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THE
MEASURES

of Christian Obedience :

OR, A

DISCOURSE

Shewing, What

O B E D I E N C E

Is Indispesibly Necessary to a

R E G E N E R A T E S T A T E,

AND WHAT

Defects are consistent With it ;

F O R

The Promotion of Piety, and the Peace of
Troubled Consciences.

By JOHN KETTLEWELL, late Vicar of
Coles-Hill, in Warwickshire.

The Sixth Edition, Corrected.

L O N D O N,

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The PREFACE.

Reader,

TH E Design of this ensuing Treatise is to increase the Piety, and promote the Peace of all sincerely honest Consciences, by stating plainly and fully what are the Terms indispensably required of all Christian Men to their eternal Pardon and Salvation.

In this I have endeavour'd to be as clear and particular as possible I could. For I write upon a Subject wherein all Men are infinitely concern'd; and therefore I have studi'd to write so, as all might understand me. I have carried on my Discourse all along, with a particular Eye to the Benefit of the plain and unlearned Reader, and suited things, as far as their Nature would bear, and my Skill would reach, to *ordinary* and *vulgar* Apprehensions. And that they might have nothing to hinder or offend them in their Progres, I have been industriously careful, through the Body of the whole Book, to insert nothing of the *learned Languages*; but wheresoever any thing of that seemed fit to be added for the sake of others, I have preserved the Text unmixt, and cast it into the *Margin*. In the whole Work, my study has been to speak things *useful* and *necessary* to be known, that the Weight and Worth of the Matter might purchase a favourable Censure for all the Defects of Art, which shall be found in the Composure.

By what I have here offered upon this Subject, I doubt not but it will appear, that although our Religion is most strictly pure, and nobly virtuous; yet is by no means melancholy, or apt in its own Nature to engender tormenting Fears and endless Scruples. For the Terms of Pardon and Salvation are no intricate or uncertain, but a fixt and easie thing. They are neither over-hard for our active Powers, nor dark and inevident to our Understandings: So that by the Assistance of God's Grace we may perform them, and be very well assured of it when we do. God exacts of us an *honest*, but not an *unerring* Obedience; he bears with our *weaknesses*, though not with our *wilful Failings*. And this is Ground enough whereupon to secure *Peace*, and yet in no wise to supplant *Piety*: Since although our Religion is so exactly

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holy, as utterly to dash all wicked Men's presuming Hopes; yet is it so indulgent still, as to tempt no Man, who is honestly obedient, to Despair.

In pursuit of this Argument, *what Piety is indispensibly required, and what Failings shall be indulged*, that Men may know when to *hope* and when to *fear*, and neither foster a Peace without Piety, nor phansie such a Rigour in Piety as leaves no room for Peace, I have proceeded as *particularly* and *perspicuously* as possibly I could; being unwilling in a matter of this importance, to leave my Reader, either in *Doubt*, by an account which is too general and *ambiguous*; or in *darkness*, by such as is *obscure*. And to give a Prospect of the whole Business, I have laid things down in this Order in five Books.

In the first Book I have shewn *what the Condition of Happiness is in general*, viz. our Obedience to the Laws of the Gospel, it being that whereby at the last Day we must all be judg'd to live eternally. And because some are tempted to think Obedience needless when they read of Pardon and Happiness promised to other things, as Faith, Repentance, &c. I have shewn particularly of those Speeches, that they are *Metonymical*, and that Life and Mercy are not promised to them as they are separate from Obedience, but only as they effect and imply it.

But Obedience being a *general Word*, and Men's great Backwardness to it rendering them very slow to run it out into all those Particulars which are contained in it: To bring this Discourse yet *nearer*, and set it home upon their Consciences, I proceed in the second Book to shew, *what those Laws are in particular which we are bound to obey*, *what is the nature of those several Virtues and Vices which are enjoyned or forbidden by them*; and from *what Expectations, and under what Forfeitures we are bound to obey them*. This indeed I found to be a toilsome Work, and the most tedious part of this whole Enquiry: But I thought it extreamly needful to a *thorow Piety*, and a *well-grounded Peace*, and that made me that I would not pass it over. For in the Business of Duty and Obedience, Men will ordinarily go no further than they needs must, but stand their Ground, and dispute it out so long as they have any Post in Reserve to which they can still retreat. First, *They do not believe that this or that particular Virtue, which is urged upon them, is a Law of God*; or, if they are forced to believe that, *then they think*

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it is not so necessary, as that Heaven and eternal Life should depend upon it ; or if at last they are made to see that too, yet still they are in Ignorance or Error about the nature of it, and to have no sense of Guilt, or remorse of Mind when they transgress and act against it. And therefore to make every particular Law have a full Force upon them, both its nature and necessity, must be evidently laid before them. They must be shewed what that is which it requires, and under what Penalties it requires it. And then their Consciences are awakened, and their Fears are raised, and so the Law is set in its full Force, to oblige them to its Performance. Thus necessary is such a particular Discourse upon the several Laws of God and Instances of Duty, to a pious Performance of them ; and it is no less necessary to a peaceable Assurance in them that do. For unless a man knows the several Instances of Duty, and understands what is meant by them ; he cannot discern when he keeps, or when he breaks them, and so can have no Comfort, or promise himself any Reward upon his Performance of them.

In the third Book I proceed to shew what sort of Obedience is indispensably required of us to all the particular Laws, which are described in the Second. And the necessary Qualifications of it I reduce to two ; viz. sincerity, and integrity. In discoursing upon which I endeavour to set out all the parts, and to state the just Bounds of this Obedience ; and to examine those Pretences, and confute those false Grounds, whereby men, who are unwilling to perform it, seek to evade or undermine it.

And having in the three first Books proceeded thus far in asserting the Necessity, and setting out the true Compass and just extent of Piety ; I go on to consult more directly the Interest of Peace in those two that follow.

In the fourth Book I shew what Defects are consistent with that indispensable pitch of Piety before described, and what destroy it. And this being a Point whereupon the Peace of Consciences so nearly depends, I have been particular in the Explication of it, and large in the Proof. Thole Sins which are inconsistent with it, and destroy a state of Grace, are such as are voluntary and wilful : Whereof some only destroy the state of acceptance for the present ; but others either greatly wound, or utterly extinguish that habitual Virtue, which should restore us to it for the Time to come. But others there are, which are allowed by it, and do not over-

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throw it ; viz. all such Defects as are involuntary, whether they be Sins of innocent unwilling ignorance, or Inconsideration. In discoursing whereupon, as I have been studious to explain them so particularly, that no honest Heart might fall into Fears and Doubts about them ; so have I been careful withal to add such Marks and Limitations to them, that no wilfully ignorant, or inconsiderate Sinners might take encouragement thence to presume.

In the fifth Book I shew what is the Remedy for all Sin, and the Gospel-Instrument of Reconciliation ; that so when at any time Men are possessed with just Fears, by being fallen into real Danger, they may again be restor'd to Peace in their own Minds, by being first restored to God's Pardon. And having proceeded thus far in shewing what Measures and Degrees of Piety God will exact of us, what Failings he will connive at in us, and upon what Terms, when once we have offended him, he will be reconciled again to us : I have gone in the last Place to remove several causeless Grounds of Scruple, which make good men fear where no fear is, and condemn themselves when God will graciously acquit them.

These are the Matters treated on in the ensuing Discourse, which was at first drawn up to serve the spiritual Necessities of a truly pious Soul, and which I have now sent abroad into the World, being made to believe it will not be altogether unserviceable to the Publick. If thereby I may promote the great End of my Lord and Saviour, in contributing to the Growth of Piety, and the Peace of Consciences, I shall think my self most happy in having been a Furtherer, tho' in a low degree, of so noble and excellent a Design. But whatever the Success in that be, I am sure I shall have the Reward of a religious Design, and an honest Endeavour, from him who estimates our Pains, not by their Events, which are not in our own Power, but by their natural Tendency, and our Intentions, which are. In which Confidence I send it out into the World, depending upon his Grace to set it home upon the Conscience, and make it effectual to guide the Practice, and secure the Comfort both of thee and me. For which End I hope I shall have the hearty Prayers of all good Men; especially of those, if any such there be, who shall receive Benefit by this Treatise.

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THE Curtins Book

INTRODUCTION.

R O M. viii. 1.

There is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the Flesh, but after the Spirit.

Among all those things which employ the minds of Religious and Considerate Men, there is none is a matter of such thoughtful care and solicitous enquiries, as their *Eternal Happiness* or *Misery* in the next World.

For in Christ's Religion there are *three* great Articles, which being believed, and seriously considered by a nature restlessly desirous of its own happiness (and such ours is) must needs render it very inquisitive after its future good Estate, and they are these ; *The Immortality of the Soul*, the *Resurrection of the Body*, and the *great Day of Doom or last Judgment*. Whosoever is firmly persuaded of these three, as every man is, or at least pretends to be, who professes himself a *Christian*, he assuredly believes that when this Life is over, both his Body and Soul shall live again, and be endlessly Delighted or Tormented, Comforted or Distressed in the next World, according as his condition is when he leaves this. For by the Doctrine of *Eternal Life* he is assured that his Soul shall live, and be adjudged to an *Eternal bliss or misery*. By the Article of the *Resurrection*, he is persuaded that his Body, with all its powers, shall spring out of the dust, and be again enlivened with its ancient Soul, to be a sharer of its state, and jointly to undergo an endless train of most exquisite woes or pleasures. And since it is the very frame and fundamental principle of our Natures studiously to pursue pleasure, and

to fly as fast from pain, to seek good, and to avoid evil : These states of future Happiness and Misery, are such as no Man, who sees and believes them, can possibly be unaffected with, or unconcern'd in. But whosoever in his own thoughts views and beholds them, must needs find all his faculties awake, and through an innate care, and natural instinct, solicitously inquisitive after that lot which shall fall to their own share.

Now if this endless happiness and misery both of Soul and Body in the next World were only *casual* and *contingent*, the gift of *blind chance*, or *partial* and *arbitrary favour* ; then would the belief of it perplex us indeed with fears and misgiving thoughts, but never encourage us on to any exact care, or diligent inquiry. It would be in vain for us to seek what we could never find, and downright folly to endeavour after satisfaction and certainty in things which are altogether *Casual* and *Arbitrary*. For what comes by *chance* is neither foreseen by us, nor subject to us. And what is given *arbitrarily*, without all rule or reason, is as fickle and unconstant as *Arbitrary Will* it self is. It cannot be prevented by any endeavours, because it doth not regard them ; neither can it be collected beforehand from any fixt rule of reason, seeing it observes none. And what neither our greatest wisdom can foretel, nor our exactest care prevent, it is wholly to no purpose to make a matter of our study and enquiry.

But as for the Everlasting happiness or misery of our Souls and Bodies in the other Life, and at the Resurrection, they are not left at *random*, nor fall out by *accident* ; but are dispensed by a *wise hand*, and according to a *fixt* and *established rule*. For it is God who distributes them, and this distribution is in Judgment ; and the procedure in that is by Laws, and those Laws are unalterably fixt for us, and most plainly declared and published to us in the Gospel. So that now it is not an impossible, nor nor extream difficult thing for us to understand, which shall be our own state in the next World. For the Laws are well known, proclaimed daily to every ear, by a whole order of men set apart for that purpose ; their sense and meaning is obvious to any common understanding ; and the Judgment according to them at that day will be true and faithful. God will Absolve all those whom his Gospel acquits, but Condemn every man whom it accuses.

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There will be no preventing of Justice through fear or favour, no Sentence passed through partiality or ill will; but a Trial every way unbyassed and uncorrupt, where *Every one shall receive according to the things done in the Body,* 2 Cor. 5. 10. And *Judgment shall pass upon all Men according to their works,* Rom. 2. 6.

And thus, as the belief of the two former Articles, *The immortal state, either of Bliss or Misery for our Souls, and the Resurrection of our Bodies,* will inflame us with restless desire: So, if we seriously believe it, will this third Article of the great and general Judgment possess us with sure hopes of being satisfied in this great enquiry, which of the two States will fall to our own share.

And as this belief of the last Judgment will be the most effectual means to encourage; so will it be withal the surest to guide our Enquiries after it. It chalks us out a method for our search, and directs us to the readiest course for satisfaction. For if the happiness and misery of the next World is to be dispensed to every man for a reward or punishment, according to the direction of those Laws which promise or threaten them; then have we nothing more to do in this enquiry, but to examine well what those Laws are, what obedience they require, what allowances and mitigations they will bear, and what lot and condition they assign us. For in that day we shall be look'd upon to be what they declare us; and be doom'd to that state which they pronounce for us. What they speak to us all now, that the Judge of all the World will pronounce upon us all then: Their sentence shall be his, and what they denounce he will execute. He will judge us by no other Measure but his own Laws; those very Laws which he has taken so much care to proclaim to us, and continually to press upon us; which he has put into every one of our hands, and made to be sounding daily in our ears; the laws and sanctions of the Gospel. Our blessed Saviour Christ the Judge himself has told us this long ago, *The word that I have spoken, the same shall judge men at the last day,* John 12. 48. And his great Apostle Paul has again confirm'd it, Rom. 2. God shall judge the World at that day according to my Gospel, ver. 16. If we perform what those Laws peremptorily require, they now already declare us blessed, and such at the last day will Christ pronounce us. But if by sinning

against them we fall short of it, they denounce nothing but everlasting Woes and Miseries, and those he will execute : For he tells us plainly, that when he shall come to judgment *in the Glory of the Father with his holy Angels*, he will reward every man according to his Works, Matt. 16. 27. To them, who by patient continuance in well-doing, seek for glory and immortality, he will give eternal life, Rom. 2. 7. But to them who obey not the Truth, but obey unrighteousness, indignation and wrath, tribulation and anguish, and that upon every man, whether he be Jew or Gentile, ver. 8, 9. For all this shall be acted in the greatest integrity, without preferring one before another. It is only the difference in Mens works, which shall difference their conditions ; but they who have been equal in their sins, shall be equal also in their sufferings. For at the appearance of Jesus Christ, God, as S. Peter tells us, without any respect of persons judges according to every Man's work, 1 Pet. 1. 7, 17.

