the Truth. For were it not for very strange sottishness indeed, they would, when they come to be informed of the Truth, and had Opportunity to compare it with those gross Errors, so plainly see the difference ; they would see such a Reasonableness in the Truth, and such Absurdity in those Errors, that they would never be in danger of being deluded by them any more. But yet so it is ; Mankind, after they have been fully instructed, and have lived in clear Light, have time after time, presently lost the Knowledge of the Truth, and have exchanged it for the most barbarous and brutish Notions.

So it was soon after the Flood, whereby the wicked World, those that were visibly so, were destroyed : and none were left but those who profess'd the true Religion : And they had such an eminently holy Man as *Noah* to instruct them. And tho' the true GOD had so wonderfully and astonishingly manifested himself in that great Work of Vengeance against his Enemies, his destroying the old World : yet the Posterity of *Noah*, great part of them, presently lost the Knowledge of the true GOD, and fell away to Idolatry ; and that even while *Noah* was living. And the Ancestors of *Abraham* were tainted with that Idolatry : and even *Terah* his own Father. " And Joshua said

unto all the People, "Thus saith the Lord God of Israel. Your Fathers dwelt on the other side of the Flood in old Time, even *Terah* the Father of *Abraham*, and the Father of *Nachor*: and they served other gods. And I took your Father *Abraham* from the other Side of the Flood &c."* It seems as tho' *Abraham* was called away from his Father's House, and from his own Country for this Reason, that the Country was over-run with Idolatry.

And even many of the Posterity of *Abraham* and *Isaac*, *Abraham's* Posterity by *Hagar* and *Keturah*, and that part of *Isaac's* Posterity which were of *Esau*, tho' the true Religion was so thoroughly taught and practised in the Houses of those holy Patriarchs, and God had from time to time so wonderfully and miraculously manifested himself to them, yet soon cast off the true GOD, and fell away to Idolatry. For not very long after we read of the Posterity of *Jacob* as being the only People of God, that he had in all the Earth.

And so the People of that Part of the Land of Canaan, that were under that holy King *Melchizedeck*, soon totally cast off the worship of the one only true GOD, which he taught and maintained. For before *Josua* brought in the Children of Israel, the Inhabitants of that Land were wholly given to Idolatry. So the People of the Land of *Uz*, who were under the Government of so great and holy a Man as *Job*, soon lost the Knowledge of the true GOD, and all those religious Truths which were then known among them, and sunk into gross Idolatry.

So the Posterity of *Jacob* themselves, tho' God had manifested himself so to them, and had wrought such Wonders for them in *Jacob's* and *Joseph's* time; yet presently fell to worshipping the gods of Egypt. This

appears

appears from the Words of *Joshua*, “ Put away the gods which your Fathers served on the other Side of the Flood, *and in Egypt.*” † And how soon did they fall to worshipping a golden Calf in the Wilderness, in the midst of the wonderful and miraculous Manifestations of the one only true GOD! And notwithstanding Idolatry was so strictly forbidden, and the Folly and Wickedness of it so clearly manifested in the Law of Moses and in God’s Providence; and it was so much guarded against every way in the Revelation given them, and the whole of God’s Conduct towards them; yet how soon did they fall into Idolatry after they were brought into the Land of Canaan! And when God raised up eminent Men, Judges to instruct and govern them, and reclaim them from their idolatrous Practices, from time to time; and they professed to be convinced of their Delusion and Folly, and to repent; yet they would soon fall away again into the most sottish Idolatry. And this they did soon after such great Light as they enjoyed in *Samuel’s*, *David’s* and *Solomon’s* time. And so they did from time to time down to the Babylonish Captivity.

And in the Apostles times, when such great things were done to rouse the Attention of Mankind, and such great Light was spread over many Nations, Multitudes, after they had been instructed in the Christian Religion by the Apostles and others, fell away into the grossest Heresies, and embraced the most corrupt and absurd Notions.

After the roman Empire had been converted from Heathenism to Christianity, and the Light of the Gospel had driven out the sottish Ignorance, and gross Absurdities of pagan Idolatry, in which they had continued so long; they soon begun to fall away again from the Truth into Antichristian Superstition and Idolatry, in which are Opinions and Practices no less absurd than

† Josh xxiv. 14.

those of the Heathen. And a great Part of the christian World fell away to Mahometism.

And since the Reformation, wherein GOD wonderfully restored Gospel Light in a great Part of the christian World, which was not but about two hundred Years ago, many are fallen away again, some to Popery, and some to gross Heresies, and some to atheistical Principles: so that the reformed Church is greatly diminished.

And our Nation in particular, which has been a Nation favoured with Light, since the Reformation, above most, if not any in the World; how soon has it in great Part fallen away! A great Part of it to Atheism and Deism, to gross Infidelity; and others to Arminianism, and to the Socinian and Arian Heresies, to believe that Christ is a created dependent God; and to hold other foolish Absurdities! And many have of late openly disputed and denied the moral Evil of some of the greatest and most heinous Vices.

These Things shew how desperately prone Mankind are to Blindness and Delusion, how addicted they are to Darkness.

GOD now and then, by his Instructions, lifts some Nations out of such gross Darkness: but then, how do they sink down into it again, as soon as his Hand is withdrawn! like an heavy Stone, which tho' it may be forced upwards by Strength of Hand; yet if it be let go, sinks down again: and will continue to sink lower and lower with a swift progress, if no stop be put to it, if there be nothing without to restrain it: There is a strong bent that Way. That is the tendency of the Mind of Man since the Fall, notwithstanding his noble Powers and Faculties, to sink down into a kind of Brutality, to loose and extinguish all useful Light, and to gather darkness: and to sink lower and lower into darkness.

5. The extreme and brutish blindness that possesses the Hearts of Men naturally, appears in their being so confident in gross Errors and Delusions. Some things that have been already said, shew how confident and assured they are : as particularly, their running such great ventutes upon it, as offering up their Children ; and cutting and mangling themselves. Multitudes live and die in the most foolish and absurd Notions and Principles, and never seem to make any Doubt of their being in the right.

The Mahometans seem to make no Doubt but that when they die they shall go to such a Paradise as Mahomet has promised them : where they shall live in all manner of sensual Pleasures : and shall spend their time in gratifying the Lusts of the Flesh.

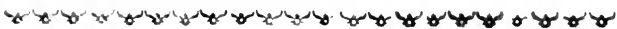
Mahomet promised them that all that die in War for the defence of the Mahometan Religion, shall go to this Paradise : and they make no Doubt of it ; and therefore many of them, as it were, willingly rush on upon the Point of the Sword.

The Papists many of them make no Doubt of the Truth of those foolish Notions of a Purgatory, and the Power of the Priests to deliver them out of it, and give them eternal Life. And therefore won't spare vast Sums of Money to purchase Deliverance for themselves, from those imaginary Torments. And how confident are many Hereticks in the grossest Heresies : many Quakers in their Quakerism : and how bold are many Deists in their Infidelity !





S E R M O N, V.




P S A L M xciv. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Understand, ye brutish among the People : and ye Fools, when will ye be wise ? He that planted the Ear, shall he not hear ? he that sowed the Eye, shall he not see ? He that chastiseth the Heathen, shall he not correct ? he that teacheth Man Knowledge, shall he not know ? The Lord knoweth the Thoughts of Man, that they are vanity.

D O C T R I N E.

THERE is an extreme and brutish Blindness in Things of Religion, which naturally possesses the Hearts of Mankind.

 Have undertaken to shew, how manifest this is in those things that appear in Men's open Profession. In order to this, I have already considered *five* Particulars.

I now proceed to observe,

6. The desperateness of that blindness which is in the Heart of Man appears in that no Nation or People in the World, ever have had any Remedy or Deliverance from such gross Ignorance and Delusion, from themselves.

There

There is no Instance can be mentioned of any People whatsoever, who have once fallen into heathenish Darknes, or any other gross Superstitions and ridiculous Opinions in Religion, that ever had any Remedy by any Wisdom of their own : or that have of themselves bethought themselves, and grown wiser by the improvement of their own Faculties, and by instructing one another : or that ever had any Remedy at all, by the teaching of any wise Men, who did not professedly act, not as of themselves, but as moved and directed of God ; and did not declare, that they had their Instructions in the first Place from him.

Thus in the heathen World : Before Christ's time the whole World excepting the Jews, lay in their Darknes for a great many Hundred Years, even time out of Mind, beyond all Time that they had any certain History of among them. And there was no remedy, nor appearance of any Remedy : but so they continued Ages after Ages, rather waxing worse and worse, sinking deeper and deeper. Among all the many Nations that were in the World, no one ever bethought themselves, and emerged out of their brutish Darknes. There were some Nations in that time that emerged out of Slavery to other Nations, and cast off the Yoke of their Enemies, and grew great and conquered great Part of the World : but never conquered the blindness of their own Hearts.

There were some Nations that excelled in other Knowledge : The Greeks and Romans did so. They excelled in Policy, and in the form of their civil Government. They had wise politic Rulers : They had excellent civil Laws for regulating their civil State : many of which have been look'd upon, and imitated as a Pattern by many christian Nations since. They excelled many other Nations in Arts and Government and Civility, almost as much as Men do Beasts.

Yet they never could deliver themselves from their
heathenism.

heathenism. Tho' they were so wise in other things, yet in Matters of Religion they were very absurd and brutish. For even the Greeks and Romans in their most flourishing State, worshiped innumerable gods: and some to whom they ascribed great Vices: and some they worshiped with most obscene and horrid Rites. To some they offer'd human Sacrifices. The Romans had a Temple dedicated to the Furies, which they worshiped as a God. And they had a Multitude of childish Notions and Fables about their gods.

And tho' there were raised up some wise Men and Philosophers among the Greeks and Romans, who borrowed some things concerning the true GOD from the Jews; yet their Instructions never were effectual to deliver any one People, or even one City or Town, from their barbarous Heathenism, or so much as to get any one Society or Company of Men to unite in the publick Worship of the true GOD. And these Philosophers themselves had many grossly absurd Opinions mingled with those scraps of Truth, which they had gathered up.

And the Jews, when they fell away to Idolatry, as they often did, never recovered of themselves. Never any Remedy appeared, unless God raised up, and extraordinarily moved some Person to reprove and instruct them.

And in this Age of Knowledge, an Age wherein Learning is carried to such a great height, even many learned Men seem really to be carried away with the gross Errors and Fooleries of the popish Religion.

Europe is a Part of the World the most famed for Civility, and for Arts and Sciences of any: and these things have been carried to a much greater height in this Age, than in many others: yet many learned Men in Europe at this Day, who do greatly excell in human Arts and Literature, are still under popish darkness. A deceived Heart has turned them aside: nor do they seem to have any Power to deliver their Souls.

Souls : nor does it come into their Minds, that there is a Lie in their right Hands.

Many Men in *France* and other Countries, who are indeed Men of vast Learning and Knowledge, and great Abilities, yet seem really to think that the Church of Rome is the only true Church of Christ ; and are zealous to uphold and propagate it. And tho' now within this hundred Years, human Learning has been very much promoted, and risen to a greater height than ever in the World : and has greatly increased not only in our Nation, but in France and Italy, and other popish Countries : yet there seems to be no such effect of it, as any considerable turning from popish Delusions ; but the Church of Rome has rather increased of late, than otherwise.

And in *England*, a Land wherein Learning flourishes as much as in any in the World, and which is perhaps the most favoured with Light of any ; there are many Men of vast Learning, and great & strong Reason, who have embraced, and do at this Day, embrace the gross Errors of the Arians & Deists. Our Nation, in all its Light and Learning, is full of Infidels, and those that are further from Christianity, than the very Mahometans themselves. Of so little avail is human Strength, and human Reason and Learning, as a Remedy against the extreme blindness of the Mind of Man. The blindness of the Mind of Man, or an Inclination to Delusion in Things of Religion is so strong, that it will overcome the greatest Learning, and the strongest natural Reason, and as it were, swallow up these Things.

Men, if let alone, will not help one another : nor will they help themselves. The Disease always proves without Remedy, unless God delivers. This was observed of old : *And none considereth in his Heart, neither is there Knowledge nor Understanding to say, I have burnt Part of it in the Fire, yea also I have baked Bread upon the Coals thereof : I have roasted Flesh and eaten of it, and shall I make the residue thereof*

*theresf an Abomination? Shall I fall down to the Stock of a Tree? He feedeth of Ashes: a deceived Heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his Soul, nor say, Is there not a Lie in my right Hand? **

If God lets Men alone, no Light arifes: but the Darknes grows thicker and thicker. How is it now at this Day among all the Nations where the Light of the Gospel has not come? Many of whose Ancestors, without doubt, have been in the mid-night Darknes of Heathenism for above three thousand Years: and not one People have delivered themselves, who have not had the Light of the Gospel. And this is not owing to their want of as good natural Abilities as we have: nor is it because they have an Inclination more to neglect their natural Abilities, or make a worse Improvement of them than we.

7. The extreme blindness of Man's Heart in Matters of Religion appears by Men's falling into gross Delusions, or continuing in them, at the same time that they have been under great Means of Instruction from GOD.

We have many Instances of this. *Rachel* in *Jacob's* Family——The Israelites in the Wildernets. They had great Means of Instruction, yet set up the golden Calf &c. And after *Joshua's* time —— they persisted in their Delusions and Folly from time to time, even under the Reproofs of the Prophets —— even in such horrid Delusions, so contrary to natural Affection, as offering their Children in Sacrifice to Moloch, burning them alive, in a most cruel manner.

In *Christ's* and the *Apottles* times the Jews had great Means of Instruction, and most of the Nations of the World were put under great Advantages to come to the Knowledge of the Truth: Yet —— —— ——

The

* *Isai. xlv. 19, 20.*

The Papists in the time of the Reformation, and since _____

The Deists and Arians in our Day _____

8. The exceeding blindness of Men in things of Religion appears in the endless Disputes and Controversies, that there have been, and are, among Men, about those things which concern Religion.

Of old the wise Men and Philosophers among the Heathen, were, as it were, infinitely divided among themselves. *Varro*, who was one of them, reckons up several hundred Opinions that they had about that one Point, *Wherein Man's happiness consisted*. And they were continually in Disputes one with another. But the Effects of their Disputes was not any greater Union or any better Agreement in their Opinions. They were as much divided after they had disputed many Ages, as they were at first: yea much more.

So there have long been Disputes in the christian World about Opinions and Principles in Religion. There is a vast variety of Sects and Opinions; and Disputes have been carried on, Age after Age, with great warmth, and thousands of Volumes have been written one against another. And all these Disputes have not terminated the Differences that have been, but they subsist still as much as ever: yea, they increase and multiply more and more. In stead of ending Controversies by disputing, they do but increase them: one Dispute only lays a Foundation for another. And thus the World goes on jangling and contending, daily writing and printing; being, as it were, deluged with controversial Books: and all to no Purpose.

The increase of human Learning don't bring these Controversies to an Issue, but does really increase and multiply them; as is evident in this learned Age, and in our Nation, where Learning has lately been carried to a very great height. There probably never

was a Time in our Nation wherein there was such a vast variety of Opinions in Matters of Religion, as at this Day. Every now and then, a new Scheme of things is broached, and various and contrary Opinions are mixed and jumbled, divided and subdivided: And every new Writer is willing to have the credit of some new Notion.

And after this Manner does this miserable World go on in endless Confusion; like a great Multitude of fool-hardy Persons, who go on in the dark, stumbling and jostling one against another, without perceiving any Remedy for their own, or affording any for their Neighbour's Calamity.

Thus I have shewn how the extreme blindness that possesses the Hearts of Men is manifest in what appears in their Profession.

I come now,

II. To shew, how this is manifest in those Things that are found by inward Experience, and are visible in Men's Practices under the Light of the Gospel.

1. This appears in their being so prone to be deceived so many Ways, or being liable to such a multiplicity of Deceits. There are Thousands of Delusions in things which concern the Affairs of Religion, that Men commonly are led away with, who yet live under the Light of the Gospel.

They are many ways deceived about GOD. They think him to be an exceeding diverse kind of Being from what he is. They think him to be altogether such an one as themselves.† They are deceived about his Holiness, they don't realize it, that he is such a holy Being as he indeed is: or that he hates Sin with such an hatred as he declares he does. They are not convinced of his Truth, or that he certainly will fulfil his Threatnings or his Promises.—They are not convinced of his Justice in punishing Sin, as he does. —

They

† Psal. l. 21.

They have very wrong Notions of Christ. They are not convinced of his Ability to save them, or of the Sufficiency of his Sacrifice and Righteousness; nor of his willingness to receive them.

They commonly are subject to a great many Errors about their Duty. They are ready to bring their Principles to agree with their Practices, in stead of bringing their Practices to their Principles, as they ought to do. They will put innumerable false Glosses on the Rules of God's Word, to bend them to a compliance with their Lusts: And so they "put darkness for light, and light for darkness; bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter."

They are subject to Deceits and Delusions about the Things of this World. They imagine that there is Happiness and Satisfaction to be found in the Profits and Pleasures and Honors, which are to be had here. They believe all the deluding Flatteries and Promises of a vain World. And they will hold that Deceit and grand Delusion, *That these Things are the highest Good*; and will act accordingly; will choose these things for their Portion. And they will hold and practise upon that Error, *That these things are of long Continuance, and are to be depended upon.*

They are greatly deceived about the things of another World. They undervalue that heavenly Glory that is promised to the Saints; and are not much terrified with what they hear of the Damnation of Hell: they can't realize it, that the Torments of it are so dreadful as they hear: and are very ready to imagine that they are not eternal, but will some time or other have an end.

They are deceived about the State of good Men. They think they are not happy, but live a melancholy Life. And they are deceived about the Wicked. They envy the State of many of them, as accounting

them well off. "They call the proud happy, * and bleſs the covetous, whom God abhors." † And they ſtrive a great deal more after ſuch Enjoyments as they have, than after ſuch as are the Portion of the godly.

They are ſubject to a thouſand Deceits and Deluſions about themſelves. They think themſelves wiſe, when they are Fools. They are deceived about their own Hearts: they think them much better than they be. They think they ſee many good things in themſelves, when indeed there is nothing good there. They appear lovely in their own Eyes, when they are nothing but Lumps of Filthineſs, and their Hearts are like the inſide of a Grave, full of dead Mens Bones and rotten Fleſh, and crawling Worms, and all uncleaneſs. Or rather, the inward Vault of Hell, that is an Habitation of Devils and every foul Spirit. Thoſe things in their Hearts are highly eſteemed by them, which are an Abomination in the Sight of God.

Men are very prone to be deceived about their own State: to think themſelves ſomething, when they are nothing; and to ſuppoſe themſelves "rich and increaſed in Goods, and to have need of nothing; when they are wretched, and miſerable, and poor, and BLIND, and naked." They are greatly deceived about the Principles they act from. They think they are ſincere in that in which there is no Sincerity. They think they do hoſe things from love to God, which they do only from love to themſelves. They call meer ſpeculative or natural Knowledge, ſpiritual Knowledge: and put Conſcience for Grace; and a fervile, for a child-like fear: and common Affections, that are only from natural Principles, and have no abiding effect, for high Discoveries, and eminent actings of Grace. Yea, 'tis common with Men to call their vicious Diſpoſitions by the Name of ſome Vertue. They call their Anger and Malice,

zeal

* Mal. iii. 15. † Pſal. xi. 3.

zeal for the righteous Cause, or zeal for the publick Good. They call their Covetousness, frugality.

They are vastly deceived about their own Righteousness. They think their Affections and Performances lovely to God, which indeed are to him as a menstruous Cloth. They think their Tears and Reformati- ons and Prayers, sufficient to make Atonement for their Sins; when indeed if all the Angels in Heaven should offer themselves in Sacrifice to God, it would not be sufficient to atone for one of their Sins. They think their Prayers and Works, and religious Doings, a sufficient Price to purchase God's Favour and eternal Glory; when they, as they perform them, do nothing but merit Hell.

They are greatly deceived about their Strengths. They think they are able to mend their own Hearts, and work some good Principles in themselves; when they can do no more towards it, than a dead Corpse does towards raising it self to Life. They vainly flatter themselves, they are able to come to Christ——

They are greatly deceived about the stability of their own Hearts. They foolishly think their own Intentions & Resolutions of what good they will do hereafter, to be depended on; when indeed there is no dependence at all to be had on them. They are greatly deceived about their Opportunities. They think that the long Continuance of their Opportunity is to be depended on, and that, to Morrow is to be boasted of; when indeed there is the utmost uncertainty of it. They flatter themselves that they shall have a better Opportunity to seek Salvation hereafter, than they have now; when there is no probability of it, but a very great improbability.

They are greatly deceived about their own Actions and Practices. Their own Faults are strangely hid from their Eyes. They live in many Ways that are very unbecoming Christians, but yet seem not to be at

all sensible of it. Those evil Ways of theirs, which are very plain to others, are hid from them. Yea, those very things, which they themselves account great Faults in others, yet they will justify themselves in. Those things for which they will be very angry with others, yet they at the same time do themselves, and often times in a much higher Degree, and never once think of it. While they are zealous to pull the Mote out of their Brother's Eye, they know not that a Beam is in their own Eye.

Those Sins that they commit, which they are sensible are Sins, yet they are wofully deceived about. They call *great* Sins, *little* ones; and in their own Imaginations, find out many Excuses, which make the Guilt very small; while the many heinous Aggravations are hid from their Eyes.

They are greatly deceived about themselves, when they compare themselves with others. They esteem themselves better than their Neighbours, who are indeed much better than themselves. They are greatly deceived about themselves, when they compare themselves with GOD. They are very insensible of the difference there is between God and them, and act in many things as if they thought themselves his Equals; yea, as if they thought themselves above him. Thus manifold are the Deccits and Delusions that Men fall into.

2. The desperate Blindness that is natural to Men, appears in their being so ignorant and blind in things that are so clear and plain. Thus if we consider how great GOD is, and how dreadful Sin against him must be, and how much Sin we are guilty of, and of what Importance it is that his infinite Majesty should be vindicated; how plain is it, that Man's Righteousness is insufficient! And yet how greatly will Men confide in it! How will they ascribe more to it, than can be ascribed to the Righteousness of any, or all of the sinless
and

and glorious Angels of Heaven. So, what can be more plain in it self, than that eternal Things are of infinitely greater Importance than temporal things? And yet, how hard is it thoroughly to convince Men of it! How plain is it, that eternal Misery in Hell is infinitely to be dreaded? And yet how few appear to be thoroughly convinced of this! How plain is it, that Life is uncertain: and yet how much otherwise do most Men think! How plain is it, that it is the highest Prudence in Matters of infinite Concern to improve the first Opportunity, without trusting to another: but yet how few are convinced of this? How reasonable is it, considering that God is a wise and just Being, to suppose that there shall be a future State of Rewards and Punishments, wherein every Man shall receive according to his Works? And yet, how does this seem like a Dream to most Men.

What can be in it self more plain and manifest, and easily to be known by us, if it were not for a strange Blindness, than We to our selves, who are always with our selves, never absent from our selves; always in our own View, as it were, before our own Eyes? Who have Opportunity to look into our own Hearts, and see all that passes there. And yet what is there that Men are more ignorant of, than they are of themselves? There are many vicious Practices, the unlawfulness of which is very plain; the Sins are gross, and contrary not only to the Word of God, but to the Light of Nature: and yet Men will often times plead there is no harm in such Sins: such as many Acts of gross Uncleanness: and many Acts of Fraud, Injustice and Deceitfulness; and many others that might be mentioned.

There is no one thing whatsoever more plain and manifest, and more demonstrable, than the Being of a GOD. It is manifest in our selves, in our own Bodies and Souls, and in every thing about us where-ever we

turn our Eye, whether to Heaven, or to the Earth, the Air or the Seas. And yet how prone is the Heart of Man to call the Being of God into question? So inclined is the Heart of Man to Blindness and Delusion, that it is prone to Atheism itself.

3. The greatness of the blindness of the Heart of Man appears in that so little a thing will deceive him, and confound his Judgment of things. A little self-interest; or only the Bait of some short Gratification of a sensual Appetite; or a little stirring of Passion, will blind Mens Eyes, and make them argue and judge most strangely and perversely. and draw up the most absurd Conclusions; such, as if they were indifferent, they would see to be most unreasonable. The Devil finds easy Work with Men, to deceive them a thousand Ways: which is an Argument of the great weakness and blindness of our Minds. As a little Child, that is weak in Understanding, is very easily deceived.

4. The wofulness of the blindness that possesses the Hearts of Men naturally, appears in their being all naturally totally ignorant of that in God, which they had most need to know; viz. the glory and excellency of his Nature. Tho' our Faculties which we have above the Beasts were chiefly given us, that we might know this; and tho' it be that without the knowlege of which, all other Knowledge will signify nothing to us; and our Faculties are as capable of it, as of any other Knowledge whatsoever; and that which is as plainly and abundantly manifested as any thing whatsoever innumerable Ways, both in the Word and Works of God: yet all Men naturally are totally ignorant of this; as ignorant, as one born blind is of Colours. Natural Men of the greatest Abilities and Learning, are as ignorant of it, as the weakest and the most unlearned; yea, as ignorant as the very Stocks and Stones; for they see, and can see nothing at all of it.

5. It appears, in that they are so blind in those same Things in religious Matters, which they are sufficiently sensible of in other Matters. In temporal things they are very sensible that it is a point of Prudence to improve the first Opportunity in things of great Importance. But in Matters of Religion, which are of infinitely the greatest Importance, they have not this discerning. In temporal Matters they are sensible it is a great folly long to delay and put off, when Life is in danger, and all depends upon that. But in the Concerns of their Souls, they are insensible of this Truth. So in the Concerns of this World they are sensible it is Prudence to improve times of special Advantage ——— to embrace a good offer when made them ——— They are sensible that things of long Continuance are of greater Importance, than those of short Duration ——— Yet in religious Concerns, none of these Things are sensibly discerned. In temporal things they are sufficiently sensible, that 'tis a point of Prudence to lay up for hereafter, in Summer to lay up for Winter — to lay up for their Families, after they are dead: but Men do not generally discern the Prudence, in making a proper Provision for a future State — In Matters of Importance in this World, they are sensible of the wisdom of taking thorough care to be on sure Grounds. But in their Soul's Concerns, they see nothing of this ——— Our Saviour observed this to be the Case with the Jews when he was upon Earth. "Ye Hypocrites, ye can discern the face of the Skie, and of the Earth: but how is it that ye do not discern this time?"†

6. The desperate blindness that naturally possesses the Hearts of Men under the Gospel, appears in their remaining so stupidly insensible and deceived, under so great Means of Instruction and Conviction. If they were brought up under heathenish Darkness, it would

not

† Luk xii. 56.

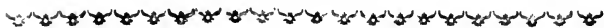
not be so full a Demonstration of it ; but thus they remain, tho' under the clearest Light, under the glorious Light of the Gospel, where they enjoy God's own Instructions in his Word, in a great fulness & plainness, and have the Evidence and Truth of things set before them from time to time in the plainest manner. They have the Arguments of God's Being & Perfection— of another World— Are told how eternal things are of greater Importance than temporal— Of what Importance it is to escape eternal Misery. How much it is worth while to take Pains for heavenly Glory— How vain their own Righteousness is— But yet—

And they have not only great Means of Instruction in God's Word, but also in Providence. They have the Evidences of the shortness and uncertainty of Life. "He seeth that wise Men die, likewise the fool and the brutish Person perish, and leave their Wealth to others." Yet "their inward thought is, that their Houses shall continue for ever, and their dwelling Places to all Generations : They call their Lands after their own Names. Nevertheless Man being in Honor, abideth not : He is like the Beasts that perish. This their way is their folly : yet their Posterity approve their sayings." They find the World is vain & unsatisfactory. — They find the great instability and treachery of their own Hearts ; and how their own good Intentions and Resolutions are not to be depended on— They often find by Experience, their Attempts to make them better fail— But yet—

Such abundant Evidence is there, both in what appears in the open Profession of Men ; and also by what is found in their inward Experience, and is evident in their Practice, of the extreme and brutish Ignorance and blindness, which naturally possesses their Hearts.



S E R M O N VI.



P S A L M xciv. 8, 9, 10, 11.

Understand, ye brutish among the People : and ye Fools, when will ye be wise ? He that planted the Ear, shall he not hear ? he that formed the Eye, shall he not see ? He that chastiseth the Heathen, shall he not correct ? he that teacheth Man Knowledge, shall he not know ? The Lord knoweth the Thoughts of Man, that they are vanity.

D O C T R I N E.

THERE is an extreme and brutish Blindness in Things of Religion, which naturally possesses the Hearts of Men.

HAVING shewn how the Truth of the Doctrine is evident, both by what appears in Mens open Profession, and by those Things which are found by inward Experience, and are manifest by what is visible in Mens practice ; I proceed to the

A P P L I C A T I O N.

The first Use may be of Instruction, in the following Particulars,

I. By this we may see how manifest are the Ruins of the fall of Man. It is observable in all the Kinds

of God's Creatures that we behold, that they have those Properties and Qualities which are every way proportion'd to their End; so that they need no more, they stand in need of no greater degree of Perfection, in order well to answer the special use for which they seem to be designed. The brute Creatures, Birds, Beasts, Fishes, and Insects, tho' there be innumerable Kinds of them, yet all seem to have such a degree of Perception and Perfection given them, as best suits their Place in the Creation, and their manner of living, and the Ends for which they were made. There is no defect visible in them: they are perfect in their kind; there seems to be nothing wanting, in order to their filling up their Place in the World. And there can be no reasonable Doubt but that it was so at first with Mankind. It is not reasonable to suppose, that God would make many thousands of Kinds of Creatures here in this lower World, and one kind the highest of them all, to be the Head of the rest; and that all the rest should be compleat in their Kinds, every way endowed with such Qualifications as are proportioned to their Use & End: And this most noble Creature of all, *only* left exceeding imperfect, notoriously destitute of what he principally stands in need of to answer the End of his being.

The principal Faculty by which God has distinguished this noble Creature from the rest, is his *Understanding*: But wou'd God so distinguish Man in his creation from other Creatures, and then seal up that Understanding with such an extreme blindness, as to render it useleſs, as to the principal Ends of it; and wholly to disenable him from answering the Ends of an understanding Creature, and to make his Understanding rather a misery rather than a blessing to him; and rendering him much more mischievous than useful?

Therefore, if the Scripture had not told us so, yet we might safely conclude, that Mankind are not now, as they were made at first; but that they are in a fallen State and Condition.

II. From what has been said, plainly appears the absolute necessity of divine Revelation. The Deists deny the Scripture to be the Word of God, and hold that there is no *revealed Religion*; that God has given Mankind no other Rule but his own Reason; which is sufficient, without any Word or Revelation from Heaven, to give Man a right understanding of divine Things, and of his Duty. But how has it proved in fact? How much trial has there been, whether Man's Reason, without a Revelation, would be sufficient or no? The whole World, excepting one Nation, had the trial from about *Moses's* time, to the coming of Christ, about fifteen Hundred Years. And was not this long enough for a trial, whether Man's Reason alone was sufficient to instruct him? Those Nations, who all that time lay in such gross darkness, and in such a deplorable helpless Condition, had the same natural Reason that the Deists have. And during this time, there was not only one Man, or a Succession of single Persons that had the trial, whether their own Reason would be sufficient to lead them to the Knowledge of the Truth; but all Nations, who all had the same human Faculties that we have. If human Reason is really sufficient, and there be no need of any thing else, why has it never proved so? Why has it never happened, that so much as *one* Nation, or *one* City or Town, or *one* Assembly of Men have been brought to tolerable Notions of divine Things, unless it be by the Revelation contained in the Scriptures? If it were only one Nation that had remained in such Darkness, the trial might not be thought so great; because one particular People might be under some Disadvantages, which were peculiar. But thus it has been with all Nations, except those which have been favoured with the Scriptures, and in all Ages. Where is any People, who to this Day have ever delivered themselves by their own Reason, or have been delivered without Light fetch'd from
the

the Scriptures, or by Means of the Gospel of Jesus Christ?

If human Reason is sufficient without the Scripture, 'tis strange that in these latter Ages, since Navigation has been so improved, and *America* and many other Parts of the World have been discovered, which were before unknown; and many hundreds of Nations have been found out, which the christian World before knew nothing of: I say, 'tis very strange, that among all these newly discover'd Nations, no one Nation has any where been found already enlightned and possess'd of true Notions about the Divine Being and his Perfections, and free from heathenish Darknes, by vertue of that human Reason, they have been possess'd of this so many thousand Years. The many poor, barbarous Nations here in *America* had the faculty of human Reason to do what they pleas'd with, before the *Europeans* came hither, and brought over the Light of the Gospel. If this human Reason alone was sufficient, it is strange no one People were found, in any corner of the Land, who were help'd with their Reason.

There has been a great trial as to what Mens Reason can do, without divine Help, in those endless Disputes that have been maintained. If human Reason alone could help Mankind, it might be expected that these Disputes would have help'd them, and have put an end to Mens darknes. The heathen Philosophers had many hundreds of Years to try their Skill in this way; but all without effect.

That divine Revelation, which the Church of God has been possess'd of, has been in the World "as a Light shining in a dark Place. † 'Tis the only Remedy which God has provided for the miserable, brutish blindness of Mankind: a Remedy without which, this fallen World of Mankind would have sunk down for ever in barbarism and brutality without any Remedy.

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It is the only means that the true God has made successful in his Providence, to give the Nations of the World the Knowledge of himself; and to bring them off from the worship of false gods.

If human Reason be the only proper Means, the Means that God has designed for the enlightening of Mankind, 'tis very strange that it has not been sufficient for this, nor has answered this end in any one Instance. All the right speculative knowledge of the true God, which the Deists themselves have, has been derived from divine Revelation ———

How vain is it to dispute against Fact, and the Experience of so many thousand Years? And to pretend that human Reason is sufficient without divine Revelation, when so many thousand years Experience, among so many hundreds of Nations, of different Tempers, Circumstances and Interests, has proved the contrary? One would think that all should acknowledge, that so long a time is sufficient for a trial; especially considering the Miseries that the poor Nations of the World have been under all this while, for want of Light: The innumerable temporal Calamities and Miseries; such as sacrificing Children, and many other Cruelties to others, and even themselves: besides, that eternal Perdition, which may reasonably be supposed to be the Consequence of such Darkness.

III. This Doctrine should make us sensible, how great a Mercy it is to Mankind, that God has sent his own Son into the World, to be the Light of the World.