The way then whereby to satisfie our selves in this great matter, is this, To look well into the Gospel, there to learn what we should be ; and into our own hearts and lives, there to see what indeed we are ; and thence to conclude what in the next World, whether in a state of Life or Death, we shall be.

And to shew this to every man, and to let them see now beforehand how he stands prepared for the next World, and whether, if he should be called away presently to the Bar of that Judgment, he would be everlastingly acquitted or condemned in it, is my present business and design. It is to let us see our *Eternal Condition* before we enter on it, and to make it evident to every man, who is both capable and willing to be instructed, what shall be his endless doom of Life or Death before the Judge pronounce it.

And since the *Rule* of that Court, whereby we must all be tryed, and which must measure out to us either Life or Death, is, as we have seen, none other than the *Gospel* of our Judge and Saviour Jesus Christ ; that I may manage this inquiry with the greater light and clearness, I will proceed in this method.

First, I will enquire, *What is that condition of our Happiness or Misery, which the Gospel indispensibly exacts.*

Secondly,

Secondly, *What are its mitigations and allowances, those defects which it pardons and bears with.*

And when at any time we fall short of this condition, and thereby forfeit all right and title to that Happiness and Pardon which is promised to us upon it: Then,

Thirdly, *What are those remedies and means of recovery, which it points us out for restoring our selves again unto a state of Grace and Favour, and whereupon we shall be reconciled.*

And having by this means discovered what in the great and general Judgment shall really and truly determine our last Estate, what shall be connived at in it; and, when once 'tis lost, what shall restore to it: I shall in the

Fourth and last place, *Remove those groundless doubts and scruples, which perplex the minds of good and safe, but yet erring and misguided, people concerning it.*

And having in this manner cleared up all these things relating to our last doom, and shewed both what in the Judgment shall be indispensibly required to our Salvation; what Defects do not overthrow, but consist with it; what remedies, when 'tis wounded or lost, can heal and restore us to it; and what, and of how great consideration thole things really are, which being wrong understood, do often create causeless fears and jealousies in good peoples minds about it: Having, I say, clearly accounted for all these, I suppose, I may think I have said enough to shew Men their Future State, and fairly take leave of this Argument.

BOOK I.

Of the indispensable condition of Happiness in the general.

C H A P. I.

Of Obedience, the general condition of Happiness.

THAT Condition which the Gospel indispensably requires of us, and which is to mete out to us our last doom of Bliss or Misery, is in the General our Obedience. When we are brought to that Bar, and stand to be judged according to those Laws which are proclaim'd to us in the Gospel, it is only our having kept them, and repented of all such Transgressions of them as we have wilfully been guilty of, which can capacitate us to be rewarded by them. For 'tis just with them, as it is with all other Laws, they never promise any thing but to Obedience, but threaten and punish all that disobey. Whosoever breaks and despises them, is guilty; they do not comfort but accuse, not acquit but condemn him. For there is no Law that is wisely ordered, but is sufficiently guarded against affronts, and back'd with such punishments as will make it every Man's interest to fulfil and keep it. The evil threatned, must always by far exceed the pleasure that is reaped by disobedience; so that no Man may have any temptation sufficient to bear him out in Sin, or ever hope to be a gainer by his Transgression.

This is the tenour of all wise Laws, whose Enactors have both *Wit* and *Power* sufficient to defend them. They have dreadful Punishments annexed to them, which take place upon Disobedience; they encourage and reward

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the Obedient, but severely punish all that dare presume to disobey.

And this is most eminently seen in all the Laws of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He gave them for the compleatest Rules to Men's Lives, and has annexed to them most glorious Promises to encourage our Obedience, but has made them breath out nothing but Woes, and intolerable Punishments to all that disobey.

He has given them for *Rules of Life*, and annexed *Rewards or Encouragements to Obedience*. He never intended his Laws for an entertainment of our Eyes, but for a Rule of our Actions; not for a matter of talk and discourse, but of practice; not to be complemented by words of honour, and lofty expressions, but to be own'd in our Lives, and served by Obedience. He is our King, and issues out his Laws as the Instruments of his Government: He is our Lord, and they are Rules for his Service. They must be guides of our Lives and Actions; it is not enough to know and talk of them; but, as ever we hope to live by them, we must do and keep them. For in the end they will be available to no Man's Happiness, but his who has conscientiously performed them. In Christ Jesus, or the Christian Religion, says S. Paul, nothing avails but keeping of the Commandments of God, 1 Cor. 7. 19. Blessed are they, saith S. John, who do the Commandments, for they only have right to the Tree of Life, Rev. 22. 14. It is not an idle wish, or ineffectual endeavour, but a thorough practice and performance of Christ's Laws which can continue us in his Love, and approve us Righteous in his Judgment. If ye keep my Commandments, says he, ye shall abide in my Love, Joh. 15. 10. Let no man deceive you, for it is he only that * * Job. 2, doth Righteousness, who in God's account is Righteous, 7. 29. 1 Joh. 3. 7. They only are pronounced Righteous and Sons of God in the Gospel's estimation, who walk after the Spirit, Rom. 8. 4. who are led by the spirit, vers. 14. who bring forth the fruits of the spirit, (all words expressing Action and Practice) Gal. 5. 16, 22. No Man therefore will be acquitted and rewarded at that Bar barely for knowing and * discoursing, for wishing or desiring; but only for working and obeying. Such only the Gospel reckons for true Servants now; his Servants ye are, not whom you confess in words, but whom in acti-

* ἐποιεῖν δι-
ργάνοντας,
un ἀδελφος.
Clem. Ro.
1 Epist. ad
Cor. c. 30.

ons you obey, Rom. 6. 16. And such only he will honour and reward then. For it is not every one who fawns upon me in his words, whilst he reproaches me in his actions, who says unto me, Lord, Lord, that shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, but he only who doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven: Which Will he had just then proclaim'd to them in that Volume of Christian Laws, which was published in the Sermon upon the Mount, whereof this is in part the conclusion, Mat. 7. 21. He tells us that when the Son of Man shall come to Judgment, he will reward every Man according to his works, Mat. 16. 27. And he repeats it again in his declaration to S. John, Behold I come quickly, and my reward is with me, to give to every Man according as his works shall be, Rev. 22. 12. And so it was in that Prophetick sight of the Last Judgment, which this same Apostle had vouch-safed him, Rev. 20. For there, as we are told, when the Sea gave up the Dead which were in it; and Death and Hell delivered up the Dead which were in them; and they all, both small and great stood before the Throne, and him that sate thereon: They were judged every man according to his WORKS, vers. 11, 12, 13.

His Laws then Christ has given us, not for Talk and Discourse, but for Action and Practice; and his Promises he has annexed to them, not as rewards of Idleness, but only of active Service and Obedience: Wherein if Men fail, God's Rewards belong not to them; they can make no claim or colourable pretence to them, because they cannot shew that which is to be rewarded by him.

Nay farther, if men disobey, they are not only excluded from all Glorious Hopes; but are moreover put into a desperate state of fears and dreadful Expectations. For God has back'd his Laws with Threatnings as well as Promises. And as they propose most noble Rewards to all that are Obedient; so likewise do they breath out most intolerable Punishments to all that disobey. For every Man at the last day will be declared a Child of Wrath, who is a Son of Disobedience; and he shall most certainly be Damned who dies, without amendment and Repentance, in works which are wilfully and deliberately sinful. Christ's Gospel has already judged this long before-hand; and at that day he will confirm it. When the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with his Angels;

gels : i. e. when he shall come with his Royal attendance to judge the World, *He will take vengeance*, says S. Paul, *on all them that OBEY not his Gospel*, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, 2 Thes. 1. 7, 8. When he comes in state with the ten thousands of his Saints, it will be to execute Judgment upon all that are Ungodly, for all the Ungodly DEEDS which they have committed, Jude 14, 15. And when our Lord himself gives a relation of his proceedings at that day, he tells us that whosoever they be, or whatsoever they may pretend, if their works have been Disobedient, they shall hear no Sentence from him but what consigns them to Eternal Punishment. *I will profess thus unto them*, says he, *I never knew you: Depart from me, ye that WORK iniquity*, Matt. 7. 23.

This will be the method of Christ's Judgment ; and these the measures of his Sentence : He will pronounce Mercy and Life upon all that are Obedient, but Death and Hell to all that Disobey.

And indeed it were height of folly and madness to expect he should do otherwise, and to fansie that when he comes to judge us, as S. Paul says, according to the Laws of his Gospel, he should absolve and reward us, when in our Works and Actions we have transgressed them. For this were to thwart his own rule, and to go cross to his own measures ; it were to encourage those whom his Laws threaten ; to acquit such as they condemn ; And, in one word, not to judge according to them, as he has expressly declared he will, but against them.

If we would know then what condition we shall be adjudged to in the next World, we must examine what our Obedience has been in this. We can have no assurance of a favourable Sentence in that Court, but only by the doing of our Duty. Our last doom shall turn, not upon our knowing or not knowing, our willing or not willing ; but upon our obeying or disobeying. It is in vain to cast about for other Marks, and to seek after other Evidences: Nothing less than this performance of our Duty can avail us unto life ; and by the merits of Christ, and the grace of his Gospel, it shall.

And thus we see in the general what those terms and that condition are, which, to mere out our last doom of Bliss or Misery, the Gospel indispensably exacts of us.

It is nothing less than a *working Service* and *Obedience*; the enquiry to be made at that day being only this, whether we *have done what was commanded us*. If we have performed what was required of us, we shall be pronounced Righteous, and sentenced to Eternal Life: But if we have wilfully transgressed, and wrought Wickedness, without Amendment and Repentance, we shall then be declared incorrigible Sinners, and adjudged to Everlasting Death.

This indeed is a very great Truth, but yet such as very few are willing to see and to consider of. For Obedience is a very laborious Service, and a painful Task; and they are not many in number who will be content to undergo it. And if a man may have no just hopes upon any thing less than it, the Case of most Dying Men is desperate. But as Men will live and die in Sin, so will they live and die in hopes too. And therefore they catch at softer terms, and build upon an easier condition. And because the Gospel promises Salvation, and a happy sentence to *Faith, Love, Repentance, our being in Christ, our knowing Christ, and other things besides Obedience*; They conclude that they shall be acquitted at that Bar upon the account of *any, or all of these*, though they do not obey with them: They make *Faith, Love, Repentance and the rest, to be something separate from Obedience*; something which will save them, when that is wanting. So that if they *be in Christ, if they know and believe with the Mind, and love and repent in their Hearts*; their hope is to be absolved at the last day, be their Lives and Actions never so Disobedient.

But this is a most dangerous and damning Error: For it makes Men secure from danger, till they are past all possibility of recovering out of it; and causes them to trust to a false support so long, till it lets them drop into Hell, and sink down in Damnation.

And although it be sufficiently evident from what has been already said, that our Obedience is that only thing which will be admitted as a just plea, and as a qualification able to save us in that Court: Yet because I would fully subvert all those false grounds, whereupon Men support their pernicious hopes and sinful lives together, I will go on to prove it still further.

And this will be most plainly effected by shewing that all those other terms and conditions, whereto the Gospel sometimes promises Pardon and Happiness, concerning all in this, save us no otherwise than by being Springs and Principles of our Obedience. They are not opposed to our doing of our Duty, and keeping the Commandments; but imply it. For when Pardon is promised to *Faith*, to *Love*, to *Repentance*, or any thing else; it is never promised to them separate from Obedience, but as containing it. Obedience is that still for which a man is saved and pardoned? it is not excluded from them, but expressed by them.

In order to a clearer apprehension of the truth of this, I think fit to observe that there is an ordinary Figure and Form of Speech very usual both with God and Men, which the Rhetoricians call a *Metonymie* or *Transnomination*, and that is a transferring of a word, which is the particular Name of one thing to express another. The use of it is this, that in things which have a near relation and dependence upon each other, as particularly the cause and its effects have, the particular name of either may many times signify both, so that when the name only of one is expressed, yet really both are meant and intended. And then by that word, which in its proper sense stands only for the effect, we are to understand, not it alone, but together with it the cause also that produced it: And by that which properly signifies the cause, we are to mean, not the bare cause alone, but, besides it, the effect which flows from it likewise.

As for the latter of these, the bare naming of the cause when we intend, together with it, to express its natural consequent and effect too; because it is that which chiefly concerns our present business, I will set down some instances of it which daily occur in common speech. If we advise a Man to trust his Physician or his Lawyer, our meaning is not barely that he should give credit to them; but together with that, that he shew the effect of such credit, in following and observing them. If we are earnest with any Man to hearken to some advice that is given him, we intend not by hearkning to express barely his giving ear to it, but besides that his suffering the effects of such attention in Practising and Obeying it. And thus we commonly say that we have got a Cold, when we mean a Disease

Disease upon Cold ; or a Surfeit, when we understand a sickness upon Surfeiting. In these, and many other instances which might be mentioned, we daily find that in the speech and usage of Men, the cause alone is oft-times named, when the effect is withal intended, and accordingly understood, to be expressed ; are that both are meant, when barely one is spoken. The effect doth so hang upon its cause, and so naturally and evidently follow after it, that we look upon it as a needless thing to express its coming after, when once we have named its cause which goes before : But we ordinarily judge it to be sufficiently mentioned, when we have expressed that cause, which, as is evident to us all, produces and inferrs it.

And as it is thus in the speech of Men, so is it in the Language of God too. He talks to us in our own way, and uses such forms of speech and figurative expressions, as are in common use among our selves. And to seek no farther for instances of this, than these that lie before us, he expresses our *Works* and *Obedience* by our *Knowledge*, our *Repentance*, our *Love*, and such other *Causes* and *Principles* as effect and produce it.

For we must take notice of this also, that our outward Works and Actions depend upon a train of powers within us, which, as springs and caules of them, order and effect them. For our *Passions* excite to them ; our *Understandings* consider of them and direct them ; our *Wills* command and choose them ; and then afterwards, in pursuance of all these, our *Bodily Powers* execute and exert them. The actions of a Man flow from all the ingredients of the Humane Nature ; each Principle contributes its share, and bears a part towards it. For from the constitution of our natural frame, our Actions are placed wholly in the power of our own Wills ; and our Wills are set in a middle station, to be moved by our Appetites and Passions, and guided and directed by our Minds or Intellects. We do and perform nothing but what we will ; neither do we will any thing but what we know and desire ; what our Reason and Passion inclines and directs to. And because these three inward faculties, our *Minds*, our *Wills*, and *Passions*, give being and beginning to our outward Works and Practice : Therefore are they, by the Masters of Moral Philosophy and Divinity,

nity, ordinarily called the Causes and Principles of Humane Actions.

But these three Principles of Humane Actions in General lie not more open to produce good than evil. They are all under the unrestrain'd power of our own free Will: It is that which determines them either for God or against him ; but in themselves they are indifferently fitted, and serve equally to bring forth Acts of Obedience or of Disobedience and Sin. To make these Principles therefore of *Works* or *Actions in General*, to become Principles of *Good Works* and *Obedience*, there are other nearer tempers and qualifications required, which may determine them, that in *themselves* are free to both, to effect one, and be Authors of such Actions only whereby we serve and obey God. And this is done by the nearer and more immediate efficiency of *Faith, Repentance, Love,* and the like. For he who knows God's Laws, and believes his Gospel with his Understanding ; who in his Heart loves God, and hates Sin ; whose Will is utterly resolved for good, and against evil : He it is, whose faculties in *themselves* indifferent are thus determinately disposed, who is ready and prepared to perform his Duty. His Faith directs him to those Laws, which he is to Obey, and to all the powerful Motives to Obedience : it shews him how it is bound upon him by all the Joys of Heaven, and by all the Pains of Hell ; and this quickens his Passions, and confirms all good Resolutions, and makes him in his Will and Heart to purpose and desire it. And when both his Mind, his Will, and Passions, which were before indifferent, are thus gained over and determinately fixed for it ; in the efficiency of inward Principles, there is no more to be done, but he is in the ready way to work and perform it in outward operation. So that as our Minds, Wills, and Passions, are Principles of Humane Actions in General, whether good or Evil : These nearer dispositions, our Faith, Repentance, &c. are Principles particularly of good Works and Obedience.

And since our obedient Actions proceed in this manner from the power and efficiency of these Principles : God, according to our own way of expressing things, is wont many times only to name them, when he intends withal to express our Obedience it self which results from them. Although he barely mention one, yet he understands

stands both; and in speaking of the cause, he would be taken to employ the effect likewise. Thus when he promiseth *Pardon and Salvation* to our knowledge and belief of his Gospel, to our *Repentance from our Sins*, to our *Love and fear of God*, which, with several others, are those preparatory dispositions, that fix and determine our Minds, Wills, and Passions, indifferent in themselves, to effect Obedient Actions; he doth not in any wise intend that these shall save us, and procure Pardon for us without Obedience, but only by signifying and implying it. Wheresoever Mercy and Salvation at the last day are promised, and this condition of our working and obeying is not mentioned, it is always meant and understood, that which such mercy was promised to, is either the *cause* of our Obedience, or the *effect* and *sign* of it. The speech is *metonymical*, and more was meant by it than was expressed. Though the word was not named, yet the thing was intended; for Obedience is ever requisite to Pardon, and nothing has Mercy promised to it in the last Judgment, but what some way or other is a sign of it, or produces and effects it.

This I might well take for granted upon the strength of that proof which has been already urged for our Obedience, being the sole condition of our being acquitted at that day. But because the interest of Souls is so much concern'd in it, I will be yet more particular, and proceed to shew further that this sense and explication of all such places is the very same that God himself has expressly put upon them. For concerning all those things, whereto he has promised a favourable sentence at the last Judgment, he assures us that they are of no account with him, nor will be owned as a good plea to that Bar when they are separate from Obedience, but then only when they effect and work it. But when he says that Faith, Repentance, Love, or any other thing shall save us, he means not all, or any, but only a working Faith, an obedient Repentance, an active Love; a Faith, Love, and Repentance, which do not overlook Obedience, but accompany and produce it. So that first or last Obedience is still that wherein all the rest must concenter and agree, that alone condition which our Judge will accept, and which we may safely trust to. And this will fully appear by running over the particulars.

C H A P. II.

Of Pardon promised to Faith, Knowledge, and
being in Christ.

FIRST, this condition of our acceptance which is to mete out to us our last doom of Bliss and Misery, and whereto Life and Pardon are promised at the last day, is sometimes called *Knowledge*, or, what is only a more particular way of knowing, a knowing upon witness or testimony, *Faith*. By, or upon the account of, his *Knowledge*, or the *Knowledge* of him; *shall my Righteous Servant*, when he sits to judge them, *justify many*, says God of our Judge and Saviour Christ by the Prophet *Isaiah*, Isa. 53. 11. And *this is Life Eternal*, says our Lord himself, *to know thee the only true God*, and *Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent*, Joh. 17. 3. And then as for *Faith*, which is the particular way of knowledge among us Christians, who owe all that we know in order to Heaven and Happiness to the Witness and Testimony of Jesus Christ, the places which promise Life and Pardon unto it, are to be met with in abundance. *Whosoever believes on me*, says our Saviour, *shall not perish, but have Everlasting Life*, Joh. 3. 15, 16. And again, *This is the will of him that sent me, that whosoever believes on me may have Everlasting Life*, Joh. 6. 40. And when he sends out his Apostles after his Resurrection, to proclaim the terms of Mercy and Salvation to all the World, he bids them say, *Whosoever believeth and is Baptized shall be saved*, Mar. 16. 16.

Faith or Belief in the General, is a thinking something to be true, upon the Testimony of those Persons who declare it. And herein it differs from other sorts of *Knowledge*, because in them, we believe upon the evidence and apparent reason of the things themselves; but in this, upon the witness and authority of those Persons who reveal them. For then we are said to know, when we assent upon the Authority of things; but then to believe, when we assent upon the Authority of Persons; when, not the evidence of the things revealed, but the word and testimony of the revealer make us give credit to his Revelation.

This

This is the nature of Faith in general, it is a giving credit to a thing, or taking it to be true, upon the Testimony or Authority of such Persons as declare it. And according to the difference of this Testimony, our Faith upon it is differenced and distinguished also. For if we believe any thing upon the bare word of a Man, it is an *Humane*; if upon the bare word and testimony of God, it is a *Divine* Faith.

Divine Faith then is nothing else, but *a belief of Divine Revelations*, or a taking any thing to be true, because God has told us that it is so. And therefore we may be said to have Divine Faith of as many things, as God has any way attested or revealed to us. And as for God's Revelations, they have been derived to us in several ways, and by several instruments.

[†] Prov.
20. 27.

For, some things God has revealed to us, by the *light of nature*. That light came from him, and is his Revelation. For [†] *the Spirit of a Man is the Candle of the Lord*, which, as S. John saith in another case of our Saviour, *enlightens every Man that cometh into the World*, Joh. 1. 9. And in this general sense of Faith, for a *natural Faith*, or a belief of all natural Revelations; all matters of knowledge are likewise matters of Faith, because at last all natural light and evidence of things rest upon God's Revelation; that every evidence being no otherwise a proof to us that things are true, than we are assured that God is the Author of it, and that it is his Testimony and Declaration to them that they are so. And by this way of Revelation, or this natural light, God has declared to us two great Foundations of all Religion, *his own Existence*, and *his Providence*; or that there is a God, and that he will love and reward all such as serve and worship him. The belief of which Articles so testified, S. Paul affirms to be a part of *Faith*; yea, a part so fundamental, as is absolutely necessary to our pleasing God, and to all Religion: *Without Faith, saith he, it is impossible to please God; for he who comes to God, must believe that HE IS, and that he is a REWARDER of them that diligently seek him*, Heb. 11. 6.

Other things God has revealed, not by the *Light of Nature*, seeing they are such things as that alone could never have discovered to us; but either by his own *immediate voice or inspiration*, or by the *mediation and message of inspired Men*.

By

By the former, he reavealed to Noah the drowning of the old World, Gen. 6. 13. the belief whereof is called Noah's Faith, Heb. 11. 7. To Abraham, his having a numerous issue by his Wife Sarah, when as yet they had no Child, and in all appearance were too Old ever to expect one, Gen. 15. 5, 6. and Chap. 17. 17, 19. The belief whereof is likewise call'd Abraham's, Faith, Heb. 11. 17. 18, 19. To Moses, his passing over all the Houses of the Israelites, where he should see the Blood of the Paschal Lamb sprinkled for a Taken, when he would slay all the First-born throughout all the Land of Egypt, Exod. 12. 12, 13. The belief of which Revelation, is also call'd the Faith of Moses, Heb. 11. 28.

By the latter, he reveal'd his will more largely to the whole People of Israel, by the mouth and [†] Mediation of ^{† Gal. 3. 19.} his Servant Moses; and because both God and Man concurr'd in this Testimony, their belief of his message was their Faith, not in God only, but, together with him, in his Servant Moses too. For because the Law and Religion which they received, though it came originally from God, was yet derived down to them immediately by Moses's Ministry, and they knew no otherwise what God had spoken to them, than by his Testimony, and upon his Authority; therefore are they said in believing and embracing that Divine Law, which was delivered to them by Moses, to believe, not the Lord alone, but also his Servant Moses, Exod. 14. 31. Joh. 5. 46. To be Baptized into Moses, 1 Cor. 10. 2. To be Moses's Disciples, Joh. 9. 28. To trust or place their hope in Moses, Joh. 5. 45. To obey or hearken unto Moses, Luk. 16. 31.

But the most clear and full Revelation, that God ever made of his will to Men, was by the message and mediation of his own Son, Jesus Christ. For God, who at sundry times, and in divers manners, spake in times past to the Jews by Moses, and to the Fathers by the Prophets; hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, Heb. 1. 1. And the belief of his Gospel, or taking for certain truths upon his authority, all those things which he has declared to us in God's Name, is call'd the Christian, as the other was the Mosaick Faith. For he being the great Author and Deriver of this last and greatest Revelation of God down to us, and our belief of it being upon his immediate Authority, he being, as S. Paul says, the Author and

Finisfer of our Faith, Heb. 12. 2. our belief of it is called, not only *Faith towards God*, Heb. 6. 1. but also *Faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ*, Acts 20. 21. And because the knowledge of our whole Religion got into our Minds this way, upon our submission to Christ's Authority, and our *Faith or belief of his Testimony*; therefore is our *Religion* itself, most commonly in the Scriptures called our *Faith*. The preaching of it, is called *Preaching the Faith*, Gal. 1. 23. The hearing of it, *hearing of Faith*, Gal. 3. 2. The professing of it, a *profession of Faith*, Heb. 10. 23. The contending for it, a *striving for the Faith*, Phil. 1. 27. The erring in it, an *erring from the Faith*, 1 Tim. 6. 10. The falling from it, a *making shipwrack of the Faith*, 1 Tim. 1. 19. Obedience to it, the *Obedience of Faith*, Rom. 1. 5. And the Righteousness required in it, and effected by it, the *Righteousness of Faith*, Rom. 4. 11, 13.

So that in like manner, as the *Mosaick Faith* was a belief of the Divinity of the *Mosaick Law* and Religion upon the *Authority of Moses*: The *Christian Faith* is a belief of the Divine institution of our Christian Religion, upon the *Authority of Jesus Christ*. It is a taking upon his word, all those things for truths of God, which he has declared to us in God's Name. A belief begot in us by virtue of his Testimony, that all his Doctrines are God's Truths; that all his Laws, are God's Precepts; that all his Promises, are God's Promises; and that all his Threats, are God's Threatnings: In summ, that that whole Religion and Gospel, which Christ has delivered to us in God's Name, is the very Religion and Word of God.

The belief of all this upon the *Authority of Christ*, makes our *Faith Christian*; and the *good effects* of it upon our *Hearts and Lives*, make it *justifying and saving*. For when, by virtue of this *Faith*, we truly Repent and sincerely Obey, which is the great condition, as we have seen, whereupon at the last day we must all be pardoned and justified Eternally; it is a *justifying*: As when by virtue of it, we are saved and delivered from the dominion and service, as well as from the Eternal Punishment of our b Mat. i. Sins, which as the Angel hath b assured us, are those principal Evils that Christ came to save us from, it is a *saving Faith*.

This is the nature of our *Christian Knowledge*, and of our *Christian Faith*. And as for it now, under the influences of the Divine Grace, it is the very fundamental cause and natural spring of all our Christian Service and Obedience. For it is because we believe and know Jesus to be the Lord, and what his Laws are, and how he will deal both with the Keepers and the Breakers of them, that we set our selves in very Deed to observe and keep them. It is our knowledge and belief, which lets us see the Truth and Reasonableness of his Precepts, the Power of his Assurances, the Glory of his Rewards, and the Terror of his Punishments; and in all respects convinces us of the beauty and profit of Obedience. And this sight and conviction in our Minds, cannot well miss, if we duly attend thereto, of gaining our Hearts and Resolutions. For the belief of his endless Judgments, will raise our Fears; the belief of his infinite Rewards, will quicken our Hopes; the belief of his inexpressible Kindness, will kindle our Love; and by all these, our Souls will be led Captive into eager desires, and firm resolutions, and be fully purposed to keep God's Laws, that so they may avoid that terrible Death which he threatens to the Breakers, and attain thole matchless Joys which he promises to the Obedient Keepers of them. And when once, by means of this Faith and Knowledge, God's Laws have gain'd both our Wills and Passions, which are the inward springs and causes of our Actions; they cannot fail (whilst they keep the same,) of being obeyed in our Works and Actions too, which ensue upon those causes, and are produced by them. But we shall quickly go on to perform what we resolve, and to do what we desire; and so in very deed to fulfil and obey them. Upon which account, of our Christian Faith having so mighty an influence upon our Christian and Obedient Practice, our Obedience it self, as being the effect of it, and produced by it, is call'd *the Obedience of Faith*, Rom. 16. 26. And the Righteousness which it exacts of us, and which it cooperates to work in us, the c Jam. 2³ Righteousness of Faith, Gal. 5. 5. And our Christian war- 22. fare or striving against Sin, is called *the good fight of Curviges* Faith, 1 Tim. 6. 12. And because in this contest our ^{nois espous} great succours which protect us, and keep us from fainting, and at last make us victorious, are some points or

promises of our Religious belief; therefore it is styled a *Shield, and a Breast-plate of Faith*, 1 Thess. 5. 8. And S. John affirms plainly, that this is the victory over the World, even our Faith, 1 John 5. 4.