The Doctrine shews what great need we stand in of some Teacher to be sent from God. And even some of the wiser Men among the Heathen saw the need of this. They saw that they disputed and jangled among themselves without coming to a satisfying discovery of the Truth; and hence they saw the need there was of a Teacher sent from Heaven; and spake of such a thing. And it is a wonderful Instance of divine Mercy that

God has so beheld us in our low Estate, as to provide such a glorious Remedy. He hasn't only sent some created Angel to instruct us; but his own SON, who is in the Bos'm of the Father, and of the same Nature and Essence with him; and therefore infinitely better acquainted with him, and more sufficient to teach a blind World. He has sent him to be the Light of the World, as he says of himself, "I am come a Light into the World.†" When he came he brought glorious Light into the World. It was like the Day-spring from on high, visiting a dark World, as *Zacharias* observes. ¶ After Christ came, then the glorious Gospel began to spread abroad in the World into one Nation and another, delivering those "that had sat in Darkness, and in the Region of the shadow of Death."

What reason have we to rejoyce and praise God, that he has made such excellent Provision for us; and has set so glorious a Sun in our Firmament, such a "Sun of Righteousness," after we had extinguished the Light, which at first enlightened us; and had, as it were, brought the World into that State, in which it was when "without Form, and void, and Darkness was on the face of it". †

The glory of that Light which God has sent into the World, is fully answerable to the grossness of that Darkness which filled the World. For Christ who came to enlighten us, is Truth and Light it self, and the Fountain of all Light. "He is Light, and in him is no darkness at all." ¶

IV. Hence we may learn, what must be the thing that will bring to pass those glorious Days of Light, which are spoken of in God's Word.

Tho' Mankind be fallen into such Darkness, and the World is mostly in the Kingdom of Darkness: yet the

Scripture

† Joh. xi. 46. ¶ Luk. i. 77, 78, 79. • See Jer. iv. 22, 23.

† Joh. i. 5.

Scripture often speaks of a glorious Day, wherein Light shall fill the Earth. "For behold the darkness shall cover the Earth, and gross darkness the People: but the Lord shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee. And the Gentiles shall come to thy Light, and Kings to the brightness of thy rising."* "And he will destroy in this Mountain, the face of the covering cast over all People, and the veil that is spread over all Nations" † "The knowledge of God shall fill the Earth, as the Waters cover the Seas" ‡

By what we have heard, we may on good Grounds conclude, that whenever this is accomplished, it will not be effected by human Learning, or by the skill or wisdom of great Men. What has been before observed of this learned Age, is an Evidence of this; wherein spiritual Darkness does so increase, with the increase of Learning. God will again make foolish the wisdom of this World; and will, as it were, say in his Providence, "Where is the wise! where is the Scribe! where is the disputer of this World!"

When this shall be accomplished, it will be by a remarkable pouring out of God's own Spirit, with the plain preaching of the Gospel of his Son; the preaching of the spiritual, mysterious Doctrines of Christ crucified, which to the learned Men of this World are foolishness. By the Spirit of God accompanying the preaching of those Doctrines, which are the stumbling-Block of this learned Age. "Not by might, nor power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." ‡ It will not be by the enticing Words of Man's wisdom; but by the demonstration of the Spirit, and of Power. Not by the wisdom of this World, nor the Princes of this World, that comes to nought: but by the Gospel, that contains the wisdom of God in a Mystery, even the hidden Wisdom, which none of the Princes of this World, who have nothing to enlighten them but their own learning, know any thing of.

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* Isai. lx. 2, 3. † Isai. xxv. 1. ‡ Isai. xi. 6.

The Spirit of God, who searches all things, even the deep things of God, must reveal it. For let natural Men be never so worldly wise and learned, they receive not the things of the Spirit : they are foolishness to them ; nor can they know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

This great effect, when it is accomplished, will be a glorious effect indeed : and it will be accomplished in such a manner, as most remarkably to shew it to be the Work of God, and his only. It will be a more glorious Work of God than that which we read of in the beginning of *Genesis*. “And the Earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the Waters : And God said, Let there be light, and there was light.” †

V. Hence we may learn the misery of all such Persons, as are under the Power of the darkness, which naturally possesses their Hearts. There are two degrees of this misery.

I. That which all that are in a natural Condition are the subjects of. The Doctrine shews, that all such as are in a natural Condition, are in a miserable Condition : for they are in an extremely dark and blind Condition. 'Tis uncomfortable living in outward Darkness. What a sorrowful State should we all be in, if the Sun should no more rise upon us, and the Moon were to withdraw her shining, and the Stars to be put out, and we were to spend the rest of our time in darkness ? The World would soon perish, in such Darkness. It was a great Plague in Egypt, when they had a total Darkness for three Days. Outward blindness is justly looked upon as a great Calamity. They who are deprived of Sight, are deprived of the most noble of the Senses : they have no benefit of external Light ;

† Gen. i. 2, 3,

Light, one of the most excellent and needful of the Things which God has made in the visible Creation. But they who are without spiritual Sight and Light, are destitute of that which is far more excellent and necessary.

That natural Men are not sensible of their blindness, and the Misery they are under by Reason of it, is no Argument that they are not miserable. For it is very much the Nature of this Calamity to be hid from itself, or from those who are under it. Fools are not sensible of their Folly. Solomon says. “The Fool
“ is wiser in his own Conceit, than seven Men that
“ can render a Reason.” * The most barbarous and brutish Heathen are not sensible of their own Darkness; are not sensible but that they enjoy as great Light, and have as good Understanding of Things, as the most enlightned Nations in the World.

2. ANOTHER Degree of this Misery. is of those who are judicially given up of God, to the blindness of their own Minds. The Scripture teaches us that there are some such “What then? Israel hath not
“ obtained that which he seeketh for, but the Electi.
“ on hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.” §
“ But their Minds were blinded: for untill this Day
“ remaineth the same Veil untaken away.” † “ And
“ he said, go and tell this People, hear ye indeed, but
“ understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.
“ Make the Heart of this People fat, and their Ears
“ heavy, and shut their Eyes; lest they see with their
“ Eyes, and hear with their Ears, and understand
“ with their Hearts, and convert and be healed.” ‡
This Judgment, when it is inflicted on Men, is commonly for the Contempt and Abuse of Light which has been offered them. For the commission of presumptuous Sins, and being obstinate in Sin, and resisting the

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Holy

* Prov. xxvi. 16. § Rom. xi. 7. † 2 Cor, iii. 14. ‡ Isai. vi. 9. 10.

Holy Ghost, after many gracious Calls and Counsels, Warnings and Reproofs.

Who the particular Persons are, that are thus judicially given up of God to the blindness of their Minds, is not known to Men. But we have no Reason to suppose that there are not Multitudes of them; and most in Places of the greatest Light. There is no manner of Reason to suppose, that this Judgement which is spoken of in Scripture, is in a great Measure peculiar to those old Times. As there were many that fell under it in the Times of the Prophets of Old, and of Christ and his Apostles; so doubtless there are now a Days too. And tho' the Persons are not known, yet doubtless there may be more Reason to fear it concerning some than others. All that are under the Power of the blindness of their own Minds, are miserable; but such as are given up to this Blindness, are especially miserable: For they are reserved, and sealed over to the blackness of darkness for ever.

And the Consideration of what has been said of the desperate blindness which possesses the Hearts of all naturally. may well be terrifying to such as are yet in a Christless Condition in this place of Light, where the Gospel has been so long enjoyed, and where God has in Times past, so wonderfully poured out his Spirit.

And let such Persons, for their awakening, consider the following Things.

1. That they are blinded by the God of this World. Their blindness is from Hell. This Darkness which natural Men are under, is from the Prince of Darkness. This the Apostle says expressly of those who remain in unbelief and blindness under the Gospel. "But if our Gospel be hid, it is hid from them that are lost; in whom the God of this world hath blinded the Minds of them that believe not."† They belong to the Kingdom of Darkness. In that Darkness

which

† 2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.

which reigns in their Souls, the Devil reigns, and holds his dominion there.

2. Consider, how God in his Word manifests his Abhorrence and Wrath towards those who remain so foolishly blind and ignorant, in the midst of Light. How does God speak of them! “Have all the workers of Iniquity no Knowledge?”* “Forty Years long was I grieved with this Generation, and said, it is a people that do err in their Heart, and they have not known my Ways. Unto whom I swear in my Wrath, that they should not enter into my Rest.” † “The Ox knoweth his Owner, and the Ass his Master’s Crib. But Israel doth not know, my People doth not consider. Ah sinful Nation! — they have provoked the Holy One of Israel unto Anger.” ‡ “It is a People of no Understanding; therefore he that made them will not have Mercy on them, and he that formed them will shew them no Favour.” § “My People is foolish, they have not known me, they are foolish Children, and they have no Understanding: They are wise to do Evil, but to do Good they have no Knowledge.” † “Declare this in the House of Jacob, and publish it in the House of Judah, saying, hear now this, O foolish People, and without Understanding, which have Eyes and see not, which have Ears and hear not. Fear ye not ME saith the Lord: Will ye not tremble at MY Presence.” (a)

3. Consider how much wilfulness there is in your Ignorance. Sinners are ready wholly to excuse themselves in their blindness, and say — — — — —
Whereas, as has been observed already, the blindness that naturally possesses the Hearts of Men, is not a merely negative Thing; but they are blinded by “the deceitfulness of sin.” (b) There is a perverseness in their blindness. There is not a mere Absence of Light,

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but

* Psal. xiv. 4. † Psal. xcvi. 10, 11. ‡ Isai. i. 3, 4. § Isai. xxvii. 10. † Jer. iv. 22. (a) Jer. v. 20, 21, 22. (b) Heb. iii. 12.

but a malignant opposition to the Light : As God says, " They know not, neither will they understand, they walk on in Darkness." † Christ observes, " That every one that doth Evil, hateth the Light, neither cometh to the Light." And that " This is their Condemnation that Light is come into the World, yet Men loved Darkness rather than Light." † And I may appeal to your own Consciences, whether you have not wilfully rejected the many Instructions you have had : and refused to hearken ? Whether you have not neglected to seek after the Light——Neglected your Bible——Whether you have not been a very negligent Hearer of the Word preached ——And neglected other proper Means of Knowledge ——Neglected to cry to God for that Wisdom which you need ? Yea, have you not *resisted* the Means of Knowledge ? Have you not resisted and quenched the Motions of the Spirit, which at some Times you have had ? And hugged your own sottishness : And taken a Course to make yourself more and more stupid, by stifling the Convictions of your own Conscience, and doing contrary to the Light thereof ; whereby you have done those Things that have tended to sear your Conscience, and make yourself more and more senseless and sottish ?

4. Consider what is the Course that God will take to teach those that will not be taught by the Instructions of his Word. He will teach them by Briars and Thorns, and by the Flames of Hell. Tho' natural Men will remain to all Eternity ignorant of the Excellency and Loveliness of God's Nature, and so will have no spiritual Knowledge ; yet God in another World will make them thoroughly to understand many Things which senseless unawakened Sinners are sottishly ignorant of in this World. Their Eyes in many Respects, shall be thoroughly opened in Hell. Their Judgments will be rectified. They shall be of the same Judgment with the godly.—They shall be convinced

cf

of the Reality of those Things which they would not be convinced of here—Of the Being of a God—His Power—Holiness—Justice.—That the Scriptures are the Word of God.—That Christ is the Son of God,—That Time is short and uncertain. They will be convinced of the Vanity of the World—Of the blessed Opportunity they had in the World—How much 'tis Men's Wisdom to improve their Time—We read of the rich Man, who was so sottishly blind in this World, that, “ In Hell he lift up his Eyes, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his Bosom.” || 'Tis so with many Men, that the first Time they open their Eyes is in Hell.

God will make all Men to know the Truth of those great Things which he speaks of in his Word, one way or another: For he will vindicate his own Truth. He has undertaken to convince all Men. They who will not be convinced in this World, by the gentle and gracious Methods which God uses with them now, shall be convinced hereafter by severe Means. If they will not be convinced for Salvation, they shall be convinced by Damnation: God will make them know that he is the Lord—And he will make them know that he bears Rule. “ Consume them in Wrath. that they may not be; and let them know that God ruleth in Jacob, unto the Ends of the Earth.” § “ Let them be confounded and troubled for ever: Yea, let them be put to Shame and perish. That Men may know, that thou, whose Name is JEHOVAH, art the Most High over all the Earth.” *

VI. HENCE we may learn what great Care we had need all have, that we be not deceived in Matters of Religion. If it be so that our Hearts are all naturally possessed with such an extreme brutish Ignorance and Blindness in things of Religion, and we are exceedingly prone

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|| Luke xvi. 23. § Psal. lix. 13. * Psal. lxxxiii. 17, 18.

to Delusion; then surely great Care ought to be taken to avoid Delusion. For that we are naturally prone to Delusion, shews our Danger: But the greater our Danger of any Calamity is, the greater had our watchfulness need to be.

Let us therefore be hence warned to take heed that we be not deceived about our Duty——About our own Hearts——About our Ways——About our State——About our Opportunities——Thousands are deceived in these Things, and Thousands perish by that Means. Multitudes fall on our right Hand and on our left, and are ruined eternally by Delusion in these Things.

VII. IF we are naturally so blind and ignorant, and prone to Delusion; then hence we learn how foolish a Thing it is for Men to lean to their own Understandings, and trust their own Hearts. If we are so blind, then our own wisdom is not to be depended on; and that Advice of the wise Man is most reasonable; “Trust in the Lord with all thine Heart, and lean not to thine own Understanding.”† So is that Saying of his, “He that trusteth in his own Heart, is a Fool.”*

They therefore are Fools, who trust to their own Wisdom, and will question the mysterious Doctrines of Religion. Such as —— —— because they cannot see through them—and will not trust to the infinite Wisdom of God.

And they who are confident and stiff in their own Judgment of themselves, and their own State, from an Opinion of their own good discerning.

And they who trust to their own Resolutions.

† Prov. iii. 5. * Prov. xxviii 26.

The Second Use may be of Direction.

If it be so, that we are naturally under the Power of such sottish Blindness, in the Things of Religion: then this leads and directs us to these two Methods in order to our being truly wise.

1. That we should become Fools: Be sensible of our own natural Blindness and Folly. There is a Treasure of Wisdom contained in that one Sentence, "If any Man among you seemeth to be wise in this World, let him become a Fool, that he may be wise." † Seeing our own Ignorance and blindness, is the first Step towards having true Knowledge. "If any Man think that he knoweth any Thing, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know."*

2. To ask Wisdom of God. If we are so blind in ourselves, then Knowledge is not to be sought for out of our own Stock, but must be sought from some other Source. And we have no where else to go for it, but to the Fountain of light and wisdom.

True Wisdom is a precious Jewel: And none of our fellow Creatures can give it us, nor can we buy it with any Price we have to give. It is the sovereign Gift of God. The Way to obtain it, is to go to him, sensible of our Weakness and Blindness, and Misery on that Account. "If any Man lack Wisdom, let him ask of God."



S E R.

† 1 Cor. iii. 18. * 1 Cor. vii. 2. † Jam. i. 5.



Men naturally G O D's Enemies.

August, 1736.




S E R M O N, VII.



R O M A N S v. 10.

*For if when we were Enemies, we were reconciled
to God by the Death of his Son.*

 HE apostle, from the beginning of the epistle, to the beginning of this chapter, had insisted on the Doctrine of Justification by faith alone. And having particularly spoken to that, in this chapter he goes on to consider the benefits that are consequent on Justification. And there are three that flow from justification, which are here spoken of, viz. Peace with God, Present happiness, and Hope of glory. Peace with God is mentioned in the first verse. "Therefore being justified by faith, *we have peace with God*, through our Lord Jesus Christ." In the following verses he speaks of present blessedness, and hope of glory, as benefits accompanying Justification. "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace, wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

And concerning this benefit of the *hope of glory*, the apostle does particularly take notice of two things, viz. the blessed nature of this hope, and the sure ground of it.

1. He insists on the blessed nature of this hope, in that it enables us to glory in tribulations. This excellent nature of true christian hope is described in the following Words. "And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience, and experience hope; and hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us." † Q. D. Through hope of a blessed reward, that will abundantly more than make up for all tribulation, we are enabled to bear tribulation with patience; patiently bearing, and patiently waiting for the reward. And patience works experience; for when we thus bear tribulation with patient waiting for the reward, this brings experience of the earnest of the reward, viz. the earnest of the spirit, in our feeling the love of God shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. So that our hope don't make us ashamed; tho' we do bear tribulation, our hope is not disappointed; for in the midst of our tribulation, we experience those blessed incomes of the spirit in our souls, that make even a time of tribulation sweet to us; and is such an earnest as abundantly confirms our hope: and so experience works hope:

2. The apostle takes notice of the sure and abundant ground there is for this hope; or the abundant evidence we have, that we shall obtain the glory hoped for, in that peace that we have with God, in our justification through Christ's blood; because that while we were without strength, in due time Christ died for us; while we were ungodly and sinners, enemies to God and Christ. § The apostle's argument is exceeding clear and strong. That if God has done already so great a thing for us, as to give us Christ, to die and shed his precious blood for us, which was vastly the greatest thing, we need not doubt but that he will bestow life upon us, after

† Ver. 3, 4, 5. § See ver. 6—10.

ter all this is already done. 'Tis but a small thing for God actually to bestow eternal life, after it is purchased; to what it is for him to give his own Son to die, to purchase it. The giving Christ to purchase it, was virtually all: It included the whole grace of God in salvation. When Christ had purchased salvation at such a dear rate, all the difficulty was got through, all was virtually over and done. 'Tis a small thing, in comparison, for God to bestow salvation, after it has been thus purchased at a full price. Sinners that are justified by the death of Christ, are already virtually saved: the thing is, as it were, done: What remains, is no more than the necessary consequence of what is done. Christ when he died made an end of sin: And when he rose from the dead, he did virtually rise with the elect: He brought them up from death with him, and ascended into heaven with them. And therefore, when this is already done, and we are thus reconciled to God through the death of his son, we need not fear but that we shall be saved by his life. The love of God appears much more in his giving his son to die for sinners, than in giving eternal life after Christ's death.

The giving of Christ to die for us is here spoken of as a much greater thing, than the actual bestowment of life, on two accounts.

1. That this is all that has any difficulty in it.

2. When God did this for us, he did it for us, as sinners and enemies. But in actually bestowing salvation on us after we are justified, we are not looked upon as sinners. After we are justified, God don't look on us any longer as sinners, but as perfectly righteous persons: he beholds no iniquity in us. We are no more enemies, for then we are reconciled. When God gave Christ to die for the elect, he looked on them as they are in themselves; but in actually bestowing eternal life, he don't look on them as they are in themselves, but as they are in Christ.

There

There are *three* epithets used in the text and context, as appertaining to sinners as they are in themselves.

1. They are *without strength*, they can't help themselves.*

2. They are *ungodly* or sinners,

3. They are *enemies*: as in the text.

D O C T R I N E.

Natural men are God's Enemies.

GOD, tho' the creator of all things, yet has some enemies in the world.

Men in general will own, that they are or have been sinners. There are few, if any at all, whose consciences are so blinded as not to be sensible they have been guilty of sin. And most sinners will own that they have bad hearts. They will own that they don't love God so much as they should do; and that they ben't so thankful as they ought to be for mercies; and that in many Things they fail. And yet few of them are sensible that they are God's enemies. They don't see how they can be truly so called: they are not sensible that they wish God any hurt, or endeavour to do him any.

But we see that the scripture speaks of them as enemies to God. So in our text, and elsewhere. "And you that were sometime alienated, and *enemies* in your minds by wicked works." § "The carnal mind is enmity against God." †

And that all natural, or unregenerate men are indeed so, is what I shall endeavour now particularly to shew. Which I propose to do in the following method.

1. I shall shew, in what respects they are enemies to God.

2. To how great a degree they are enemies.

3. Why

* Ver. 6, 7, 8. § Col. i. 21. † Rom. vii. 7.

3. Why they are enemies.
4. I shall answer some objections.

I. I am to shew, in what respects they are enemies to God.

I. **THEIR** enmity appears in their judgments; in the judgment and esteem they have of God. They have a very mean esteem of God. Men are ready to entertain a good esteem of those with whom they are friends: They are apt to think highly of their qualities, to give them their due praises; and if there be defects, to cover them. But those to whom they are enemies, they are disposed to have mean thoughts of; they are apt to entertain a dishonourable opinion of them: they will be ready to look contemptibly upon any thing that is praise-worthy in them.

So is it with natural men towards God. They entertain very low and contemptible thoughts of God. Whatever honour and respect they may pretend and make a shew of towards God, if their practice be examined, it will shew, that they do certainly look upon him to be a being, that is but little to be regarded. They think him one that is worthy of very little honor and respect, not worthy to be much taken notice of. The language of their hearts is, "Who is the Lord, that I should obey his voice?"* "What is the Almighty, that we should serve him? and what profit should we have if we pray unto him?"† They count him worthy neither to be loved nor feared. They dare not behave with that slight and disregard towards one of their fellow creatures, but a little raised above them in power and authority, as they dare, and do towards God. They value one of their equals much more than God, and are ten times more afraid of offending such an one, than of displeasing the God that made them. They cast such exceeding contempt on God,

as

* Exod. v. 2. † Job, xxi. 15.

as to prefer every vile lust before him. And every worldly enjoyment is set higher in their esteem, than God. A morsel of meat, or a few pence of worldly gain, is preferred before him. God is set last and lowest in the esteem of natural men.

2. **THEY** are enemies in the natural relish of their souls. They have an inbred distaste and disrelish of God's perfections. God is not such a sort of being as they would have. Tho' they are ignorant of God; yet from what they hear of him, and from what is manifest by the light of nature of God, they don't like him. By his being endowed with such attributes as he is, they have an aversion to him. They hear God is an infinitely holy, pure and righteous Being, and they don't like him upon this account; they have no relish of such kind of qualifications: they take no delight in contemplating them. It would be a mere task, a bondage to a natural man, to be obliged to set himself to contemplate these attributes of God. They see no manner of beauty or loveliness, nor taste any sweetness in them. And upon the account of their distaste of these perfections, they dislike all the other of his attributes. They have greater aversion to him because he is omniscient and knows all things; because his omniscience is an holy omniscience. They are not pleased that he is omnipotent, and can do whatever he pleases; because it is a holy omnipotence. They are enemies even to his mercy, because it is a holy mercy. They do not like his immutability, because by this he never will be otherwise than he is, an infinitely holy God.

'Tis from this disrelish that natural men have of the attributes of God, that they don't love to have much to do with God. The natural tendency of the heart of man is to fly from God, and keep at a distance from him; and to get as far off as possible from God. A natural man is averse to communion with God, and is naturally disinclined to those exercises of religion, where-
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in he has immediately to do with God. It is said of wicked men, "God is not in all his thoughts." § 'Tis evident that the mind of man is naturally averse to thinking about God: And hence if any thoughts of God be suggested to the mind, they soon go away; such thoughts be not apt to rest in the minds of natural men. If any thing is said to them of God, they are apt to forget it: 'tis like seed that falls upon the hard path, it don't at all enter in, and the fowls of the air soon catch it away: or like seed that falls upon a rock. Other things will stick; but divine things, do, as it were, rebound: and if they are cast into the mind, they meet with that there which soon thrusts them out again: they meet with no suitable entertainment, but are soon chased away.

Hence also it is that natural men are so difficultly perswaded to be constant in the duty of secret prayer. They would not be so averse to spending a quarter of an hour, night and morning, in some bodily labour; but 'tis because they are averse to a work, wherein they have so immediately to do with God; and they naturally love to keep at a distance from God.

3. THEIR wills are contrary to his will. God's will and their's, are exceeding cross the one to the other. God wills those things that they hate, and are most averse to; and they will those things that God hates. Hence they oppose God in their wills: they set up their wills against the will of God. There is a dreadful, violent and obstinate opposition of the will of natural men to the will of God.

They are very opposite to the commands of God. 'Tis from the enmity of the will, that "the carnal mind is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be"* Hence natural men are enemies to God's government. They are not loyal subjects, but enemies

§ Psal. x. 4.

* Rom. vii. 7.

to God, considered as lord of the world. They are entire enemies to God's authority.

4. THEY are enemies to God in their affections. There is in every natural man a seed of malice against God: yea, there is such a seed of this, rooted in the heart of man naturally. And it does often dreadfully break forth and appear. Tho' it may in a great measure lie hid in secure times, when God lets men alone, and they meet with no great disturbance of body or mind; yet, if God does but touch men a little in their consciences, by manifesting to them a little of his wrath for their sins, this oft times brings out the principle of malice against God, which is exercised in dreadful heart-risings, inward wranglings and quarrellings, and blasphemous thoughts: wherein the heart is like a viper, hissing, and spitting poison at God. There is abundance of such a principle in the heart. And however free from it the heart may seem to be, when let alone and secure, yet a very little thing will set it in a rage. Temptations will shew what is in the heart. The alteration of a man's circumstances will often discover the heart: a change of circumstance will bring that out which was hid before. Pharaoh had no more natural enmity against God than other men; and if other natural men had been in Pharaoh's circumstances, the same corruptions would put forth themselves in as dreadful a manner. The Scribes & Pharisees had naturally no more of a principle of malice in their hearts against Christ, than other men; and other natural men would, in their case, and having as little restraint, exercise as much malice against Christ as they did. When wicked men come to be cast into hell, then their malice against God will appear. Then will it appear what dreadful malice they have in their hearts. Then their hearts will appear as full of malice, as hell is full of fire. But when wicked men come to be in hell, there will be no

new corruptions put into their heart; but only old ones will then break forth without restraint. That is all the difference between a wicked man on earth, and a wicked man in hell, that in hell there will be more to stir up the exercise of corruption, and less to restrain it than on earth: but there will be no new corruption put in. A wicked man will have no principle of corruption in hell, but what he carried to hell with him. There are now the seeds of all the malice that will be exercised then. The malice of damned spirits is but a branch of the root, that is in the hearts of natural men now. A natural man has a heart like the heart of a devil; but only as corruption is more under restraint in man than in devils.

5 THEY are enemies in their practice. "They walk contrary to him."* Their enmity against God don't lie still, but *they are exceeding active* in it. They are engaged in a war against God. Indeed they can't hurt God, he is so much above them; but yet they do what they can. They oppose themselves to his honor and glory: they oppose themselves to the interest of his kingdom in the world: they oppose themselves to the will and command of God; and oppose him in his government. They oppose God in his works, and in his declared designs; while God is doing one work, they are doing the contrary, and as much as in them lies, counterworking. God seeks one thing, and they seek directly the contrary. They list under Satan's banner, and are his willing soldiers in his opposing the kingdom of God. I proceed now,

II. To say something with respect to the *degree* of this enmity: tending in some measure to shew, *how great* enemies natural men are to God.

I. THEY have no love to God; their enmity is *mere* enmity without any mixture of love. A natural man

* Lev. xxvi. 21.

man is wholly destitute of any principle of love to God, and never had the least exercise of this love. Some natural men have better natural tempers than others; and some are better educated than others; and some live a great deal more soberly than others: but one has no more love to God than another; for none have the least spark of that. The heart of a natural man is as destitute of love to God, as a dead, stiff, cold corpse is of vital heat. "I know you, that ye have not the love of God in you."†

2. EVERY faculty and principle of action is *wholly* under the dominion of enmity against God. The nature of man is wholly infected with this enmity against God. He is tainted with it throughout, in all his faculties and principles. And not only so, but every faculty is entirely and perfectly subdued under it, and enslaved to it. This enmity against God, has the absolute possession of the man. The apostle *Paul*, speaking of what he was naturally, says, "I am carnal, *sold under sin.*"‡

The understanding is under the reigning power of this enmity against God, so that it is entirely darkened and blinded with regard to the glory and excellency of God. The will is wholly under the reigning power of it. All the affections are governed by enmity against God: there is not one affection, nor one desire, that a natural man has, or that he is ever stirred up to act from, but that contains in it enmity against God. A natural man is as full of enmity against God, as any viper, or any venomous beast, is full of poison.

3. THE power of the enmity of natural men against God, is so great, that 'tis *insupportable* by any finite power. It has too great and strong a possession of the heart, to be overcome by any created power. Natural

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† Jon. v. 43. ‡ Rom. vii. 14.

men can't overcome their own enmity, let them strive never so much with their own hearts. Indeed, a natural man never sincerely strives to root out his enmity against God; his endeavours are hypocritical: he delights in his enmity, and chooses it. Neither can others do it, tho' they sincerely, and to their utmost endeavour to overcome this enmity. If godly friends and neighbours labour to perswade them to cast away their enmity, and become friends to God, they can't perswade them to it. Tho' ministers use never so many arguments and entreaties, and set forth the loveliness of God, and tell them of the goodness of God to them, and hold forth to them God's own gracious invitations, and intreat them never so earnestly to cast off their opposition and enmity, and to be reconciled, and become friends; yet they can't overcome it: still they will be as bad enemies to God, as ever they were. The tongue of men or of angels can't perswade them to relinquish their opposition to God. Miracles will not do it. How many miracles did the children of Israel see in the wilderness! yet their enmity against God remained; as appeared by their often murmuring. And how often did Christ use miracles to this end without effect, but the Jews yet obstinately stood out. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, *and ye would not.*"|| And how great did the enmity of these people appear to be after all; how spiteful and venomous were their hearts towards Christ, as appears by their cruel treatment of him, in his last sufferings!

4. THEY are *mortal* enemies to God; i. e. They have that enmity in their hearts, that strikes at the life of God. A man may be no friend to another, and may have

|| Mat xxiii 37.

have an ill spirit towards him ; and yet not be his *mortal* enemy : his enmity will be satisfied and glutted with something short of the death of the person. But it is not so with natural men, with respect to God : they are *mortal* enemies. Indeed, natural men can't kill God. They have no hope of it, and so make no attempts : It has ever been looked upon so much above their power, that, it may be, it is not thought of. But that is no argument that this is not the tendency of the principle.

Natural men are enemies to the dominion of God ; and their nature shews their good will to pull him down out of heaven, and dethrone him if they could ! Yea, they are enemies to the *Being* of God, and would be glad if there was no God. And therefore it necessarily follows, that they would *kill him*, and cause that there should be none, if they could.

“ The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God.” † This saying *in his heart, There is no God*, implies in it, not only an aptness to question the Being of God ; but it implies, that he *inclines* it should be so. His *heart* says, i. e. his inclination says. The words in the original are thus, “ The fool hath said in his heart, No God.” The words, *there is*, are not in the original, but were put in by the translators. Now if we read the words so, “ The fool hath said in his heart, No God,” they will perhaps shew the Psalmist's meaning more fully, than as they are now translated. “ The fool hath said in his heart, *No God.*” That is, “ I would have none, I don't desire any, I wish there was none ; that would suit my inclination best.” That is the language of the inclinations of a natural man ; no God. Let there be no God for me, let me have no God : Let the world be emptied of a God, he stands in my way.” And hence he is an Atheist in his heart, he is ready to think there is none ; and that also is ready to be the language of his heart, “ There is no God.”

The viper's poison is *deadly* poison; and when he bites, he seeks the precious life. And men are in this respect a generation of vipers. Their poison, which is enmity against God, seeks the life of God. O generation of vipers.† “The wicked are estranged from the womb—Their poison is like the poison of a serpent.”‖ “For their vine is the vine of Sodom, and of the fields of Gomorrah: their grapes are the grapes of gall, their clusters are bitter. Their wine is the *poison of dragons*, and *the cruel venom of asps*.‡

The divine nature being immortal, and infinitely out of our reach, there is no other trial possible, whether the enmity that is naturally in the heart against God, be mortal or no, but only for God to take on him the human nature, and become man; so as to come within man's reach, that they should be capable of killing him. There can be no other experiment but this. And this trial there has been. And what has been the event? Why, when once God became man, and came down to dwell here, among such vipers as fallen men, they hated him, and persecuted him; and never left till they had imbrued their hands in his blood. There was a multitude of them that appeared combined in this design. Nothing would do, but he must be put to death. All cry out, “Crucify him, crucify him. Away with him.” They had rather Barrabbas, who greatly deserved death, should live, than he should not die. Nothing would restrain them from it; even all his preaching and all his miracles: but they would kill him. And it was not the ordinary kind of execution that would satisfy them: but it must be the most cruel, and most ignominious they possibly could invent. And they in the time of it, added to it, and aggravated it as much as ever they could, by mocking him, and spiting on him, and scourging him. This shews what the nature and tendency of man's enmity against God is; here it appeared in its true colours.

5. NATURAL.

† Mat. iii. 7. ‖ Psal. lvi. 3, 4. * Deut. xxxii. 32, 33.

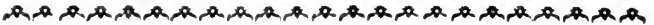
5. NATURAL men are greater enemies to God, than they are to any other being whatsoever. Natural men may be very great enemies to their fellow creatures; but not so great as they are to God. There is no other being that so much stands in sinners way, in those things that they chiefly set their hearts upon, as God. Men are wont to hate their enemies in proportion to two things, viz. their opposition to what they look upon to be their interest, — and their power and ability. One that is looked upon a great and powerful enemy, will be more hated, than one that is weak and impotent. But none of their enemies is so powerful as God.

Man's enmity to other enemies may be got over: time may wear it out, and they may be reconciled, and be friends. But natural men, without a mighty work of God to change their hearts, will never get over their enmity against God. They are greater enemies to God, than they be to the devil. Yea, they treat the devil as their friend and master, and join in with him against God. "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do: he was a murderer from the beginning.*.



S E R M O N,

* Joh. viii. 44.



S E R M O N, VIII.



R O M A N S v. 10.

For if when we were Enemies, we were reconciled to God by the Death of his Son.

D O C T R I N E.

Natural Men are God's Enemies.

- In speaking to this Doctrine, it was proposed,
1. **T**O shew in what respects they are enemies to God.
 2. T o how great a degree they are enemies.
 3. W H Y they are enemies.
 4. T o answer some objections.

The two first things proposed, have been attended to in the foregoing discourse. I now proceed,

III. T o shew why, or on what account they are enemies to God.

The general Reason is, That God is opposite to them in the worship of their idols.

The apostacy of man does summarily consist in departing from the true God, to idols, forsaking his creator, and setting up other things in his room,

When God at first created man, he was united to his creator; the God that made him was his God. The true God was the object of his highest respect, and had the possession of his heart. Love to God was the principle in his heart, that ruled over all other principles; and

and every thing in the soul, was wholly in subjection to it. But when man fell, he departed from the true God, and the union that was between his heart and his creator was broken: he wholly lost the principle of love he had to God. And henceforward man clave to other gods. He gave that respect to the creature, which is due to the creator. When God ceased to be the object of his supream love and respect, other things of course became the objects of it.

Man will necessarily have something that he respects as his God. If man don't give his highest respect to the God that made him, there will be something else that has the possession of it. Men will either worship the true God, or some idol: it is impossible it should be otherwise; something will have the heart of man. And that which a man gives his heart to, may be called his God: and therefore when man by the fall extinguished all love to the true God, he set up the creature in his room

And so man came to be at enmity against the true God. For having lost his esteem and love of the true God, and set up other gods in his room, and in opposition to him; and God still demanding their worship, and opposing them in their worship of those false gods; and man continuing still to worship idols, enmity necessarily follows.

That which a man chuses for his God, he sets his heart mainly upon. And nothing will so soon excite enmity, as opposition in that which is dearest. A man will be the greatest enemy to him who opposes him in what he chooses for his God: he will look on none as standing so much in his way, as he that would deprive him of his God. "Ye have taken away my gods; and what have I more?"† A man, in this respect, can't serve two masters, that stand in competition to his service. And not only, if he serves one, he cannot *serve*

† Judg. vxiii. 24.

the other ; but if he cleaves to one, he will necessarily *hate* the other. “ No man can serve two masters ; for either he will *hate* the one, and love the other, or else he will hold to the one, and *despise* the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon.”† And this is the very reason that men hate God. In this case it is, as when two kings set up in one kingdom, in opposition one to the other ; and they both challenge the same throne, and are competitors for the same crown : they that are loyal, hearty subjects to the one, will necessarily be enemies to the other. It always happens so, nor indeed can it be otherwise.

As that which is a man's God, is the object of his highest love ; so that God which chiefly opposes him in it, must be the object of his greatest hatred.

The gods which a natural man worships, instead of the God that made him, are himself and the world. He has withdrawn his esteem and honor from God, and proudly exalts himself. As satan did : he was not willing to be in such subjection ; and therefore rebelled, and set up himself for God. So a natural man, in the proud and high thoughts he has of himself, sets up himself upon God's throne. And he gives his heart to the world, worldly riches, and worldly pleasures, and worldly honors : they have the possession of that regard which is due to God. The apostle sums up all the idolatry of wicked men in their *love of the world*. “ Love not the World, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, is not of the father, but is of the world.”* And the apostle *James* observes, that a man must necessarily be the enemy of the true God, if he be a friend of the world. “ Know ye not that the friendship of the world is en-
mity

† Mat. vi. 24. * 1 Joh. ii. 15. 16.

mity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world, is the enemy of God. †

All the sin that men commit, is what they do in the service of their idols: there is no one act of sin, but what is an act of service to some false God. And therefore wherein soever God opposes sin in them, he is opposite to their worship of their idols: on which account they are enemies to God.

God opposes them in their service of their idols, in the following respects.

1. HE manifests his utter abhorrence of their worship of their idols. Their idols are what they love above all things: they would by no means part with them. This wickedness is *sweet* unto them. † If you take them away, what have they more? If they loose their idols, they loose their all. To rend away their idols from them, would be more grievous to them, than to rend body and soul asunder: it is like rending their heart in twain. They love their idolatry; but God don't approve of it, but exceedingly hates it: he hates it implacably, and will by no means be reconciled to it; and therefore they hate him. God declares an infinite hatred of every act of sin which they do; or every act that they do in the service of their false gods. He approves of it in no part, but hates it all. He declares himself to be an holy God, and a jealous God; a God that is very jealous of his own honor; and that greatly abhors the giving that honor to another.

2. HE utterly forbids their cleaving to those idols, and all the service that they do to them. He not only shews that he dislikes it, but he utterly forbids it; and demands that they should worship him, and serve him only, and give their hearts wholly to him; without tolerating any competitor. He allows them to serve their idols in no degree; but requires them to cast them away
utterly,

† Jam. iv. * Job xx. 12.

utterly, and pay no more worship to them, at any time. He requires a *final* parting with their idols. Not only that they should refrain from them for a while, but cast them away forever ; and never gratify their idolatrous respect to them any more. This is so exceeding contrary to them, and what they are so averse to, and so obstinate in their refusal of, that they are enemies to God for it. They can't endure God's commands, because they forbid all that which their hearts are so engaged in. And as they hate God's commands, so they hate Him whose commands they are.

3. HE threatens them with everlasting damnation for their service of their idols. He threatens them for their past idolatry. He threatens them with his eternal wrath, for their having departed from him, and their having cholen to themselves other gods. He threatens them for that disposition they have in their hearts to cleave to other gods : He threatens the *least degrees* of that respect which they have in their hearts to their idols. He manifests that he will not tolerate any regard to them, but has fixed eternal death, as the wages of every degree of it. And he won't release them from their guilt ; he holds them to their obligations ; he won't acquit them at all : And he will accept of no atonement that they can make. He will not forgive them, whatever they do in religion ; whatever pains they take ; whatever tears they shed. He will accept of no money or price that they have to offer.

And he threatens every future act of their idolatry. He not only forbids them ever to be guilty of the least act, but forbids them on pain of eternal damnation. So strictly does God prohibit them from the service of their idols, that are so dear to them, that are their all, and which they would on no account part with. He threatens them with everlasting wrath for all exercises of inordinate love of worldly profit : for all manifestations of inordinate regard to worldly pleasures, or world-ly

ly honors. He threatens them with everlasting torments for their self exaltation. He requires them to deny themselves, and renounce themselves, and to abase themselves at his feet, on pain of bearing his wrath to all eternity.

The strictness of God's law is a principle cause of man's enmity against God. If God were a God that did not so much hate sin : if he were one who would allow them in the gratification of their lusts, in some degree ; and his threatenings were not so awful against all indulgence of their lust : if his threatenings were not so absolute ; if his displeasure could be appeased by a few tears, and little reformation, or the like ; they would not be so great enemies, nor hate him so much as they do now. But God shews himself to be an implacable enemy to their idols, to every degree of their service of them ; and has threaten'd everlasting wrath, infinite calamity for all that they do in the service of their lusts ; and holds them bound under his wrath therefor. And this makes them irreconcilable enemies to him.

For this reason, the Scribes and Pharisees were such bitter enemies to Christ ; because he shewed himself to be such an enemy to their pride, and conceit of their own wisdom, and their self-righteousness, and inordinate affectation of their own honor, which was their God. Natural men are enemies to God, because he is so opposite to them, in that in which they place their all. If you go to take away that which is very dear to a man, nothing will provoke him more. God is infinitely opposite to that in which natural men place all their delight, and all their happiness, viz. their gods. He is an enemy to that which natural men value as their greatest honor and highest dignity ; and which they trust wholly to, that which is all their dependence, viz. their own righteousness.

Hence

Hence natural men are greater enemies to God, than they are to any other being. Some of their fellow-creatures may stand very much in their way, with regard to some things they set their hearts upon; but God opposes them with respect to all their idols, and those gods which are their all. And then God's opposition to their idols, which are above all things dear to them, is infinitely great. None of our fellow-creatures ever opposes us in any of our interests so much as God opposes wicked men in their idolatry: For God has an infinite opposition against it. His infinite opposition is manifested by his threatening an infinite punishment, viz. his dreadful wrath to all eternity, misery without end. Hence we need not wonder that natural men are enemies to God.

Having thus shewn, in some measure, why natural men are God's enemies; I proceed to the last thing propos'd.

IV. To consider and make answer to some objections, that some may be ready to make against this.

Natural men don't generally conceive themselves to be so bad: they han't this notion of themselves, that they are enemies to God. And therefore when they hear such doctrine as this taught them, they stand ready to make objections.

Obj. I. SOME natural men may be ready to say, "I don't know that I feel any such enmity in my heart against God, as is spoken of. I am not sensible that I am such a dreadful enemy, so as to hate God, and to have a mortal enmity against him: and to have a disposition, if I could, to kill him. I feel no such thing in myself, and why should I think that I have such a thing in me? If I have such enmity, why don't I feel it? If I am a mortal enemy, why should not I know it better than any body else? How can others
see

see what is in my heart, better than I myself? If I hate one of my fellow creatures, and have a spirit against him, I can feel it inwardly working." To such an objection I would

Ans. I. If you do but observe yourself, and search your own heart, unless you are strangely blinded, you may be sensible of those things, wherein enmity does fundamentally consist. As particularly, you may be sensible that you have at least had a low & contemptible esteem of God; and that you in your esteem set the trifles and vanities of this world, far above him; so as to esteem the enjoyment of these things far before the enjoyment of God, and to value these things better than his love. And you may be sensible that you despise the authority of God, and value his commands and his honor but very little. Or if by some means you have blinded yourself now, so as to think you do regard them now, doubtless you can look back and see that you have not regarded them. You may be sensible that you have had a dislike and aversion towards God; an opposit on to thinking of God, or to have any thing to do with him; so that it would have been a very uncomfortable task to have been confined to it for any time; and that when the vanities of the world, at the same time, have been very pleasing to you; and you have been all swallowed up in them, while you have been averse to the things of religion.

If you look into your heart, it is there plain to be seen, that there is an enmity in your will, that your will is contrary to God's will; for you have been opposing the will of God all your life long. These things are plain in natural men; 'tis nothing but some great delusion that can hide them from you. And these things are the foundation of all enmity: if these things be in you, all the rest that we have spoken of will follow of course.

2. ONE reason why you han't more sensibly felt the exercises of malice against God, is that your enmity is now exercised partly in your unbelief of God's being; and this prevents its appearing in other ways, that otherwise it would. Man has naturally a principle of atheism in him; an indisposition to realize God's being, and a disposition to doubt of it. The being of God don't ordinarily seem real to natural men. All the discoveries that there are of God's being, in his works, won't overcome the principle of atheism, that is in the heart. And tho' they seem in some measure to be rationally convinced, yet it don't appear real; the conviction is faint there is no strong conviction impressed on the mind, that there is a God: and often times they are ready to think that there is none. Now this will prevent the exercise of this enmity, that otherwise would be felt; particularly, it may be an occasion of there not being these *sensible* exercises of hatred, that otherwise there would be.

It may in some measure be illustrated by this: If you had a rooted malice against another man, a principle that had been long established there; if you should hear that he was dead, and so should conceive that he had no being, the sensible workings of your malice would not be felt, as when you realized it that he was alive, or that there was such a person: and that altho' there be the same thing in the foundation, which would appear, if you should afterwards hear the news contradicted, and perceive that your enemy was still alive; you would feel the same workings of hatred that you did before. And when you thought he was dead, you might feel the exercise of your enmity, in being glad of it. And thus your not realizing it, that God has a being, may prevent those sensible workings of hatred, that otherwise you would have. If wicked men in this world were sensible of the reality of God's being, as the wicked are in another, they would feel more of that hatred, that

that men in another world do. The exercise of corruption in one way, may, and often does prevent its working in other ways. As covetousness may prevent the exercise of pride, so atheism may prevent malice ; and yet it may be no argument of there being any the less of a principle of enmity in the heart ; for 'tis the same enmity, working in another way. The same enmity that in this world works by atheism, will in another world, where there will be no room for atheism, work by malice and blasphemy. The same mortal enmity that, if you saw there was a God, might make you to wish him dead, and to desire, if it were possible, to kill him, may now dispose and incline to think there is none. Men are very often apt to think things are so as they would have them to be. The same principle disposes you to think God has no life, which, if you knew he had, would dispose you, if it were possible to take it away.

3. IF you think that there is a God, yet you don't realize it, that he is such a God as he is. You don't realize it, that he is so holy a God as he is : You don't realize it, that he has such an hatred of sin as indeed he has. You don't realize it, that he is so just a God as he is, that will by no means clear the guilty. But that in the Psalms is applicable to you : " These things hast thou done, and I kept silence : thou thoughtest that I was altogether such a one as thy self. * So that if you think there is a God, you don't think there is such a God as there is. And your atheism appears in this, as well as in thinking there is no God. For that God that you think there is, is not that God that indeed is ; but another, one of your own feigning, the fruit of your own vain, deluded imagination. So that your objection arises from this, that you don't find such a sensible hatred against that God which you have formed, to suit your self ; a God that you like better than the true God.

But

* Psal. 121.

But this is no argument that you han't bitter enmity against the true God ; for it was your enmity against the true God, and your not liking him, that has put you upon forming up another in your imagination, that you like better. It is your enmity against those attributes of God's holiness and justice, and the like, that has put you upon conceiving another, who is not so holy as he is, and don't hate sin so much, and won't be so strictly just in punishing it ; and whose wrath against sin is not so terrible.

But if you was sensible of the vanity of your own conceits, and that God was not such an one as you have imagined ; but that he is, as he is indeed, an infinitely holy, just, sin hating & sin revenging God, who will not tolerate nor endure the worship of idols, you would be much more liable to feel the sensible exercises of enmity against him, than you are now. And this experience confirms. For we see that when men come to be under convictions, and to be made sensible that God is not as they have heretofore imagined ; but that he is such a jealous, sin hating God, and whose wrath against sin is so dreadful, they are much more apt to have sensible exercises of enmity against God, than before.

4. YOUR having always been taught that God is infinitely above you, and out of your reach, has prevented your enmity's being exercised in those ways, that otherwise it would have been. You have always from your infancy been taught, that God is so high, that you can't hurt him ; that notion has grown up with you. And hence you be not sensible, that you have any disposition to hurt him ; because it has been conceived so impossible, that it has not come into your mind. And hence your enmity has not been exercised in revengeful thoughts ; because revenge has never found any room here ; it has never found any handle to take hold of ; there has been no conception of any such thing, and hence it has lain still. A serpent won't bite

bite, or spit poison at that which it sees at a great distance; which if it saw near, would do it immediately. Opportunity shews what men be often times, whether friends or enemies. Opportunity to do, puts men in mind of doing; wakens up such principles as lay dormant before. Opportunity stirs up desire to do, where there was before a disposition, that without opportunity would have lain still. If a man has had an old grudge against another, and has a fair opportunity to be revenged, this will revive his malice, and waken up a desire of revenge.

If a great and sovereign prince injures a poor man, and tho' what he does is looked upon very cruel, that won't ordinarily stir up that passionate revenge, as if he sustain'd no bigger an injury from one of his equals, because he is so much above him, and out of his reach. Many a man that has appeared calm and meek, when he has had no power in his hands, and has not appeared, either to himself or others, to have any disposition to these and those cruel acts; that yet afterwards when he came to have opportunity by unexpected advancement, or otherwise, has appeared like a ravenous wolf, or devouring lion. So it was with *Hazael*. "And Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? And he answered, Because I know the evil that thou wilt do unto the children of Israel: their strong holds wilt thou set on fire, and their young men wilt thou slay with the sword, and wilt dash their children, and rip up their women with child. And Hazael said, But what, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this great thing! And Elisha answered, The Lord hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria."† Hazael was then a servant; he had no power in his hands to do as he pleased; and so that cruel disposition that was in him had lain hid, and he did not himself imagine that it was there: But afterwards, when he became king of Syria, and was absolute, and
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† 2 Kings viii. 12, 13.

had none to controul him ; then it broke out and appeared, and he did as the prophet had foretold. He committed those very acts of cruelty, that he thought it was not in his heart to do. And it was want of opportunity that was the thing that made the difference. It was all in his heart before : he was such a dog then as to do this thing, but only had not had opportunity. And therefore when he seems surprized that the prophet should say so of him, all the reason the prophet gives is, “ The Lord hath shewed me that thou shalt be king over Syria.”

And some natural men are such dogs as to do things, if they had opportunity, which they don't imagine it is in their hearts to do. You object against your having a *mortal* hatred against God ; that you never felt any desire to kill him. But one reason has been, that it has always been conceived so impossible by you, and you have been so sensible how much desires would be in vain, that it has kept down such a desire. But if the life of God were within your reach, and you knew it, it would not be safe one hour. Who knows what thoughts would presently arise in your heart by such an opportunity, and what disposition would be raised up in your heart ! Who would trust your heart, that there would not presently be such thoughts as these, tho' they are enough to make one tremble to mention them ? “ Now I have opportunity to set myself at liberty — that I need not be kept in continual slavery by the strict law of God.—Then I may take my liberty to walk in that way I like best, and need not be continually in such slavish fear of God's displeasure. And God has not done well by me, in many instances. He has done most unjustly by me, in holding me bound to destruction for unbelief, and other things which I can't help—He has shewn mercy to others, and refused it to me. I have now an opportunity to deliver my self, and there can be no danger of my being hurt for it : God will not be
alive

alive to revenge it. And then there will be no God for us to be terrified about, and so keep us in slavery.”

Who would trust your heart, that such thoughts would not arise? And others, much more horrid? too dreadful to be mention'd! and therefore I forbear. Those natural men are foolishly insensible of what is in their own hearts, who think there would be no danger of any such workings of heart, if they knew they had opportunity.

5. You little consider, how much your having no more of the sensible exercises of hatred to God, is owing to a being restrained by fear. You have always been taught what a dreadful thing it is to hate God. And you have been taught what a dreadful Being GOD is, and how terrible God's displeasure is; that God sees the heart and knows all the thoughts; and that you are in his hands, and he can make you as miserable as he pleases, and as soon as he pleases. And these things have restrained you: and the fear that has risen from these things, has kept you from appearing what you be; it has kept down your enmity, and made that serpent afraid to shew it's head, as otherwise it would do. If a man were wholly under the power of an enemy, tho' he were never so much of an enemy to him, he would be afraid to exercise his hatred in outward acts, unless it was with great disguise. And if it be supposed that such an enemy, in whose power he was, could see his heart, and know all his thoughts; and apprehended that he would put him to a terrible death, if he saw the workings of malice there, how greatly would this restrain! He would be afraid so much as to believe himself, that he hated his enemy: But there would be all manner of smothering, disguise and hypocrisy, and feigning even of thoughts and affections.

Thus your enmity has been kept under restraint; and thus it has been from your infancy. You have grown

up in it. so that it is become an habitual restraint. You dare not so much as think you hate God. If you do exercise hatred, you have a disguise for it, whereby you endeavour even to hide it from your own conscience; and so have all along deceived your self. And your deceit is very old and habitual: And hence you are so difficultly convinced. But this has been only restraint: it has been no mortification. But there has been an enmity against God in its full strength. It has been only restrained, like an enemy that durst not rise up and shew himself.



S E R M O N,





S E R M O N, IX.



R O M A N S v. 10.

*For if when we were Enemies, we were reconciled
to God by the Death of his Son.—*

D O C T R I N E.

Natural Men are God's Enemies.

HAVING shewn,—in what respects they are enemies,—to how great a degree they are enemies—and why they are so; I proceeded to answer some Objections.

The objection now under consideration is, that many natural men may make from their not being *sensible* that they are God's enemies, whence they conclude, that they have no enmity against God. †

This objection has been answered in five particulars. I now proceed to

Ans. 6. One reason why you have not felt more sensible hatred to God may be because you have not had much trial of what is in your heart. It may be God has hitherto in a great measure let you alone. The enmity that is in men's hearts against God, is like a serpent, which if it be let alone lies still; but if any body disturbs it, will soon hiss, and be enraged, and shew its serpentine spiteful nature.

I 3

Notwithstanding

† See the objection stated at large, p. 124.

Notwithstanding the good opinion you have of your self, yet a little trial would shew you to be a viper, and your heart would be set all on a rage against God. One thing that restrains you now is your *hope*. You hope to receive many things from God. Your own interest is concerned; you hope to make great gains of God. So that both hope and fear operate together, to restrain your enmity from such sensible exercises, as otherwise would be. But if once hope was gone, you would soon shew what you was: you would soon feel your enmity against God in a rage.

7. IF you pretend that you do not feel enmity against God, and yet act as an enemy, you may certainly conclude that it is not because you are no enemy; but because you do not know your own heart. Actions are the best interpreter of the disposition: They shew better than any thing else, what the heart is. It must be because you do not observe your own behaviour, that you question whether you are an enemy to God.

What other account can you give of your own carriage, but only your being God's enemy? What other account can be given of your so opposing God in your ways; walking so exceeding contrary to him, contrary to his counsels, contrary to his commands, and contrary to his glory? What other account can be given of your casting so much contempt upon God; your setting him so low; your acting so much against his authority, and against his kingdom and interest in the world? What other account can be given of your so setting your will in opposition to God's will, and that so obstinately, for so long a time, against so many warnings as you have had? What other account can be given of your joining so much with Satan, in the opposition he is making to the kingdom of God in the world? And that you will join with him against God, tho' it be so much against your own interest, and tho' you expose your self by it to everlasting misery?

Such

Such like behaviour in one man towards another, would be look'd on as sufficient evidence of a man's being an enemy to another. If he should be seen to behave thus from time to time, and that it was his constant manner, none would want any better evidence that he was an enemy to his neighbour. If you your self had a servant that carried it towards you, as you do towards God, you would not think there was need of any greater evidence of his being your enemy. If your servant should manifest so much contempt of you; should disregard your commands as much as you do the commands of God; and should go so directly contrary, should in so many ways act the very reverse of your commands; and should seem so set himself in ways that were contrary to your will so obstinately and incorrigibly, without any amendment from your repeated calls and warnings and threatnings; and should act so cross to you day and night, as you do to God; when you sought one thing, he would seek the contrary; when you did any work, he would, as much as in him lay, undo and destroy your work; and should continually drive at such ends, as tended to overthrow the ends you aimed at: when you sought to bring to pass any design, he would endeavour to overthrow your design; and should set himself as much against your interest, as you do your self against God's honor. And you should moreover see him from time to time with others that were your declared mortal enemies; and making them his counsellors, so much as you do the devils, God's declared mortal enemies: and hearkening to their counsels, as much as you do to satan's temptations: Should you not think you had sufficient evidence that he was your enemy indeed?

Therefore consider seriously your own ways, and weigh your own behaviour. "How canst thou say, I

am not polluted—? see thy way in the valley, know what thou hast done.” *

Obj. II. NATURAL men may be ready to object, the respect they shew to God from time to time. This makes many to think that they are far from being such enemies to God. They carry it respectfully towards God: they pray to him in secret, and do it in as humble a manner as they are able. They attend on public worship, & take a great deal of pains to do it in a decent manner. It seems to them that they shew God a great deal of respect: they use many very respectful terms in their prayer: they give him all the honor they can: they are respectful in their manner of speaking, and in their voice, and their gestures, and the like.

But to this, I

Answer, That all this is done in meer hypocrisy. All this seeming respect is feigned, there is no sincerity in it: there is external respect, but no respect in the heart: there is a shew, and nothing else. You only cover your enmity with a painted vail. You put on the disguise of a friend, but in your heart you are a mortal enemy for all that. There is external honor, but inward contempt: There is a shew of friendship and regard, but inward hatred. You do but deceive yourself with your shew of respect; and endeavour to deceive God: not considering that God looks not on the outward appearance, but that he looks on the heart.

Here consider particularly,

I. THAT much of that seeming respect which natural men shew to God, is owing to their education. They have been taught from their infancy that they ought to shew great respect to God. They have been taught to use respectful language, when speaking about God, and to behave with solemnity, when attending on those exercises of religion, wherein they have to do with God. They from their childhood have seen that

this

this is the manner of others, when they pray to God, to use reverential expressions, and a reverential behaviour before him. And their shew of respect, which they make to God, is owing in a great measure to this.

Those who are brought up in places where they have commonly from their infancy, heard men take the name of God in vain, and swear and curse, and blaspheme; they learn to do the same; and it becomes habitual to them so to do. And it is the same way, & no other, that you have learned to behave respectfully towards God; not that you have any more respect to God than they: but they have been brought up one way, and you another. In some parts of the world, men are brought up in the worship of idols of silver, and gold, and wood, and stone, made in the shape of men and beasts. "They say of them, Let the men that sacrifice, kiss the calf."* In some parts of the world, they are brought up to worship serpents, and are taught from their infancy to carry it with great respect to them. And in some places, they are brought up in worshiping the devil, who appears to them in a bodily shape; and to behave with a shew of great reverence and honor towards him. And what respect you shew to God has no better foundation; it comes the same way, and is worth no more.

2. THAT shew of respect which you make is *forced*. You come to God, and make a great shew of respect to him, and use very respectful terms, with a respectful, reverential tone and manner of speaking; and your countenance is grave and solemn; and you put on an humble aspect; and you kneel, and use humble, respectful postures, out of fear. You are afraid that God will execute his wrath upon you; and so you feign a great deal of respect, that he may not be angry with you. "Through the greatness of thy power shall thine enemies submit themselves unto thee."† In the original it is, "shall thine enemies lie to thee." It is render'd therefore
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* Hof. xiii. 2. † Pfal. lxvi. 3.

in the margin, "shall yield feigned obedience to thee." All that you do in religion is forc'd and feign'd. Thro' the greatness of God's power, you yield feigned obedience. You are in God's power, and he is able to destroy you; and so you feign a great deal of respect to him, that he might not destroy you. As one might do towards an enemy that had taken him captive, though he at the same time would gladly make his escape, if he could, by taking away the life of him who had taken him captive.

3. It is not real respect that moves you to behave so towards God: you do it because you hope you shall get by it. 'Tis respect to yourself, and not respect to God, that moves you. You hope to move God to bestow the rewards of his children, by it. You are like the Jews who followed Christ, and called him *Rabbi*, and would make him a king. Not that they honored him so much in their hearts, as to think him worthy of the honor of a king; or that they had the respect of sincere subjects; but they did it for the sake of the loaves. "Jesus perceived that they would come and make him a king. And when they had found him on the other side of the sea, they said unto him, Rabbi, how camest thou hither? Jesus answered and said unto them, Verily, verily I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because you saw the miracles, but because ye did eat of the loaves, and were filled." †

These things don't argue but that you are implacable enemies to God notwithstanding. If you examine your prayers and other duties, your own consciences will tell you, that the seeming respect which you have shewn to God in them, has been only in hypocrisy. That oftentimes you have set forth in your prayers, that God was a great God, and a glorious God, and an infinitely holy God, as if you greatly honor'd him on the account of these attributes; and you, at the same time, had no
sense

† Job. vi. 15. 25, 26.

sense in your heart of the greatness and gloriousness of God, or of any excellency in his holiness. And so your own consciences will tell you, that you have often pretended to be thankful; you have told God, that you thank'd him that you was alive, and thank'd him for these and those mercies, when you have not found the least jot of thankfulness in your heart. And so you have told God of your own unworthiness, and set forth what a vile creature you was; when you have had no humble sense of your own unworthiness.

And if these forementioned restraints were thrown off, you would soon throw off all your shew of respect. Take away fear, and take away a regard to your own interest, and there would soon be an end to all those appearances of love, honor, and reverence, which now you make. All these things are not at all inconsistent with the most implacable enmity.

The devil himself made a shew of respect to Christ, when he was afraid that he was going to torment him; and when he hoped to persuade Christ to spare him longer. "When he saw Jesus, he cried out, and fell down before him, and with a loud voice said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou son of God most high? I beseech thee, torment me not." *

Obj. III. SOME may perhaps object against this doctrine of their being God's enemies, *the religious affections* they have sometimes experienced. They may be ready to say, That when they have come before God in prayer, they have not only used respectful terms and gestures, but they have prayed with affection; their prayers have been attended with tears, which they are ready to think shewed something in the heart.

Ans. THESE affections have risen from other causes, and not from any true respect to God.

As particularly,

I. THEY

* Luk. viii. 28.

1. **THEY** have risen from self-love, and not love to God. If you have wept before God, from the consideration of your own pitiful case ; that has been because you loved your self, and not because you had any respect to God. And if your tears have been from sorrow for your sins ; you have mourned for your sins, because you have sinned against your self, and not because you have sinned against God. "When ye fasted and mourned, did ye at all fast unto me, even unto ME ?" ||

2. **PRIDE**, and a good thought of themselves, very commonly has a great hand in the affections of natural men. They have a good opinion of what they are doing when they are praying ; and the reflection on that affects them : they are affected with their own goodness. Men's self-righteousness often occasions tears. An high opinion of themselves before God, and an imagination of their being persons of great account with him, has affected them, in their transactions with God.

There is commonly abundance of pride in the midst of tears ; and pride is in a great measure the source of them. And then they are so far from being an argument that you be not an enemy to God, that on the contrary, they are an argument, that you be. In your very tears, you are, in a vain conceit of yourself, exalting your self against God.

3. **THE** affections of natural men do often arise from wrong conceits that they have of God. They conceive of God after the manner they do of men, as tho' he were a being liable to be wrought upon in his affections. They conceive of him as one whose heart could be drawn, whose affections can be overcome, by what he sees in them. They conceive of him as being taken with them, and their performances ; and this works on their affections ; and thus one tear draws another, and their

their affections increase by reflection. And oftentimes they conceive of God as one that loves them, and is a friend to them: and such a mistake may work much on their affections. But such affections that arise towards God, as they conceit him to be, is no argument that they have not the same implacable hatred towards God, considered as he really is. There is no concluding that men are not enemies, because they are affected and shed tears in their prayers, and the like. *Saul* was very much affected when *David* expostulated with him about pursuing after him, and seeking to kill him. *David's* words wrought exceedingly upon *Saul's* affections. "And it came to pass when *David* had made an end of speaking these words unto *Saul*, that *Saul* said, Is this thy voice, my son *David*? and *Saul* lift up his voice and wept."* He was so affected that he wept aloud, and called *David* *his Son*, tho' he was but just before seeking his life. But this affection of *Saul's* was no argument that he did not still continue in his enmity against *David*. He was *David's* mortal enemy before, and sought his life; and so he did afterwards. It was but a pang: his enmity was not mortified or done away. The next news we hear of *Saul* is, that he was pursuing *David*, and seeking his life again.

THE APPLICATION.

This shall be of Instruction, in several Inferences.

INF. I. IF it be so, that natural men are God's enemies; then hence we may learn, how much we are indebted to God for his restraining grace. If all natural men are God's enemies, what would they not do, if they were not restrain'd! For what has one that is an enemy, within himself, or in his disposition, to restrain him from acting against him that is an enemy to? Hatred won't restrain a man from acting any thing whatsoever

* 1 Sam. xxiv. 16, Chap. xxvi. 1, &c.

whatsoever against him that is hated. Nothing is too bad for hatred, if it be meer hatred, and no love; nothing is too bad for that to do towards the object of it. Hatred shews no kindness either in doing, or forbearing. Only hatred will never make a man forbear to act any thing whatsoever against God; for the very nature of hatred is to seek evil. But wicked men, as has been shewn, are meer enemies to God. They have hatred, without any love at all. And hence natural men have nothing within them, in their own nature, to restrain them from any thing that is bad, be it never so bad: and therefore their restraint must not be owing to nature, but to restraining grace. And therefore whatever wickedness we have been kept from, it is not because we have not been bad enough to commit it; but it is God has restrained us, and kept us back from sin. There can be no worse principle, than a principle of hatred to God. The devils in hell don't do any thing from any worse principle than this. And there can be no principle that will go further in wickedness than this, if it be neither mortified nor restrained. But it is not mortified in natural men; and therefore all that keeps them from any degree of wickedness, is restrained. If we have seen others do things that we never did; and if they have done worse than we, this is owing to restraining grace. If we have not done as bad as *Pharash*, it is owing to divine restraints. If we have not done as bad as *Judas*, or as the Scribes and Pharisees, or as bad as *Herod*, or *Simon Magus*, it is because God has restrained our corruption. If we have ever heard or read of any that have done worse than we; if we have not gone the length in sinning, that the most wicked pirates or carnal persecutors have gone, this is owing to restraining grace. For we are all naturally the enemies of God as much as they. If we have not committed the unpardonable sin, it is owing to restraining grace. There is no worse principle in exercise

in that sin, than enmity against God. There is the entire fountain, and all the foundation of the sin against the Holy Ghost, in that enmity against God, that we all have in us, and naturally reigns in us.

It is not we our selves that restrain our selves from the commission of the greatest imaginable wickedness; for enmity against God reigns in us and over us; we are under the power and dominion of it, and are sold under it. We do not restrain that which reigns over us. A slave, as long as he continues a meer slave, cannot controul his master. "He that committeth sin, is the servant of sin. † So that the restraint of this our cruel tyrant, is owing to God, and not to us. What does a poor, impotent subject do to restrain the absolute Lord, that has him wholly under his power ?

How much will it appear that the world is indebted to the restraining grace of God, if we consider that the world is full of enemies to God. The world is full of inhabitants; and almost all are God's enemies, his implacable and mortal enemies. What therefore would they not do; what work would they not make, if God did not restrain them ?

GOD's work in the restraint that he exercises over a wicked world, is a glorious work. God's holding the reins upon the corruptions of a wicked world, and setting bounds to their wickedness, is a more glorious work, than his ruling the raging of the sea, and setting bounds to its proud waves, and saying, hitherto shalt thou come, and no further. In hell, God lets the wickedness of wicked spirits have the reins, to rage without restraint; and it would be in a great measure upon earth as it in hell, did not God restrain the wickedness of the world.

But in order to the better understanding how it is owing to the restraining grace of God, that we are kept
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† Joh. viii. 34.

and with-held from the highest acts of sin, I would here observe several things.

1. WHENEVER men are with held from sinning by the common influence of God's spirit, they are with-held by restraining grace. If sinners are awakened sinners, and are made sensible of the great guilt that sin brings, and that it exposes to a dreadful punishment; they under such circumstances dare not allow themselves in wilful sin: God restrains them *by the convictions of his spirit*; and therein their being kept from sin, is owing to restraining grace. And sinners that live under the gospel, that are not awakened sinners, but in a great measure secure, yet commonly have some degrees of the influence of God's spirit with his ordinances influencing natural conscience. And tho' they be not sufficient thoroughly to rouse them out of security, or make them reform; yet they keep them from going such lengths in sin, as otherwise they might do. And when it is thus, this is restraining grace. They are very stupid and sottish; yet they would be a great deal more so, if God should let them wholly alone.

2. ALL the restraints that men are under from the word and ordinances, is from restraining grace. The word and ordinances of God might have some degree of influence on men's natural principles of self-love, to restrain them from sin, without any degree of the influence of God's spirit: But this would be the restraining grace of God; for God's goodness and mercy to a sinful world, appears in his giving his word to be a restraint on the wickedness of the world. When men are restrained by fear of those punishments that the word of God threatens; or by the warnings of the word, or by the offers and promises of it; when the word of God works upon hope, or upon fear, or natural conscience, to restrain men from sin, this is the restraining grace of God. When we are restrained thus, 'tis owing to the mercy of God that we are restrained. 'Tis an instance
of

of God's mercy that he has revealed hell, to restrain men's wickedness; and that he has revealed a way of salvation, and a possibility of eternal life. This is a thing that has great influence on men, to restrain them from sin; and this is the restraining grace of God.

3. WHEN men are restrained from sin, by the light of nature, this also is restraining grace. If men are destitute of the light of God's word, yet the light of natural conscience teaches that sin brings guilt, and exposes to punishment. The light of nature teaches that there is a God who governs the world, and will reward the good and punish the evil. When men are restrain'd by this, they are to attribute their restraints to the restraining grace of God; for it is God who is the author of the light of nature, as well as the light of revelation. He in mercy to mankind, makes known many things by natural light to work upon men's fear and self love, to restrain their corruptions.

4. WHEN God restrains men's corruptions by his providence, this is restraining grace. And that whether it be his general providence, or his providence in ordering the state of mankind; or his particular providence, or providential disposals towards them in particular.