And for this reason it is, because our Faith and Knowledge are so powerful a cause and principle of our Obedience, that God speaks so great things of them, and has made such valuable promises to them. He never intends eternally to reward the Faith and Knowledge of our Minds, further than they do effect the Obedience of our Actions, and become an Obedient Knowledge, and a working Faith. For when in the places mentioned, or in any other, God promises, that he who knows Christ, or believes in Christ, shall live; he speaks metonymically, and means Faith and Knowledge with this effect, of a working Service and Obedience.

Δια πίστεως ποίησας; Clem. Rom. Ep. 1. ad Cor. c. 31.

e Quid est fideliter Christo credere? est fideliter Dei mandata servare. Salvian. de Gub. l. 3. p. 67. Ed. Oxon. *Αβέραμος δὲ φίλος τοῦ θεοῦ πεπονθεὶς μήτις εὑρέθη, ἐν τῷ αὐλώντι κατάκοον οὐέδας τοῖς φίλοις τῆς θεοῦ.* Clem. Rom. 1. Ep. ad Cor. c. 10.

As for knowledge, 'tis plain that God accepts it no otherwise, than as it effects Obedience, nor can we any otherwise confide in it. Hereby alone, says S. John, we know that we know him, in that sense of knowledge whereto God has promised Life and Pardon, if we keep his Commandments. But he that saith I know him, and for all that keepeth not his Commandments, he is a lyar, and the truth is not in him, 1 John 2. 3, 4.

And then as for Faith, no man is interpreted to have that Faith, which is made the condition of our Pardon and Acceptance, but he who is acted by it, and in his Works is obedient thereto. The Faith, says S. Paul, which in Christ Jesus or the Christian Religion, availeth any thing to that Righteousness which all Christians hope for, is that only which worketh by Love, Gal. 5. 5, 6. It begins the change within, by purifying of our Hearts and Desires, Acts 15. 9. And thence goes on to perfect it in our outward Words and Actions. And unless it proceed f Mar. 25. to this, it will never be able to bear us out, and to justify us at God's Bar: For there, as S. James tells us, by 34, 35, 36, &c. our works we must all be justified, and not by a Faith only which

which works nothing, Jam. 2. 24. Such alas ! will be wholly useless, and of no consideration in that Court ; it will not any way profit, and then certainly it cannot save us. For what doth it profit, my Brethren, though a Man be able to say, either here or hereafter, he hath Faith, and hath not Works ; will that be allowed a sufficient plea in God's Judgment ? Or shall that Faith save him ? Jam. 2. 14. This unworking Faith, is not that effectual Faith, which the Gospel encourages, but its worthless shell and lifeless carcase. For wilt thou know, O vain Man, that Faith without Works is dead ? Even as the body without the spirit is dead, so Faith without Works is dead also, ver. 20, 26. It is Faith only in an imperfect degree, and a weak unprofitable measure ; for it is not arrived to a perfect pitch, or to that compleat state, whereunto the Gospel doth at present promise Life, and Christ will at the last Day award it, until it shews it self in action, and our lives express the power of it. Our Father Abraham, says S. James, was justified by Works, produced by Faith, when, in an unstagger'd belief that God would make good his promise of a numerous issue by his Son Isaac, though it were by raising him up again from the g dead, he would ^g Heb. 11. obey his command which seemed quite to overthrow it, 17, 19. and offered up his Son upon the Altar. Seest thou how his Faith in God's Power and Promise, wrought, prevalently over all opposition h, to the production of that his strange h Κυριεγένετος εργος, work ; and by this justifying work upon it, was his Faith wrought to his works, or to make him work,

So that when all is done, we see that there is no Life or Pardon promised, to any Faith or Knowledge, which are separate from Obedience, but to such only as co-operate to them, and imply them. There is no belief, wherewith our Judge at the last day will be satisfied, or wherein we are safe ; which either he will accept, or we may trust to, if our dutiful works are wanting. So that this is, and ever will be, as S. Paul says, a faithful saying, and such as every good Christian Man ought constantly to receive or affirm, that they who have Faith, or have believed in God, be careful to maintain Obedience and good Works, because it is they which at the last day must do all Men good, are good and profitable unto Men. Tit. 3. 8.

Secondly, This condition of our acceptance, whereto the Gospel promises a happy sentence of Life and Pardon in the last Judgment, is sometimes called, *being in Christ.* There is no condemnation, says S. Paul, to them, who are in Christ Jesus, Rom. 8. 1.

The word *Christ*, we must know many times in Scripture signifies the *Religion of Christ*. Thus the *Law*, is said to be a *Schoolmaster to bring us to Christ*, i. e. the imperfect rule of the *Mosaick Religion*, was fitted for the minority of the World, and intended to train Men up, as Children are by School Discipline, for the more perfect and manly institution of the *Christian*, Gal. 3. 24. And thus we read of *Preaching Christ*, that is the *Christian Religion*, Phil. 1. 15. And S. Paul tells the *Ephesians*, of their *learning Christ and hearing him*, i. e. his *Gospel and Doctrine*. *Ye have not so learned Christ, if so be ye have heard him, and been taught by him, or i in him*, Eph. 4. 20, 21. Heard him and been taught by him, i. e. not by his person, for he never went beyond *Judea*, being sent, as he said, to none but the lost sheep of the house of *Israel*, Mat. 15. 24. And therefore never travelled so far as *Ephesus*; but by, and in his *Doctrine or Religion*. And this is a most usual form of speech, to call any *Institution or Profession* by the name of its first *Author*. The *Doctrine and Religion*, which was delivered to the *Jews* by *Moses*, is called by his Name. For S. Paul speaks of *Moses* being *read*, i. e. the *Law of Moses*, 2 Cor. 3. 15. And of the *Israelites* being *baptized into Moses*, i. e. the *Mosaick Religion*, 1 Cor. 10. 2. And our Lord himself tells the *Jews* in the Parable of the Rich Man, that they *have Moses and the Prophets*, and bids them *hear them*, Luke 6. 29. where he cannot mean their *Persons*, in regard they were dead long before, and got without the reach of their hearing, but their *Writings and Religion*.

And as *Christ* many times signifies the *Christian Religion*, so is *being in Christ*, the very same with *being of his Religion, or being a Christian*. Thus S. Paul tells us of *Andronicus and Junia*, who embraced the *Christian Doctrine*, whilst he persecuted and opposed it, that *they were in Christ*, i. e. in *Christ's Religion*, before him, Rom. 16. 7. They who died in the *Profession of the Christian Faith*, are said to be fallen asleep in *Christ*, 1 Cor. 15. 18. The *veil of Moses is done away in Christ*, 2 Cor. 3. 14. The *veil*

veil of Moses, i. e. types and obscure shadows of the Mosaical Religion, are done away in Christ, i. e. by the plain clearness of the Christian. Thus I knew a *Man in Christ*, is no more than I knew a *Christian Man*, 2 Cor. 12. 2. And the *Churches of Judea in Christ*, are the very same as the *Christian Churches among the Jews*. Gal. 1. 22. So when we read that *in Christ Jesus neither Circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new Creature*, Gal. 6. 15. The meaning is only this, that what price soever the *Religion of Moses* put upon this outward Rite of Circumcision, and thole other Jewish observances whereof it was the federal undertaking: Yet the *Religion of Christ* doth not regard them at all, but that all which can avail us *in it* is only a new Creature. And to the same sense S. Peter speaks of a *good Conversation in Christ*, i. e. in Christ's Religion, 1 Pet. 3. 16. And to name no more instances in a case so evident, we read not only of Men, but likewise of *Bonds in Christ*; i. e. of Mens being bound for the Religion and Faith of Christ, *My bonds in Christ*, says S. Paul, are manifest in all the Palace, and in all other places, Phil. 1. 13.

Aut besides the sense of the words, our *being in Christ*, for our *being of the Christian Religion*; there is another very near it, which it is pertinent to our present business to observe; and that is, our *being in the Christian Church*. Thus S. Paul says, that *we being many Members, are yet one Body, or Corporation in Christ*, or in the Society and Church of Christians, wherein we are *every one Members one of another*, Rom. 12. 5. And God's gathering together all particular Christians scatter'd over the World, into *one Catholick Church or Society*, is called his gathering together in one all things in Christ, Eph. 1. 10. Thus our admission into Christ's Church by *Baptism*, is called our being engraffed or planted into him. We have been planted together, says the Apostle, in the likeness of his Death; or in Baptismal immersion, which is a representation of Burial after Death, Rom. 6. 5.

As for our *Being in Christ* then, which sets us beyond the reach of Danger and Condemnation, it is the same as our *being of the Christian Religion*, and *Members of the Christian Church*.

And this Communion and Membership of Christ's Church, and profession of his Religion, is a most ready

and effectual means to make Men practise and obey it. For to be in the Church of Christ, is to live under the more especial aid and influences of his Holy Spirit, and under the preaching of his Word, the solemn return of Holy Prayers, the Administration of Blessed Sacraments, the counsel and direction of wise Guides, the Authority of good examples, the Correction and Discipline of Church Governours, and all the other both inward and outward means and advantages of Grace and Obedience. And then the profession and owning of his Religion, if it be true and undissembled, implies our Faith and belief of it; which is the great and only expedient that Christ could think of, for the Reformation of a wicked World; and wh ch, as we have already seen, is a most effectual means and sure Principle of good Life and Practice.

And because our *being in Christ*, i. e. our profession of Christ's Religion and Communion and Society with Christ's Church, is so powerful a Principle of our obedient Service; therefore has God promised to it that Life and Pardon, which is the inseparable reward of Obedience it self. He doth not in any wise intend, that every Man who bears the Name of Christ, and is of his retinue, that will make a bare profession of his Service in calling of him *Lord*. *Lord*, without any real works and performance, shall have right to these Rewards when he comes to Judgment. Not every one that saith unto me, *Lord, Lord*, shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he only, who doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven, Matt. 7. 21. Nay in the next verse he goes higher, *Many will say unto me in that day, Have we not prophesied in thy Name, and in thy Name cast out Devils, and in thy Name done many wondrous works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you, depart from me, you are no such k Christians as I own*; for whatsoever your names and professions be, ye are of their number that in their Lives works Iniquity, vers. 22, 23. When God assures us by S. Paul therefore that there is no Condemnation to them that are in Christ, or in Christ's Church and Religion; he means to them that are so in them, as thereby to become obedient; he speaks metonymically, and implies Gub. 1. 4. our Works and Actions, as well as that Communion p Ed. Ox. and profession which signifies them, and ought to produce them.

& Nec Christianus esse videtur, qui Christiani nominis opus non agit. Salvian de Gub. l. 4. And

And in this, the Scriptures are express, *He that KEEPS his Commandments, dwells in Christ, and Christ in him*, says S. John, 1 Ep. 3. 24. It is nothing less than our fulfilling of his Laws, who is head of that body whereunto we join our selves as members, and obeying the Rules of that Holy Religion which we profess; that will at the last day be interpreted, for our being in him in such sort, as may qualify us to be saved by him. *Whoso KEEPETH his word, says the same Apostle, in him is the love of God made perfect: and hereby, by this perfection of love in Obedience, we know that we are in him: So that whosoever he be that saith he abideth in him he ought himself also so to walk even as he walked,* 1 John 2. 5, 6.

The necessity of connexion between these two, *viz. being a member of Christ's Church, and a good Man; between professing of Christ's Religion, and obeying it;* was so evident, and so well known and allowed of in the first times of Christianity, that both were understood, when either was mentioned. To put on Christ in the Apostles days, was the same, as to make no provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof, Rom. 13. 14. And to learn Christ, was but another phrase, for to put off concerning the former CONVERSATION the Old Man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful Lusts; and to put on the New Man, which after the similitude of God is created in Righteousness and true Holiness, Eph. 4. 20, 22, 24. A Christian and a keeper of God's Laws, were then only two words for the same thing. For they thought nothing could be a greater contradiction, than for a Man to profess himself a Servant of Christ, and yet to pay him no Obedience; to call him + Luke 6. Lord, Lord, and not to do the things that he says; to own 26. the Name of a Christian, and yet to lead the life of a Heathen. *The time past of our Lives,* says S. Peter, or that time before we became Christians, must suffice us wherein to have wrought the will of the Gentiles, 1 Pet. 4. 3. But when once we have listed our selves in Christ's Service, and are called upon by his Name; we must renounce all our former ways, and depart from all iniquity, 2 Tim. 2. 19.

So that in the language of those first times, and in the meaning of the Holy Scriptures, Mens being in Christ, is by no means separate from Obedience, but implies it. To talk

talk of an interest in him, without fulfilling of his Laws, is but vain Cant and unprofitable Speech. It is to talk without Book, and to use a Scripture phrase, but against the Scriptures meaning. For at the last day, when Christ comes to expound his own Gospel, we shall hear him pronounce, what it has already in plain words declared to us, that no Man is savingly *in Christ* who is *out* with his Laws; but that he only is so *in him*, as to be secure from all Condemnation, who has *kept* his Commandments and faithfully *obey'd* him.

C H A P. III.

Of Pardon promised to Repentance.

THIRDLY, that condition which the Gospel exacts of us as the terms whereupon we must hope to find Life and Pardon at the last day, is oft-times called *Repentance*, *Regeneration*, *a new Creature*, or *a New Nature*. Christ's fore-runner, *John the Baptist*, came Preaching *Repentance for the Remission of Sins*, Luke 3. 3. And when Christ himself Commissions his Apostles to publish his Golpel over all the World, their instructions are, to *preach Repentance and Remission of Sins in his Name to all Nations*, beginning at *Jerusalem*, Luke 24. 47. And according to this order they practised. *Repent*, says *S. Peter* in his first Sermon *and be Baptized for the Remission of Sins*, Acts 2. 38. And again, *Repent that your Sins may be blotted out*, Acts 3. 19. And then as for *Regeneration*, *a New Creature*, and *a New Nature*; they are such qualifications as fit us for *Eternal Life*, and without which we shall never be admitted to it. It is, says our Saviour to *Nicodemus*, a Man's being born again, that must capacitate him to enter into the Kingdom of God, Joh. 3. 3. In *Christ Jesus*, or the Christian Religion saith *S. Paul*, neither *Circumcision availeth any thing*, nor *Uncircumcision*, but a *NEW C R E A T U R E*, Gal. 6. 15. The condition required of all Men to Life and Pardon, as the truth is in *Jesus*, is this, that they put off the *OLD M A N*,

MAN, and be RENEWED in the Spirit of their mind ; and that they put on the NEW MAN, which after the similitude of God, is Created in Righteousness and true Holiness, Eph. 4. 21, 22, 23, 24.