(1.) GOD doth greatly restrain the corruption of the world, by ordering the state of mankind. He has set mankind here in a mortal state, & that is a great restraint on their corruption. He hath set mankind in a state of probation for eternity, & that is a great restraint to corruption. God hath so ordered the state of mankind, that ordinarily many kinds of sin & wickedness are disgraceful, and what tend to the hurt of a man's character and reputation amongst his fellow men; and that is a great restraint. He hath so disposed the world, that many kinds of wickedness are many ways very contrary to men's temporal interest; and that is a great restraint. God has so disposed the state of mankind that they are led to prohibit many kinds of wickedness by human

laws ; and that is a great restraint. God hath set up a church in the world, made up of those who, if they are answerable to their profession, have the fear and love of God in their hearts ; and they by holding forth light and the word of God, and keeping up the ordinances of God in the world, and by warning others, are a great restraint to the wickedness of the world.

But in all these things, the restraining grace of God appears. It is God's mercy to mankind, that he has so ordered their state, that they should have so many things, by fear and a regard to their own interest, to restrain their corruptions. It is God's mercy to the world, that the state of mankind here, does so differ in that respect, from the state of the damned in hell ; where men will have none of these things to restrain them : they won't be in such circumstances that will so influence their hope and fear, to restrain them from sin.

The wisdom of God, as well as the attributes of God's grace, greatly appears in thus disposing things for the restraining of the wickedness of men.

(2.) GOD doth greatly restrain the corruptions of men by his particular providence, or providence towards particular persons ; by placing men in such circumstances as to lay them under restraints. And to this it is often owing that some natural men never go such lengths in sinning, or are never guilty of such atrocious wickedness as some others, that providence has placed them in different circumstances. If it were not for this, many thousands of natural men, who now live sober and orderly lives, would do as *Pharoah* did. The reason why they do not, is, that providence has placed them in different circumstances. If they were in the same circumstances as *Pharoah* was in, they would do as he did. And so, if in the same circumstances as *Manassah*—as *Judas*—as *Nero*— But providence restrains their corruptions, by putting them in such circumstances, as not to open such a door or outlet for their

their corruption, as he did to them. So some do not do such horrid things as others, they do not live such horribly vicious lives as some others, because providence has restrained them by ordering that they should have a better education than others. Providence has order'd that they should be the children of pious parents it may be, or should live where they should enjoy many means of grace; and so providence has laid them under restraints. Now this is restraining grace. The attribute of God's grace is exercised in thus restraining persons in providence.

And oftentimes God restrains men's corruptions by particular events of providence. By particular afflictions they are brought under, or by particular occurrences, whereby God does, as it were, block up men's way in their course of sin, or in some wickedness that they had devised, and that otherwise they would perpetrate. Or something happens unexpected to hold men back from that which they were about to commit. When men are restrained thus, it is God that restrains them. Thus God restrained *David* by his providence from shedding blood, as he intended to do. "Now therefore, my lord, as the LORD liveth, and as thy soul liveth, seeing the LORD hath withholden thee from coming to shed blood, and from avenging thy self with thine own hand——"* God withheld him from it no otherwise, than by ordering it so in his providence that *Abigail* should come, and by her wisdom should cool and pacify him, and perswade him to alter his purpose.†

5. GODLY persons are greatly indebted to restraining grace, in keeping them from dreadful acts of sin. So it was, in that instance of *David*, that has been just mentioned. Godly persons when God has left, and has not restrained them, have fallen into dreadful acts of sin. So did *David*, in the case of *Uriah*.—*Lot*—

K 2

Peter

* 1 Sam xxv 26. † See ver. 32, 33, 34.

Peter— And when other godly persons are kept from falling into such sins, or much worse sins than these, it is owing to the restraining grace of God. Meerly having a principle of grace in their hearts, or meerly their being godly persons, without God's presence to restrain them, will not keep them from great acts of sin. That the godly do not fall into the most horrid sins that can be conceived of, is owing not so much to any inconsistency between their falling into such sins, and the having a principle of grace in the heart, as it is owing to the covenant mercy of God, whereby he has promised never to leave nor forsake his people; and that he will not suffer them to be tempted above what they are able; but with the temptation will make a way for them to escape. If saving grace restrains men from great acts of sin, this is owing to God who gives such exercises of grace at that time when the temptation comes, that they are restrained.

Let not the godly therefore be insensible of their indebtedness to the restraining grace of God. Tho' the godly cannot be said to be enemies to God, because a principle of enmity does not reign; yet they have the very same principle and seed of enmity in them, tho' it be mortified. Tho' it be not in reigning power, yet it has great strength; and is too strong for them, without God's almighty power to help them against it. Tho' they be not enemies to God, because they have another principle, besides a principle of enmity, viz. a principle of love; yet their old man, the body of sin and death that yet remains in them, is a mortal enemy to God. Corruption in the godly, is not a whit better than it is in the wicked. The corruption in them is of as bad a nature every whit, as that which is in a mortal enemy to God: it aims at the life of God, where ever it is. And tho' it be not in reigning power; yet it would dreadfully rage, were it not for God's restraining grace.

GOD.

GOD gives his restraining grace to both natural men and godly men ; but only there is this difference. God gives his restraining grace to his children in way of covenant mercy : 'tis part of the mercy promised to them in his covenant. God is faithful, and will not leave them to sin in like manner as wicked men do ; otherwise they would do every whit as bad.

Let not therefore the godly attribute it to themselves, or meerly to their own goodness, that they be not guilty of such horrid crimes as they hear of in others : let them consider 'tis not owing to them, but to God's restraints.

Thus all both godly and ungedly, may learn from this doctrine. their great indebtedness to the restraining grace of God.



K 3

S E R M O N,





S E R M O N, X.



R O M A N S v. 10.

*For if when we were Enemies, we were reconciled
to God by the Death of his Son,——*

D O C T R I N E.

Natural Men are God's Enemies.

IN speaking to this doctrine, it has been shewn, in what respects they are God's enemies,—to what degree they are enemies,—and why they are so. And some objections have been answered. —And we have proceeded to the improvement of the doctrine, in one inference. I now proceed to

INF. II. HENCE we may learn the reason why natural men will not come to Christ: For they do not come because they *will not* come. “Ye will not come to me, that ye might have life.”* When we say that natural men be not willing to come to Christ, it is not meant that they are not willing to be delivered from hell; for without doubt, no natural man is willing to go to hell. Nor is it meant, that they are not willing that Christ should keep them from going to hell. Without doubt, natural men that are under awakenings, do often greatly desire this. But if they do desire it, this don't argue that they are willing to come to Christ; for
notwithstanding

* Joh. v. 40.

notwithstanding their desire to be delivered from hell, yet their heart don't close with Christ, but are averse to him. They see nothing in Christ wherefore they should desire him; no beauty or comeliness to draw or incline their hearts to him. And they are not willing to take Christ as he is; they would feign divide Christ. There are some things in him that they like, and others that they greatly dislike; but consider him as he is, and as he is offered to them in the gospel, and they will not have him. They are not willing to accept of Christ as he is offered; for in doing so, they must of necessity part with all their sins; they must sell the world, and part with their own righteousness. But they are not willing to do that; they had rather, for the present, run the venture of going to hell than do that.

When men are truly willing to come to Christ, they are *freely* willing. It is not what they are *forced* and drove to by threatnings; but they are willing to come, and choose to come without being driven. But natural men have no such free willingness; but on the contrary have an aversion. And the ground of it is that which we have heard, viz. That they are enemies to God. Their having such a reigning enmity against God, makes them obstinately refuse to come to Christ. If a man is an enemy to God, he will necessarily be an enemy to Christ too; for Christ is the Son of God; he is infinitely near to God, yea he is God. He has the nature of God, as well as the nature of man. He is a saviour appointed of God. God anointed him, and sent him into the world. And in doing what he did in the work of redemption, he wrought the works of God. He always did those things that pleased God; and all that he does as a saviour is to the glory of God. And one great thing that he aimed at in his redemption was to deliver them from their idols which they had chosen, and bring them to God. The case being so, and sinners being enemies to God, they will necessarily be opposite to

coming to Christ; for Christ is of God, and as a favourer seeks to bring them to God only: But natural men are not of God, but are averse to him.

INF. III. FROM this doctrine we may learn, how dreadful the condition of natural men is. Their state is a state of enmity with God. If we consider what God is, and what men are, it will be easy for us to conclude that such men as are God's enemies, must be miserable. Consider, ye that are enemies to God, how great a God he is that you are enemies to. He is the eternal God; the God that fills heaven and earth, and whom the heaven of heavens cannot contain. He is the God that made you; the God in whose hand your breath is, and whose are all your ways; the God in whom you live and move, and have your being; the God who has your soul and body in his hands every moment.

You would look on yourself as in very unhappy circumstances, if your neighbours were all your enemies, and none of your fellow creatures were your friends. If every body was set against you, and all despised and hated you, you would be ready to think, you had better be out of the world than in it. But if it be such a calamity to have enmity maintained between you and your fellow creatures, what is it, when you and the almighty God are enemies one to another? What avails either the friendship or enmity of you neighbours, poor little worms of the dust, that are about you, in comparison of the friendship or enmity of the great God of heaven and earth? Consider,

I. IF you continue in your enmity a little longer, there will be a mutual enmity between God and you to all eternity. God will appear to be your dreadful & irreconcilable enemy. And you know not how soon it will come to this. If you should die an enemy to God, there will be no such thing as any reconciliation after death. God will then appear in hatred of you. As
you

you are a meer enemy to God, so God will then appear a meer enemy to you; he will appear in perfect hatred, without any love, and without any pity, and without any mercy at all. As you hate God, he will hate you. And that will be verified of you: "My soul loathed them, and their soul abhorred me." † And then God will be your enemy forever. If you be not reconciled so as to become his friend in this life, God never will become your friend after death. If you continue an enemy to God till death, God will continue an enemy to you to all eternity. There will nothing avail to reconcile God to you hereafter. You will find that you can't move the heart of God by any of your cries. You will have no mediator offered you; there will be no days man betwixt you. So that it becomes you to consider what it will be to have God your enemy to all eternity, without any possibility of being reconciled.

Consider, what will it be to have this enmity to be mutual or maintain'd for ever on both sides? For as God will for ever continue an enemy to you, so you will for ever continue an enemy to God. If you continue God's enemy until death, you will always be his enemy. And after death your enmity will have no restraint, but it will break out and rage without controul. When you come to be a fire-brand of hell, you will be a fire-brand in two respects, viz. As you will be all on fire full of the fire of God's wrath: and also as you will be all on a blaze with spite & malice toward God. You will be as full of the fire of malice, as you will with the fire of divine vengeance, & both will make you full of torment. Then you will appear as you be, a viper indeed. You are now a viper; but under great disguise; a wolf in sheep's cloathing: But then your mask will be pulled off; you shall loose your garments, and walk naked.* Then will you as a serpent spit poison at God, and vent your rage and malice in fearful blasphemies. Out of that

† Zech. xi. 8. * Rev. xvi. 15.

that mouth, out of which, when you open it, will proceed flames, will also proceed dreadful blasphemies against God. That same tongue, to cool which you will wish for a drop of water, will be eternally employed in cursing and blaspheming God and Christ. And that not from any new corruption being put into your heart; but only from God's withdrawing his hand from restraining your old corruption. And what a miserable way will this be of spending your eternity!

(2) Consider, What will be the consequence of a mutual enmity between God and you, if it be continued. Now you find your self left alone; you find no very terrible event; but there will be great changes. Tho' hitherto you have met with no very great changes, yet they will come. After a little while, dying time will come; and then what will be the consequence of this enmity? God, whose enemy you be; has the frame of your body in his hands. Your times are in his hand; and he it is that appoints your bounds. And when he sends death to arrest you, and change your countenance, and dissolve your frame, and take you away from all your earthly friends, and from all that is dear and pleasant to you in the world; what will be the issue then of God and you being enemies one to another? Will not you then stand in need of God's help? Would not he be the best friend in such a case, worth more than ten thousand earthly friends? If God be your enemy, then who will you betake your self to for a friend? When you launch forth into the boundless gulf of eternity, then you will need some friend to take care of you, but if God be your enemy, where will you betake your self? Your soul must go naked into another world, in eternal separation from all worldly things: and you won't be able to dispose of your self; your soul will not be in its own power to defend, or dispose of it self. Will you not then need to have God for a friend, into whose hands

hands you may commend your spirit? And how dreadful will it be, to have God your enemy then!

The time is coming when the frame of this world shall be dissolved. Christ shall descend in the clouds of heaven, in the glory of his Father; and you, with all the rest of mankind, must stand before the judgment seat of God. Then what will be the consequence of this mutual enmity betw en God and you! If God be your enemy, who will stand your friend? Who else will be able to help you, & what will you do? And what will be the event of God's being your enemy then? Now, it may be, it does not appear to be very terrible to you to have God for your enemy; but when such changes as these are brought to pass, it will greatly alter the appearance of things. Then God's favour will appear to you of infinite worth. They, and they only will then appear happy, who have the love of God: and then you will know that God's enemies are miserable.

But under this head, consider more particularly several things,

(I.) WHAT God can do to his enemies. Or rather, what can he not do? How miserable can he who is almighty make his enemies & those that he is an enemy to? Consider, you that are enemies to God, whether or no you shall be able to make your part good with him. "Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he? † Have you such a conceit of your own strength, as that you think to try it out with God? Do you intend to run the risque of an encounter with him? Do you imagine that your hands can be strong, or your heart endure? Do you think you shall be well able to defend yourself? Or will you be able to escape out of his hand? Or do you think to harden your own heart, and fortify yourself with courage, and set yourself to bear? And do you think that you shall be able to
uphold

† 1 Cor. x. 22,

uphold your spirits, when God acts as an enemy towards you? If so, then gird up your loins, and prepare to meet God, and see what the event will be. Therefore thus will I do unto thee,—and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God.—”* Is it not in vain to set the briars and thorns in battle against God? Is it not like setting dry briars and thorns in battle array against devouring flames; which tho’ they seem to be armed with natural weapons, yet the fire will pass through them, and burn them together? §

And if you endeavour to support yourself under God’s wrath, can’t God lay so much upon you as to sink and crush you? Can’t he lay you under such misery, as to cause your spirit quite to fail; so that you shall find no strength to resist him, or to uphold yourself? Why should a little worm think of supporting himself against an omnipotent adversary? Has not he that made you, and gave you your strength and your courage, got your strength and courage in his hands? Is it an hard thing for him to overcome it? Consider God has made your soul: and he that made it, knows how to punish it, to what degree he will. He can fill it with misery; he can bring what degree of sorrow, and anguish, and horror he will. And he that made your body, can bring what torments he will upon it. He has made every vein and sinew: and has every one in his hands, and he can fill every one as full of torments as he will. God who made you, has given you a capacity to bear torment; and he has that capacity in his hands; and he can enlarge it, and make you capable of more misery, as much more as he will. If God hates any one, and sets himself against him as his enemy, what cannot he do with him? How dreadful must it be to fall into the hands of such an enemy! Surely,

“ It

* Amos, iv. 12. § See Isai. xxvii. 4.

“It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God.” ||

2. IF God be your meer enemy, you may rationally conclude that he will act as such in his dealings with you. We have already observed that you are a mere enemy to God; that is, have enmity without any love or true respect. So, if you continue to be so, God will appear to be your meer enemy; and will be so forever, without being reconciled. But if it be so, he will doubtless act as such. If he eternally hates you, he will act in his dealings with you, as one that hates you with meer hatred, without any love or pity. The proper tendency and aim of hatred is the misery of the object hated; misery, and nothing else. So that you may expect God will make you miserable, and that you will not be spared; for sparing is not the effect of hatred, but of pity and mercy; which is a quite different thing from enmity.

Now God does not act as your meer enemy: If he corrects you, it is in measure. He now exercises abundance of mercy to you. He threatens you now; but it is in a way of warning, and so in a merciful way. He now calls and invites, and strives with you, and waits to be gracious to you. But hereafter there will be an end to all these things: In another world God will cease to shew you mercy.

3. IF you will continue God's enemy, you may rationally conclude that God will deal with you so as to make it appear how dreadful it is to have God for an enemy. It is very dreadful to have a mighty prince for an enemy. “The wrath of a king, is as the roaring of a lion.” § But if the wrath of man, a fellow-worm, be so terrible, what is the wrath of God! And God will doubtless shew it to be immensely more dreadful. If you will be an enemy, God will make you know that it is not a light thing to be an enemy to
God,

God, and have him for an enemy to you. God will doubtless glorify himself as an enemy, in his dealings with those to whom he is an enemy. That is, he will act so as to glorify those attributes which he exercises as an enemy, which are his majesty, his power and justice. God will deal so with you as to glorify these attributes in your destruction. His great majesty, his awful justice, and mighty power, shall be shewed upon you. "What if God willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction?" †

(4.) Consider, What God has said he will do to his enemies. He has declared that they shall not escape; but that he will surely punish them. "Thine hand shall find out all thine enemies, thy right hand shall find out all those that hate thee." † And repayeth them that hate him to their face, to destroy them: he will not be slack to him that hateth him, he will repay him to his face."* "The Lord shall wound the head of his enemies, and the hairy scalp of such an one as goeth on still in his trespasses. §

Yea, God hath *sworn* that he will be avenged on them; and that in a most awful and dreadful manner. "For I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever. If I whet my glittering sword, and mine hand take hold on judgment; I will render vengeance to mine enemies, and I will reward them that hate me. I will make mine arrows drunk with blood (and my sword shall devour flesh) and that with the blood of the slain—from the beginning of revenges on the enemy." † The terribleness of that destruction that God will bring on his enemies, is here variously set forth. As particularly: In God's "whetting his glittering sword, as one that prepares himself to do some great execution. "His hands take hold on judgment," to signify that he will surely

† Rom. ix. 22. † Psal. xxi. 8. * Deut. vii. 10. § Psal. lxxviii. 21. † Deut. xxxii. 40, 41, 42.

surely reward them as they deserve. "He will render vengeance to his enemies, and reward them that hate him." i. e. He will render their full reward; he won't fail or come short. As in the forementioned place it was said, he would not be slack in this matter. "I will make mine arrows drunk with blood." This signifies the greatness of the destruction. It shall not be a little of their blood that shall satisfy; but his arrows shall be glutted with their blood. "And his sword shall devour flesh." That is, it shall make dreadful waste of it. Hereby is very lively set forth the terrible manner in which God will one day rise up and execute vengeance on his enemies.

Again, the totalness and perfection of their destruction is represented in the following words: "The wicked shall perish, the enemies of the Lord shall be as the fat of lambs, they shall consume: into smoke shall they consume away." * The fat of lambs, when it is burnt in the fire, burns all up; there is not so much as a cinder left; it all consumes into smoke. This is made use of here to represent the *perfect* destruction of God's enemies in his wrath. So God hath promised Christ; that he would make his enemies his footstool. † i. e. He would pour the greatest contempt upon them, and as it were tread them under foot.

Consider, that all these things will be executed on you, if you continue God's enemies.

INF. IV. If it be so, that natural men are God's enemies, hence we may learn how justly God may refuse to shew you mercy. For is God obliged to shew mercy to his enemies? Is God bound to set his love on them that have no love to him; but hate him with perfect hatred? Is God bound to come and dwell with them that have an aversion to him, and choose to keep at a distance from him, and fly from him as one that is hateful

* Psal. xxxvii. 20. † Psal. cx. 1.

hateful to them? If you earnestly desire the salvation of your soul, is God bound to comply with your desires, when you do always resist and oppose his will? Is God bound to be perswaded and overcome by your prayers, when you are obstinate in your opposition to him, and refuse to yield obedience to him? Is God bound to put honor upon you, and to advance you to such dignity as to be a child of the King of Kings, and the heir of the kingdom of glory, while you at the same time have God in the greatest contempt, & set him too low to have the lowest place in your heart? Is God bound to spare your life, and deliver you from eternal death, when you are a mortal enemy to God, and would, if you could, destroy the Being of God? Is God oblig'd to set his great and transcendent love on you, so as to give you benefits purchased by the blood of his own Son, when your heart is all the while full of that enmity that strikes at the life of God?

This doctrine affords a strong argument for the *absolute sovereignty* of God, with respect to the salvation of sinners. If God is pleas'd to shew mercy to his haters, it is certainly fit that he should do it in a sovereign way, without acting as any way oblig'd. God will shew mercy to his mortal enemies; but then he will not be bound, he will have his liberty to choose the objects of his mercy; to shew mercy to what enemy he pleases, and punish and destroy which of his haters he pleases. And certainly this is a fit and reasonable thing. It is fit that God should distribute saving blessings in this way, and in no other, viz. in a sovereign and arbitrary way. And that ever any body thought of or devised any other way for God to shew mercy, than to have mercy on whom he would have mercy, must arise from ignorance of their own hearts, whereby they were insensible what enemies they naturally are to God.

But consider here the following things,

1. How causeless you are enemies to God. You have no manner of reason for it, either from what God is, or from what he has done. You have no reason for this from what he is. For he is an infinitely lovely and glorious Being; the fountain of all excellency: All that is amiable and lovely in the universe, is originally and eminently in him. Nothing can possibly be conceived of that could be lovely in God, that is not in him. & that in the greatest possible degree, even infinitely.

And you have no reason for this, from what God has done. For he has been a good & bountiful God to you. He has exercised abundance of kindness to you; has carried you from the womb, preserved your life, taken care of you, and provided for you, all your life long. He has exercised great patience and long suffering towards you. If it had not been for the kindness of God to you, what would have become of you? What would have become of your body? And what, before this time would have become of your soul? And you are now, every day, and hour, maintained by the goodness and bounty of God. Every new breath you draw, is a new gift of God to you. How causelessly then are you such dreadful enemies to God? And how justly, might God, for it, eternally deprive you of all mercy, seeing you do thus requite God for his mercy and kindness to you?

2. Consider, how you would resent it, if others were such enemies to you, as you are to God. If they had their hearts so full of enmity to you; if they treated you with such contempt, and opposed you, as you do God; and injured you so much as you do God, how would you resent it? Do you not find that you are apt greatly to resent it, when any oppose you, and shew an ill spirit towards you? And tho' you excuse your own enmity against God from your corrupt nature that you brought into the world with you, which

you could not help ; yet you do not excuse others for being enemies to you from their corrupt nature that they brought into the world, which they could not help ; but are ready bitterly to resent it notwithstanding.

Consider therefore, if you, a poor, unworthy, unlovely creature, do so resent it, when you be not loved, but hated, how may God justly resent it when you are enemies to him, an infinitely glorious Being ; and a Being from whom you have received so much kindness ?

3. How unreasonable is it for you to imagine that you can oblige God to have respect to you by any thing that you can do, continuing still to be his enemy. If you think you have prayed and read, and done considerable for God ; yet who cares for the seeming kindness of an enemy ?

What value would you your self set upon it, if a man should seem to carry it respectfully to you, with a fair face, talking smooth, and making a shew of friendship ; when you knew at the same time, that he was inwardly your mortal enemy ? Would you look upon yourself obliged for such respect and kindness ? Would you not rather abhor it ; Would you count such respect to be valued, as Joab's towards Amasa, who took him by the beard, and kissed him, and said, Art thou in health my brother ? and smote him at the same time under the fifth rib, and killed him ?

What if you do pray to God ? Is God obliged to hear the prayers of an enemy ? What if you have taken a great deal of pains, is God obliged to give heaven for the prayers of an enemy ? God may justly abhor your prayers, and all that you do in religion, as the flattery of a mortal enemy. No wonder God does not accept any thing from the hands of an enemy.

INF. V. HENCE we may learn how wonderful is the love that is manifested in giving Christ to die for us. For this love is love to enemies. That is taken notice of in the text, "While we were ENEMIES, we were

were reconciled to God by the death of his Son." How wonderful was the love of God the Father in giving such a gift, to such, who not only were such as could not be profitable to him, and such as could merit nothing from him, and poor little worms of the dust; but were his enemies, and enemies, to so great a degree! They had that enmity that aimed at his life; yet so did he love them, that he gave his own Son to lay down his own life, to save their lives. Tho' they had that enmity that sought to pull God down out of his throne; yet God so loved them, that he sent down Christ from heaven, from his throne there, to be in the form of a servant; and in stead of a throne of glory, gave him to be nailed to the cross, and to be laid in the grave, that so we might be brought to a throne of glory.

How wonderful was the love of Christ, in thus exercising *dying love* towards his enemies! That he should so love those that hated him, with hatred that sought to take away his life; so as voluntarily to lay down his life, that they might have life through him. "Herein is love; not that we loved him, but that he loved us, and laid down his life for us.

INF. VI. IF we are all naturally God's enemies, hence we may learn what a spirit it becomes us to be of towards our enemies. Tho' we are enemies to God, yet we hope that God has loved us; and we hope that Christ has died for us; and we hope that God has forgiven or will forgive us; and will do us good, and bestow infinite mercies and blessings upon us, so as to make us happy for ever. All this mercy, we hope has been, or will be exercised towards us, while enemies.

Certainly then, it won't become us to be bitter in our spirits against those that are enemies to us, and have injured and ill treated us; and tho' they have yet an ill spirit towards us. Seeing we depend so much on God's forgiving us, tho' enemies, we should be of a spirit of forgiveness;

forgiveness towards our enemies. And therefore our Saviour inserted it in that prayer, which he dictated as a general directory to all; “*Forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors,*” to enforce the duty upon us, and to shew us how reasonable it is. And we ought to love them even while enemies; for so we hope God hath done to us. We should be the children of our father, who is kind to the unthankful and evil. †

If we refuse thus to do, and are of another spirit, we may justly expect that God will deny us his mercy, as he has threatned! “*If ye forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly father will also forgive you: but if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.* † The same we have in the parable of the man, who owed his lord ten thousand talents. ||

† Luk. vi. 35. ‡ Mat. vi. 14, 15. || Mat. xviii. 23,—35.



S E R M O N,





The Wisdom of GOD, as display'd in the Way of Salvation by JESUS CHRIST, far superior to the Wisdom of the Angels.

[March 1733.]



S E R M O N, XI.



E P H E S I A N S iii. 10.

To the Intent that now unto the Principalities and Powers in heavenly Places, might be known by the Church the manifold Wisdom of God.

THE apostle, in speaking here in the context of the glorious doctrine of the redemption of sinners by Jesus Christ; and how it was in a great measure kept hid in the past ages of the world; and that it was a mystery that they did not understand, but now, was in a glorious manner brought to light. *v.* 3, 4, 5. — “By revelation he made known unto me the mystery, (as I wrote afore in few words; whereby when ye read ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ) which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets, by the spirit.” And *v.* 8 & 9. “Unto me, who am less than

than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which, from the beginning of the world, hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ."

And the apostle, in the text, informs us, that what Christ had accomplished towards his church, in the work of redemption, had not only in a great measure unvail'd the mystery to the church here in this world; but God had more clearly and fully opened it to the understanding, even of the angels themselves: And that this was one end of God in it, to discover the glory of his wisdom to the angels. "To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places, might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God."

We may observe in the text,

1. One end of the revealing God's counsels concerning the work of redemption specified, viz. The glorifying, or making known God's *wisdom*.

2. The epithet given to the wisdom of God appearing in the work of redemption: it is called *manifold* wisdom; because of the manifold glorious ends that are attained by it. The excellent designs, hereby accomplished, are very manifest. The wisdom of God in this is of vast extent. The contrivance is so manifold, that one may spend an eternity in discovering more of the excellent ends and designs accomplished by it; and the multitude and vast variety of things that are, by divine contrivance, brought to conspire to the bringing about those ends.

3. We may observe, *to whom* it is that God would manifest this his wisdom, by revealing the mystery of our redemption; —and they are not only men, but the *Angels*. "To the intent that now unto the *Principalities and Powers in heavenly places* might be known—the

the manifold wisdom of God." The Angels are often called principalities and powers, which seems to be because of the exalted dignity of their nature. The Angels are of a very noble and excellent nature. They excel in strength and wisdom. Those that are the wise men of the earth, are called princes in the stile of the apostle, 1 Cor. ii. 6. "Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect, yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world—y. 8. "Which none of the princes of this world knew ; for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." So the Angels are called principalities for their great wisdom. They may also be so called for the honor God has put upon them, in improving them as his ministers and instruments, wherewith he governs the world : and therefore are called thrones, dominions, principalities and powers, Col. i. 16.

They are called principalities and powers in *heavenly* places, as distinguishing them from those that are in places of *earthly* power and dignity. The offices, or places of dignity and power, that the angels sustain, are not earthly but *heavenly*. They are in places of honor and power in the *heavenly city*, and the *heavenly kingdom*.

One end of God in revealing his design or contrivance for redemption, as he hath so fully and gloriously done by Jesus Christ, is that the angels in heaven may behold the glory of his wisdom by it. Tho' they are such bright intelligencies, and do always behold the face of God the father, and know so much ; yet here is matter of instruction for them. Here they may see more of the divine wisdom than ever they had seen before. It was a new discovery of the wisdom of God to them.

4. Observe the *time* when this display of the wisdom of God was especially made to the angels, and that is, when Christ introduced the gospel dispensation, implied in those words, "To the intent that *Now* unto the

principalities.' &c. When Christ came into the world and died, and actually performed the work of redemption, had fully and plainly revealed the counsels of God concerning it; and accordingly introduced the evangelical dispensation, and erected the gospel church, —then the angels understood more of the mystery of man's redemption, and the manifold designs and counsels of divine wisdom, than ever they had done before.

This is very plainly implied in the text and context.

In the foregoing verse, the apostle after speaking of revealing of this wisdom of God to man, "And to make all *men* see, what is the fellowship of this mystery &c. He then speaks of this mystery as a thing from the beginning kept hid till now. "The mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God—— that now, &c

Now in this verse, he mentions another end, and that is, that he may also at the same time, make the angels also to see [God's wisdom in his glorious scheme of redemption]

Now at this time, i.e. now Christ has actually wrought out redemption; and fully reveal'd [it to the angels] which implies that it was also before a mystery kept hid from them in comparison of what it is now.

And this need not seem strange; for here is room enough for the angels to discover more and more to all eternity, of the wisdom of God in this work. So manifold and infinite is the wisdom thereof.

5. Observe the *medium* by which the angels come by this knowledge, viz. the church — 'That now unto principalities— might be known *by the church*,—i.e. by the things they see done *in the church*, or *towards the church*: and by what they see *concerning the church*. So hath it pleased the sovereign God that the angels should have the most glorious discoveries of divine wisdom by his doings towards his church, towards a sort of beings much inferior to themselves. It hath pleased God to put this honor upon us.

D O C T R I N E.

The wisdom appearing in the way of salvation by JESUS CHRIST, is far above the wisdom of the Angels.

This is evidently taught in this text ; for here it is mentioned as one end of God in revealing the contrivance for our salvation, that the angels thereby might see and know how great and manifold the wisdom of God is ; to hold forth the wonderfulness of divine wisdom to the angel's view and admiration. But why is it so, if this wisdom be not higher than their own wisdom ? It never would have been mentioned as one end of revealing the contrivance of redemption, that the angels might see how manifold God's wisdom is ; if all the wisdom to be seen in it was no greater than their own. It is mentioned as such a wisdom as they had never seen before, not in God, much less in themselves. That *now* might be known how manifold the wisdom of God is ; now, four thousand years since the creation. In all that time the angels had always beheld the face of God ; and had been studying God's works of creation for four thousand years together ; yet they never till that day, had seen any thing like that : never knew how manifold God's wisdom is, as now they knew it by the church. Here I would shew,

I. That there is great wisdom manifested in contriving the way of salvation by Christ.

II. That this wisdom is above the wisdom of the angels.

I. I would shew, that there is great wisdom manifested in contriving the way of salvation

And to shew this, I would consider two things, viz.

1. The wonderfulness of the things done, by which redemption is procured. 2. The wonderfulness of the good that is attained thereby.

First,

First, I would consider the wonderfulness of the things done by which redemption is procured. Such is the choice of the person chosen to be our redeemer,—the substituting of him in our room ;—his incarnation—his life—his death—and exaltation. And in the

1st place. We will consider the choice of the person to be our redeemer. When God designed the redemption of mankind, his great wisdom appears in that he pitched upon his own, and only begotten Son, to be the person to perform the work. He was a redeemer of God's own choosing, and therefore he is called in scripture, God's *elect*, (Hsa. 42 1.) The wisdom of choosing this person to be the redeemer, appears in his being every way a fit person ; and in his being the only fit person ; and in *that*, it shews a divine wisdom, to *know* that he was a fit and suitable person.

He was every way a *fit* person for this undertaking. It was necessary, that the person that is the redeemer, should be a *divine* person. None but a *divine* person was sufficient for this great work. The work is infinitely unequal to any creature. It was requisite, that the redeemer of sinners, should be himself infinitely *holy*. None could take away the infinite evil of sin, but only one that was infinitely far from & contrary to sin himself. Christ is a fit person upon this account.

It was requisite, that the person, in order to be sufficient for this undertaking, should be one of infinite *dignity* and worthiness, that he might be capable of meriting infinite blessings. The Son of God is a fit person on this account.

It was necessary, that he should be a person of infinite *power* and *wisdom* ; for this work is so difficult, that it requires such an one. Christ is a fit person also upon this account.

It was requisite, that he should be a person infinitely *dear* to God the father, in order to the giving an infinite value to his transactions in the father's esteem, and that the

the father's love to him might balance the offence and provocation by our sins. Christ is a fit person upon this account. Therefore called *the beloved*, (Eph. 1. 6.) He hath made us accepted in the *beloved*.

It was requisite, that the person should be one that could act in this as of *his own absolute right*: one that, in himself, is not a servant or subject; because if he is one that cannot act of his own right, he cannot merit any thing. He that is a servant, and that can do no more than he is bound to do, cannot merit. And then he that has nothing that is absolutely his own, cannot pay any price to redeem another. Upon this account Christ is a fit person; and none but a divine person can be fit.

And he must be a person also of infinite *mercy* and *love*; for no other person but such an one would undertake a work so difficult, for a creature so unworthy as man. Upon this account also Christ is a fit person.

It was requisite that he should be a person of unchangeable perfect *truth* & faithfulness; otherwise he would not be fit to be depended on by us in so great an affair. Christ is also a fit person upon this account.

The wisdom of God in chusing his eternal Son, appears, not only in that he is a fit person; but in that he was the *only* fit person of all persons that are either created or uncreated. No *created* person, neither man, nor angel, was fit for this undertaking; for we have just now shewn, that he must be a person of *infinite* holiness—dignity—power—wisdom; infinitely dear to God—of infinite love and mercy; and one that may act of his own absolute right. But no creature, how excellent soever, has any one of these qualifications.

There are three *increated* Persons, the Father, Son and Holy Ghost; and Christ alone of these was a suitable person for a Redeemer. It was not meet, that the Redeemer should be God the *Father*; because he, in the divine œconomy of the persons of the trinity, was the

the person that holds the rights of the Godhead, and so was the person offended, whose justice required satisfaction ;—and was to be appeas'd by a mediator.

It was not meet it should be the *Holy Ghost*, for in being mediator between the Father and the saints, he is in some sense so between the Father and the Spirit. The saints, in all their spiritual transactions with God, act by the Spirit : or rather, it is the Spirit of God, that acts in them : they are the temples of the holy Ghost. The holy Spirit dwelling in them, is their principle of action, in all their transactings with God.

But in these their spiritual transactings with God, they act by a *Mediator*. These spiritual and holy exercises cannot be acceptable, or avail any thing with God, as from a fallen creature, but by a mediator. Therefore Christ, in being mediator between the Father and the saints, may be said to be mediator between the Father and the holy Spirit, that acts in the saints. And therefore it was meet. that the mediator should not be either the Father or the Spirit, but a middle person between them both.

It is the Spirit in the saints, that seeks the blessing of God, by faith and prayer ; and, as the apostle says, with groanings that cannot be uttered, (*Rom. 8. 26.*) *Likewise the spirit also helpeth our infirmities : for we know not what we should pray for as we ought ; but the spirit it self maketh intercession for us, with groanings that cannot be uttered.* The spirit in the saints seeks divine blessings of God, by and thro' a mediator : and therefore that mediator must not be the spirit, but another person.

It shews a *divine* wisdom, to *know* that he was a fit person. No other but one of *divine* wisdom could have known it. None but one of infinite wisdom could have thought of him to be a redeemer of sinners. For he, as he is God, is one of the persons offended by sin ; whom sin is enmity against ; whom man by his sin had

had rebelled against, and cast contempt upon. Who but God infinitely wise could ever have thought of *him* to be a redeemer of sinners! *Him* they had sinned against, were enemies to, and deserved infinitely ill of! Who would ever have thought of him as one that should set his heart upon man, and exercise infinite love and pity to him,— and infinite wisdom and power and merit in redeeming him! We proceed

2. To consider the substituting this person in our room. After the choosing the person to be our redeemer, the next step of divine wisdom, is, in contriving the way how he should perform this work. If God had declared who the person was, that his wisdom had pitched upon, to do this work, and had gone no further, there is no creature could have thought which way this person could have performed the work. If God had told them, that his own Son must be the Redeemer; and that he alone was a fit person for the work: and that he was a person every way fit & sufficient for it,— but had proposed to them to have contriv'd a way how this fit and sufficient person should do the work,— Here we may well suppose that all created understandings would have been utterly at a loss.

The first thing necessary to be done, is that this Son of God should become our representative and surety; and so be substituted in the sinner's room. But who of created intelligences would have tho't of any such thing as the eternal and infinitely beloved Son of God his being substituted in the room of sinners! His standing in stead of a sinner, a rebel, an object of the wrath of God! and should in the sinner's stead place himself in the woful circumstances, that he has brought himself into, by sin! Who would have thought of a person, that was the eternal God, a person of infinite glory, his undertaking to stand before God, as representing sinful worms, that had made themselves by sin infinitely provoking and abominable!

For,

For, if the Son of God be substituted in the sinner's room, then his sin must be charged upon him : He will thereby take the guilt of the sinner upon himself ; and all that was due to the sinner for his sin, becomes now due to him ; and he must be subject to the same law that man was, both as to the commands, and threatenings : but who would have thought of any such thing concerning the Son of God ! Who would have thought, that it was fit to be, or could be ! But we proceed,

3. To consider the incarnation of Jesus Christ. The next step of divine wisdom in contriving how Christ shou'd perform the work of redeeming sinners, was in determining his incarnation. If God had reveal'd his counsels thus far to created understandings, not only that his own Son was the person he had pitched upon, for this work, but also that he had substituted him in the sinner's room ; and appointed him to represent the sinner, and to become his surety ; and so to take the sinner's obligations and guilt on himself :—and had reveal'd no more, but had left the rest to them to find out ; it is no way probable, that even then they could ever have thought of a way, whereby this person might actually have performed the work of redemption. For if the Son of God be substituted in the sinner's stead, then the Son of God takes the sinner's obligations on himself : as for instance ; he must take the obligation the sinner is under to perform perfect obedience to the divine law. But it is not probable, that any creature could have conceiv'd how that could be possible. How should a person that is the eternal JEHOVAH, become a servant, be under law, and perform obedience to the law of man !

And again, if the Son of God be substituted in the sinner's stead, then he comes under the sinner's obligation to suffer the punishment, which man's sin had deserved. And who could have thought that to have been possible ! For how should a divine person, who is essentially,

tially, unchangeably, and infinitely happy, suffer pain and torment ! And how should he that is the object of God's infinitely dear love, suffer the wrath of his father !

It is not to be suppos'd, that created wisdom ever would have found out a way how to have got over these difficulties. But divine wisdom hath found out a way, viz. by the incarnation of the Son of God. That the word should be made flesh, that he might be both God and man, in one person : what created understanding could have thought or conceived of such a thing as that ! or could have conceiv'd that such a thing was possible !

And if God had reveal'd to them that it was possible, and that it *should be*, but left them to find out *how* it should be ; — how may we well suppose that they would all have been puzzled and confounded, to conceive of a way for so uniting a man to the eternal Son of God, that they should be one person : that one that is truly a man in all respects, as truly and properly a man as any man, should indeed and in truth, be the very same Son of God, that is God, and was with God from all eternity. This is a great mystery to us. Hereby, a person that is infinite, omnipotent and unchangeable, is become a finite, a feeble man : a man subject to our sinless infirmities, passions and calamities ! The great God, the sovereign of heaven and earth, is become a worm of the dust. (Psa. 22. 6) “ I am a worm, and no man.” He that is eternal and self-existent, is born of a woman as the rest of us are ! He that is the great original spirit is clothed with flesh & blood like one of us ! He that is independent & self-sufficient and all-sufficient, that supplies all creatures out of his bountiful hand ; — he now is come to stand in need of food and cloathing to keep him alive : He becomes poor, “ has not where to lay his head ; ” — stands in need of the charity of men ; and is maintain'd by it ! It is far above us, to conceive how it is done. It is a great wonder and mystery to us : but it was no mystery to divine wisdom.

4. The next thing to be considered, is the life of Christ in this world. The wisdom of God appears in the circumstances of his life.—and in the work and business of his life. Particularly,

1. The circumstances of his life. If God had reveal'd that his own Son, should be incarnate, and should live in this world, in the human nature; and it had been left to men to determine what circumstances of life would have been most suitable for the Son of God to appear in here,—human wisdom would have determin'd, that he should appear in the world in a most magnificent manner; with very extraordinary outward ensigns of honor, authority and power far above any of the kings of the earth: that here he should reign in great visible pomp and splendor over all nations.—And thus it was that men's wisdom did determine, before Christ came. The wise, great men among the jews, scribes and pharisees, who are called “princes of this world;” did expect that the messiah would thus appear. But the wisdom of God chose quite otherwise: It chose that when the Son of God was incarnate and became man, he should begin his life in a stable; that he should for many years dwell obscurely in a family of low degree in the world; and afterwards should be in low outward circumstances: that he should be poor, and not have where to lay his head;—that he should be maintained by the charity of some of his disciples;—That he should “grow up as a tender plant, and as a root out of a dry ground,” (*I/a. 53. 2.*) “That he should not cry, nor lift up, nor cause his voice to be heard in the streets.” (*I/jai. 42. 2.*) That he should come to Zion in a lowly manner, “riding on an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass.”—“That he should be despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief.”

And now the *divine* determination in this matter is made known, we may safely conclude that it is far the
most

most suitable : and that it would not have been at all suitable for God, when he was manifest in flesh, to appear with earthly pomp, wealth and grandeur, as tho' he affected such things as these. No ! these things are infinitely too mean, and despicable. For the Son of God to shew as if he affected or esteemed them.

Men, if they had had this way proposed to them of the eternal Son of God, appearing on earth, viz. in such mean, low circumstances, would have been ready to condemn it, as foolish and very unsuitable for the Son of God. " But the foolishness of God is wiser than men," (1 Cor. 1. 25.) " And God hath brought to nought the wisdom of this world, and the princes of this world," (1 Cor. 2. 6.)

CHRIST, by thus appearing in mean and low outward circumstances in the world, has poured contempt upon all worldly wealth and glory ; and has taught us to despise it. It is becoming of christians to be above these things and to despise them. And if it becomes mean men to despise them, how much more did it become the Son of God ! And then Christ hereby hath taught us to be lowly in heart. We see hereby how lowly that Person was, that was infinitely high & great. How lowly then should we be, who are indeed so low & vile.

Again,

2. The wisdom of God appears in the work and business of the life of Christ. That he should perfectly obey the law of God, under such great temptations : That he should have conflicted with and overcome, for us, in a way of obedience, the powers of earth & hell : That he should be subject to, not only the *moral* law, but the *ceremonial* also, that heavy yoke of bondage.

CHRIST went thro' the time of his public ministry, in delivering to us divine instructions and doctrines. The wisdom of God appears in giving us such an one to be our prophet and teacher, who is a divine person :

who is himself the very wisdom and word of God : And was from all eternity in the bosom of the Father :— that he should find such an one to teach us : His word will tend to be of greater authority and weight than if delivered by the mouth of an ordinary prophet. And then it is wisely ordered that the same should be our teacher, that is our redeemer : that his relations and offices, as redeemer, might the more sweeten and endear his instructions to us. We are ready to give heed to things that are said by one that is dear to us. Our love to their persons make us to delight in their discourse. It is therefore wisely ordered, that he that has done so much to endear himself to us, should be appointed our great prophet to deliver to us divine doctrines.

5 The next thing to be considered is the death of Christ. The only begotten Son of God his dying, is a means of salvation for poor sinners, that no other but divine wisdom would have pitched upon. And when it was revealed, was doubtless greatly to the surprize of all the hosts of heaven. This is what they admired with great admiration when they saw it ; and never will cease to wonder at. And how astonishing is it, that a person that is blessed for ever, and is infinitely and essentially happy, should endure the greatest sufferings that ever was endured on earth ! That a person that is the supreme lord and judge of the world, should be arraigned, and should stand at the judgment seat of mortal worms, and then be condemned. That a person that is the living God, and the fountain of life, should be put to death. That a person that created the world, and gives life to all his creatures, should be put to death by his own creatures. That a person that is one of infinite majesty and glory, and so the object of the love, praises and adorations of angels, should be mocked and spit upon by the vilest of men. That a person that is infinitely good, and that is love it self, should

should suffer the greatest cruelty. That a person that is infinitely beloved of the father, should be put to inexpressible anguish under his own father's wrath. That he that is king of heaven, hath heaven for his throne, and the earth for his footstool, should be buried in the prison of the grave.

How wonderful a thing is this ! and who would ever have thought of any such thing coming to pass. But yet this is the way that God's wisdom hath pitched upon, as the way of sinners salvation: and this not unsuitable, or any dishonour to Christ.

6. The last thing done to procure salvation for sinners, that we shall here consider, is Christ's exaltation. Divine wisdom saw it needful or most expedient, that the same person that was incarnate, and that died upon the cross, should sit on his own right hand, on his own throne as supreme Governor of the world ; and should have particularly the absolute disposal of all things relating to man's salvation, and should be the judge of the world. This was needful, because it was requisite that the same person that purchas'd salvation, should have the bestowing of it ; for it is not fit, that God should at all transact with the fallen creature in a way of mercy, but by a mediator. And this is exceedingly for the strengthening of the faith & comfort of the saints, that he that hath indured so much to purchase salvation for them, has all things in heaven, & in earth delivered unto him ; that he might bestow eternal life to them that he purchased it for. And that the same person that loved them so greatly, as to shed his precious blood for them, was to be their judge, whose sentence there could be no reversing.

But this was another thing full of wonders, that he that was man as well as God ; he that was a servant, and

died like a malefactor ; that this person not exclusive of the human nature, should be exalted to be made the sovereign lord of heaven and earth, angels and men ; the absolute disposer of eternal life and death ; the supreme judge of all created intelligent beings, for eternity : and should have committed to him, all the governing power of God the Father ; and that, not only as God ; but as God-man, not exclusive of the human nature.

As it is wonderful, that a person that is *divine* should be humbled, so as to become a servant, and to suffer as a malefactor : so it is in like manner wonderful, the other way, that he that is God-man, not exclusive of the man hood, should be exalted to the power & honor of the great God of heaven and earth. But such wonders as these has infinite wisdom contrived, and accomplished in order to our salvation.



S E R M O N, XI.



E P H E S I A N S iii. 10.

To the Intent that now unto the Principalities and Powers in heavenly Places, might be known by the Church the manifold Wisdom of God.

WE proceed now in the second place, to shew, how the wisdom of God will appear by the consideration of the good that is obtained by those fore-mentioned things. The wisdom of the contrivance of our redemption will appear by considering,

First, How great and manifold the good *ends* are that are obtained.

Secondly, The wonderful circumstances of the attainment thereof.

First,

First. The good *ends* that are attained by those things done in the work of redemption, are exceeding great and manifold.

1. The *good* is exceeding manifold.

Particularly,

(1.) All manner of glory redounds to God hereby. He is glorified in all his attributes: and each person of the trinity is, in this work exceedingly glorified.

GOD has greatly glorified himself in the work of creation;— and in many of his other works of providence: but above all, is he glorified in this work of redemption. All God's works do praise him. His glory shines brightly from them all: but as some stars differ from others in glory, so the glory of God shines brighter in some of his works than in others. And amongst all these, the work of redemption is like the sun in his strength. The glory of the author is abundantly the most resplendent in this work.

1. Each attribute of God is glorified in the work of redemption.

(1.) In this work, God has exceedingly glorified his *wisdom*; as may more fully appear before we have done with this subject.

(2.) God hath exceedingly glorified his *power* in this work. It shews the great and inconceivable power of God to unite natures so infinitely different, as the divine and human nature, in one person. If God can make one that is truly God, and one that is truly man, one and the self same person, what is it that he cannot do? This is a greater and more marvellous effort, by far, than creation or producing something out of nothing.

The power of God most gloriously appears in man's being actually saved and redeemed in this way. In his being brought out of a state of sin and misery, into a conformity to God; and at last to the full and perfect

enjoyment of God. This is a more glorious demonstration of divine power, than creating things out of nothing, upon two accounts. One is, the *effect is greater and more excellent*. To produce the new creature is a more glorious effect, than merely to produce a creature. The making a holy creature, a creature in the spiritual image of God; in the image of the divine excellencies, and a partaker of the divine nature — is a greater effect than merely to give being to a thing. And therefore as the effect is greater, it is a more glorious manifestation of power.

And then, upon another account also is it a more glorious manifestation of divine power, and that is, that in this effect of the actual redemption of sinners, *the term from which, is more distant from the term to which*, than in the work of creation. The term from which, in the work of creation is *nothing*, and the term to which, is *being*. But the term from which, in the work of redemption, is a state infinitely worse than nothing; and the term to which, a holy and a happy being, a state infinitely better than mere being. The terms in the production of the last, are much more remote from one another, than in the first.

And then the production of this last effect, is a more glorious manifestation of power, than the work of creation; because, tho' in creation the terms are very distant: nothing is very remote from being; yet there is no opposition. The power of God in producing that effect is not opposed. Nothing, makes no opposition to the creating power of God. But in redemption, the power of God meets with and overcomes great opposition. There is great opposition in a state of sin to a state of grace. Men's lusts and corruptions are exceeding opposite to grace and holiness; and do greatly resist the production of the effect. This opposition is overcome in actual redemption.

And besides, there is great opposition from satan. The power of God is very glorious in this work, because it therein conquers the strongest and most powerful enemies, making the most violent opposition they are capable of. Power never appears more illustrious than in conquering. Jesus Christ in this work, conquers and triumphs over thousands of devils, strong and mighty spirits, uniting all their strength against him. *Luk. xi. 21.* "When a strong man armed keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoil. *Col. ii. 15.* "And having spoiled principalities & powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in the cross.

(3.) The justice of God is exceedingly glorified in this work. God is so strictly and immutably just, that he would not spare his Son when he took upon him the guilt of men's sins, and was substituted in the room of sinners; he spared him not at all. He would not abate him the least mite of that debt which justice demanded. Justice should take place, tho' it cost his infinitely dear Son his precious blood; and his enduring such extraordinary reproach & pain & death in it's most dreadful form. Such was God's justice, that his love to his own Son would not influence him to abate the least of what justice required.

(4.) The holiness of God is also exceeding glorious in this work. Never did God so manifest his hatred of sin as in the death & sufferings of his only begotten Son. Hereby he shew'd himself unappeasable to sin. And that it was impossible for him to be at peace with it.

(5.) God hath also exceedingly glorified his truth in this way, both in his threatenings and promises. Herein is fulfilled the threatenings of the law, wherein God said, "in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." "And cursed is every one that continueth not in

all things written in the book of the law to do them" God shew'd hereby, that not only heaven & earth should pass away,—but, which is a great deal more, that the blood of him, who is the eternal Jehovah, should be spilt, rather than one jot, or tittle of his word should fail, till all be fulfilled

(6) And lastly, Especially has God exceedingly glorified his mercy and love, in this work. The mercy of God was an attribute never seen before, in the exercises of it, till it was seen in this work of redemption, or the fruits of it. The goodness of God appeared towards the angels in giving them being and blessedness. It appeared glorious towards man in his primitive state, a state of holiness and happiness.

But now God hath shewn that he can find in his heart, to love sinners, those that deserve his infinite hatred: that have provoked him by rebellion against him; and that are enemies to him. And not only hath he shewn that he can love them, but love them so as to give them more and do greater things for them than ever he did for the holy angels, that never sinned or offended their creator. He loved sinful men so as to give them a greater gift than ever he gave the angels: so as to give his own Son, and not only to give him to be their possession and enjoyment; but to give him to be their sacrifice. And herein he has done more for them, than if he had given them all the visible world; yea more, than if he had given them all the angels, and all heaven besides.

GOD hath loved them so, that hereby he purchased for them, deliverance from eternal misery, and the possession of immortal glory.

2dly. Each person of the trinity is exceedingly glorified in this work. This is a thing wherein the work of redemption is distinguished from all the other works of God. The attributes of God are glorious in other works of God: but the three persons of the trinity are distinctly

distinctly glorified in no work as in this work of redemption. In this work every distinct person has his distinct parts and offices assigned him. Each one has his particular and distinct concern in it, agreeable to their distinct, personal properties & relations & œconomical offices.

The persons of the trinity are each of them, distinctly and equally glorified in this work. The redeemed have an equal concern with and dependance upon each person, in this affair, and owe equal honor and praise to each of them.

The Father appoints and provides the Redeemer, and accepts the price of redemption. The Son is the Redeemer and the price. He redeems by offering up himself. The Holy Ghost immediately communicates to us the thing purchased: yea, and he is the good purchased. The sum of what Christ purchased for us is holiness & happiness. But the Holy Ghost is the great principle both of all holiness & happiness. The Holy Ghost is the sum of all that Christ purchased for men. *Gal. iii. 13, 14.* "He was made a curse for us, that we might receive the promise of the spirit, thro' faith.

The blessedness of the redeemed consists in partaking of Christ's fulness, which consists in partaking of that Spirit, which is given not by measure unto him. This is the oil that was poured upon the head of the Church, which ran down to the members of his body; to the skirts of his garment.

Thus we have an equal concern with, and dependance upon each of the persons of the trinity, distinctly; upon the Father as he that provides the Redeemer, and the Person of whom the purchase is made; — the Son as the purchaser, and the price; the Holy Ghost as the good purchased.

[Thus we have considered how God is glorified in this work; which is part of the good obtained in the work of Redemption.]

We proceed now

II. To

II. To consider the wisdom of God appearing in the variety, and exceeding greatness of the good that is hereby procured for *men*.

Here we may distinctly consider — The variety—and the greatness of the good procured for men.

1. Here are all sorts of good procured for fallen man, that he *does* or *can* stand in need of, or is *capable* of. The wisdom of God appears in the way of salvation in that it is so sufficient a way. Herein it is most worthy of an infinitely wise God, as it is every way perfect and sufficient, and answers all our needs.

We in our fallen state are most necessitous creatures, full of our wants: but they are all answered in this way of salvation. Every sort of good is here procured. Every thing that would really contribute to our happiness that we can think of, and a great many things we could not have thought of, had not Christ purchased them for us, and revealed them to us. Every demand of our circumstances, and craving of our natures, is here exactly answered.

First, As for instance, we stand in need of *peace* with God. We had provoked God to anger, and the wrath of God abode upon us, and we needed to have it appeased. This is done for us in this way of salvation. Christ, by shedding his blood, has fully satisfied justice, and appeased God's wrath, for all that shall believe in him. We were by the sentence of the law condemned to hell. We needed to have our sins pardoned that we might be delivered from hell. In this work, pardon of sin, & deliverance from hell, is purchased for us.

Secondly, We needed not only to have God's wrath appeased, and our sins pardoned; but we needed to have the *favour* of God. To have God, not only not our enemy, but our friend. God's favour is also purchased for us by the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, We needed not only to be delivered from hell, but to have some *satisfying happiness* bestowed. Man is of such a nature, that he has a natural craving and thirst after happiness. And will thirst and crave, 'till his capacity is fill'd. And his capacity is of vast extent ; and nothing but an infinite good can fill it, and satisfy his desires. But notwithstanding, provision is made in this way of salvation to answer those needs of our souls. And there is a satisfying happiness purchased for us : that which is fully answerable to the capacity and cravings of our souls.

Here is food procured in his way of salvation to answer all our appetites and faculties of our souls. God has made the soul of man of a spiritual nature ; and therefore he needs a spiritual happiness : some spiritual object, in the enjoyment of which he may be happy. And in this way of salvation. there is good procured, that is suitable to this spiritual nature of man, a spirit. Christ has purchased the enjoyment of God, as the portion of our souls, — who is the great and original Spirit. And he hath purchased the Spirit of God to come and dwell in us to be an internal principle of happiness.

GOD hath made man a rational, intelligent creature. And man needs some good, that shall be a suitable object of his understanding, for him to contemplate ; wherein he may have full and sufficient exercise for his capacious faculties, in the utmost extent of them : or in the utmost extent they are capable of ; — an object that is great and noble, and worthy of the exercise of the noblest faculties of the rational soul.

Provision is made for this also, in this way of salvation. Here it is provided that God himself should be theirs, for them forever to behold & contemplate ; whose glorious perfections and works are most worthy objects of the improvement of their faculties : And there is room enough for them to improve them, and still to exercise their faculties to all eternity. And

And what object can be more worthy to exercise the understanding of a rational soul, than the glories of the divine being, with which the heavenly intelligences and the infinite understanding of God himself is entertain'd !

Our souls need some good that shall be a suitable object of the will and affections : a suitable object for the choice, the acquiescence, the love and joy of the rational soul. Provision is made for this also in this way of salvation. There is an infinitely excellent Being offered to be chosen, to be rested in, to be loved, to be rejoiced in, by us : even God himself, who is infinitely lovely, the fountain of all good ; a fountain that can never be exhausted, where we can be in no danger of going to excess, in our love and joy : and may be assured ever to find our joy and delight in the enjoyment answerable to our love and desires.

Fourthly. There is all possible enjoyment of this object procured in this way of salvation. When persons entirely set their love upon another they naturally desire to *see* that person : meerly to here of the person, don't satisfy love. So here is provision made that we should see God, the object of our supreme love. Not only that we should hear and read of him in his word, but that we should see him with a spiritual eye here : and not only so, but that we should have the satisfaction of seeing God face to face, hereafter. This is promised (*Mat. 5. 8*) *Blessed are the pure in Heart ; for they shall see God.* It is promised, that we shall not see God, as thro' a glass darkly, as we do now, but face to face. *1 Cor. 13. 12.* That we shall see Christ as he is. *1 Job. 3. 2.*

We naturally desire not only to see those that we love, but to *converse with* them. Provision is made for this also, that we should have spiritual conversation with God while here in this world ; and that we should be hereafter admitted to converse with Christ in the most intimate

intimate manner possible. Provision is made in this way of salvation, that we should converse with God much more intimately, than otherwise it would have been possible for us ; for now Christ is incarnate, he is in our nature : he is become one of us ; whereby we are under advantages for an immensely more free and intimate conversation with him, than could have been, if he had remain'd only in the divine nature ; and so in a nature infinitely distant from us.

We naturally desire not only to converse with those that we greatly love, but to *dwell with* them. Provision, thro' Christ, is made for this. It is purchased and provided that we should dwell with God in his own house in heaven, which is called our father's house.— To dwell for ever in God's presence, and at his right hand.

We naturally desire to have a *right* to that person that we greatly love. Provision is made in this way of salvation, that we should have a right *in* God ; a right *to* him. This is the promise of the covenant of grace, "That he will be our God. God with all his glorious perfections and attributes : with all his power and wisdom ; and with all his majesty and glory, will be ours : so that we may call him our inheritance, and the portion of our souls : what we can challenge, having this portion made over to us, by a firm instrument ; by a covenant ordered in all things and sure.

And we may also hereby challenge a right to Jesus Christ.— — Love desires that the right should be *mutual*. The lover, desires not only to have a right to the beloved, but *that the beloved should also have a right to him* : he desires to be his beloved's, as well as his beloved should be his. Provision is also made for this, in this wise method of salvation,—that God should have a special propriety in those that are redeemed, that they should be in a distinguishing manner *his* : that they should

should be his *peculiar* people. We are told that God sets apart the godly for himself, *Psal.* 4. 3. They are called God's jewels. The spouse speaks it with great satisfaction and rejoicing, *Cant.* 2. 16. *My beloved is mine, and I am his.*

Love desires to stand in some *near relation* to the beloved. Provision is made by Christ, that we should stand in the nearest possible relation to God, that God should be our father; and we should be his children. We are often instructed in the word of God, that God is the father of believers, and that they are his family.

And not only so, but they stand in the nearest relation to Christ Jesus. There is the closest union possible. The souls of believers are married to Christ. The church is the bride the lamb's wife. Yea, there is yet a nearer relation than can be represented by such a similitude as this. Believers are as the very members of Christ, and of his flesh and of his bones, *Eph.* 5. 30. Yea, this is not near enough yet, but "they are one spirit." *1 Cor.* 6. 17.

Love naturally inclines to a *conformity* to the beloved. To have those excellencies, upon the account of which he is beloved, copied in himself. Provision is made in this way of salvation, that we may be conformed to God; that we shall be transformed into the same image. *2 Cor.* 3. 18 *We all with open face, beholding as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory.*—And that hereafter we shall see him as he is, and be like him.

It is the natural desire of love to *do something* for the beloved, either for his pleasure or honour. Provision is made for this also in this way of salvation; that we should be made instruments of glorifying God, and promoting his kingdom here, and of glorifying him to all eternity.

Fifthly,

Fifthly, In this way of salvation, provision is made for our having *every sort of good* that man naturally craves; as honor, wealth, and pleasure.

Here is provision made that we should be brought to the highest *honor*. This is what God has promised, "That those that honor him, he will honor." And that true christians shall be kings and priests unto God.

Christ has promised them, "That as his father has appointed unto him a kingdom, so he will appoint unto them, that they may eat and drink at his table in his kingdom." — He has promised to crown them with a crown of glory,—and that "they shall sit with him in his throne." And that he will confess their names before his father, and before his angels." "Will give them a new name."— And that they "shall walk with him in white."

CHRIST has also purchased for them the *greatest wealth*. All those that are in Christ are rich. They are *now* rich. They have the best riches. Are rich in faith, and the graces of the spirit of God. They have gold tried in the fire. They have durable riches & righteousness. They have treasure in heaven, where neither thief approacheth, nor moth corrupteth. An inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away. They are possessors of all things.

CHRIST has also purchased *pleasure* for them. Pleasures that are immensely preferable to all the pleasures of sense, most exquisitely sweet, and satisfying. He has purchased for them fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore at God's right hand: And that they may drink of the river of God's pleasure.

Sixthly, CHRIST has purchased all needed good *both for soul and body*. While we are here, we stand in need of these earthly things; as Christ observes.

CHRIST has purchased all that we stand in need of, and are best for us. He has purchased that God should feed, and cloath us. *Matth. 6. 26. How much more shall he*

he feed you, O ye of little faith!" How much more shall he cloath you! Christ has purchased that God should take care of us, and provide what is needed, and shall be best, of these things, as a father provides for his children. 1 Pet 5. 7. *Casting your care upon him, for he careth for you.*

Seventhly, CHRIST has purchased good that is suitable for his people *in all conditions.* There is, in this way of salvation respect had to, and provision made for all circumstances that they can be in. Here is provision made, for a time of affliction, of all they shall stand in need of, at such a time. ———

Here is provision made for a time of poverty and pinching want. ———

—— For a time of bereavement and mourning. ——

—— For spiritual darknes ——

—— A Day of temptation. ——

—— A time of persecution. ——

There is a suitable provision made for a time of death. Sufficient provision in this way of salvation for such a time as that. Here is such a provision made that is sufficient to carry a person above death, and all its terrors; and to give him a compleat triumph over that king of terrors. Here is enough in this way of salvation to sweeten the grave, and make it cease to seem terrible. Yea, enough to make death, in prospect to seem desirable; and in its near approach to be not terrible but joyful.

Eighthly, There is provision made in this way of salvation for the life and blessedness of soul & body *to all eternity.* Christ has purchased that we should be deli-
vered

vered from a state of temporal death, as well as *spiritual* and *eternal*. He has purchased that the bodies of the saints shall be raised to a resurrection of life. He has purchased all manner of perfection for the body that it is capable of, that it shall be raised a spiritual body, in incorruption, and glory: and be made like Christ's glorious body, and shine as the sun in the kingdom of his father. And that it should be glorified with the soul and exist in a glorified estate in union with the soul to all eternity.

Ninthly. But man in his fallen state still needs something else in order to his happiness, than that these fore-mentioned should be purchased for him. i. e. He needs to be *qualified* for the possession and enjoyment of them. In order to our having a title to these blessings of the covenant of grace, there is a certain condition must be performed by us. We must believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and accept of him as offered in the gospel, for a Saviour. But this we cannot do of our selves.— But Christ has purchased this also for all the elect. He has purchased that they shall have faith given them; whereby they shall be united to Christ, and so have a title to his benefits.

But still something further is necessary for man, in order to his coming to the actual possession of the inheritance. A man, as soon as he has believed, has a title to the inheritance: but in order to come to the actual possession of it, he must persevere in a way of holiness. There is not only a gate that must be entered; but there is a narrow way that must be travel'd before we can arrive at heavenly blessedness; and that is a way of universal and persevering holiness. But men after they have believed, cannot persevere in a way of holiness, of themselves. But there is sufficient provision made for this also, in the way of salvation by Jesus Christ. The

matter of a saint's perseverance is sufficiently secured by the purchase that Christ has made.

But still there is something else needful in order to qualify a person for the actual entering upon the enjoyments and employments of a glorified estate, viz. that he should be made perfectly holy : that all remainders of sin should be taken away ; for there can't any sin enter into heaven. No soul must go into the glorious presence of God, with the least degree of the filth of sin. But there is provision made ; for Christ has purchased that all sin shall be taken away out of the hearts of believers at death ; and that they should be made perfectly holy : whereby they shall be fully and perfectly qualified to enter upon the pleasures and enjoyments of the new Jerusalem.

CHRIST has purchased all both objective and inherent good : not only a portion to be enjoyed by us ; but all those inherent qualifications necessary to our enjoyment of it. He has purchased not only justification, but sanctification and glorification ; both holiness and happiness.

Having considered the good attained in the way of salvation, as *manifold* and various : I now proceed, as proposed

II To consider the good attain'd, by this way of salvation, for us, as *exceeding great*.

There is not only every sort of good we need, but of every sort, in *that degree* so as to answer the extent of our capacity, and the greatest stretch of our desires, and indeed of our conceptions.

— Greater than our conceptions are here. —

— Greater than ever they could be, were it not that God's revelation, and our own experience will teach us —

— Greater

— Greater than the tongue of angels can declare

— The deliverance that we have in it is exceeding great : —

— From guilt —

— From sin it self —

— Anger of God —

— Miseries of Hell —

— Objective and inherent good

— Objective —

— God —

— Jesus Christ —

— Love great —

— Relation near —

— Union close —

— Communion intimate —

— Vision clear —

Communication great —

Conformity perfect —

Enjoyment full ———

Honor great ———

Glory ineffable, of both soul and body ———

Riches immense—God and all things are the christi-
an's treasure ———

Pleasures unspeakable and inconceivably great ———

Rivers of pleasure ———

As to duration infinite ———

—————

The benefit procured for us, is double infinite. Our deliverance is an infinite benefit ; because the evil we are delivered from, is infinite ———

And the positive good bestowed is eternal. The full enjoyment of all those blessings merited, will last as long as God will last.



S E R M O N





S E R M O N, XIII.



E P H E S I A N S iii. 10.

To the Intent that now unto the Principalities and Powers in heavenly Places, might be known by the Church the manifold Wisdom of God.

From whence we observed, this

DOCT. *The wisdom appearing in the way of salvation by JESUS CHRIST, is far above the wisdom of the angels.*

For the more distinct handling of which, we proposed to illustrate two propositions.

I Prop That there is great wisdom manifested in contriving the way of salvation by Christ

II That this wisdom is above the wisdom of the Angels.

To shew that it was a wise way, we proposed to consider two things

First. The wonderfulness of the things done, by which redemption is procured. — The choice of a person—substituting him—The incarnation of Christ—his life his death—and his exaltation

Secondly. The wonderfulness of the way, appertaining to the good obtained by it. Under which, we proposed

posed to consider two things. 1. How great and manifold the good ends are that are obtained by it. 2. The wonderful circumstances of the attainment.

(1) How great and manifold the good ends are, that are attained by it, as they relate — to God — to men — to angels — and devils. 1. How God is glorified hereby. 2. What good is procured for men. 3. What benefits the angels have hereby. 4. How Satan is overthrown.

Having in the preceding Sermon considered — the glory that is brought to God — and the good that is procured for man. I proceed,

III. To consider, what benefit the *Angels* have by what is done in the affair of our redemption. So hath the wisdom of God contriv'd this affair, that the benefit of what he has done therein should be so extensive, as to reach the elect angels. It is for men that the work of redemption is wrought out; and yet the benefit of the things done in this work is not confined to them, or all that is properly called redemption, or included in it is confined to men. The angels can't partake in this, for they have no need of any redemption, having never fallen. Neither have they that direct benefit, by what is done in this work, that man has: yet they have great indirect benefit by it.