Repentance, in the constant and plain notion of the Holy Scriptures, is such a virtuous alteration of the mind and purpose, as begets a like virtuous change in the Life and Practice. It begins in our Thoughts and Resolutions, and is made perfect in our Works and Actions. It first casts all false Principles and foolish Judgments, of the desirableness of Sin, and the dreadfulnes of Vertue ; all Opinions that hinder a good Life, and encourage Wickedness ; all inveigling Thoughts, and bewitching Imaginations ; all firm purposes, and studied contrivances of Evil, out of our Minds : And thereby purges all Wickedness and Disobedience, out of our Lives and Actions.

It implies a change of Mind, and is well noted by the Greek * name for Repentance, which is very expressive ^{*μελανσα} of its nature: For it signifies an alteration of the Mind, or a transformation of our Thoughts and Counsels ; and is the same, that S. Paul calls a being renewed in the Spirit of our Mind, Eph. 4. 23. And this God expressly calls for, when he summons the Wicked to Repentance, Isa. 55. Let the Wicked Man forsake his Thoughts, and turn them from his Sin unto the Lord, and then he will have mercy upon him, verl. 7.

It includes also an alteration of the † Life and Practice, or a forbearing to repeat the Sin which we repent of. And this is a natural effect of the former, in as much as our Works and Actions will still go along with our studies and contrivances, our purposes and resolutions. Now this part of Repentance from Sin, viz. a leaving or forsaking of it, is its prime ingredient, and the chief thing which the Scriptures express by it ; it is the main end, where-to the former serves only as the principle and instrument. Godly sorrow, or the grief and trouble of our minds for having offended God, working, as S. Paul says, that Repentance, which will never fail us, nor ever need

† μετανοῶν ἐφ' οἷς ἔδειχον ἐκ τὴν ποιεῖ, ἢ λέγει, βασανίζων ὃ ἐφ' οἷς ἔμαρτυρεν τὴν ἑαυτῆς ψυχὴν αγαθοεργεῖ. Clem. Alex. Strom. 2. p. 281. δόκησις μετανοίας, & μετάνοια, τὸ πολλάκις αἰτεῖσθαι συγγένουν ἐφ' οἷς πλημμελῆμεν πολλάκις. id. p. 212. ed. Lug.

need to be repented of, 2 Cor. 7.10. And that Repentance includes this alteration of our lives, as well as that other of our Minds, the Scriptures plainly express to us, when they style it a *Repentance FROM dead works*, Heb. 6.1. a *TURNING away from all Transgressions, and doing that which is lawful and right*, Ezek. 18. 27,30. A *CONVERSION FROM darkness unto light*, Acts 26.18. A *putting AWAY the evil of our DOINGS, by ceasing to DO Evil, and learning to DO well*, Isa. 1.16, 17.

These two changes, a change of *Mind* and a change of *Practice*, make up the essence, and integrate the Nature of a saving Repentance. It implies first a change in our *Minds and Tempers*, and upon that a correspondent change in our *Lives and Actions*.

Now as for the former of these, this change of our *Minds and Tempers*, in new *Thoughts, new Counsels, new Desires and Resolutions*: This virtuous alteration both in our *Wills and Understandings*, which are those two powers that make up our *rational Nature*, is that which the Scriptures call our *new Nature*; the begetting of

^{† Noah's} which in us, is called our [†] *Regeneration*, or our *being born again*. For the *Tempers and Inclinations* of our ^{Righteousness and Repentance before the flood,} 2 Pet. 2. 5. and 1 Pet. 3.20. Souls, are usually in our common Discourse called our *Nature*. A Man of a *loving condescensive disposition*, is called a *Man of a good Nature*; and one of a *sowre revengeful Temper*, is called a *Man of an ill Nature*. And the *change from one to the other*, is called a *change of Nature*, a *making of him a new Creature, and a new Man*. And thus we are daily wont to say of any person, who, from wicked and sinful inclinations, is changed to a disposition which is virtuous and holy, that he is become a *new Man*. And as this is our language, so is it the language of the Holy Scriptures too. For our putting on the *Tempers and habitual Inclinations* of *Righteousness and true Holiness*, is called our putting on the *new Man*, Eph. 4.24. The alteration, from an *unbelieving and uncharitable*, to a *believing loving Temper*, or to a *Faith that worketh by love*, S. Paul calls a *New Creature*. Gal. 5. 6. compared with Chap. 6. vers. 15. And as for the *Renovation* it self, it is called a *Regeneration or New Birth*; the *Author of it*, a *Father*; and the persons so *renewed*, his *Sons or Children*. All which are expressed to us by

S. John, when he tells us of all those who have received such virtuous and holy dispositions from God, as make them resemble him and like unto him, that they are the Sons of God, 1 Joh. 3. 2. and born of him, 1 Joh. 5. 1, 4. In like manner, as the Disciples of the Prophets among the Jews, because they received those qualifications from their institution whereby they were made like unto them, are usually in the Old Testament called * Sons of the Prophets.

*Prophetarum Filii.

Now this first part of Repentance, or this inward change of mind and purpose, which is called a New Creature, and a New Nature; is a most direct cause and natural Author, of a like change in our outward Works, and of an Obedient Service. For it cuts off the very root of all Transgression, and plants that of Obedience instead of it.

And in the like sense among the Gentiles, Poetarum Filii.

It makes us now in obeying, to follow our own temper and inclination; and our doing of God's Will, to become our desire, as well as it is our Duty. So that now when we perform God's Commands, we do nothing more than follow the natural tendencies of our own Souls; our Duty is become our choice and delight, and it is not without pains and difficulty that we can either omit or transgress it. For it is an equal force and violence; to a Renewed and Obedient Nature, to act Sin; as it is for a Wicked and Debauched one, to work Obedience. He whose nature carries him on to Love and Pity, can as hardly be Rigorous and Cruel; as he, on the contrary, can abstain from Cruelty, whose Nature is Harsh and Revengeful. To act against Nature any way, is not without difficulty; and to follow it, is always easie. And if it be changed from Sin and Disobedience, to Obedience and Holiness; it is then as truly a self-denial to transgress, as it was before to obey. Nay, if this alteration gets up to a full growth, and Obedience become perfectly our Nature; it is then not only uneasy, but even almost impossible to sin against it. For then we shall be arrived to that pitch, which S. John's words express, when he says, that he who is born of God, or formed into this new Nature which makes him like unto, and comes from God, CANNOT Sin, 1 Joh. 3. 9.

So that if Obedience has got this hank of us, if by this first part of Repentance, or this new Nature, it be ingrafted in our tempers and inclinations, and become the employment

employment of our Thoughts, the desire of our Hearts, and the matter of our firm Purposes and Resolutions ; whilst this state lasts, it cannot miss of our Works and Actions. It has won the Principles which command them ; so that nothing more is needful to be done towards their procurement, but they will be sure to follow after them.

Now because *Repentance* in its whole Nature implies Obedience, as its chief ingredient ; and because the first part of it, *viz.* a change of *Mind*, which is called a *New Nature*, or a *New Creature*, is so natural a Principle, and so powerful a caule to work and effect it : Therefore, and upon no other reason, doth God in the Holy Scriptures so far encourage them. He means not in any wise at the last day, to quit and reward Men upon such *Repentance* and *New Birth*, as is void of *obedient Works and Actions* ; and upon such only, as include or effect them.

'Tis true, indeed the *Wicked* and *Disobedient*, who will not *Reform* and *Obey*, but would notwithstanding have *right* to Life and Pardon, call something else *Repentance*, which is void of all *Amendment* and *Obedience*. If they confess their *Sin*, and are sad upon it, if they wring their *Hands*, and beat their *Breasts*, and then, giving it hard *Names* and *Reproachful Titles*, beg God to forgive them ; they think that they have done an acceptable Service, and sufficiently repented of it. They take no care to keep off from it, provided they continue to bewail and confess it. For although they bring in before God large Catalogues of Sins, yet they never strive to lessen them. But when they profess to him, how they have deserved his Wrath and Eternal Judgment, they want nothing but opportunity still further to provoke the same. When they acknowledge how *vilely* they have affronted him in the breach of his Laws, they are still ready to repeat their Breaches thereof. All the hard names which they give their Sins, are false and forced Expressions, they mean no hurt to them all the while. For although they revile them in their words, yet they Honour and Applaud them in their Practice. They are still in love with them at their next meeting, and for all the ill language which they gave them when they spake of them before God, they will embrace them upon the first occasion, and repeat them upon every return of Temptation.

But can any considerate Man think, that such a Repentance as this shall avail him before God, and save him from perishing when Christ comes to judgment? Surely he must know nothing, either of God's Nature, or of his Word, who can be imposed upon so grossly. For God by the necessity of his very Nature, perfectly hates all Sin, and so can never be reconciled to any Man barely for telling him that he is a Sinner. To inform him only that we have rebell'd against him, is to acquaint him, that we are his Enemies, whom, to vindicate himself, and the Authority of his Government, he should destroy and ruin, not cherish and protect. The Gospel declares that he will take severe and endless vengeance on all, who die Unreformed, and finally Disobedient: And then to own our Disobedience to his Face, without a true turn and a firm purpose of Reformation, is to bid him maintain his Law and execute his Sentence; to provoke Justice, and not to appease it; to hasten and assure our Misery, but by no means to prevent or retard it.

But that Repentance, whereupon God will Pardon us, and that Regeneration which he will eternally Reward, is such only, as I said, as either includes or ends in Obedience and Reformation. When he graciously proclaims, that *whosoever repenteth him of his former Sins, and is born again, shall be saved;* he means, whosoever doth the one, and is the other, and obeys with them. His speech is metonymical, he intends Obedience, and the thing implies it, although his words do not express it. For all the while, it is only a Repentance which is Obedient, and a New Nature that is Operative, which in the last Judgment he will eternally reward, and pronounce for ever Blessed.

For of Repentance he tells us plainly, that when he promises Life and Pardon to it, he means this Promise only of such Repentance, as implies a forsaking of those Sins, which we repent of, in our Works and Actions. It is a Repentance *F R O M dead Works*, Heb. 6. 1. A forbearing to act that, which with our own Mouths we confess to be Evil. They repented not, says he, of the works of their Hands, in making and worshipping Idols, that they should not ANY LONGER worship them, Rev. 9. 20. And because it includes a turn, and a change of our Works and Actions, from Sin to Obedience; therefore

* Jer. 8. 2. therefore it is expressed by forsaking and * returning. Re-
So S. Cle- pent and TURN to God, and do works meet for Repentance,
ment uses Acts 26. 20. Repent and turn from all your Transgressions,
the words and so iniquity shall not be your ruin, Ezek. 18. 30. For it
~~εμεγον~~ is only when the wicked Man TURNETH away from his
and ~~μετα-~~ wickedness that he hath committed, and in his works DOTH
mischievous- that which is lawful and right; that he shall save his Soul
ly. ~~μετα-~~ alive, vers. 27.
voias τὸπον

Ἐδωκεν ὁ δέσποτης τοῖς βελούδοις ἐμεγφῆναι ἡτοί αὐτόν. And what, in
the Septuagint, whom he follows in Citations, is expressed by ἀποστέλλειν,
Ezek. 33. 11. βελτίων διὰ τοῦτος ἀποστέλλειν, &c. He, giving the
sense, though not the words, according to the Apostolical usage, ex-
presses thus, — εἰ βελτίων θάβατον ἀμετόλες ὡς μετάνοιαν, Clem. Rom. 1.
Ep. ad Cor. c. 7, 8. And agreeable to this, the compilers of our Liturgy
in the Sentences before Morning Service in our old Common Prayer
Books, translate Matt. 3. 2. Repent ye, for the Kingdom of God is at hand;
thus—Amend your lives, for the Kingdom, &c. As on the other side, they
expound, Ezek. 18. 21. If the wicked turn from all his Sins that he hath com-
mitted, and keep all my Statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, &c.
Thus — At what time soever a Sinner repenteth, &c. And S. Paul calls
his Preaching Repentance, his being obedient to the Heavenly Vision, which
bad him go turn Men from Darkness to Light, and from the Power of Satan
unto God, Acts. 26. 17, 18, 19, 20.

Let no Man therefore think, that he ever savingly re-
pents of any damning Sin, so long as he perseveres to pra-
etice and repeat it. His repentance must deliver him from
Sin, before it rescue him from Suffering; for 'tis then on-
ly, when the wicked Man forsakes his way, and returns unto
the Lord, that God will have mercy upon him, and abundantly
pardon, Isa. 55. 7.

And as for that part of Repentance, viz. Regeneration,
a New Nature, or a New Creature; God tells us plainly,
that he accepts of them no further, than they are Princi-
ples of a New Service, or than we obey with them. The
New Creature in Christ's Religion, is a being Created, as
S. Paul speaks, unto good WORKS, which God hath before
ordained for us that we should walk in them, Eph. 2. 10.
It is our Actions, which must evidence our Nature: the
Tree, says our Saviour, is known by its Fruits; so that we
must either make the Fruit good as well as the Tree is good,
or, if the Fruit be evil, the Tree will be known to be so too,
Matt. 12. 33. For do Men gather Grapes of Thorns, or
Figs.