GOD hath so wisely ordered, that what has been done directly and especially for men, in this, should redound to the exceeding benefit of all intelligent creatures, that are in favour with God. That the benefit of it should be so diffusive as not to be confined to earth, but reach heaven itself. So great and manifold is the good attain'd in this work, that those glorious spirits that are so much above us, and were so highly exalted in happiness before, yet should receive great addition hereby.

I will shew *how* in some particulars.

1. The

1. The angels hereby see a great and wonderful manifestation of the glory of God. The happiness of angels as well as of men consists very much in beholding the glory of God. The excellency of the divine Being is a most delightful subject of contemplation to the saints on earth; but much more to the angels in heaven. The more holy any being is, the more sweet and delightful will it be to him to behold the glory and beauty of the supreme Being.

Therefore the beholding the glory of God must be exceeding ravishing to the holy angels, that are perfect in holiness, and never had their minds leaven'd with sin. The manifestations of the glory of God, are as it were the food that satisfies the angels: they live thereon. It is their greatest happiness.

And it is exceeding delightful to them to behold the glory of God manifested in his works. It is without doubt much of their employment to behold the glory of God appearing in his works. Therefore this work of redemption greatly contributes to their happiness and delight, as the glory of God is so exceedingly manifested by it. For what is done, is done in the sight of the angels, as is evident by our text and many other passages of holy scripture. And they behold the glory of God appearing therein with entertainment and delight; as it is manifest by 1 Pet. 1. 12. *Which things the angels desire to look into.*

The angels have this advantage that now they may behold the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, where it shines with a peculiar lustre and brightness. This is spoken of, 1 Tim. 3. 5. *Great is the mystery of godliness, God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of Angels.* Perhaps all God's attributes are more gloriously manifested in this work, than in any other that ever the angels saw. There is certainly a fuller manifestation of some of his attributes, than ever they saw before; as is evident by the

the text, as we have observed already. And especially, it is so with respect to the mercy and grace of God, that sweet and endearing attribute of the divine nature. The angels of heaven never saw so much grace manifested before, as in the work of redemption; nor in any measure equal to it. It is exceeding ravishing to them to behold such a discovery of this amiable perfection of God. How full of joy doth it fill the heart of the angels, to see such a boundless and bottomless ocean of love and grace in the heart of God. And therefore with what rejoicing do all the angels praise Christ for this work of divine grace, his being slain! Rev. 5. 11, 12. *And I beheld, and heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts and the elders: And the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands; saying with a loud voice, worth is the lamb that was slain to receive power & riches & wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.*

2. They have this benefit by it, that hereby Jesus Christ, God-man, is become their head. God, subsisting in three persons, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, was the king of angels, and would have been, if it had not been for our redemption. But it was owing to what is done in this work, that Jesus Christ, as God man, becomes the head of the angels. Christ is now not only the head of angels simply as God, but as God man. Col. 2. 10. *And ye are compleat in him, who is the head of all principality & power.* Eph. 1. 20, 21, 22. *Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him on his own right hand in heavenly places, far above all principality and power, and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come. And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church,*

This is a part of the exaltation and glory of Christ, which God confers on him, as his reward. But not only so, but it is greatly to the angels benefit. It is God's manner in his dealings with his elect creatures, in the same works wherein he glorifies himself, or his Son, greatly to benefit them. The same dealings of his that are most for his glory, shall be most for their good.

That Christ God-man should be made the head of the angels, is greatly to their benefit,

First, because they become hereby more nearly related to so glorious a person. They have a more near relation and close union with the Son of God, than otherwise they would have. The angels esteem it a great honor done them to be related to such a Person as Jesus Christ, God-man, who by reason that he is a divine Person is an infinitely honourable person.

The angels by Christ's becoming their head, are become nearly related to him. They with the saints are gathered together in one in Christ, *Eph. 1. 10.* They by virtue hereof, tho' Christ be not their redeemer as he is our's, yet have a right and propriety in this glorious Person, as well as we. He is theirs: tho' not their Saviour, yet he is their head of government, and head of influence.

Secondly, Again this is greatly to their benefit; as they, as well as we, hereby are under advantages for a far more intimate converse with God. The divine nature is at an infinite distance from the nature of angels, as well as from the nature of man. This distance forbids that familiarity and intimacy of intercourse——.

It is therefore a great advantage to the angels, that God is come down to them in a created nature; and in that nature is become their head; so that their intercourse and enjoyment may be more intimate. They are invited by the similar qualifications of the created nature, that the Son of God is in.



Thirdly

Thirdly. It is for the benefit of the angels, as hereby the elect of mankind are gathered into this Society. Christ by the work of redemption, gathers in the elect of mankind to join the angels of heaven: Eph. 1. 10. *That in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, & which are on earth, even in him.*

Men are brought in to join with the angels; to join with them in their work of praising God; to partake with them of their enjoyments. The angels greatly rejoice at this. They rejoice when but one person is gathered in, as Christ teaches us, Luk. 15. 10. *Likewise I say unto you, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God, over one sinner that repenteth.* The heavenly society is made more compleat by this accession of the saints to it. The saints and angels will contribute to the happiness of each other. The angels rejoice that others are added to join them and assist them in praising God.

The vacancy by the fall of angels is filled up — —

Fourthly, It tends to make the angels the more to prize their happiness, when they see how much it cost to purchase the same happiness for man. The angels tho' they knew so much, yet be not incapable of being taught more and more of the worth of their own happiness. For the worth of it is infinite, and therefore the understanding of an angel cannot comprehend it. But when they saw how much it cost to purchase the same happiness for man; that it cost the precious blood of the Son of God. This tended to give them a great sense of the infinite value of their happiness. They never saw such a testimony of the value of the eternal enjoyment of God before.

Thus we have shewn, how the wisdom of God appears in the work of redemption in the good ends attained thereby, with respect to God, men and angels.

We

We come now

IV. To shew what good ends are obtain'd with respect to the devil, God's grand enemy, in his overthrow and the ruin of his kingdom. Satan and his angels rebelled against God in heaven. He proudly presumed to try his strength with God's. He opposed strength. And when God by his almighty power overcame the strength of satan, and sent him like light'ning from heaven to hell with all his army; satan does not give out: but tho' he was conquer'd when he opposed his strength to God's, yet he hoped to get the victory by subtilty. Tho' he could not overcome God by power, yet he hoped to succeed by craft: tho' he found that God's power could easily cast them headlong from heaven to the bottomless pit; yet this proud spirit did not despair of out-witting God; and so his subtilty, disappointing him of his end in creating this lower world.

GOD therefore has shewn his great wisdom in overthrowing satan's design. He has disappointed the devises of the crafty, so that they cannot perform their enterprize. He has carried satan's counsel headlong.

1. Satan thought to have disappointed God of his own glory, that he designed in creating this lower world: And to make mankind, which God had made for his own glory, not to be for God's, but for his own glory, in setting up himself God over them.

Now Christ, by what he has done, in the work of redemption, has overthrown, satan, has utterly frustrated him, as to this end of his, viz. robbing God of his glory. God is not robbed of his glory; but is exceedingly glorified in mankind——in the elect to the surprize of angels and devils. God by redemption has all the glory of mankind that he intended, and more than ever, either men, angels or devils thought of, or imagined that God intended.

Satan did not know any way how God could have his intended glory by mankind, after he had procured

their fall. But God knew a way that the devil never thought of. Neither could the wisest angel in heaven have thought of it.

GOD might have glorified his justice in the destruction of all mankind. But it was God's design in creating the world to glorify his goodness & love; and not only to be glorified eventually but to be served and glorified actually by mankind. Satan intended to frustrate God of this end; but his design is confounded by the redemption of Jesus Christ.

2. Another design of the devil, was to gratify his envy, in the utter destruction of mankind. But by the redemption of Jesus Christ, this malicious design of Satan's is cross: because all the elect, whom God design'd should be happy when he made the world, are brought to their designed happiness; which is much greater than ever Satan thought it was in God's heart to bestow on man.

And tho' some of mankind are left to be miserable yet that does not answer Satan's end; for this is ordered for God's glory. No more are left miserable than God saw meet to glorify his justice upon.

One end why God suffered Satan to do what he did in procuring the fall of man, was that his Son might be glorified in conquering that strong, subtil and proud spirit, and triumphing over him.

How glorious doth Christ Jesus appear in baffling and triumphing over this proud king of darkness, and all the haughty confederate rulers of hell.

How glorious a sight is it to see the meek and patient Lamb of God, leading that proud, malicious and mighty enemy in triumph! What songs doth this cause in heaven!

It was a glorious sight in Israel to see *David* carrying the head of *Chah* in triumph to Jerusalem. It appeared a glorious sight to the daughters of Israel, who came out with timbrels and with dances, and sang,
 " *Saul*

“*Saul* hath slain his thousands, and *David* his ten thousands.” But how much more glorious to see the Son of *David* and the Son of God, carrying the head of the spiritual Goliath, the champion of the armies of hell, in triumph to the heavenly Jerusalem.

This victory of Christ is much celebrated. It is with a principal view to this, that Christ is called, “The Lord of Hosts or Armies, and a Man of War, *Exod.* 15. 3. And *Psal.* 24. 8. “Who is this King of Glory! The Lord strong and mighty, the Lord mighty in Battle.”

Thus we have briefly shewn, how the wisdom of God appears, in the contrivance of our salvation, by the greatness, and manifoldness, of the good ends that are obtain'd. We proceed,

Secondly, To shew how the wisdom of God appears in the wonderful manner and circumstances, of the attainment of this good. And here,

1. I would observe some things under this head, with respect to the glory of God that is obtained thereby.

1. By this contrivance for our redemption, God's greatest dishonour is made an occasion of his greatest glory. Sin is a thing by which God is greatly dishonoured; the nature of it's principle is enmity against God, and contempt of him. And man by his rebellion has greatly dishonoured God. But this dishonour by the contrivance for our redemption, is made an occasion of the greatest manifestation of God's glory that ever was. Sin, the greatest evil, is made an occasion of the greatest good

It is made an occasion of a greater glory, than before was, or than otherwise would have been. It is the nature of a principle of sin that it seeks to dethrone God; but this is hereby made an occasion of the greatest manifestation of God's royal majesty and glory that ever was. By sin, man has slighted and despised God. But this is made an occasion of his appearing the more greatly honourable. Sin casts contempt upon the authority
and

and law of God. But this is, by the contrivance for our redemption, made the occasion of the greatest honor done to that same authority, and that very law, that ever was. It was a greater honor to the law of God that Christ was subject to it, and obey'd it, than if all mankind had obey'd it. It was a greater honor to God's authority that Christ shew'd such great respect, and such intire subjection to it, than the perfect obedience of all the angels in heaven.

Man by his sin shew'd his enmity against the holiness of God : but this is made an occasion of the greatest manifestation of God's holiness. The holiness of God never appeared to the degree it did when God executed vengeance upon his own dear Son.

2. So has the wisdom of God contrived that those attributes are glorified in man's salvation ; whose glory seem'd to require his destruction. When man had fallen, several attributes of God seem'd to require his destruction. The justice of God seem'd to require it ; for the justice of God requires that sin be punished as it deserves : But it deserves no less than eternal destruction. God proclaims it as a part of the glory of his nature, that he will in no wise clear the guilty, *Exod.* 34. 7.

And so again the holiness of God seem'd to require man's destruction ; for God by his holiness infinitely hates sin. This seem'd to require therefore that God should manifest a proportionable hatred of the sinner ; and that he should be for ever an enemy unto him.

And the truth of God seem'd also to require man's destruction ; for eternal death was what God had threaten'd for sin, one jot or tittle of which word cannot by any means pass away.

But yet so has God contrived that those very attributes not only do allow of man's redemption, and are not opposite unto it ; their glory is not only not inconsis-

sistent with it, but they are glorified in it. That same vindictive justice is glorified in this way of salvation. It is manifest in the death and sufferings of Christ : So that same holiness of God and hatred of sin, that seemed to require man's damnation, is seen in Christ's dying for sinners.—

So herein also is manifested and glorified the truth of God, in the threatenings of the Law. —

3. Yea, it is so ordered now that the glory of these attributes requires the salvation of those that believe. The justice of God that required man's damnation, and seemed inconsistent with his salvation, now does as much require the salvation of those that believe in Christ, as ever before it required their damnation. Salvation is an absolute debt to the believer from God, so that he may in justice demand and challenge it ; not upon the account of what he himself has done ; but upon the account of what his Surety has done. For Christ has satisfied justice fully for his sin ; so that it is but a thing that may be challenged that God should now release the believer from the punishment ; it is but a piece of justice, that the creditor should release the debtor, when he has fully paid the debt. And again, the believer may demand eternal life, because it has been merited by Christ, by a merit of condignity. So it is contrived that that justice that seemed to require man's destruction, now requires his salvation.

So it is with the truth of God. The truth of God that seemed to require man's damnation, now requires man's salvation. At the same time that the threatening of the law stands good, there is a promise of eternal life to many of them that have broken the law. They both stand good at the same time : and the truth of God requires that both should be fulfill'd. And how much soever they seemed to interfere one with another, yet so is the matter contrived in this way of salvation, that both are fulfill'd and do not interfere one with another.

At the very same time that God uttered that threatening, "In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die:" and at the same time that *Adam* had first eaten the forbidden fruit; there was then a promise stood good, that many thousands of *Adam's* race should obtain eternal life; for this promise was made before the world was to Jesus Christ. What a difficulty and an inconsistency, did here seem to be? But it was no difficulty to the wisdom of God, which had so contrived that there should appear no inconsistency; but that that promise, and that threatening should be both fully accomplished to the glory of God's truth in each of them. *Psal 85. 10. Mercy and truth are met together, righteousness and peace have kissed each other.*

4. Those very attributes which seemed to require man's destruction, are more glorious in his salvation, than they would have been in his destruction.

The revenging justice of God is a great deal more manifested in the death of Christ, than it would have been if all mankind had been damned to all eternity; and that because, if man had remained under the guilt and imputation of sin, the justice of God would not have had such a trial, as it had, when his own Son was under the imputation of sin. If all mankind had stood guilty, and justice had called for vengeance upon them, — that would have been, in no wise, such a trial of the inflexibility and unchangeableness of the justice of God, as when his own Son, that was the object of his infinite love, and in whom he infinitely delighted, stood with the imputation of guilt upon him.

This was the greatest trial that could be, whether or no God's justice was perfect and unchangeable, or not. This was the greatest possible trial whether or no God was so just that he would not upon any account, abate of what justice required. This was the greatest trial that can be conceived of, whether or no God would have any respect to persons, in judgment. And God when there

there was such a trial, hath appear'd immutably just. He exacted aall, even the utmost farthing of the debt due to justice, of his Son.

So the majesty of God appears much more in the sufferings of Christ than it would have done in the eternal sufferings of all mankind, — that his justice should be executed upon so great a person, a person of infinite dignity. It exceedingly shews the awful majesty of God; as the majesty of a prince appears greater in the just punishment of great personages that are under the guilt of treason, than lesser persons.

And then the sufferings of Christ have this advantage of the eternal sufferings of the wicked, for impressing upon the minds of the spectators a sense of the dread majesty and infinite justice of God, and his infinite hatred of sin; viz. that the eternal sufferings of the wicked never will be seen actually accomplished, and finished; whereas they have seen that which is equivalent to those eternal sufferings actually fulfilled and finished in the sufferings of Christ.

5. Such is the wisdom of this way of salvation, that the more any of the elect have dishonoured God, the more is God glorified in this redemption. Such wonders as these are accomplished by the wisdom of this way of salvation. Such things as these, if they had been proposed to any creature intelligence, would have seem'd strange and unaccountable paradoxes, till the counsels of divine wisdom concerning the matter were unfolded.

So sufficient is this way of salvation, that it is not inconsistent with any of God's attributes to save the chief of sinners. However great a sinner any one has been, yet God can, if he pleases, save without any injury to the glory of any one attribute. And not only so, but the more sinful any one has been, the more doth God glorify himself in his salvation. The more doth he glorify his power, that he can redeem one in whom

sin so abounds, and of whom satan has such strong possession. The greater triumph has Christ over his grand adversary, in redeeming and setting at liberty from his bondage those that were his greatest vassals. The more doth the sufficiency of Christ appear, in that it is sufficient for such vile wretches.

The more is the sovereignty, and boundless extent of the mercy of God manifested, in that it is sufficient to redeem those that are most undeserving. Rom. 5. 20. *Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound.*

S E R M O N, XIV.

E P H E S I A N S iii. 10.

To the Intent that now unto the Principalities and Powers in heavenly Places, might be known by the Church the manifold Wisdom of God.

We now come,

II. **T**O take notice of some wonderful circumstances of the attainment of *our* good, hereby; which shews the great wisdom of this contrivance.

So hath God contrived in this way, that a sinful creature, should become not guilty; and he that has no righteousness of his own, should become righteous. These things if they had been proposed, would have appeared contradictions to any but only the divine understanding.

If it had been proposed to any creature, to find out a way that a sinful creature should not be a guilty creature,

ture, how impossible would it have been judged, that there shou'd be any way at all. It would doubtless have been judged impossible but that he that has committed sin, must stand guilty of the sin he has committed. And if sin be such a thing as necessarily obliges to punishment, then, that it must oblige to punishment him that has committed it. If punishment and sin be inseparable, then that punishment and the sinner are inseparable. If the law denounces death to the person that is guilty of sin, and it be impossible, that the law should not take place, then that he that has committed sin must die. Thus any created understanding would have thought.

And so if it had been proposed that there should be some way found out, wherein man might be righteous, without fulfilling righteousness himself; so that he might reasonably and properly be looked upon and accepted as a righteous person, and adjudged to the reward of righteousness, and yet have no righteousness at all of his own; and nothing but the contrary. That he should be righteous by the righteousness of the law, by a perfect righteousness, and yet have broken the law and done nothing else but break it; this would doubtless have been looked upon impossible and contradictions.

But yet the wisdom of God has truly accomplished each of these things. He hath accomplished, that tho' men are sinners, yet they should be without guilt, in that he hath found out a way that the threatnings of the law should truly and properly be fulfilled, and punishment be executed on sin, and yet not on the sinner. The sufferings of Christ do answer the demands of the law, with respect to the sins of those that believe in Christ; and justice is truly fulfilled & satisfied thereby. And the Law is fulfilled & answered by the obedience of Christ, so that his righteousness should properly be our righteousness. Tho' not performed by us, yet it is properly and reasonably accepted for us, as much as

if we had performed it our selves. Divine wisdom has so contrived, that such an interchanging of sin and righteousness — should be consistent, and most agreeable with reason, with the law, and his own holy attributes. And that because Jesus Christ has so united himself to us, and us to him, as to make himself our's, ——— to make himself our head. He has united himself to the elect by his dying love. The love of Christ to the elect is so great, that God the Father looks upon it proper and suitable to account Christ and the elect as one; and accordingly to account what Christ does and suffers, as if they *did* and *suffered* it.

That love of Christ that is so great as to render Christ willing to put himself in the stead of the elect, and to bear the misery that they deserved, does in the Father's account so unite Christ and the elect, that they may be look'd upon as legally one.

2. It shews wonderful wisdom that our good should be procured by such seemingly unlikely and opposite means, as the humiliation of the Son of God. When Christ was about to undertake that great work of redemption, he did not take that method that any creature-wisdom would have thought the most proper. Creature-wisdom would have determined that in order to his effectually and more gloriously accomplishing such a great work, he should rather have been exalted higher, if it had been possible, rather than humbled so low.

Earthly kings and princes when they are about to engage in any great and difficult work, will put on their strength, and will appear in all the majesty and power that they are masters of, that they might be successful.

But when Christ was about to perform the great work of redeeming a lost world, the wisdom of God took an opposite method, and determin'd that Christ in order to the successfully performing of it, should be humbled and abased to a mean state, that he should appear in low circumstances. He did not deck himself with his strength

strength and glory but he laid aside his glory. He emptied himself. *Phil. 2. 6. 7, 8.* "Being in the form of God—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 unto death, even the death of the cross.

Creature-wisdom would have thought that Christ, in order to perform this great work, should deck himself with all his strength, and if possible be made more strong. But divine wisdom determin'd, that Christ, in order to perform it, should be made weak, that he should put on the infirmities of human nature. The wisdom of God saw this infirmity and weakness needful in order to the working out our salvation.

And why did divine wisdom determine that he should become thus weak? It was that he might be subject to want, and to suffering, and to the power and malice of his enemies. But then what advantage could it be of to him in this work, to be subject to the power and malice of his enemies! It was the very design that he came into the world upon, to overcome his enemies, to overthrow them. Who would have thought that this was the way to overthrow them, to become weak & feeble, & for that very end that he might be subject to their power and malice. But this is the very means that the wisdom of God pitched upon, whereby Christ was to overthrow his enemies, viz. his being weak, and so being for a time subject to their power and malice.

This was the means by which God determined that Christ should prevail against his enemies, that he should be so subject to their power, that they might prevail against him, so as to put him to great disgrace and to great pain, and even so as to kill him.

What other wisdom but divine wisdom could ever have determined—that this was the way to be taken in order to the being successful in the work of our redemption. This would have appear'd to creature-wisdom
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the most wrong way that could be thought of, the direstest course to be frustrated that could be devised. But it was indeed the way to glorious success, and the only way. "The foolishness of God is wiser than men." 1 *Cor.* 1. 25. God has brought strength out of weakness, glory out of ignominy and reproach. Christ's shame and reproach are the only means, by which way is made to our eternal glory and honor.

The wisdom of God hath made Christ's humiliation the means of our exaltation; his coming down from heaven is that which brings us to heaven. The wisdom of God hath made life the fruit of death. The death of Christ was the only means, we could have eternal life. The death of a person that was God, was the only way by which we could come to have life in God.

Here favour is made to arise out of wrath: our acceptance into God's favor, out of God's wrath upon his own Son. A blessing rises out of a curse. Our everlasting blessedness from Christ's being made a curse for us. Our righteousness is made to rise out of Christ's imputed guilt. He was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God. 2 *Cor.* 5. 21. By such wonderful means hath the wisdom of God procured our salvation.

3. Our sin and misery, is by this contrivance made an occasion of our greater blessedness. This is a very wonderful thing. It would have been a very wonderful thing if we had been merely restored from sin & misery, to be as we were before; but it was a much more wonderful thing that we should not only be restored, but bro't to a higher blessedness than ever; and that our sin & misery should be the occasion of it, & should make way for it.

It was wonderful that both our sin and misery, should be made the occasion of our greater blessedness.

Note. It was wonderful that our sin should be made the occasion of our greater blessedness; for sin is the thing that deserves misery. By our sin we had deserved

to be everlastingly miserable. But yet this is fo'rtuned by divine wisdom, that it is made an occasion of our being more happy.

It was a strange thing that sin should be the occasion of any thing else but misery : and nothing but divine wisdom could have made it an occasion of any other. It was a strange thing that after man had sinned, it should be possible for him to escape misery. But divine wisdom has found out a way whereby the sinner might not only escape being miserable, but that he should be happier than before he sinned ; yea, than he would have been if he had never sinned at all. And this sin and unworthiness of his, is the thing that is the occasion of this greater blessedness.

Secondly. It was a wonderful thing that man's own misery should be an occasion of his greater happiness. For happiness and misery are contraries. It shews divine wisdom to bring contraries thus one out of another. Especially when it is considered how great man's misery was. He was under the wrath and curse of God, and condemned to everlasting burnings.

This sin and misery of man, is by this contrivance, made an occasion of his being more happy, not only than he was before the fall, but more happy than he would have been, if he never had fallen. Man if he never had fallen,— if he had performed the required obedience of the law, would have had a more high degree of happiness than he had while in a state of trial.

Our first parents, if they had stood and persever'd in perfect obedience, 'till God had given them the fruit of the tree of life as a seal of their reward, they would have been advanced to higher happiness ; for they before were but in a state of probation for their reward. And 'tis not to be supposed but that their happiness was to have been greater after they had persisted in obedience, and had actually received the reward, than it was, while they were in a state of trial for it.

But

But by the redemption of Christ, the sin and misery of the elect is made an occasion of their being brought to a higher happiness than mankind would have had if they had persisted in obedience 'till they had received the reward. As is manifest in the following things.

1st. Man is hereby brought to a greater and nearer union with God. If man had never fallen, God would have remained man's friend; he would have enjoyed God's favor, and so would have been the object of Christ, as he would have had the favor of all the persons of the trinity.

But now Christ becoming our surety and Saviour, and having taken on him our nature, occasions between Christ and us an union of a quite different kind, and a nearer relation than otherwise would have been. Christ is become our's now, in a manner than otherwise would not have been. The fall is the occasion of Christ's becoming our head, and the church his body. And believers are become his brethren and kinsfolk, and spouse, in a manner that otherwise would not have been. And by our union with Christ we have a greater union with God the Father. We, if we had stood, should have been the children of God in a sense as the angels are said to be the sons of God, *Job* 38. 7.

But now we are sons in a different, more excellent manner, that is by a special relation to Christ the eternal Son of God, and a certain participation of his relation to the Father. We are sons by virtue of our union with the natural son of God. *Gal. 4. 4, 5, 6. 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. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, abba, father.* And therefore Christ has taught us, in all our addresses to God, to call him, Our Father, in like manner as he calls him Father, *Joh. 20, 17. Go tell my brethren*

brethren, behold I ascend to my Father, and your Father.

This is one of the wonderful things brought about by the work of redemption, That thereby our separation from God, is made an occasion of a greater union, than was before, or otherwise would have been.

When we fell, there was a dreadful separation made betwixt God and us, but this is made an occasion of a greater union. Joh. 17. 20, 21, 22, 23. *Neither pray I for these alone, but for them also which shall believe on me thro' their word: that they all may be one, as thou Father art in me, and I in thee: that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them: that they may be one, even as we are one, I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.*

2dly. Man now has greater manifestations of the glory and love of God, than otherwise he would have had. Man's happiness consists principally in the manifestations of these two things, viz. of the glory — and love of God. Now, man by the work of redemption, has greater manifestation of both of them, than otherwise he would have had. We have already spoken particularly of the glory of God, and what advantages even the Angels have by the discoveries of it in this work. But if they have such advantages, much more, will man who is far more directly concerned in this affair than they.

And here is in this work, immensely greater displays of the love of God, than man had before he fell; or, as we may well suppose, than he would have had, if he had never fallen. God now manifests his love to his people, by sending his Son into the world, to die for them. There never would have been any such testimony of the love of God, if man had not fallen.

CHRIST manifests his love, by coming into the world, and laying down his life. This is the greatest testimony of divine love that can be conceived, immensely greater than all blessings would have been, if bestowed upon man in innocency, and without any humiliation, or suffering of any of the divine persons. This is a greater testimony of divine love than otherwise would have been thought of, or known to be possible. Now surely the greater discoveries God's people have of God's love to them, the more happy must they be: the more they see of God's love to them, the more occasion will they have to rejoice in that love. Here will be a delightful theme the saints will have to contemplate to all eternity, which they never could have had, if man never had fallen, viz the dying love of Christ. They will have occasion now to sing that song for ever, in the first chapter of Revelations, ver. 5, 6. *Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his father, to whom be glory and dominion forever, amen.*

3dly. Man now has greater motives offered him to love God than otherwise he ever would have had. Man's happiness consists in mutual love between God and man;—in seeing God's love to him and in reciprocally loving God. And the more he sees of God's love to him, and the more he loves God, the more happy must he be. His love to God is as necessary in order to his happiness, as the seeing God's love to him; for he can have no joy in the beholding God's love to him, any otherwise than as he loves God.

This makes the saints prize God's love to them. because they love him. If they did not love God, it would not rejoice them to make them happy, to see his love to them; because they would make light of his love and despise it. The more any person loves another, the more will he be delighted in the manifestations of that other's love.

There

There is provision therefore made for both in the work of redemption. Both, that there should be greater manifestations of the love of God to us, than there would have been, if man had not fallen, and also that man should love God more than he would have done, if he had not fallen. And that therefore there are greater motives to love him than otherwise there would have been. There are greater obligations to love him, for God has done more for us to win our love. Christ hath died for us. Man would have had no such motives to the love of God, if man had not fallen: none to be compared to it. The greater motives God's people have to love God, the more will their hearts indeed be drawn forth to love, and consequently the more happy will men be.

And then, man is now brought to a more universal and immediate and sensible dependance on God, than otherwise he would have been. All his happiness is now *of* him, *thro'* him, and *in* him. If man had not fallen, he would have all his happiness of God, but he would have had it by his own righteousness; but now it is by the righteousness of Christ. He would have had all his holiness of God, but not so sensibly; because then he would have been holy from the beginning, as soon as he received his being; there never would have been a time when he was not holy, and so it's derivation from God would not have been so sensible as it is now, when he is first sinful and universally corrupt, and afterwards is made holy. If man had held his integrity and persever'd in obedience through the time of trial, he would have had all his happiness from God, but not so sensibly; for he would have been happy from the time when he first began to exist in a constant uninterrupted manner, and misery would have been a stranger to him; and therefore happiness would not have been so sensible a derivation from God, as it is now, when man looks to God from the deeps of

distress, cries repeatedly to him, and waits upon him, being convinc'd by abundant experience, that he has no where else to go but to God, who is graciously pleas'd in consequence of man's earnest and persevering suit to appear to his relief, take him out of the miry clay and horrible pit, and set him upon a rock, and establish his goings, and put a new song into his mouth.

By man's having thus a more immediate, and universal and sensible dependence, God doth more intirely secure man's undivided respect. There is greater motive for man to make God his all in all, —to love him and rejoice in him as his only portion.

4thly. By the contrivance for our salvation, man's sin and misery are but an occasion of his being brought to a more full and free converse with, and enjoyment of God than otherwise would have been. For as we have observed already, the union is greater; and the greater the union, the more full the communion, and intimate the intercourse.

And then, man has this advantage, that Christ is come down to him, in his own nature; and hereby he may converse with Christ more intimately, than the infinite distance of the divine nature would allow. I have before observed this advantage as what the angels have, but 'tis more man's advantage than the angels. For Christ is not only in a created nature, but he *is in man's own nature.*

And so we have advantages for a more full enjoyment of God. This end is also obtain'd in the work of redemption, viz. that by Christ's incarnation, the saints may see God with their bodily eyes, as well as by an intellectual view. They may see him in both ways of seeing, which their natures, being body and spirit, are capable of. The saints after the day of judgment, will consist of both body and soul: And so they will have outward as well as spiritual sight. It is now ordered of divine wisdom, that God himself or a divine person should

should be the principal entertainment of both these kinds of sight, spiritual and corporal. And that the saints in heaven should not only have an intellectual sight of God, but that they should see a divine person as they see one another : which shall not only be spiritually, but outwardly.

The body of Jesus Christ will therefore appear with that transcendent visible majesty and beauty, that is exceeding expressive of the divine majesty beauty & glory. The body of Christ shall appear with the glory of God upon it, as Christ tells us that he will come at the day of judgment, with the glory of his Father, Mat. 16. 27. *The Son of man shall come in the glory of his Father.* This will be a great happiness to the saints thus to see God. Job comforted himself with this, that he should see God with his bodily eyes, Job 19. 26. *And tho' after my skin, worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.*

5ly, and lastly. Man's sin and misery is made an occasion of his greater happiness, as he has now a greater relish of happiness, by reason of his knowledge of both. In order to happiness, there must be two things, viz. his union to a proper object—and a relish of the object. Man's sin and misery is made an occasion of increasing both these, by the work of redemption. We have shewn already that the union is increased. And that is not only increased but the relish too; and that by the knowledge that man now has of evil. These contraries, good and evil, heighten the sense of one another. And therefore the forbidden tree was called the tree of knowledge of good and evil. 'Tis the tree of the knowledge of evil; because it was by that that we came to the experience of evil. If it had not been for our eating of that tree, we never should have known what evil was. And it is also the tree of the knowledge of Good, because we should never have known so well what good was, if it had not been for that tree. We are taught the value of good,
by

by our knowledge of it's contrary, evil. This teaches us to prize good, and makes us the more to relish it and rejoyce in it.

This is made to be the effect of the fruit of that tree to the saints by the work of redemption. They thereby know something what a state of sin and alienation from God is. They know something what the anger of God is, and what it is to be in danger of hell. And this makes them the more exceedingly to rejoyce in the favour of God, and in the enjoyment of God.

Take two persons : one that never knew what evil was, never was in any misery ; but that was happy from the first moment of his being, having the favour of God, and all manner of tokens of it. And another that is in a very doleful, lost and undone condition : and let there be bestow'd upon these two persons the same blessings, the same good things : and let them be objectively in the same glorious circumstances, — and which will rejoyce most ? Doubtless he that was brought to this happiness out of a miserable and doleful state. So the saints in heaven will for ever the more rejoyce in God, and in the enjoyment of his love, for their being brought to it out of a most lamentable state & condition. They thereby know what evil is, and great danger of it.

Other things might be mentioned, where the happiness that the saints have by the redemption of Christ does excell the happiness that man had before the fall ; or that he would have had, if he had stood. But these may suffice.

Having thus observed some wonderful circumstances of the good attain'd for us by this contrivance, for our redemption, — I proceed now,

IIIly. To take notice of some wonderful circumstances of the overthrow of Satan that is attain'd thereby. The wisdom of God doth greatly and remarkably appear in so exceedingly baffling and confounding all the subtilty of the old serpent.

As we have already observed, power never appears so conspicuous as when opposed and conquering opposition: so the same may be said here of wisdom. It never appears so brightly and with such advantage as when opposed by the subtilty of some very crafty enemy: and in baffling and confounding that subtilty.

The devil is exceeding subtil. The subtilty of the serpent is emblematical of it, spoken of, Gen. 3. 1. *Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field—* He was once one of the brightest Intelligences of heaven, and one of the brightest if not the very brightest of all. And all the devils were once morning stars, of a glorious brightness of understanding. They still have the same faculties, tho' they ceased to be influenced and guided by the holy spirit of God; and so their heavenly wisdom is turned into hellish craft and subtilty.

GOD in the work of redemption hath wondrously baffled the utmost craft of the devils: and that tho' they are all combined, and have all as it were laid their heads together to contrive to frustrate God, in his designs of glory to himself, and goodness to men.

The wisdom of God appears very glorious herein. We shall take notice of some instances wherein.