Figs of Thistles? Even so a good Tree CANNOT bring forth evil fruit, neither CAN a corrupt Tree bring forth good fruit: by their fruits therefore you shall know them, Matt. 7. 16, 17, 18. Nothing less than a good life, will be allowed, either by God or Men, for a sufficient proof of a good heart; nor any thing below a new Conversation and Obedience, will pass for a good evidence of a new Nature. Doth a Fountain send forth at the same place sweet water and bitter, says S. James; can the Fig-tree bear Olive-berries, or a Vine Figs? Who is a wise Man, and endued with Knowledge among you? Let HIM shew out of a good CONVERSATION his works with meekness, of wisdom, James 3. 11, 12, 13.

Let no Man then dare to think himself regenerate, and born of God, so long as he is Disobedient, and his Works are Sinful. For whosoever is born of God doth not COMMIT sin, because his Seed, his new Nature, remaineth in him; and, through the determining power and strength of that, he is almost come to this pass, that he cannot sin, i. e. it is become the bent of his Nature to do otherwise, he is born of God, Joh. 3. 9. And therefore if any Man would pass a true judgment upon his Nature, whether it be the New or Old Man; from God, or from the Devil; let him consult his Works and Actions, those undisseimbling effects of it, and from thence he may have a sure evidence which will not deceive him. For in this, as S. John goes on in the next words, is manifested who are Children of God, and who are Children of the Devil; whosoever DOTH not Righteousness is not of God, v. 10.

So that when Christ comes to judge us according to his Gospel, we see plainly, that no Repentance will bear us out, nor any pretended Regeneration or new Nature avail us unto life, but that only, which either implies, or ends in our Obedience. For no Man can with any show of reason hope to be acquitted and rewarded at that Bar, but he who repents unto amendment, who is Created unto good Works, and is born again to a new Practice and Obedience.

One case indeed there is, wherein a new birth will save a Man without a new practice; and that is, when a Man is forthwith called away upon the change, before any opportunities of action come. Some Men are listed into God's Service late, at the eleventh hour of the day, Matt. 20. 6.

They have just time to become Obedient, in *Will* and *Purpose*, but not in *Life* and *Practice*; they have no leisure left them to work in, but the Night comes suddenly upon them, when all the time of labour is at an end. And this is the case of all dying Penitents.

And here indeed, the *Will* shall be accepted for the *Deed*. For in Heart and Mind, such Penitents are become God's honest Servants; their desires are in great strength, and their inward purposed are come up to effectual degrees, which want nothing but time wherein to shew themselves, and are sufficient, whensoever an opportunity should occur, to beget a change of life, and to make their actions answer them. So that if they are destitute of an entire Obedience, and have not as yet evidenced their change of Nature in their change of Practice; that is not for want of inward readiness, but of outward opportunities; and therefore it is not so much their fault as their unhappiness. And when God sees it is thus with them, he takes the inward will and choice, for the outward service and performance. He judges us by our wills, which are in our own power; and not by chance and accidental opportunities, which are utterly without it. This he doth in evil Actions, as shall be shewn afterwards: The Will in them is taken for the Deed, and if once our Hearts are effectually resolved, and fully set upon them, in his account we are guilty of them, though by some intervening accidents we are hindred from committing them.

And since as S. Bernard* argues undeniably in this matter, he is much more prone to pity than he is to punish, and had far rather interpret things to our profit than to our prejudice: We may be sure, that our Obedient purposes shall have as much force with him to the full as our disobedient have, and that an effectual Will in them, when nothing but time is wanting to perform in, shall pass for the Deed likewise. God is by no means forward to seek our

* Quid planius, quam quod voluntas pro facto reputetur, ubi factum excludit necessitas? nisi forte putetur in malo, quam in bono efficacior inveniri voluntas apud Deum, qui Charitas est; & promptior esset ad ulciscendum, quam ad remunerandum misericors & misericordia Dominus. Bernard Ep. ad Hugonem de Sancto Victore, qual est Ep. 77. p. op. 1458.

hurt, and to take advantages of our necessities; but in this, and in all other cases, where there is first an effectually willing Mind, and nothing but opportunity is wanting

ing to an answerable Practice, he takes, as S. Paul says, the Will for the Deed, and accepts Men according to that sufficient and effectual desire which they have; and not according to that outward performance, which through some unhappy and preventing accidents, they have not, 2 Cor. 8. 12.

And of this we have a clear instance, in one dying Penitent, the Thief upon the Cross. His return was late indeed, he begun not to besit himself for the next World, till he was in his departure out of this. His conversion was in his very last hour, under the pangs of Death, and at the instant of Execution. But when our Saviour Christ saw, that his change of Heart was true, full, and sufficient; and needed nothing but opportunity to shew it self effectual: He tells him that it should serve his turn, and secure his everlasting Peace and Happiness. Because he would have been Obedient in his Practice if he had lived to it, he shall be rewarded at the last day as if he had been so. For this very day, saith he, *shalt thou be with me in Paradise*, Luk. 23. 42.

Thus available, I say, a new Nature, and an inward Change is, although it want an outward Practice, when it is sufficient and effectual to produce it, and would certainly effect it, if there were but time and opportunity allowed for it.

But then here is the dangerous state and deplorable case of all such dying Penitents, that 'tis twenty to one, if they defer Repentance to their Death-Bed, that all the change which then appears in them, is not so sufficient, nor would prove so effectual, were there a due time allow'd for the tryal thereof. And of this we have a clear Argument; in that among all the Holy Vows and Pious Purposes, which are begun by Men upon a Sick-Bed, when they are in sight of Death and expect a Dissolution; there are so few that continue with them, and prove effectual to make their Lives and Actions answer them, when they recover. There is not, I believe, one unconverted Christian in some hundreds, but will shew some signs of sorrow, and put up devout Prayers, and make holy Vows and Purposes, when he apprehends himself about to die: And yet of all them, who are raised up again, 'tis a very small and inconsiderable number in Comparison, that make good those Vows, and effect what they

had resolved upon. And now, if these Men had died when they thus repented, in what a miserable state had they been? For this change in their *Will* and *Purpose*, is no further *available* to their everlasting *Salvation*, than it would be *effectual* to work a like change in their *Lives* and *Practice*. God accepts the *Holiness* of the *Mind*, only as it is an *Holy Principle*; and imputes the *Reward* of *Obedience* to it no farther, than he foresees, that, if he allow'd time, *Obedience* would *ensue* upon it. The *Will* is never taken for the *Deed*, but when it is able to *effect* the same, when the *Deed* would be sure to follow so soon as an opportunity were offered for it. And this God sees beforehand, although we do not: He is able to judge of the *sincerity* of Men's *Desires*, and of the *sufficiency* of their *Purposes*, before their following *Works* declare them. And according to what he foresees they would afterwards effect; he either accepts or rejects them. But when Men's after-works come as a clear evidence, of the *insincerity*, or *insufficiency* of their *Sick-Bed Resolutions*, they may see plainly themselves, what God saw long before, that all the change of *Mind*, which was *then* wrought in them, was utterly *insignificant* and *unavailing*. When they trusted to it, they relied upon a broken Reed; their *Confidence* upon it was ill grounded, and if they had died with it, would most certainly have deceived them.

Thus utterly uncertain and uncomfortable a thing is a mere unworking change, and a late Death-Bed Repentance. It may sometimes prove sufficient to beget an after-change of Practice, and when God sees it would, I doubt not but he will accept it. But it very seldom doth, and no Man who dies in it can possibly tell whether it would or no. It is very great odds, that it would prove too weak; so that although there be *some*, yet is there very small hope, that any dying Man can place in it.

And that which renders it ordinarily so insufficient, and thereupon so uncertain and uncomfortable, is either,

First, Because it generally proceeds from an *unconstant*, *temporary Principle*: Or,

Secondly, Because, when the *Principle* is *genuine* and *lasting*, it is still too weak, and in an *incompetent measure* and *degree*.

i. That

i. That penitential grief and change of mind which is wrought upon a Death-Bed, is ordinarily ineffectual, and insufficient to produce a *constant* change of Life and Practice, because it generally proceeds from an *inconstant and temporary principle*. It is commonly founded upon a reason, that doth not hold in all times; a reason, that is good in Sickness, but not in Health; that concludes for a Pious change whilst we are under our Sick-Bed sorrows, but not when being freed from them, we are placed again under the pleasure of temptations.

For the great and general motive, which makes all those who never thought of reforming in all their lives before, to resolve upon it when they are on their Death-Bed; is plainly the *nearness* of the next World, and their apprehension of their *sudden death* and departure. Could they hope to live longer, they would sin still. But they look upon themselves as going to Judgment, and they have so much Conscience left in them, as to believe that there is a Hell for the impenitent; and their own self-love is extreamly startled at that, and makes them run to any shelter: So that they make many fearful confessions, and fervent Prayers, and holy purposes, and say and do any thing whereby they may quiet their present fears, and catch at any comfortable hopes of avoiding the Eternal torments which they are afraid of. The ordinary cause then of all this work, is not any *love* of God, or *hatred* of Sin; but only a *fear* of Punishment. And that too, not a *fear* of it at a *distance*, and as at some removes from them: but only as it looks *near* at hand, and just hanging over them.

But now, as for this apparent *nearness* of Death and this confounding fear upon it; it is plainly a *short* and *transient*, and *unconstant, temporary Principle*. It is a reason to them no longer, than they are *sick*; for when they recover and are well again, Death is as *far off*, and they are become again as fearless as ever. They are got out of its neighbourhood, and it gives them no further trouble: So that all their former fears abate, and their virtuous resolutions fall, as beginning now to want that which first gave life to them, and should support them. And now, when opportunities of Sin are offered, and the pleasurable baits of Temptations invite; they have nothing left that is able to resist them. Whilst they were *sick*, they

were not capable to be tempted ; and then Death being near, it enabled them to purpose well, and to make a pious resolution. But now, since they are well, Temptations are become as strong as ever ; and the thoughts of Death being far removed, they have no resolutions that can withstand them, but are quickly changed again into the same Men, as sensual and sinful as they were before.

Indeed it sometimes happens, that those Souls, which were at first awakened by such a transient, temporary motive ; go on to others afterwards, that are more fixt and lasting : And then they are furnished with Armour in all times, and have a motive that may bear them out when Death is far off, as well as when 'tis near at hand ; in time of Health, as well as in time of Sickness. For they who were at first affrighted into a change of Mind and holy Purposes, by the near approach of Death and Judgment, go on sometimes to confirm their Resolutions upon more lasting Principles. They think themselves into a deep sense, of that base ingratitude towards God and our dearest Saviour, which is in Sin, and of its mischievousness to their own selves ; how it robs them of all that Eternal Good which their Hearts desire, and brings them under all those insupportable and endless Evils which they fear : All which it doth for the purchase of some light, empty, and transient Pleasures, which are vastly below the Joys of Heaven ; and for the avoidance of some short pain and uneasiness, which are infinitely nothing in comparison of the Pains of Hell. And these thoughts give them a firm and lasting conviction of the utter necessity of renouncing all evil Courses, which are so destructive ; and of leading a Holy and Obedient Life, which are so infinitely becoming them, and beneficial to them.

And this conviction now, can beget, and preserve a Resolution, that is sufficient and effectual, victorious and prevailing. It will be a reason to them to resolve and practise at all times, in Sicknes and in Health ; when they are not tempted, and also when they are. For Heaven and the Love of God, is always a necessary end ; and their Obedience is always a necessary means or instrument. So that if Men resolve upon a conviction of this necessity, they resolve upon a reason that may well hold always. They will constantly have the highest reason

son to be so convinced ; and still to repeat and fortifie their Resolution upon such conviction ; and to Act and Practise that which they have so wilely resolved to Practise. And when a Sick Man's change is built upon this ground, and proceeds upon this motive ; it may be permanent and fixt, effectual and prevailing. As it is in all those, who are Converted by Sickness and Afflictions, that great, and usually *last* means, which God makes use of for the reclaiming of sinful Men.

But generally Men's Sick-Bed purposes, go no further than the first ground. They *always* begin upon the fears of present Death, and the near approach of Judgment ; and though sometimes they go higher still, yet ordinarily they rest there ; so that they have no change longer than their Sickness lasts. And this *Repentance*, is certainly insufficient ; this *Will* can never be accepted for the *Deed* ; because if they were allow'd to recover again, and to live on till an opportunity of Doing came, the good-will and purpose would be quite lost in the time of tryal, and able to effect nothing.

But although a Death-Bed change should proceed upon both these grounds, and the Dying Men should resolve to amend, both upon the sense of sudden Death, which will maintain their resolution so long as it is near, and also upon a conviction of the absolute necessity of Heaven and an Holy Life, which may make them resolve still when the present danger is over : Yet may their Repentance after all be insufficient and avail nothing. For a Death-Bed Repentance, when it doth proceed upon a genuine and lasting motive, is still oft-times ineffectual, because the change is.

2. In too weak, and incompetent a measure and degree. It is not every degree, even of true and undissembled Resolution, that will overcome a Man's Lusts, and strengthen him to such a pitch, as to mak him prevail over all Temptations. A thousand good resolutions go to Hell, because, although they are sincere and true, yet they are weak and ineffectual. For how many Men are there, who resolve against their Sins, who do not yet get quit of them ? They purpose to leave them, but for all that they liye still in them ; their Mind and Will is against them, but yet they continue to work and practise them. When once Men have got violent Lusts, and vicious Habits, and

Sin by a long use is become almost a second Nature to them : It is not every measure, no not every moderate degree of Resolution, that can mortifie and overcome them. For a weak Resolution is quickly overthrown ; Men's Lusts are too hard for it, and quite overbear it. It may make some resistance, create some trouble, and cause some delay ; but that is all that it can do : It can only contend and struggle, but it is not able to overcome.

This is plain from every Religious Man's Experience. And this S. Paul sets down expressly, in his Character of
 † See b. 3. the † unregenerate striver, in the seventh Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans. For there was a real change in his Mind, without a change in his Practice ; a Resolution without Effect, and a Will without Performance : The violence of his Lusts was too hard for the conviction of his Conscience, and led him Captive, even against his Will, into a course of Sin and Disobedience. With the MIND, says he, I serve the Law of God, but with the FLESH the Law of Sin, ver. 25. What I DO, I ALLOW not ; for what I WOULD, that I DO not ; but what I HATE, that I DO, ver. 15, 19. To WILL is present with me, but how to PERFORM that which is good I find not, ver. 18 : For the Law of my MEMBERS wars against the Law of my MIND, and brings me into CAPTIVITY to the Law of Sin, ver. 23.

Thus weak and unable, ineffective and idle, are many true and real Resolutions. They have not strength enough to do their work ; the opposition is greater than they can overcome ; so that they are able to make no alteration, but for all this change of Mind, Men will continue Wicked and Disobedient in their Practice still.

And of this sort generally, even when they proceed upon a genuine and lasting motive, are the Penitential purposes of Dying-Men. For, alas ! when Men have lived all their Lives in a course of Sin, and their Minds have been always taken up with it, and their Hearts wholly enslaved to it : It is no easie matter to bring them off, and to fill them with such firmness of purpose, and strength of pious Resolution, as would be able effectually to mortifie and subdue it. This is a most laborious work, and a difficult undertaking. It requires much time, and the freedom of all our Faculties.

For how hard a thing is it, even for Men in *Health*, when their *Thoughts* are *free*, *distracted* by no *business*, *in-corrupted* by no *pain*, and *disturbed* by no *disease* or other *hindrance*, to work themselves up to an *effectual* and *prevailing* Resolution against *any one Sin*, which they have been habitually inured, and for a long time enslaved to? And even of them who do at last *effectually* resolve against it, how few are there who come to such a pitch of Resolution at the *first tryal*? No, their proceeding is *gradual*, they go on from step to step; every following Resolution is more firm, and stronger than that which went before; till after several Repetitions and Advances, they arrive at last to a degree and pitch of holy purpose so *compleat*, as can effect that virtuous change of *Life* and *Action* which they aim at. So that their *Spiritual Life*, is not brought on to perfection in a moment, more than their *Natural*; but requires much *Time*, and much *Exercise*: For as their *sinful Habits* were not at first *acquired*, so neither are they to be *conquered* by one *Action*, but by many.

And since the process in Repentance, even from *one single Sin*, is so *long* and tedious e'er it has arrived to a *saving* pitch, and so difficult to a *healthy Man*, who has nothing to trouble and distract him: What must an *Universal Reformation* be, to a *Dying Person*, whose time is *short*, and much *disturbed*; who cannot repeat many Resolutions, nor make a tryal of the force and power of *any one*, and who is most likely to be *weak* and *languid* in all those good purposes which he makes, by reason that his *Thoughts* are *heavy*, and his *Attention broken*, and all his *Faculties* are *oppressed* with *Pain*, and become *weary* and *un-active* through a *wasting Disease*? Surely if the *first Resolutions* of *Healthy Men*, are generally so *ineffective* and *insufficient*; these purposes of *Dying Penitents*, which in all *advantages* for a *strong* and *prevailing* Resolution fall much below them, must needs be generally of this *ineffective* sort too.

And when they are so, they will not pass in God's account, but are *utterly unavailable* to any *Man's Salvation*: A *Man* who only *purposeth*, but doth not *practise*; who barely *wills*, but is not able to perform; is in the *way to life* indeed, but he is far from having yet *attained* to it. He is still in a *bad case*, and under a *damning Sentence*.

For he is, as S. Paul says in that seventh Chapter to the *Romans*, where he describes him, *slain by Sin*, v. 11. It works *Death in him*, v. 13. he is yet under, as the *Law of Sin*, so the body of *Death* too, v. 24. But the change of *Mind* which God requires of us, is such as works a change of *Practice*. If he sees it sufficient to effect that, he will graciously accept it indeed before the effect follows. But if it be only an *impotent* and *ineffective* Will, and he discerns plainly that no Obedient Works would follow it: It is no such *Will* as he accepts for the *Deed*, and as for such Penitents, they must not expect that he will absolve, but utterly condemn them.

And since the change of *Mind* and *Penitential* purposes of *Dying Persons*, even when they are upon *genuine* and *lasting* grounds, so as in the following parts of a Man's Life, if God should please to spare him, they would do *something*; would yet be *weak* and *insufficient*, and so unable to do *enough*: There is still a further reason of the *ordinary* insufficiency of such Repentance, and why those *Dying Men* will not *ordinarily* be saved by it, but perish notwithstanding it.

To conclude this point then, we see that 'tis *possible* for such *New Birth* to save a Man, as has not yet produced a *New Practice*; and for *Dying Penitents* to be accepted upon a *change of Mind*, without a like *change of Life and Actions*. This I say *is possible*, it *sometimes* is, and sometimes has been done: But this indeed is very *rare* and *seldom*, so that no Man in his sober wits, who has time before him, will dare to trust to it. And the Sum of all is

* Quid dicam nescio, quid promittam penitus ignor; re-
vocare ab inquisitione ultimi remedii periclitantes, durum & impium; spon-
dere autem aliquid in tam sera cætione, temerarium. Salv. de Avaritia,
l. 1. p. 363. Ed. Oxon.

C H A P. IV.

Of Pardon promised to Confession of Sins, and
to Conversion.

FOURTHLY, That condition of Life and Pardon, which the Gospel indispensably exacts of us, and whereupon at the last day Christ will accept and reward us, is sometimes called *Confession* of our Sins to God. When we acknowledge them, God will be sure to pardon them; he has engaged his word and faithfulness for it, and so cannot recede from it: *If we * confess our Sins*, says S. John, * Luk. 26, *God is just and FAITHFUL to forgive us our Sins*, 1 Joh. 40, 42, 1. 9.

Now as for this *Confession* of our Sin, whereupon God promises mercifully to forgive them, it is not a bare *naming* of them, or giving in an *Historical Catalogue* of them to Almighty God, that he may *know* them and be informed of them. For he sees all our thoughts afar off, and our actions long before. We cannot inform him, when we lay open our transgressions before him; for we could never find any place wherein to act them so retired, but it was under his eye; nor any time and circumstances so secret, as to escape his knowledge. So that our *Confession* cannot be to *instruct* him, but only to *shame*, and to *humble*, and to work other effects in our *own selves*. And therefore it must not be a bare *recital* of such offences, as we have committed; but an acknowledgment *duly qualified*, and accompanied with such *tempers* of mind, as will lead us on to *forsake* and *amend* them.

It is a *Confessing* of them with *shame*, with an humble debasement, and sense of our unworthiness, who could ever be so vile as to be guilty of them. And such was *Ezra's Confession*, Ezra 9. O my God, saith he, I am *ASHAMED* and *blush to lift up my face to thee my God*, for *our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespasses are grown up unto the Heavens*, v. 6.

It is an acknowledgement of them with *hatred* and *detestation*, as things that are utterly *odious* and *loathsome* to us, which therefore we are prone to *fly from*, as from what is most *offensive*. And such is that *Confession*, whereunto

God

God directs the Jews by his Prophet Ezekiel. *Ye shall remember your ways, saith he, and all your doings wherein ye have been defiled; and ye shall LOATH your selves in your own sight, for all your evils that you have committed,* Ezekiel 20. 43.

It is a recital of them with sorrow of mind, and a troubled heart; with such pain, as we use to feel in things which heavily afflict us: Which therefore we are forward to avoid, as what creates us smart and torment. And such was that of S. Peter, who when he remembred, and made mention of his Sin to God, wept, saith the Text, bitterly, Mat. 26. 75. And of David, who tells us in the 38 Psal. that when he declares to God his iniquity, he will be SORRY for his Sin, v. 18.

It is a Confession of them with a resolution, upon all this shame and sorrow which we have undergone for the same, never more to be reconciled to them, or to repeat, and act them over again. A Confession of the mouth, that is accompanied with a turn and change of the heart, which is now set as much against them, as formerly it was inclined to them. And such was that Confession, which Wise Solomon durst recommend to God's mercy, and beg him to accept of for mens Pardon and Forgivenels. *If they Repent, saith he, and say, we have done perversly, we have committed wickedness: And so RE TURN unto thee with all their hearts, and all their soul: Then hear their prayer, and forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, and all their transgressions wherein they have trespassed,* 1 Kings 8. 47, 48, 49, 50.

It is such an acknowledgment of our Sins, lastly, as undoes, so far as is possible, all that which we had done wickedly; and makes all just, and sufficient recompence, and satisfaction for them. And this is that acknowledgment of all Sins of injustice, which God himself prescribes. *When a Man or Woman, saith he, shall commit any sin of injury and wrong, that men commit one against another, to do a trespass thereby against the Lord, and that person be guilty: Then shall they confess their Sin that they have done, and shall RECOMPENCE their Trespass with the principal thereof, or the thing it self which they took away wrongfully, and shall add moreover unto it a fifth part more thereof, and give it unto him against whom they trespassed,* Numb. 5. 6, 7.

Now a Confession of our Sins thus qualified, viz. a Confession of them, with blushing and being ashamed of them, with an imp'cable hatred and loathing indignation of them, with bitter sorrow for them, with firm purpose and resolution against them, and with all possible endeavours to undo them by making just recompence and satisfaction; A Confession, I say, thus attended, is a most natural cause, and powerful principle, of our leaving and forsaking them. The four first concomitant Tempers, are all most effectual causes of better obedience and reformation; and the last, viz. making of satisfaction, is an assistance and effect of it. For nothing is more natural for us, than to be slow to do that which we are ashamed of; to avoid what we hate; and to turn away from that which grieves and torments us, and which we are before resolved to leave. So that if once disobedience falls under the opposition of these passions and good purposes, it has lost all its interest, and will surely be excluded from the service of our works and actions. We have no temptation nor disposition to pursue it further; we are weary of it, and offended at it, and bent against it, and so are lured to leave and forsake it.

And because this Confession, thus qualified and attended as we have seen, is so genuine a cause of better obedience and reformation: Therefore alone it is, that so great things are spoken of it. When God says, *he who confesses his sins shall find mercy*, he means, *he who confesses and forsakes it*, or who acknowledges his offences in such sort, as to renounce them and become obedient. His speech is metonymical, and he implies Obedience, although he doth not mention it. For no Confession of sin will serve any man's turn at the last day, except he leave the same, and in his life and actions bid adieu to it.

The world, indeed, abounds with another sort of Confession, which costs less, and effects nothing. They confess their sins without shame, and relate them without sorrow, and name them without hatred; they recite them to God without resolving against them, and acknowledge them daily without any amends, or making any recompence and satisfaction for them.

For they cannot but be hardened against *shame*, who day by day, if not several times every day, have the face to tell God that they have rebell'd against him, and yet never

ver endeavour to come with another story, by disavowing and forsaking their Rebellion. They must needs be void of sorrow for sin, who will never keep back from it: And it cannot but please them, so long as they continue to pursue it. For they would not continually repeat their pain, and at every turn act over again their own torment and vexation. And it is beyond all doubt, that they do not hate, but entirely love disobedience, so long as they slip no opportunities of acting it. And that they are plainly resolved upon it, whilst they are most firmly fixt, and forward to embrace it. And since notwithstanding all their hideous Confessions they stand ready still to close with their Sin upon the first meeting, and to repeat what they confessed upon the next occasion; it is plain, that their hearts were never against it, whatever their words were. They only shewed their Wit, but not their Passions or Perswasion; they declaimed against it, but all the while they meant no hurt to it. For even whilst they inveighed against the baseness, the loathsomness, the destructiveness of their Sin; their own heart did not believe the same. They did no more, but spare God their tongues, and speak what he pleased: But for their souls and actions, they reserved them for their Lusts, and would like and do what they pleased themselves.

But can any man be so blind as to think, that such a Confession of Sins as this, can in any wise please God, and procure his Pardon? Has he any kindness for our Sins, that he should take delight to hear them spoken of? Or is any man so weak, as to think that he honours God, merely by reckoning up his own offences? Or that he is like to gain him only by declaring to him how vilely he has affronted and despised him? To confess thus; if it

goes no further, is to * reproach him to his face, and boldly to defie him. It is a telling of him, that we have disobeyed, and are resolved to go on in it: An open profession and avowing of our Rebellion, without any real signs, or approach to amendment and due subjection. It is a Transgression bare-faced, an addition of Impudence to Sin; a continuing daily to Rebel against him, and yet coming as daily into his very presence

* *Novum monstri genus,
eadem pene omnes jugiter faci-
unt, quæ fecisse se planzunt;
dī qui intrant Ecclesiasticam
Domum ut mala antiqua de-
fleant, exerunt ut moliantur.—
Et sic oratio eorum RIXA est
magis Criminum, quam exora-
trix. Salvian. de Gub. l. 3.
p. 89. Ed. Oxon.*

sence to declare and own our continued Rebellions. And this now is not to supplicate, but to defie; not to beg peace, but to declare enmity; it is by no means the way to soften and appease, but a most effectual course to exasperate, and implacably to provoke him.

But then to go on still further, and to pretend to him, that we are *sorry* at our heart, and *loathe* our selves for having sinned against him, and are *resolved* to do so no more; when *really*, as our after-actions (which are the truest interpreters of our hearts and minds) do declare, there is no such thing: This is to add *mockery* to *sin*, and a *flesh affront* to our former *disobedience*. It is most grossly to play the *hypocrite*, and in the most loathsome fashion to *dissemble* with him. It is an endeavouring to put *tricks* upon the Almighty; a tryal of his *skill*; a seeking to delude and impole upon an *infinite, wise* and *all-seeing God*, by such *thin pretences*, as cannot but be seen through and discovered by any *ordinary Man*. But let no Man vainly deceive himself, for God is not mocked; nor can all the arts of Earth and Hell, out-wit and go beyond him. No, he sees clearly through all this *hypocrisie*, and he will most severely punish it. And when he comes to judge of mens Confessions at the last day, he will then, in the face of all the world, distinguish *reality* from *complement*; and an acknowledgement of *Repentance*, from one of *form* and *custom*; and will for ever reward the *first*, whilst he Eternally punishes the latter. He will pardon no Confession of our Sins at that day, but only such as is *sorrowful, penitent* and *obedient*; and we must amend those faults which we confess, before we can with reason hope that he will accept us.