1. The weak and seemingly despicable means and weapons that God makes use of to overthrow satan withal. Christ poured the greater contempt upon satan, in the victory that he obtained over him; by reason of the means of his preparing himself to fight with him, and the weapons that he hath made use of. Christ when he prepared himself to fight with satan, he as it were lays aside his strength: he takes on him the human nature, and makes himself a weak mortal. He chuses to fight with satan in the human nature, in a poor, frail, afflicted state. It was his will to overcome satan thus. He did as David did. David when he was going against the philistine refused to go with Saul's armour, with a helmet of brass upon his head and a coat of mail, and his sword,

sword. No, he puts them off him. Goliath comes mightily armed against David, with a helmet of brass upon his head, and a coat of mail weighing five thousand shekels of brass, and greaves of brass upon his legs and a target of brass between his shoulders; and a spear, whose staff was like a weaver's beam; and the spear's head weighing six hundred shekels of iron. And besides all this, had one bearing a shield that went before him. But David takes nothing but a staff in his hand, and a shepherd's bag and a sling, and goes against the philistine. And the weapons that Christ made use of were his poverty, afflictions and reproaches, sufferings and death. His principal weapon was his own cross: the instrument of his own reproachful death. These were seemingly weak and despicable instruments, to go and fight against such a giant as satan with. And doubtless the devil disdain'd them as much as Goliath did David's staves and sling. But with such weapons as these has Christ in a human, weak, mortal nature, overthrown all the reproach, and baffled all the craft of hell.

Such disgrace and contempt has Christ poured upon satan, much more than if he had overcome satan with some very pompous and magnificent apparatus of armour, as he that overcomes his enemy with a wooden sword puts him to the greater disgrace, and he has the greater triumph over him. As David had a more glorious victory over Goliath for his conquering him with such despicable instruments: and Samson over the Philistines, for killing so many of them with such a despicable weapon as the jaw-bone of an ass.

It is spoken of in scripture as a glorious triumph of Christ over the devil, that he should overcome him, by such a despicable weapon as his cross. Col. 2. 14, 15. *Blotting out the hand-writing of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross: and having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.*

GOD

GOD shews his great and infinite wisdom in taking this method, to confound the wisdom and subtilty of his enemies. He hereby shews how easily he can do it, and that he is infinitely wiser than they I Cor. I. 27, 28, 29. *God hath chosen the foolish things of the world, to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world, to confound the things that are mighty: and the base things of the world & things that are despised, hath God chosen: yea, and things that are not to bring to naught the things that are.*

S E R M O N, XV.

E P H E S I A N S iii. 10.

To the Intent that now unto the Principalities and Powers in heavenly Places, might be known by the Church the manifold Wisdom of God.

2. **A**Nother wonderful circumstance of the overthrow of satan, in the work of redemption, is, God has hereby confounded satan with his own weapons. It is so contrived in the work of redemption, that our grand enemy should be made a means of his own confusion: and that, by those very things, whereby he endeavours to rob God of his glory, and to destroy mankind. He is made a means of frustrating his own designs. His most subtil and powerful endeavours for the accomplishing his designs are made a means of confounding them, and of promoting the contrary.

Of this, I will mention but two instances.

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First,

First His procuring man's fall is made an occasion of the contrary to what he designed.

Indeed he has hereby procured the ruin of multitudes of mankind, which he aimed at. But in this he does not frustrate God; for this was God's design from all eternity, to glorify himself in the damnation of multitudes of mankind. And it will prove no context to him, but his own misery.

But what satan did in tempting man to fall is made an occasion of the contrary to what he intended, in that it gave occasion for God to glorify himself the more: and as also it giveth occasion for the elect's being bro't to higher happiness: as we have shewn.

The happy state that man was in was envied by satan,—— That man that was of earthly original should be advanc'd to such honors; when he who was originally of a so much more noble nature should be cast down to such disgrace. His pride could not bear it,— that man that dwelt in a house of clay, should be made so much of, while he'was in such misery.

And how, may we conclude, that satan triumphed when he had brought him down!

The devil tempted our first parents with this, that if they eat of the forbidden fruit, they should be as Gods: it was a lie in satan's mouth; for he aim'd at nothing else but to fool man out of his happiness, and make him his own slave and vassal, with a blinded expectation of being like a god.

But little did satan think that God would turn it so, as to make man's fall an occasion of one in the human nature actually being a divine person. Man's eating the forbidden fruit is made an occasion of God's becoming man: and so an occasion of our nature's being advanc'd to a union to God, so as to be the same person.

By this means it comes to pass, that one in mans' nature, that satan so envied, now sits at the right hand
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of God, invested with divine power and glory, and reigns over heaven and earth with a god-like power and dominion. Thus is satan disappointed in his subtilty. As he intended, that saying, "Ye shall be as gods — was a lie, to decoy and befool man. Little did he think, that it would be in such manner verified, as it is, by the incarnation of the son of God.

And then this is the occasion also, of all the elect being united to this divine person, so that they become one with Christ; are as it were parts of him. Believers are as Christ; or, members and parts of Christ. So the Church is called Christ. Little did satan think, that his telling that lie to our first parents,—Ye shall be as Gods, would be the occasion of their being as Christ the Son of God.

Again, satan is made a means of his own confusion in this:—It was satan's design in tempting man to sin, to make man his captive and slave for ever; to have plagued him and triumphed over him. And this very thing is a means to bring it about, that man instead of being his vassal should be his judge. It is the very means, that the elect, instead of being his captives, to be for ever tormented and triumphed over by him, should sit as judges to sentence him to everlasting torment. It has been the means, that one in man's nature, viz. Jesus Christ should be his supream judge. It was man's nature that satan so envied, and sought to make a prey of. But Jesus Christ at the last day, shall come in man's nature; and the devils shall be all brought to stand trembling at his bar: and he shall judge, and condemn them, and execute the wrath of God upon them.

CHRIST shall come in the human nature: in a nature in it self much inferior to the original nature of the devils——to do this. And this, satan's tempting man to sin, has been the occasion of. For it was the fall of

man that satan procured, which was the occasion of Christ's being in the human nature.

And not only shall Christ in the human nature judge the devils, but all the saints shall judge them with Christ; as assessors with him in judgment. 1 Cor. 6. 3. *Know ye not that we shall judge angels.*

Secondly. In another instance satan is made a means of his own confusion; and that is in his procuring the death of Christ. Satan set himself to oppose Christ as soon as he appeared. He fought by all means to procure his ruin. He set the jews against him. He filled the minds of the scribes and pharisees with the most bitter persecuting malice against Christ. He fought by all means to procure his death; and that he might be put to the most ignominious death that could be. We read "that satan entred into Judas, and tempted him to betray him *Luk. 22. 3.* And Christ speaks of his sufferings as being the effects of the power of darkness, *Luk. 22. 53. When I was daily with you in the temple, ye stretcha forth no hands against me: but this is your hour and the power of darkness.*

But satan hereby overthrows his own kingdom. Christ came into the world to destroy the works of the devil. And this was the very thing that did it, viz the death of Christ. Christ overcomes satan by his blood. Here it is that the whole work of redemption is built, even the blood of Christ. The cross was the devil's own weapon. Christ overthrew satan with this weapon. As David cut off Goliath's head with his own sword.

CHRIST'S thus making satan a means of his own confusion was typify'd of old by Samson's getting honey out of the carcass of the lion. There is more implied in Samson's riddle, "Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness, than ever the philistines explain'd. And it was a saying that is verify'd by Christ in a far more glorious manner than

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by Samson's getting honey out of the carcase of the lion. God's enemy and our's are taken in the pit which they themselves have digged: and their own soul is taken in the net which they have laid.

Thus we have shewn in some measure the wisdom of this way of salvation by Jesus Christ.

This introduces the next general head, which was to shew,

II. That this wisdom is above the wisdom of the Angels. This wisdom is altogether divine. And tho' the angels are spirits of glorious wisdom, yet it was above their wisdom to contrive such a way of salvation. If it had been put to them to find out a way for man's redemption, they all would have been nonplus'd.

The wisdom of this contrivance appears to have been above the wisdom of the angels by the following things.

I. It appears that this wisdom in that they themselves did not fully comprehend the contrivance, till they saw it accomplished. They knew that man was to be redeemed, long before Christ came into the world: but yet they did not fully comprehend it until they saw it. This is evident by the expression in the text. "That now might be known unto the principalities—the manifold wisdom of God. i. e. *Now* the work is actually accomplished by Jesus Christ. Which implies that it was now new to them. If they understood no more of it now, than they had all along, the Apostle would never have expressed himself so; for he is speaking of it as a mystery, in a measure kept hid until now.

They doubtless understood much of it before: but they did not understand all. They had a new discovery when Christ came and performed the work.

Now it is to be considered, that the angels had had four thousand years time to contemplate and look into this affair. And they did spend that time in studying of it; for they did not want inclination and desire to understand

understand it and look into it, as the scripture teaches us. And they had a great deal to put them upon an attentive contemplation of it. For when it was made known that God had such a design, it must appear a wonderful thing to them. It was a new thing. They had seen their fellow Angels destroyed without mercy. And this redeeming of the fallen sinful creature, was quite a new thing. It must needs be astonishing to them, when God had revealed this design of mercy to them presently after the fall; and had given an intimation of it, in saying, "The seed of the woman shall bruise the serpent's head. They knew that God had such a design; for they were from the beginning ministering spirits, sent forth to minister to those that were the heirs of salvation. They were sent forth to minister to them, that were redeemed by Christ ever since the fall. They were present at the institution of the typical dispensation, that was so full of shadows of gospel things; as is evident by *Psal.* 69. 17.

The angels contemplating the contrivance of our redemption was typified by the posture of the cherubims over the mercy-seat, over the ark. They were made bending down towards the ark and mercy seat. This is what the apostle *Peter* is thought to have some reference to, *1 Pet.* 1. 12.

So that they for four thousand years had been studying this contrivance, and yet they did not fully comprehend it till they saw it accomplished.

This shews that the wisdom of it was far above their wisdom; for if they could not fully comprehend it after it had been reveal'd that there was such a design; and after much of it had already been made known, as it was in the old testament:—If they not withstanding could not fully understand it, after they had studied four thousand years together upon it; how much less could they have found it out of themselves without any thing being ever made known to them of it. They that
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have four thousand years time to study a thing, have sufficient trial whether it be above their understanding or not.

2. It will appear if we consider for what end this wisdom of God was made known unto them, viz. that they might admire and prize it. It was made known to them, that they might see how manifold it is; how great and glorious it is; that they might see the unspeakable depths of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God, as the Apostle expresses it, *Rom. 11. 33.*

It was manifested to them that they might see the glory of God in it. It was shewn unto the angels that they might see how great and wonderful the mystery was. *1 Tim. 3. 16.* "Great is the mystery of godliness: Godliness: God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit, seen of angels———"

Now if the wisdom of it were not far above their own understandings, this would not be shewn them, for them to admire and praise.

3. It appears in that they are still contemplating of it; and endeavouring to see more and more of it. There is so much wisdom in this way of salvation, that there is room for the faculties of Angels to employ themselves to all eternity. It is evident that the Angels are still employing themselves in endeavouring to see more and more of God's wisdom appearing in the work of redemption, by *1 Pet. 1. 12.* "Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them—did signify, when it testified before hand of the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; *which things the angels desire to look into.* It is not said, that they desire to look into it before

fore Christ came ; but they still desire to look into it, after they have seen it accomplished. Now they don't so perfectly comprehend all the wisdom that is to be seen in it : but they are contemplating, looking into it, that they may see more and more ; and never will have fully exhausted to all eternity : But here will still in this work be room enough to employ the angelical understandings.

A P P L I C A T I O N .

I. Hence we may learn the blindness of the world, that the wisdom appearing in the work of redemption is no more admired in it. God has revealed this his glorious design and contrivance to the world. He has sent forth his gospel, and causes it to be preached abroad in the world, to declare to the world his infinite wisdom has been set on work for man's salvation. But how little is it regarded ! There are some that do see ; that have their eyes opened to behold the wondrous things of the gospel, to see the glory of God in, and to admire the wisdom of it. But the greater part are wholly blind to it. They see nothing in all this that is any way glorious and wonderful. Tho' the Angels are so surprized at, and so attentively behold and consider, and account it worthy of their most engaged and deep contemplation ; yet the greater part of them that have the Gospel here on earth, take little notice of it. It is all a dull story, and dead letter to them. They see no such wisdom in it, as characterizes it to be of divine original. They are so far from seeing any wisdom in it, that it is above the wisdom of the Angels, that they can't see any thing in it above the wisdom of men. They can discover nothing in it above what is human, that should make them conclude that it is any thing more than the invention of men. Yea the gospel to many seems foolishness ; so that they
question

question whether it be of divine original or not. And there are many that do openly deny it.

Tho' the light that shines in the world be so exceeding glorious, yet how few are there that do see it. The glory of God's wisdom in this work is surpassing the brightness of the sun : but so blind is the world that it sees nothing. It don't know that the sun of righteousness shines.

Thus it has been in all ages, and wherever the gospel has been preached. Ministers of the word of God, in all ages have had occasion to say, Who hath believed our report, and to whom is the arm of the Lord revealed ?

Thus it was of old, under the preaching of the prophets. They were sent to many with that errand, *Isai.* 6. 9, 10. "Go and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not ; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and their ears heavy, and shut their eyes, lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert and be healed.

And so it was in Christ's time, when that glorious prophet came, and more fully revealed the counsels of God concerning our redemption. How many were there that were blind ! How much did Christ complain of them ! How blind were the scribes and pharisees, the most noted sect of men among the jews for wisdom ; they beheld no glory in that gospel which Christ preached unto them ; — which gave occasion to Christ to call them fools and blind, *Mat.* 23. 17.

So it was again in the Apostles times. In all places where they preached, some believed, and some believed not, *Acts* 28. 24. "As many as were ordained to eternal life believed, *Chap.* 13. 48. "The election obtained, but the rest were blinded, *Rom.* 11. 7.

And so it is still in those places where the gospel is preached. There are a few that have their eyes open to see the glory of the gospel. God has a small number whose eyes he opens, who are called out of darkness into marvellous light. Who have an understanding given them of the way of life, to see the wisdom and fitness of that way.

But how many are there that sit under the preaching of the gospel, all their days, that never see any divine wisdom or glory in it! To their dying day they are unaffected with it. When they hear it, they see nothing to attract their attention, and excite any admiration. To preach the gospel to them will serve very well to lull them asleep: but very little other effect upon them. This shews the exceeding wickedness of the heart of man,—That infinite wisdom should be so set on work, as to surprize the Angels, and to entertain them from age to age;—and that this wisdom should be so plainly set before men, and after all it should appear foolishness *1 Cor. I 18.* “The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness.

Infer. II. This is a great confirmation of the truth of the gospel. The gospel stands in no need of external evidences of its truth and divinity. It carries its own light and evidence with it. There is that in the nature of it that sufficiently distinguishes it to those who are spiritually inlightened from all the effects of human invention. There are the evident appearances of the divine perfections; the stamp of divine glory, of which this of the divine wisdom is not the least part.

There is as much in the gospel to shew that it is no work of men, as there is in the sun in the firmament. Persons that are come to the mature exercise of their reason and look upon the sun, and consider the nature of it, its wonderful height, its course, its brightness and heat, may know that it is no work of man. So if the
nature

nature of the gospel be duly considered, if the true nature of it is seen, it may be known that it is no work of man, and that it must be from God.

If the wisdom appearing in the gospel be duly considered and understood, it will be seen as much to excel all human wisdom, as the sun's light excels the light of fires of our own inkindling.

The contrivance of our salvation is of such a nature, as that no one that duly considers it can rationally conclude that man had any hand in it. The nature of the contrivance is such, so out of the way of all human thoughts, of a nature so different from all human inventions; so much more sublime, excellent and worthy, that it don't favour at all of the craft or subtilty of man: it favours of God.

If any are ready to think man might have found out such a way of the salvation of sinners; so honourable to God; to his holiness and authority, they don't well consider the scantiness of human understanding. Mankind were of a poor capacity for any such Undertaking; for 'till the gospel inlighten'd the world, they had but miserable notions of what was honourable to God. They could have but poor notions of what way would be suitable to the divine perfections; for they were wofully in the dark about these divine perfections themselves, till the gospel came abroad in the world. They were ignorant of the nature and perfections of God. They had strange notions about a Deity. Most of them thought there were many Gods. "They chang'd the glory of the incorruptible God into an image like to corruptible man, and to birds and four footed beasts and creeping things. *Rom. 1. 23.* They attributed vices to God. Even the philosophers, their wisest men entertain'd but imperfect notions of the supream Being.

How then should man find out a way so glorious and honorable to God, and agreeable to his perfections, who had not wisdom enough to get any tolerable notions of God, till the gospel was revealed to them. They groped in the dark. Their notions shew'd the infinite insufficiency of man's blind understanding, for any such undertaking, as the contriving a way of salvation, every way honorable to God, and suitable to the needs of a fallen creature.

But since the gospel has told what God's counsels are, and how he has contrived a way for our salvation, men are ready to despise it, and foolishly to exalt their own understanding; and to imagine they could have found out as good a way themselves. When, alas! men of themselves had no notion of what was honorable to God, and suitable for a divine being. They did not so much as think of the necessity of God's law being answered, and justice satisfied. And if they had, how dreadfully would they have been puzzled, to have found out the way *how*. Who would have thought of a trinity of persons in the godhead; and that one should sustain the rights of the Godhead; and another should be the Mediator; and another should make application of redemption!

Who would have thought of such a thing as three distinct persons, and yet but one God! all the same Being, and yet three persons! Who would have thought of this, in order to have found out a way for the satisfying justice.

Who would have thought of a way for the answering the law that threatned eternal death, without the sinner's suffering eternal death.

And who would have thought of any such thing as a Person that was God, a divine Person *suffering the wrath of God!* And if they had; who would have
contrived

contrived a way *how* he should suffer, when he was God, since the divine nature cannot suffer!

Who could have thought of any such thing as Gods becoming man; two natures and but one person! These things are exceedingly out of the way of human thought and contrivance. It is most unreasonable to think that the world, who till the gospel enlightned them, were so blind about the nature of God, and divine things, should contrive such a way that should prove thus to answer all ends; every way to suit with what the case required; every way most glorious to God; every way answerable to all man's necessities: wherein every thing is so fully provided for, and no absurdity to be found in the whole affair, but all speaking forth the most perfect wisdom. That there should be no infringement upon the holiness of God, or on the justice of God; nothing dishonourable to the majesty of God; no encouragement to sin, all possible motives to holiness: — all manner of happiness provided; satan so confounded and entirely overthrown.

And if we suppose that all this notwithstanding was the invention of men, whose invention should it be! Who should be pitched upon as the most likely to invent it. It was not the invention of the jews; for they were the most bitter enemies to it. The wise men among them, when they first heard of it, they conceived a virulent malice against it, and persecuted all that held this doctrine: And so they do to this day entertain a great hatred of the whole doctrine of the contrivance of our salvation by Jesus Christ.

It was not the invention of the heathen; for the heathen knew nothing about it, till the apostles preach'd it to them. It was a new doctrine to them; and appeared a very foolish doctrine to the wise men among them. The doctrine of Christ crucified was to the jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness, 1 Cor. 1. 23.

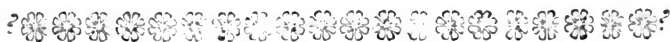
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And besides, it was contrary to all their notions about a deity, they knew nothing about the true God, the fall of man, and the like, till the gospel reveal'd it to them.

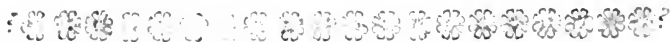
It was not the invention of the apostles; for the apostles of themselves, were no way capable of any such learned contrivance. They were nothing but a parcel of poor fishermen and publicans, an obscure and illiterate sort of men, 'till they were extraordinarily taught. And besides it could not be their invention; for they were all surpriz'd when they first heard of it. When they heard that Christ must die for sinners, they were offended at it: It looked strange to them: And it was a long while before they were brought fully to receive it.

It could not be the invention of any other christians; for there were no other christians, but only those that were converted by the preaching and the writings of the apostles, and other disciples of Christ that were under them.

There is but one Way left, and that is, to suppose, That Christ was a mere man, and a very subtil crafty man, and that he invented it all: But this is as unreasonable as the rest; for if Christ had been a meer man, it would have been all against himself, to invent a way of salvation, by his own crucifixion, which he knew he could get nothing by, but a most tormenting and ignominious death.



S E R M O N





S E R M O N, XVI.



E P H E S I A N S iii. 10.

To the Intent that now unto the Principalities and Powers in heavenly Places, might be known by the Church the manifold Wisdom of God.

INF. III. **H**OW great a sin they are guilty of who despise and reject this way of salvation. When God hath thus as it were set wisdom on work, and has manifested such unsearchable riches of wisdom, When all the persons of the trinity have as it were held a consultation from all eternity, in contriving for the providing a way of salvation for us sinful miserable worms. To contrive a way that should be sufficient for us, and every way suitable for us. To contrive a way that should be such a way as we want, so as to answer all our needs. To contrive a way that should be in all things compleat, whereby we might have compleat salvation, not only full pardon of all our sins, and deliverance from hell; but have full blessedness in heaven forever. When he has been so gracious to us as to magnify his wisdom, more in this work of grace towards men, than in any other work of his.—How must God needs be provok'd, when after all, men reject this way of salvation!

When it comes to be preached to them, and salvation is offered to them, and salvation is offered to them in this way; and they are invited to accept of the benefits of it, they despise it, and refuse salvation in that way.

They

They cast contempt upon all this rich and glorious wisdom of God. They do practically deny it to be a wise way. And call this wisdom of God foolishness.

How provoking must it be when—such a poor creature as man shall rise up and find fault with that wisdom which is so far above the wisdom of the angels of heaven, as tho' the way that God had found out was an unsuitable, an insufficient way,

This is one thing wherein consists the heinousness of the sin of unbelief, that it implies a rejecting and despising the wisdom of God in the way of salvation by Jesus Christ. It charges God with folly in this contrivance.

Unbelief finds fault with the wisdom of God in the choice of the person, as tho' God had made an unwise choice of the person for the performing this work. It dislikes the Person of Christ. It sees no form or comeliness in him, or beauty wherefore he should desire him. Accounts him insufficient for the work that he has been chosen and appointed to.

That person that the wisdom of God looked upon as the fittest person of any whatsoever, and the only fit person, is despised and rejected by unbelief.

Men thro' unbelief find fault with the Salvation itself that Christ has purchased: They don't like to be saved as Christ would save. They don't like to be made holy, and to have such a happiness as is to be had in God for a portion.

It may not be amiss here to mention two or three ways whereby persons are guilty of a provoking contempt of the wisdom of God in the way of salvation.

1. They are guilty of a provoking contempt, who live in a careless neglect of their salvation: They that are secure in their sins, and are not much concerned about salvation or damnation. Are not so much as earnestly seeking salvation. This is a practical charging God with folly in this affair. The

The language of it is, that it is all in vain, and to no purpose that God hath contrived and consulted for the obtaining salvation, when there was no need of it. That he has laid out himself, and been at great cost to procure salvation for them when they don't want salvation. They are well enough as they are. They don't see any great necessity they are in of a saviour. They like that state they are in, and do not much desire to be delivered out of it.

They don't thank him for all his consultation and contrivance. They think he might have spared his cost. They do as much as say that God greatly cared for the finding out and accomplishing a way of salvation; whereas they don't think it worth their caring about. God has greatly minded that, which they don't think worth a minding. God has contrived abundantly for that which they don't trouble their heads about.

2. They are guilty of a provoking contempt of the wisdom of this way of salvation. who go about to contrive ways of their own. They that are not content with that way of salvation by the righteousness of Christ which God has provided, are for contriving some way of being saved by their own righteousness.

These find fault with the wisdom of God's way that is so much above the wisdom of the angels, and set up their own wisdom in opposition to it. They set up their own wisdom above God's, as tho' they could find out a better way.

How greatly must God be provoked when persons thus set up their own wisdom above that infinite wisdom manifested in the way of salvation by Jesus Christ.

3. Those that entertain discouraged and despairing apprehensions about their salvation, cast contempt on the wisdom of God. They that entertain such thoughts as that, because they have been such great sinners, God will not be willing to pardon them: Christ will not be

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willing to accept of them. They fear Christ, in the invitations of the gospel don't mean such wicked creatures as they are. They fear they have committed so much sin, that they have sinn'd beyond the reach of the mercy of God. They think it is in vain for them to seek for salvation.

These cast contempt on the wisdom of God in the way of salvation, as tho' the way was not an all-sufficient way. As tho' the wisdom of God had not found out a way that was sufficient for the salvation of great sinners:—As tho' God had not found out a way to make satisfaction for so many and so great sins.—

As tho' the wisdom of God had not pitched upon a person worthy enough to be a mediator for such great sinners.

INF. IV. Hence the misery of unbelievers who have no portion or lot in this matter. There is a most glorious way of salvation, but you have no interest in it. The wisdom of God hath been gloriously employ'd for the deliverance of men from a miserable, doleful state; and procure happiness for them; but you are never the better for it, because you reject it: You don't fall in with it: You don't comply with God's counsels and designs in this affair. This way of salvation is preached to you in vain. If you continue in that state that you are in, you will not be the better for its being such a wise way. This wisdom will do you no good.

The wisdom of God has pitched upon a most fit and suitable Person for the accomplishing this work; but you have no interest in him. Christ is a glorious Person; every way fit to be a saviour of sinners; a person that has power sufficient, and wisdom sufficient, and merit sufficient, and love sufficient for the perfecting this work. And he is the only fit person for the perfecting of it; but you have no right in him; you can lay claim to no benefit by his power, wisdom, love or merits.

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This wisdom of God hath found out a way whereby this favour might satisfy justice, and fulfil the law for us. He hath found out a way whereby he might be capable of suffering for us, *viz.* That he should become man, and be both God and man : But you have no lot in this matter of the incarnation, death and sufferings of Jesus Christ.

The wisdom of God hath contrived a way of salvation that there should be procur'd for us perfect & everlasting happiness. The wisdom of God hath contrived that there should be procured for fallen man all the good that he stands in need of. Here is purchas'd peace with God and the favour of God. Here is that happiness procured that is most suitable to our nature, and answerable to the salvation of our souls. Here is a most glorious portion purchased for us, *viz.* The divine Being himself, with his glorious perfections. Here it is purchas'd that we should see God face to face ;—That we should converse with God ; and dwell with God in his own glorious habitation. 'Tis purchas'd that we should be the children of God ;— and be conformed to him.

Here is procured for worms every sort of good that human nature craves the highest honours,— the most abundant riches,— the most substantial satisfying pleasures forevermore.

Here God hath contrived a way for the meriting all needed good both for the souls and bodies of sinners : All needed earthly good things, while here ; and glory for both body and soul hereafter, forever.

But you are never the better for all this. You have no lot, or portion in any of it. Notwithstanding all this rich provision, you remain in the same miserable state and condition, in which you came into the world. Tho' the provision of the Gospel be so full, yet your poor soul remains in a famishing, perishing state and condition. You remain dead in trespasses & sins. You remain in a lost condition ; your soul under the dominion

of Iatan : In a condemned state, having the wrath of God abiding on you, and being daily expos'd to the dreadful effects of it, in hell ; notwithstanding all this provision, you yet remain wretched and miserable, poor and blind and naked O that you might turn to God through Jesus Christ, be number'd among his disciples & faithfull followers, and so be intitled to their priviledges ! They have an interest in this glorious saviour, and are intitled to all the ineffable blessedness of his kingdom, so far as their capacities will admit : But you remain without Christ, being aliens from the common wealth of Israel, strangers to the covenant of promise, having no well-grounded hope, and without God in the world.

Consider several things,

First. It argues the greatness of the misery of sinners, that the wisdom of God should be exercised to such a degree to find out a way to deliver them from it. It shews that their misery was very great. Their case surely was most deplorable : It required infinite wisdom to find out a way for their deliverance.

It shews how far they were sunk into misery, that there could be no contrivance for their deliverance, but the contrivance of the wisdom of the great God. The wisdom of the angels was not sufficient : Nothing but divine wisdom could reach and remedy their case. And that God should so lay out himself, that all the persons of the Trinity should enter into such a consultation about it. And that the greatest wisdom ; that should appear most wonderful in the sight of the Angels, should be exercised about this affair. It is not likely it should be so, unless the affair be very great. If mans misery was not very great, divine wisdom would not have been exercised for his deliverance from it. God would not contrive and do things so wonderful in a trivial Affair. If the salvation of a sinner was not a great salvation, from an exceeding great misery, 'tis

not to be supposed, that God's wisdom should be more signalized in this affair than in any other whatever.

But so it is ; this contrivance seems to be spoken of in scripture as the master piece of divine wisdom. This work of redemption is represented as most wonderful, spoken of in scripture in the most exalted manner of any work of God. Doubtless therefore salvation is a great thing : And consequently the misery that sinners are saved from is a great and unspeakable misery.

This is the misery that all you are in, who remain in a natural condition. This is the condemnation you lie under. This is the wrath of God that abides upon you. The wisdom of God knew it to be a very doleful thing for a person to be in a natural state, and therefore did so exercise itself to deliver miserable sinners out of it. But this is the state that many among us do yet remain in.

Secondly. Consider that if you continue in the state you are in, you will be so far from being the better for this contrivance, that you will be a great deal the more miserable for it. You will be a great deal the more miserable for there being such a wise way, such an excellent way of salvation found out. It would have been better for you, if the way of salvation had been an imperfect way, an insufficient way : Or, if there had been no way at all. The justice and wisdom of the way of salvation will be your condemnation. " This is the condemnation that, light is come into the world, and men loved darkness rather than light". Joh. 3. 19.

That will be your condemnation, that God contriv'd an infinitely wise way of salvation, wherein compleat salvation was procured for sinners, and you refused to accept of it, but still went on in your trespasses.

If you continue in the state that you are now in, it would have been better for you, if Christ had never died for sinners : If God had left all mankind to perish,

as he did the fallen Angels. Your punishment then would have been light in comparison of what it will be now.

You will have greater sins by far to answer for ; and all your sins will be abundantly the more aggravated.

I have since I have been upon this subject, observed that the work of redemption, is an occasion of the elect's being brought to greater happiness than man could have had if he had not fallen. But this is as true as to reprobates. It will be an occasion of their having greater misery than they would have had, if there had been no redemption, 2 Cor. 2. 15. "For we are unto God, a sweet favour of Christ in them that are saved and in them that perish. To the one we are a favour of death unto death ; and to the other we are a favour of life unto life". If you perish at last you will be the more miserable for the benefits of the gospel being so glorious, and that because your crime in rejecting and despising them will be the more heinous. If Christ had purchased comparatively small happiness for sinners : — If he had purchased a happiness that was imperfect, unsatisfactory, and but of finite duration it would have been better for you, Heb. 2. 3. "How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation".

Thirdly. Whilst you continue an unbeliever, the more you hear of this way of salvation, your condition will become the more miserable. The longer you sit under the preaching of the gospel, the more doleful does your case grow. Your guilt continually increases. For your refusals of the calls of the gospel, and your rejections of this way of salvation, are so much the oftner repeated. Every time you hear the gospel preached, you are guilty of a renewed rejection of it, the guilt of which therefore you will have lying upon you.

And the more you hear of the suitableness and gloriousness of this way, the greater is your guilt who still
continue

continue to reject it. Every new illustration of the wisdom of God, and grace of God in redemption, adds to your guilt. Mat. 23 37 "O Jerusalem Jerusalem—how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, but ye would not!"

And that which adds to the misery you are under, is, that as long as it continues, it is a growing evil.

Fourthly. Consider the danger there is, that you will never have any lot or portion in this matter. You must consider that there are but few that have. Christ has told us that strait is the gate and narrow is the way that leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it. There have been but few in all ages of the world. Many seek; and many hope that they shall obtain. There are but few that intend to be damned. There are many that hope that they shall some way or other find means to escape eternal misery. But after all, there are but few saved. But few obtain the benefits of redemption.

I conclude with a

USE of EXHORTATION to come to Christ, and accept of salvation in this way. You are invited to come to Christ, heartily to close with him, and trust in him for salvation: And if you do so, you shall be one that shall have the benefit of this glorious contrivance. You shall have the benefit of all as much as if the whole end had been contrived for you alone.

God has already contrived and done every thing that is needful to your salvation; and there is nothing wanting but your consent. Since God has taken this matter of the redemption of sinners into his own hand, he has made thorough work of it; he has not left it for you to finish. Satisfaction is already made, righteousness is already

already wrought out ; there is nothing for you to do. Death and hell are already conquer'd. The redeemer has already taken possession of glory, and keeps it in his hands to bestow on them that come to him. There were many difficulties in the way, but they are all removed. The saviour has already triumphed over all, and is already in heaven at the right hand of God, to give eternal life to his people.

Salvation is ready brought to your door ; and the saviour stands and knocks and calls that you would open to him, that he might bring it in to you. There remains nothing but your consent. All the difficulty now remaining is with your own heart. If you perish now, it must be wholly at your door. It must be because you would not come to Christ that you might have life : And because you virtually choose death rather than life, Prov. 8. 36. "He that sinneth against me wrongeth his own soul : All they that hate me love death".

All that is now required of you, is, that your heart should close with Christ as a saviour. Here consider,

1. That the wisdom of God hath so contrived that he hath forestalled all our objections. If you make objections against Christ and the way of salvation, they must be all unreasonable. You can't reasonably object that your sins are of such a nature, that God's honour won't allow of your pardon. 'Tis true God insists upon his own honour. He is a God that will be honoured, and his majesty shall be vindicated : And when sinners cast contempt upon him, his honour requires vengeance : But God has so contrived this way, that his honour may be repaired by the punishment of sin without the sinners suffering, how great soever the sin be. Herein the wisdom of this way appears, that there is a sufficiency for the greatest and most heinous transgressors.

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You can't object that God the father will not be willing to accept you, for the mediator's sake ; for he hath chosen such a person as his own son, a person so near and dear to him to be a mediator, to cut off any such objections. So you may be sure that God will receive you if you go to him thro' Christ.

You can't object that God the father has not given sufficient assurance of salvation to believers ; for God has not only promised, but the principal things ; those which would have been most difficult to believe, are already fulfilled ; God has already given his son to die for us. This, before it was accomplished, was a thing a great deal more strange, and difficult to believe, than that he should give eternal life to sinners after Christ died for them. That the son of God should die, was a much greater thing, than to give eternal life upon the account of it. Rom. 8. 32. "He that spared not his own son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him freely give us all things."

And then there is no room to doubt but that if we accept of Christ, God will give eternal life ; for he hath given it already into the hands of our saviour for us. He hath trusted him with the whole affair. He hath given all things into his hands, that he might give eternal life to as many as should come to him. The father hath appointed him that died for believers, to be their judge, to have the whole determination of the matter and disposal of the reward, in his own hand. And you can't doubt but that Christ will be willing to bestow eternal life on them that he purchased it for. For if he is not willing to bestow it, surely he never would have died to purchase it. Who can think that Christ would be so desirous of sinners being saved, as to undergo so much for it ; and not be willing to let them have it, when he had obtained it for them.

Consider,

2. The wisdom of God hath contrived that there should be in the person of the saviour all manner of attractives to draw us to him. He has not chosen a mean person, a person of but indifferent loveliness, lest sinners should say, that there was not excellency enough in Christ to draw them to him. He did not pitch upon one of the Angels; for tho' they are excellent creatures, yet their excellency is but finite. But he hath pitched upon his own son, that there might be no want of excellency in the person. He is not a person whose excellency is but finite. He hath in him all possible excellency. He is possess'd of all the beauty and glory of the God head.

So that there can be no manner of excellency, nor degree of excellency that we can devise, but what is in the person of the saviour. By this, it appears, Christ has excellency enough. For to say, that excellency which is infinite is not enough, is a contradiction.

But yet so redundant has the wisdom of God been in providing attractives to us to come to Christ, it hath so ordered that there should also be all human excellencies in him. If there be any thing attractive in this consideration, that Christ is one in our own nature, one of us; this is true of Christ. He is not only in the divine, but in the human nature. He is a man like ourselves; and has all possible human excellencies. He was of a most excellent spirit. He was wise and holy. He was of a condescending, meek and lowly, a benign and benevolent disposition.

And again: The wisdom of God hath chosen such a person, who should be a person of a great love to sinners, and should show that love in the most endearing manner possible. What more condescending love can there be, than the love of a divine person to such worms of the dust! And what freer love can there be than love to enemies! And what greater love can there be,

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than dying love ! And what more endearing expression of love, than dying for the beloved ! So that here is not only the excellency of Christ, but his love to mankind to draw us.

Again, the wisdom of God hath so contrived that Christ shall sustain that office that should most tend to endear him to us, and draw us to him : The office of a redeemer, a redeemer from eternal misery, and the purchaser of all happiness.

And if all this be not enough to draw us, the wisdom of God hath ordered more : It hath provided us a favour that should offer himself to us in the most endearing relation. He offers to receive us as friends. To receive us to an union to himself, to become our spiritual husband and portion forever.

And if all this is not enough to draw, there is more yet. The wisdom of God hath provided us a favour that woos us in a manner that has the greatest tendency to win our hearts. His word is most attractive. He stands at our door and knocks. He don't merely command us to receive him ; but he condescends to apply himself to us in a more endearing manner. He intreats and beseeches us in his word and by his messengers.

3. The wisdom of God hath contrived that there should be all manner of attractives in the benefits that Christ offers you. There are not only the excellencies of the Person of Christ to draw you to him, but the desirable benefits he offers. Here is what is most suitable to the cravings of the human nature : Needed relief for all our distresses.—Men when distressed and burden'd, long for ease and rest. Here it is offered to us in Christ. Come unto me, says he, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.

Men when in fear of danger, long for safety. Here it is provided for us in Christ. God promises that he will become the shield and buckler, strong rock and

high tower to those that trust in him.—Those that mourn need comfort : Christ tells us that he came to comfort those that mourn, *Isai. 61. 2.*

The blind need to have their eyes opened. The light is sweet to men : Christ offers to anoint our eyes with eye salve that we may see glorious light. He will be our sun, and the light of God's countenance.

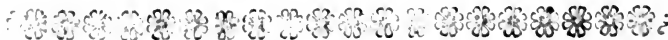
What is more dear to men than life ? Christ hath purchased for men, that they should live forever, *Psal. 21. 4.* “ He asked life of thee. and thou gavest it him, even length of days forever and ever”.

How greatly is a crown prized and admired by the children of men ? And Christ offers this,—not a corruptable crown, but an incorruptable and far more glorious crown than any worn by earthly kings. A crown of glory, the lustre of which shall never fade or decay—an everlasting kingdom.

Men love pleasures. Here are pleasures forevermore. What could there be more to draw our hearts to Jesus Christ, to make us willing to accept of him for our saviour ; and to accept of his benefits, in that glorious and wise way that he has provided for us !



S E R M O N





The true Christian's Life, a Journey
towards Heaven.



S E R M O N, XVII.

[Sept. 1733.]



H E B R E W S xi. 13, 14.

And confessed that they were Strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth. For they that say such Things, declare plainly that they seek a Country.

THE apostle is here setting forth the excellencies of the grace of faith, by the glorious effects and happy issue of it in the saints of the old testament. He had spoken in the proceeding part of the chapter particularly, of *Abel, Enoch, Noah, Abraham* and *Sarah, Isaac* and *Jacob*. Having enumerated those instances, he takes notice that “these all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them & embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers” &c.

In these words the apostle seems to have a more particular respect to *Abraham* and *Sarah*, and their kindred that came with them from *Haran*, and from *Ur*
of

of the chaldees, by the 15. ver. where the apostle says, "And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned". It was they that upon God's call left their own country.

Two things may be observed in the text.

1. What these saints confessed of themselves, viz. "that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth".

Thus we have a particular account concerning Abraham, "I am a *stranger* and a *sojourner* with you".* And it seems to have been the general sense of the patriarchs, by what Jacob says to Pharaoh. "And Jacob said to Pharaoh, the days of the years of my *pilgrimage* are an hundred and thirty years: Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained to the days of the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their *pilgrimage*". † "I am a *stranger* and a *sojourner* with thee, as all my fathers were." †

2. The inference that the apostle draws from hence, (viz.) that they sought another country as their home. "For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a country." In confessing that they were strangers, they plainly declared that this is not their country; that this is not the country where they are at home. And in confessing themselves to be pilgrims, they declar'd plainly that this is not their settled abode; but that they have respect to some other country, that they seek and are travelling to as their home.

D O C T R I N E.

This life ought so to be spent by us, as to be only a journey towards heaven.

Here

* Gen. 23. 4. † Gen. 47. 9. † Psa'm, 39. 12.

Here I would observe,

- I. *That we ought not to rest in the world and it's enjoyments, but should desire heaven.*

This our hearts should be chiefly upon and engaged about. We should "seek first the kingdom of God."† He that is on a journey, seeks the place that he is journeying to. We ought above all things to desire a heavenly happiness: To go to heaven and there be with God; and dwell with Jesus Christ. If we are surrounded with many outward enjoyments, and things that are very comfortable to us: If we are settled in families, and have those good friends and relations that are very desirable: If we have companions whose society is delightful to us: If we have children that are pleasant and hopeful, and in whom we see many promising qualifications: If we live by good neighbours; have much of the respect of others; have a good name; are generally beloved where we are known: And have comfortable and pleasant accommodations: Yet we ought not to take our rest in these things. We should not be willing to have these things for our portion, but should seek a higher happiness in another world. We should not merely seek something else in addition to these things; but should be so far from resting in them, that we should chuse and desire to leave these things for heaven; to go to God and Christ there. We should not be willing to live here always, if we could, in the same strength and vigor of body and mind as when in youth, or in the midst of our days; and always enjoy the same pleasure, and dear friends, and other earthly comforts. We should chuse and desire to leave them all in God's due time, that we might go to heaven, and there have the enjoyment of God. We ought to possess them, enjoy and make use of them,

with

† Mat. 6. 33.

with no other view or aim, but readily to quit them, whenever we are called to it, and to change them for heaven. And when we are called a way from them, we should go chearfully and willingly.

He that is going a journey, is not wont to rest in what he meets with that is comfortable and pleasing on the road. If he passes along thro' pleasant places, flowery meadows or shady groves; he don't take up his content in these things. He is content only to take a transient view of these pleasant objects as he goes along. He is not enticed by these fine appearances to put an end to his journey, and leave off the thought of proceeding. No, but his journey's end is in his mind; that is the great thing that he aims at. So if he meets with comfortable and pleasant accommodations on the road, at an inn; yet he don't rest there; he entertains no thoughts of settling there. He considers that these things are not his own, and that he is but a stranger; that, that is not allotted for his home. And when he has refreshed himself, or tarried but for a night, he is for leaving these accommodations, and going forward, and getting onward towards his journey's end. And the thoughts of coming to his journey's end, are not at all grievous to him. He don't desire to be travelling always and never come to his journey's end: The thoughts of that would be discouraging to him. But 'tis pleasant to him to think that so much of the way is gone, that he is now nearer home; and that he shall presently be there; and the toil and fatigue of his journey will be over.

So should we thus desire heaven so much more than the comforts and enjoyments of this life, that we should long to change these things for heaven. We should wait with earnest desire for the time, when we shall arrive to our journey's end. The apostle mentions it as an encouraging, comfortable consideration to christi-

ans, when they draw nigh their happiness. "Now is our salvation nearer than when we believed."

Our hearts ought to be loose to these things, as it is with a man that is on a journey. However comfortable enjoyments are, yet we ought to keep our hearts so loose from them, as cheerfully to part with them, whenever God calls. "But this I say, brethren, the time is short, it remaineth, that both they that have wives, be as tho' they had none; and they that weep, as tho' they wept not; and they that rejoice, as tho' they rejoiced not; and they that buy, as tho' they possessed not; and they that use this world, as not abusing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away". †

We ought to look upon these things, as only lent to us for a little while, to serve a present turn; but we should set our hearts on heaven as our inheritance forever.

II. *We ought to seek heaven, by travelling in the way that leads thither.*

The way that leads to heaven, is a way of holiness. We should chuse and desire to travel thither in this way and in no other. We should part with all those sins, those carnal appetites that are as weights, that will tend to hinder us in our travelling towards heaven — "Let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race set before us". * However pleasant any practice or the gratification of any appetite may be, we must lay it aside, cast it away; if it be any hindrance, and stumbling-block in the way to heaven.

We should travel on in a way of obedience to all God's commands even the difficult as well as the easy commands. We should travel on in a way of self-denial;

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denial;

† 1 Cor. 7. 29, 30.

* Heb. 12. 1.

denial; denying all our sinful inclinations & interests. The way to heaven is ascending; we must be content to travel up hill, tho' it be hard and tiresome, tho' it be contrary to the natural tendency and bias of our flesh, that tends downward to the earth. We should follow Christ in the path that he has gone. The way that he travelled in, was the right way to heaven. We should take up our cross and follow him. We should travel along in the same way of meekness and lowliness of heart; in the same way of obedience and charity, and diligence to do good; and patience under afflictions. The way to heaven is an heavenly life; we must be travelling towards heaven in a way of imitation of those that are in heaven. In imitation of the saints and angels there, in their holy employments, in their way of spending their time in loving, adoring, serving, & praising God and the Lamb. This is the path that we ought to prefer before all others, if we could have any other that we might chuse. If we could go to heaven in a way of carnal living, in the way of the enjoyment and gratification of our lusts, we should rather prefer a way of holiness and conformity to the spiritual self-denying rules of the gospel.

III. We should travel on in this way in a laborious manner.

The going of long journeys is attended with toil and fatigue; especially if the journey be thro' a wilderness. Persons in such a case expect no other than to suffer hardships and weariness, in travelling over mountains and thro' bad places.

So we should travel in this way of holiness in a laborious manner, improving our time and strength, to surmount the difficulties and obstacles that are in the way. The land that we have to travel thro, is a wilderness;

derness ; there are many mountains, rocks, and rough places that we must go over in the way ; and there is a necessity that we should lay out our strength.

IV. *Our whole lives ought to be spent in travelling this road.*

1. *We ought to begin early.* This should be the first concern, and business that persons engage in, when they come to be capable of acting in the world in doing any business. When they first set out in the world, they should set out on this journey.

And,

2. *We ought to travel on in this way with assiduity.* It ought to be the work of every day, to travel on towards heaven. We should often be thinking of our journey's end ; and not only thinking of it, but it should be our daily work to travel on in the way that leads to it.

As he that is on a journey, is often thinking of the place that he is going to ; and 'tis his care and business every day to get along ; to improve his time, to get towards his journey's end. He spends the day in it ; 'tis the work of the day, whilst the sun serves him. And when he has rested in the night, he gets up in the morning, and sets out again on his journey ; and so from day to day, 'till he has got to his journey's end. Thus should heaven be continually in our thought ; and the immediate entrance or passage to it, viz. death, should be present with us. And it should be a thing that we familiarize to ourselves ; and so it should be our work every day, to be preparing for death, and travelling heaven-ward.

3. *We ought to persevere in this way as long as we live ; we should hold out in it to the end.*

“ Let us run with *patience* the race that is set before us”. † Tho’ the road be difficult, and it be a toilsome thing to travel it, we must hold out with patience, and be content to endure the hardships of it. If the journey be long, yet we must not stop short; we should not give out in discouragement, but hold on ’till we are arrived to the place we seek. We ought not to be discouraged with the length and difficulties of the way, as the children of Israel were, and be for turning back again. All our thought and design should be to get along. We should be engaged and resolved to press forward ’till we arrive.

V. *We ought to be continually growing in holiness; and in that respect coming nearer and nearer to heaven.*

He that is travelling towards a place, comes nearer and nearer to it continually. So we should be endeavouring to come nearer to heaven, in being more heavenly; becoming more and more like the inhabitants of heaven, and more and more as we shall be when we have arrived there, if ever that be.

We should endeavour continually to be more and more as we hope to be in heaven, in respect of holiness and conformity to God. And with respect to light and knowledge, we should labour to be growing continually in the knowledge of God and Christ, and clear views of the glory of God, the beauty of Christ, and the excellency of divine things, as we come nearer and nearer to the beatific vision.

We should labour to be continually growing in divine love; that this may be an increasing flame in our hearts, ’till our hearts ascend wholly in this flame. We should be growing in obedience and an heavenly conversation;

† Heb: 12. 1.

fation; that we may do the will of God on earth as the angels do in heaven.

We ought to be continually growing in comfort and spiritual joy; in sensible communion with God and Jesus Christ. Our path should be as "the shining light, that shines more and more to the perfect day".*

We ought to be hungering and thirsting after righteousness; after an increase in righteousness. "As newborn babes desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby". § And we should make the perfection of heaven our mark. We should rest in nothing short of this; but be pressing towards this mark; and labouring continually to be coming nearer and nearer to it. — "This one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things that are before, I press toward the mark, for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus". †

VI. *All other concerns of life ought to be entirely subordinate to this.*

As when a man is on a journey, all the steps that he takes are in order to further him in his journey; and subordinated to that aim of getting to his journey's end. And if he carries money or provision with him, 'tis to supply him in his journey. So we ought wholly to subordinate all our other business, and all our temporal enjoyments to this affair of travelling to heaven. Journeying toward heaven ought to be our only work and business, so that all that we have & do, should be in order to that. When we have worldly enjoyments, we should be ready to part with them, whenever they are in the way of our going toward heaven. We should sell all this world for heaven. When once any thing we have, becomes a clog and hindrance to us, in the way heavenward,

* Prov. 4. 18. § 1 Pet. 2. 2. † Phil. 3. 13, 14.

ward, we should quit it immediately. When we use our worldly enjoyments and possessions, it should be with such a view and in such a manner, as to further us in our way heaven-ward. Thus we should eat and drink and cloath ourselves. And thus should we improve the conversation and enjoyment of friends.

And whatever business we are setting about ; whatever design we are engaging in, we should enquire with ourselves, whether this business or undertaking will forward us in our way to heaven ? And if not, we should quit our design.

We ought to make use of worldly enjoyments, and pursue worldly business in such a degree and manner as shall have the best tendency to forward our journey heaven-ward, and no otherwise.

I shall offer some reasons of the doctrine.

I. *This world is not our abiding place.*

Our continuance in this world is but very short. Man's days on the earth, are as a shadow. It was never designed by God this world should be our home. We were not born into this world for that end. Neither did God give us these temporal things, that we are accommodated with, for that end. If God has given us good estates ; if we are settled in families, and God has given us children, or other friends that are very pleasant to us ; 'tis with no such view or design, that we should be furnished and provided for here, as for a settled abode ; but with a design that we should use them for the present, and then leave them again in a very little time.

If we are called to any secular business ; or if we are charged with the care of a family ; with the instruction and education of children, we are called to these things with a design that we shall be called from them again,
and

and not to be our everlasting employment. So that if we improve our lives to any other purpose, than as a journey toward heaven, all our labour will be lost. If we spend our lives in the pursuit of a temporal happiness: If we set our hearts on riches, and seek happiness in them: If we seek to be happy in sensual pleasures: If we spend our lives in seeking the credit and esteem of men; the good will and respect of others: If we set our hearts on our children, and look to be happy in the enjoyment of them, in seeing them well brought up, and well settled, &c. — All these things will be of little significancy to us. Death will blow up all our hopes and expectations, and will put an end to our enjoyment of these things. “The places that have known us, will know us no more”: And the eye that has seen us, shall see us no more. We must be taken away forever from all these things: And it is uncertain when; it may be soon after we have received them, and are put into the possession of them. It may be in the midst of our days, and from the midst of our enjoyments. And then where will be all our worldly employments and enjoyments, when we are laid in the silent grave! “So man lieth down and riseth not again, till the heavens be no more” —————.*

II. *The future world was designed to be our settled and everlasting abode.*

Here it was intended that we should be fixed; and here alone is a lasting habitation, and a lasting inheritance and enjoyments to be had. We are designed for this future world. We are to be in two states, the one in this world, which is an imperfect state; the other in the world to come. The present state is short and transitory; but our state in the other world, is everlasting.

* Job 14. 12.

ing. When we go into another world, there we must be to all eternity. And as we are there at first, so we must be without change.

Our state in the future world therefore being eternal, is of so exceedingly greater importance than our state in this world, that it is worthy that our state here, and all our concerns in this world should be wholly subordinated to it.

III. *Heaven is that place alone where our highest end, and highest good is to be obtained.*

God hath made us for himself. "Of God, and thro' God, and to God are all things". Therefore then do we attain to our highest end, when we are brought to God: But that is by being brought to heaven; for that is God's throne; that is the place of his special presence, and of his residence. There is but a very imperfect union with God to be had in this world, a very imperfect knowledge of God in the midst of abundance of darkness; a very imperfect conformity to God, mingled with abundance of enmity and estrangement. Here we can serve and glorify God, but in an exceeding imperfect manner; our service being mingled with much sin and dishonour to God.

But when we get to heaven, (if ever that be) there we shall be brought to a perfect union with God. There we shall have the clear views of God. We shall see face to face, and know as we are known. There we shall be fully conformed to God, without any remainder of sin. We shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is. There we shall serve God perfectly. We shall glorify him in an exalted manner, and to the utmost of the powers and capacity of our nature. Then we shall perfectly give up ourselves to God. Then will our hearts be pure and holy offerings to God; offer'd all in a flame of divine love.

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In heaven alone is the attainment of our highest good. God is the highest good of the reasonable creature. The enjoyment of him is our proper happiness; and is the only happiness with which our souls can be satisfied.

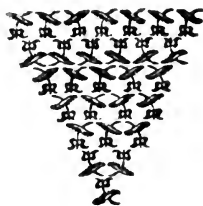
To go to heaven, fully to enjoy God, is infinitely better than the most pleasant accommodations here. Better than fathers and mothers, husbands, wives or children, or the company of any, or all earthly friends. These are but shadows; but the enjoyment of God is the substance. These are but scattered beams; but God is the sun. These are but streams; but God is the fountain. These are but drops; but God is the ocean.

Therefore it becomes us to spend this life only as a journey towards heaven, as it becomes us to make the seeking our highest end, and proper good the whole work of our lives: And we should subordinate all other concerns of life to it. Why should we labour for any thing else; or set our hearts on any thing else but that which is our proper end, and true happiness?

IV. *Our present state, and all that belongs to it, is design'd by him that made all things, to be wholly in order to another world.*

This world was made for a place of preparation for another world. Man's mortal life was given him only here, that he might here be prepared for his fixed state. And all that God has here given us, is given to this purpose. The sun shines upon us; the rain falls upon us; the earth yields her increase to us: Civil and ecclesiastical

ecclesiastical affairs ; family affairs, and all our personal concerns are designed and ordered in a subordination to a future world, by the maker and disposer of all things. They ought therefore to be subordinated to this by us.



E R M O N



S E R M O N, XVIII.



H E B R E W S xi. 13, 14.

And confessed that they were Strangers and Pilgrims on the Earth. For they that say such Things, declare plainly that they seek a Country.

D O C T R I N E.

This life ought to be spent by us, so as to be only a journey towards heaven.

HAVING shewn how this is to be done, and given the reasons of it, in the preceeding discourse, I now proceed to the

A P P L I C A T I O N.

I. *In a use of instruction.*

1. *This doctrine may teach us moderation in our mourning for the loss of such dear friends, who while they lived, improved their lives to right purposes.*

If they lived a holy life, then their lives were a journey towards heaven. And why should we be immoderate in mourning, when they are got to their journey's end?

end? Death to them, tho' it appears to us with a frightful aspect, is a great blessing. Their end is happy, and better than their beginning. "The day of their death, is better to them than the day of their birth".* While they lived they desired heaven, and chose it above this world, or any of the enjoyments of it. They earnestly sought and longed for heaven; and why should we grieve that they have obtained it.

Now they have got to heaven, they have got home. They never were at home before. They have got to their father's house. They find more comfort a thousand times, now they are got home, than they did in their journey. While they were on their journey, they underwent much labour and toil. It was a wilderness that they passed through: A difficult road. There were abundance of difficulties in the way; mountains and rough places. It was a laborious, fatiguing thing to travel the road. They were forced to lay out themselves to get along; and had many wearisome days and nights; but now they have got through; they have got to the place they sought; they are got home; got to their everlasting rest. They need to travel no more; nor labour any more; nor endure any more toil and difficulty; but enjoy perfect rest and peace; and will enjoy them forever. "And I heard a voice from heaven, saying unto me, write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, from henceforth: Yea, saith the spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them". † They don't mourn that they are got home, but greatly rejoice. They look back upon the difficulties, and sorrows, and dangers of life, rejoicing that they have got through them all.

We are ready to look upon death as tho' it was a calamity to them: We are ready to mourn over them with tears of pity; to think that those that were so dear

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* Heb. 7. 1. † Rev. 14. 13.

to us, should be in the dark rotting grave; that they should there turn to corruption and worms: that they should be taken away from their dear children, and other pleasant enjoyments; and that they never should have any part more in any thing under the sun. Our bowels are ready to yearn over them, and we are ready to look upon it, as tho' some sorrowful thing had befallen them; and as tho' they were in awful circumstances. But this is owing to our infirmity that we are ready thus to look upon it. They are in a happy condition. They are inconceivably blessed. They don't mourn, but rejoice with exceeding joy. Their mouths are filled with joyful songs: They drink at rivers of pleasure. They find no mixture of grief at all, that they have changed their earthly houses and enjoyments, and their earthly friends, and the company of mortal mankind, for heaven. They think of it without any degree of regret.

This is an evil world, in comparison of that they are now in. Their life here, if attended with the best circumstances, that any earthly life ever was; was attended with abundance that was adverse and afflictive; but now there is an end to all adversity. "They shall hunger no more, nor thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the lamb which is in the midst of the throne, shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes".

'Tis true we shall see them no more while here in this world, yet we ought not immoderately to mourn for that; tho' it used to be pleasant to us to see them; and tho' their company was sweet. For we should consider ourselves as but on a journey too; we shall be travelling towards the same place, that they are gone to; and why should we break our hearts with that, that they are got there before us; when we are follow-

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ing after them as fast as we can ; and hope, as soon as ever we get to our journey's end, to be with them again ; to be with them in better circumstances than ever we were with them while here ? A degree of mourning for near relations when departed, is not inconsistent with christianity, but very agreeable to it : For as long as we are flesh and blood, no other can be expected, than that we shall have animal propensities and affections. But we have not just reason to be overborn and sunk in spirit. When the death of near friends is attended with these circumstances, we should be glad they are got to heaven, our mourning should be mingled with joy. " But I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them that are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others that have no hope" : * (i. e.) that they should not sorrow as the heathen, that had no knowledge of a future happiness, nor any certain hope of any thing for themselves or their friends, after they were dead. This appears by the following verse ; " For if we believed that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus, will God bring with him".

2. *If it be so, that our lives ought to be only a journey towards heaven ; how ill do they improve their lives, that spend them in travelling towards hell ?*

Some men spend their whole lives from their infancy to their dying day, in going down the broad way to destruction. They don't only draw nearer to hell in length of time, but they every day grow more ripe for destruction ; they are more assimilated to the inhabitants of the infernal world. While others press forward in the strait and narrow way to life, and laboriously travel up the hill toward Zion, against the inclinations and tendency

+ 1 Thef. 4. 13.

tendency of the flesh ; these run with a swift career down towards the valley of eternal death ; towards the lake of fire ; towards the bottomless pit. This is the employment of every day, with all wicked men ; the whole day is spent in it. As soon as ever they awake in the morning, they set out anew towards hell, and spend every waking moment in it. They begin in early days, before they begin to speak. “ The wicked are estranged from the womb, they go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies”.* They hold on in it with perseverance. Many of them that live to be old, are never weary in it , if they live to be an hundred years old, they will not give out travelling in the way to hell, ’till they arrive there. And all the concerns of life are subordinated to this employment. A wicked man is a servant of sin ; his powers and faculties are all employed in the service of sin, and in fitting for hell. And all his possessions are so used by him, as to be subservient to the same purpose. Some men spend their time in treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath. Thus do all unclean persons, that live in lascivious practices in secret. Thus do all malicious persons—Thus do all prophane persons, that neglect duties of religion. Thus do all unjust persons ; and those that are fraudulent and oppressive in their dealings. Thus do all backbiters and revilers. Thus do all covetous persons, that set their hearts chiefly on the riches of this world. Thus do tavern-haunters, and frequenters of evil company ; and many other kinds of persons that might be mentioned. Thus do far the greater part of men ; the bulk of mankind are hastening onward in the broad way to destruction. The way, as broad as it is, is, as it were, filled up with the multitude that are going with one accord this way. And they are every day going into hell out of this broad way by thousands.

* Psal. 48. 4.

thousands. Multitudes are continually flowing down into the great lake of fire and brimstone, out of this broad way, as some mighty river constantly disembogues its waters into the ocean.

3. *Hence when persons are converted, they do but begin their work, and set out in the way they have to go.*

They never 'till then do any thing at that work which their whole lives ought to be spent in ; which we have now shewn to be travelling towards heaven. Persons before conversion, never take a step that way. Then does a man first set out on this journey, when he is brought home to Christ ; and he is but just set out in it. So far is he from having done his work, that he then only begins to set his face towards heaven. His journey is not finished ; he is then only first brought to be willing to go it, and begins to look that way ; so that his care and labour in his christian work and business, is then but begun, which he must spend the remaining part of his life in.

Those persons do ill, who when they are converted, and have obtained a hope of their being in a good condition, don't strive as earnestly as they did before, while they were under awakenings. They ought henceforward, as long as they live, to be as earnest and laborious as ever ; as watchful and careful as ever ; yea, they should increase more and more. It is no just objection or excuse from this, that now they have not the same to strive for as before ; before they strove that they might be converted ; but that they have obtained. Is there nothing else that persons have as much reason to strive, and lay out their strength for, as their own safety ? Should we not be as willing to be diligent that we may serve & glorify God, as that we ourselves may be happy ? And if

we have obtained grace, yet there is not all obtained that may be. 'Tis but a very little grace that we have obtained ; we ought to strive that we may obtain more. We ought to strive as much that we may obtain the other degrees that are before, as we did to obtain that small degree that is behind. The apostle tells us, that he forgot what was behind, and reached forth towards what was before.*

Yea those that are converted, have now a further reason to strive for grace than they had before ; for now they have tasted, and seen something of the sweetness and excellency of it. A man that has once tasted the blessings of Canaan, has more reason to press forward towards it, than he had before. And then, they that are converted, should strive that they may make their calling and election sure. All those that are converted, are not sure of it ; and those that are sure of it, don't know that they shall be always so ; and still seeking & serving God with the utmost diligence, is the way to have assurance, and to have it maintained.

II. *Use may be of exhortation ; so to spend the present life that it may only be a journey towards heaven.*

Labour to be converted and sanctified, and to obtain such a disposition of mind that you may chuse heaven for your inheritance and home ; and may earnestly long for it, and be willing and desirous to change this world, and all the enjoyments of it for heaven. Labour to have your heart taken up so much about heaven ; and heavenly enjoyments, as that you may rejoice at any time when God calls you to have your best earthly friends, and those things that are most comfortable to you here, to go to heaven, there to enjoy God and Christ. Z. Be

* Phil. 3. 13.

Be perswaded to travel in the way that leads to heaven ; viz. in a way of holiness, self-denial, mortification, in a way of obedience to all the commands of God, in a way of following Christ's example, in a way of a heavenly life, or imitation of the saints and angels that live in heaven. Be content to travel on in this way, in a laborious manner, to endure all the fatigues of it. Begin to travel it without delay, if you have not already begun it ; and travel in it with assiduity. Let it be your daily work, from morning to night, and hold out in it to the end ; let there be nothing that shall stop or discourage you, or turn you aside from this road. Labour to be growing in holiness, to be coming nearer and nearer to heaven, in that you are more and more as you shall be when you get there ; (if ever that be). And let all other concerns be subordinated to this great concern of getting forwards towards heaven. Consider the reasons that have been mentioned why you should thus spend your life. Consider that the world is not your abiding place, and was never so intended by God. Consider how little a while you are to be here, and how little worth your while it is to spend your life to any other purpose. Consider that the future world is to be your everlasting abode ; and that the enjoyments and concerns of this world, have their being only and entirely in order to another world. And consider further for motive.

1. *How worthy is heaven that your life should be wholly spent as a journey towards it.*

To what better purpose can you spend your life, whether you respect your duty or your interest ? What better end can you propose to your journey, than to obtain heaven ? Here you are placed in this world ; in this wilderness, and have your choice given you, that you

you may travel which way you please. And there is one way that leads to heaven. Now can you direct your course better than this way? What can you chuse better for your journey's end? All men have some aim or other in living. Some mainly seek worldly things; they spend their days in the pursuit of these things. But is not heaven, where is fullness of joy forever and ever, much more worthy to be sought by you? How can you better employ your strength, and use your means, and spend your days, than in travelling the road that leads to the everlasting enjoyment of God; to his glorious presence, to the city of the new Jerusalem; to the heavenly mount Zion; where all your desires will be filled, and no danger of ever losing your happiness?

No man is at home in this world, whether he chuse heaven or no; yet here he is but a transient person. Where can you chuse your home better than in heaven? The rest and glory of heaven is so great, that 'tis worthy we should desire it above riches; above our father's houses, or our own; above husband or wife, or children, or all earthly friends. It is worthy that we should subordinate these things to it, and that we should be ready cheerfully to part with them for heaven, whenever God calls.

2. *This is the way to have death comfortable to us.*

If we spend our lives so as to be only a journeying towards heaven, this will be the way to have death, that is the end of the journey, and entrance into heaven not terrible, but comfortable.

This is the way to be free from bondage, through the fear of death, and to have the prospect and forethought of death comfortable. Does the traveller think of his journey's end with fear and terror, especially when he has been many days travelling, and it be a long and

tiresome journey? Is it terrible to him to think that he has almost got to his journey's end? Are not men rather wont to rejoice at it? Were the children of Israel sorry after forty years travel in the wilderness, when they had almost got to Canaan? This is the way to have death not terrible when it comes. 'Tis the way to be able to part with the world without grief. Does it grieve the traveller when he has got home, to quit his staff and load of provisions that he had to sustain him by the way?

3. *No more of your life will be pleasant to think of when you come to die, than has been spent after this manner.*

All of your past life that has been spent as a journey towards heaven, will be comfortable to think of on a death bed, and no more. If you have spent none of your life this way your whole life will be terrible to you to think of, unless you die under some great delusion. You will see then, how that all of your life that has been spent otherwise, is lost. You will then see the vanity of other aims, that you may have propos'd to yourself. The thought of what you here possessed and enjoyed in the world, will not be pleasant to you; unless you can think withal that you have subordinated them to this purpose.

4. *Consider that those that are willing thus to spend their lives as a journey towards heaven, may have heaven.*

Heaven, as high as it is, and glorious as it is, is attainable for such poor worthless creatures as we are. We, even such worms, may attain to have for our home, that glorious region that is the habitation of
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the glorious angels ; yea, the dwelling place of the glorious Son of God ; and where is the glorious presence of the great Jehovah. And we may have it freely ; there is no high price that is demanded of us for this privilege. We may have it without money and without price ; if we are but willing to set out and go on towards it ; are but willing to travel the road that leads to it, and bend our course that way as long as we live ; we may and shall have heaven for our eternal resting place.

5. Let it be consider'd that if our lives be not a journey towards heaven, they will be a journey to hell.

We can't continue here always, but we must go some where else. All mankind after they have been in this world a little while, they go out of it, and there is but two places that they go to ; the two great receptacles of all that depart out of this world ; the one is heaven ; whether a few, a small number in comparison, travel : The way that leads hither, is but thinly occupied with travellers. And the other is hell, whether the bulk of mankind do throng. And one or the other of these must be our journey's end ; the issue of our course in this world.

I shall conclude by giving some directions.

1. Labour to get a sense of the vanity of this world ; or the vanity of it on account of the little satisfaction that is to be enjoy'd here ; and on account of its short continuance, and unserviceableness when we most stand in need of help, viz. on a death bed.

All men that live any considerable time in the world, see abundance that might convince them of the vanity of the world, if they would but consider.

Be perswaded to exercise consideration, when you see and hear from time to time of the death of others. Labour to turn your thoughts this way. See if you can't see the vanity of the world in such a Glass. If you were sensible how vain a thing this world is, you would see that it is not worthy that your life should be spent to the purposes thereof; and all is lost that is not some way aimed at heaven.

2. *Labour to be much acquainted with heaven.*

If you are not acquainted with it, you will not be likely to spend your life as a journey thither. You will not be sensible of the worth of it; nor will you long for it. Unless you are much conversant in your mind with a better good, it will be exceeding difficult to you to have your hearts loose from these things, and to use them only in subordination to something else, and to be ready to part with them for the sake of that better good.

Labour therefore to obtain a realizing sense of a heavenly world, to get a firm belief of the reality of it, and to be very much conversant with it in your thoughts.

3. *Seek heaven only by Jesus Christ.*

Christ tells us that he is the way, and the truth, and the life.* He tells us that he is the door of the sheep. "I am the door, by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved; and go in and out and find pasture". † If we therefore would improve our lives as a journey towards heaven, we must seek it by him, and not by our own righteousness; as expecting to obtain only for his sake, looking to him, having our dependance on him only for the purchase of heaven, and procuring it for us by his
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* Joh. 14. 6. † Joh. 10. 9.

merit. And expect strength to walk in a way of holiness, the way that leads to heaven, only from him.

4. *Let christians help one another in going this journey.*

There are many ways that christians might greatly help and forward one another in their way to heaven by religious conference, and otherwise. And persons greatly need help in this way, which is, as I have observ'd, a difficult way.

Let christians be exhorted to go this journey as it were, in company, conversing together while their journey shall end, and assisting one another. Company is very desireable in a journey, but in none so much as in this.

Let christians go united, and not fall out by the way which would be the way to hinder one another; but use all means they can to help one another up the hill.

This is the way to be more successful in travelling, and to have the more joyful meeting at their father's house in glory.

F I N I S.



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