And for this, the Scripture is clear. It is only our returning upon our Confession, that shall be rewarded and forgiven. If they Repent, says Solomon, and *SAY*, we have done *perversly*, we have committed *wickedness*; and so *RETURN* unto the Lord with all their heart, and all their soul: Then *HEAR* their Prayer, and forgive thy people that have sinned against thee, 1 Kings 8.47, 48, 49, 50. And to name but one place more, these words of Solomon are full and home to the purpose, *He who confesses, and FORSAKES his Sin, shall find mercy*, Prov. 28. 13.

That Confession of our Sins then, whereupon Christ our Judge will at the last day accept and Pardon us, is such only,

only, as ends in Reformation and Obedience. The service of our lives, must go along with that of our lips; and we must do as we say, and avoid what we condemn, before we can safely trust; that God will sentence us to that Mercy and Life, which are not the rewards of *idle* acknowledgments, but only of a confessing *obedience*.

Fifthly, This Gospel-condition of Life and Pardon, is sometimes call'd *Conversion*. Without this we can have no hopes of happiness, *For except ye be CONVERTED*, says our Saviour, *and become as little Children*, as void as they are of all former impressions and courses, and free to enter upon new ones, *ye shall not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven*, Matt. 18. 3. But if our Conversion goes before, God's Pardon is sure to follow after; that being the duty, and this the reward. *Repent, and be CONVERTED*, says the Apostle Peter, *that your Sins may be blotted out*, Acts 3. 19. Conversion lets us without the reach of Death, and beyond the precincts of Damnation; for *he who Converts a Sinner from the error of his way, doth save a Soul from DEATH*, James 5. 20.

Now our *Conversion from Sin to God*, is nothing else but our *Obedience* in another word. For it denotes a *turn* and a *change*, not only of our *wills* and *desires*, but withal, and that principally of our *Works* and *Actions*. For our *course of actions*, is in the familiar, and customary use of the *Scriptures*, call'd our *way*; our *Conversation*, *walking*; and our *particular Actions*, so many several steps: and our *turning out* of a course of *Sin* into a course of *Righteousness*, being like the turning out of a wrong way into a right, is call'd our *turning from Sin*, and our *turning to God*, i. e. in one word our *Conversion*. So that to be *Converted*, is nothing else in the *Scripture-language*, but to have the *course of our works or actions turned*, and from *workers of sin*, to become *workers of obedience*.

When Mercy and Life then are promised to our *Conversion*; they are not made over to any thing which is separate from Obedience, but to that only which denotes it, and is but another name for it. We are not *Converted* until we *obey*; so that Obedience still is that, which must procure our peace, and capacitate us for Pardon and Happiness, when Christ comes to judge us.

C H A P. V.

Of Pardon promised to Prayer.

SIxthly, That condition, whereto the Gospel promises a gracious sentence of Mercy and Life, is sometimes call'd Prayer, or calling upon God. *The Lord is nigh unto all them that call upon him, says David, to all that call upon him in truth, Psal. 145. 18. Thou Lord art good and ready to forgive, and plenteous in mercy to all that call upon thee, Psal. 86. 5.* Our asking, is set out as the condition of obtaining, *Ask, and it shall be given you, lays out Saviour, for EVER Y one that asketh receiveth, Mat. 7. 7. 8.* And that in all thingsequally which are fit for them, one as well as another, if they do not disturb him and disbelieve his Love. *For ALL things, WHATSOEVER you shall ask in Prayer BELIEVING, you shall receive, Matt. 21. 22.*

So that if Men want any thing, which they desire God would bestow upon them, it is because they do not beg it of him. *Ye have not, says S. James, because ye ask not, Jam. 4. 2.* For not only the overflowing goodness of God's own nature, but, besides that, the interest of his Son Jesus Christ our MEDIATOR at his right hand, gives us a full security in all our requests, that we shall obtain any thing which we ask in his name. *Ask any thing, says he, in my name, and I will do it, Joh. 14. 14.* Nay, so dear is he to Almighty God, that although he himself should not move in it, yet, through the strength of God's inexpressible love to him, they who beg in his name can miss of nothing. *In that day, says he, after I am taken from you, you shall ask ME nothing : Verily, verily, I say unto you, whatsoever you shall ask the FATHER in MY NAME, he will give it you. And I say not that I will PRAY the Father for you, for the father himself loveth you, BECAUSE ye have loved me, Joh. 16. 23, 26, 27.* And seeing, as the Apostle says, that we have so great and powerful an High-Priest at God's right hand, whether our suit be for pardon, or for strength, or for whatsoever else ; *Let us come boldly to the Throne of Grace, that we may obtain Mercy for Pardon of past Sins, and find*

*Grace to prevent future, and to help in time of need, or in
act's ev'nat. the most a fitting season, Heb. 4. 14, 16.*

*Now our Prayers and calling upon God, are a mighty
means and instrument of our serving and obeying him. And
as all the forementioned means, had a natural fitness and
tendency, to make us do the will of God : So, over and
above that, have our Prayers a supernatural, and help us
to fulfil the Divine Laws, not so much through any effi-
cacy of their own nature (though they do by that too) as
through the aids of divine Grace. For we have great dif-
ficulties to conflict with, and great hindrances to over-
come, in the doing of our duty. There is much hardship
in a holy course, to make us unwilling ; and if we have a
will to it, we yet find much weakness in ourselves, that
renders us unable to continue in good living, and to per-
form constantly all those good things which God has com-
manded us. For we have much ignorance of what we
should do, and much other business besides it : And as for
that moreover, which we do know, we are apt many times
to forget it : or, through the throng of other things,
through suddenness, and surprize, not to consider of it
when we should use it ; or, when in our minds we do
clearly see it, yet full ofteā we cannot bring over our
wills to chuse and embrace it. For our Lusts and Passions
prove many times of more force with our Wills, than our
Reason and Religion ; and we are either born down by the
weight and strength, or wearied out with the tedioulnels
and length of a Temptation.*

And now, to supply all these defects, and to support us
in the doing of our duty, notwithstanding all these infirmi-
ties, we have an absolute necessity of the help and assistance
of God's grace. We want the good timing of his provi-
dence, to have temptations assault us when we are best able
to overcome them, and our duties stay for us when we
may most easily perform them. We stand in need of the
suggestions of his spirit, to cure our forgetfulness ; and of
the aids of his grace, to enlighten our minds and clear up
our notions, and to bend and establish our wills and res-
olutions, and so to make us unmoveable in a good course.
So that we have an utter necessity of his help, both in the
disposals of his providence, and in the concurrence of his
spirit to enable us to obey his Laws, and make us, as St.
Paul says, both to will and to do what he requires of us, Phil.
2. 13. But

But now it is our Prayers, which bring all these divine aids down unto us. They obtain for us a good providence, and a powerful spirit, which, in spite of all our natural weaknesses, shall work out our Obedience. God will not deny us these, when we ask them. For, as our Saviour argues unanswerably, *If ye being EVIL, will yet give GOOD gifts to your Children; How much more shall your heavenly Father, whose GOODNESS infinitely exceeds yours, and who cannot be tainted with any of your INNOCENCE, give the HOLY SPIRIT, that best of gifts, to them that ask him?* Luke 11. 13. And since our Prayers procure such a never failing Aid, and so Almighty an Assistance for us, they must needs be a certain cause and instrument of our active Service and Obedience. They imply in us an hearty desire of having, and fetch down to us a sufficient power of doing our Duty, and of keeping God's Holy Commandments. And when there is both a preparedness in us to use, and a readiness in God to give us grace sufficient therewith to do his Will, there is nothing further wanting to our Performance of it.

And forasmuch as our Prayers imply the one, and procure the other; because they fetch down Divine Aids, and express our forwardness to obey with them: Therefore have they so much favour shewn them, and Life and Pardon promised to them. For God never intends to reward an idle and unobeying Prayer, but such only, as is Industrious and Obedient. Our Prayers must first make us do what he commands, before they can obtain those mercies for us which he promises. For when he tells us, that they who call upon him shall find favour and mercy; he speaks metonymically, he excludes Obedience, although he doth not express it. He means them only, who pray for were the b Mercy and Pardon, and obey in order to receive it; and old Jewish who ask for Grace and Strength, and work with it after it is granted to them. No prayers are of any account with him, but the Prayers of the Obedient; so that if ever we with Sacrifice, or without it: With Sacrifice —— *Obsecro, Domine, peccavi, deliqui, rebellavi, hoc aut illud feci; nunc autem POENITENTIA M ago, sitque hostia huc expiatio mea:* Without Sacrifice —— *Obsecro, Domine, peccavi, deliqui, rebellavi, hoc aut illud feci; nunc mei me facti POENITET, PVDETQUE, neque unquam ITERUM ad REVERTA R,* as they are cited out of Maimonides by the Learned Dr. Outram in his Book de Sacrificiis, l. I. c. 15.

expect to be saved by them at the last day, we must obey with them.

The Prayers, indeed, which are generally offered up to God, have little of this in them. For if Men pray for *Mercy* and *Pardon*, they take no care to come furnished with *Repentance* and *Obedience*, which is that indispensable condition, whereupon the Gospel doth encourage us to ask, and hope for Pardon. And if they pray for any *Virtue* or *Grace*, they expect it should drop into them without any endeavours of their own, and will take no pains, to cooperate with it, and make use thereof. Their Prayers for *Mercy* are generally *Presumptuous*, and their Prayers for *Grace* *unendeavouring* and *idle*. And Obedience all the while, is the least in all their Thoughts, and has the least of all their care. All their Religion is only to be often upon their knees, to keep up Prayers in their Families Morning and Evening; to send up a great many *Lord forgive me's*, *Christ help me's*; they are a *praying* and *desiring* but not a *working* and *obeying* People. They are of a *fordid* niggardly Religion, which would receive all, and give nothing: Their Petitions look altogether on the *reward*, but quite overlook the *duty*: they would take all from God, but do nothing for him.

But this is such a way of praying, as will most certainly delude Men, but can never do them good. It is inconsiderate hope and downright folly, to expect that ever God should hear our Prayers for Pardon, whilst we continue in our Sins. For since he has so frequently, so *plainly*, and so *peremptorily* declared, That at the last day he will Pardon none but the *Penitent* and *Obedient*, it is *impudent incredulity* to beg pardon, whilst, without any amends we *continue* to *Sin* and *Disobey*. It is to desire of him, that he would *break his word*, that he would Pardon and *acquit* us, when his Gospel *condemns* us. It is to beg of him that he would frame *another Religion*, and *another Law*, than that of his Son Jesus; a Religion which would *save* us, when that *kills* and *destroys* us. Nay, by such asking forgiveness from him, whilst we go on in *rebelling* against him, we do as good as desire, that he would cease to be *Governour* of the World, and *leave* us to our own selves; that we might have no *Law*, but our own *Wills*; that we might *do* what he *forbids*, without *undergoing* what he *threatens*. We only

only ask leave to sin ; and crave a liberty to transgress, without suffering ; and desire that we might break his Laws, but that he would not punish us. And what Man now dare presume, that such shameless desires as these, should be granted to him ? That God should desert his Laws, and alter his Religion, and cast off his Government over Men, when they request it ? For in very deed we see, that to desire him to forgive us, whilst we are going on in our sins, is in effect to put up all these frontless, and abominably impudent Petitions to him.

And then, as for the other sort of Petitions, our asking for any Virtue or Grace, without putting forth any endeavours after it, it is as certain to meet with no good answer as the other. For to pray thus, is plainly to play the Hypocrite with God Almighty, and flatly to dissemble with him. It is to beg that, which we do not care for ; to ask that, which we refuse ; to pretend desire, (for all praying is desiring) for that which we account is worth no endeavour. And what a miserable piece of falsehood is this now, when a man makes his Actions most palpably to give the lye to his words ? For he tells God, that he earnestly desires his help, to work in him a pure heart ; but yet he will do nothing for it, nor avoid the least occasion of uncleanness. He begs his grace, to assist him to a meek and patient spirit : But when he is off his knees, he thinks his work is done, for he never after uses any means to procure it, or takes any care to nourish and preserve those degrees of it which he hath already. Surely, any Man of common understanding must needs see, that such desires as these were never in his Heart, but dwelt only upon his Tongue. In reality he cares not what becomes of the Graces which he has prayed for, and was no farther concerned about them, than that he might be able barely to say, that he had asked them. Or at best, if he did desire them at all, yet was his desire far from that degree, which he pretends ; it was a weak wish, rather than a desire, an imperfect inclination, that could effect nothing. It may be, he had rather have that grace which he asks, than go without it ; but he had rather want it, than be at any pains for it. He loves and desires a little ease, far more than the virtue ; and is resolved to keep that, although he loses this. So that although he do think the grace which he prays for, to be worth something, yet

he esteems it next to nothing; he judges it to be worth no pains, and deserving no endeavour, and so has either no desires of it at all, or such weak and feeble ones, as are just as good as none.

Yea, it is well, if many times his Heart is not set against those very Graces which he begs, whilst he is asking of them, which is more than barely being unconcerned for them. For how often doth it happen, that a Man prays for *Charity*, whilst he is in love with *Malice*; that he begs *Sobriety*, whilst his Heart is upon *Drunkenness*; that he asks *Justice*, whilst his affections hanker after *deceitfulness* and *wrong*? This, in very deed, is the case of most, if not of all, *impenitent* and *wicked* Men. For they love their Sins, and resolve to continue in them; and yet even then pray for such Graces, as are contrary to them. Now here it is plain, that their *Hearts* doth not go along with their *Tongues*: For they are not willing to lose that, which they pray to God that they may leave; and are afraid to receive that, which they beg to have. They only pretend desire, but are possessed in truth with hatred and aversion.

And then, as for all the *good promises* which they make to God in their Prayers, viz. *That if he will forgive them, they will never do so any more; but become new Men, and watch more carefully, and sin more seldom, and obey more constantly and universally*; so long as their Prayers are thus *unendeavouring* and *idle*, all this is but *hypocritical pretence*, and *deceitful talk*. For it, when their Prayers are over, they take no care still to perform their Obedience, which they promised whilst they were at them; is it not clear to every eye, that all is delusion and falsehood, and that they lye and dissemble in these their *Promises*, as well as we saw they did in their *Professions*. All their engagements are stark naught, they meant no such thing whilst they made them, nor ever after think upon them to make them good.

And can any Man now, be so intolerably weak and shamefully blind, as to imagine, that God should reward such *idle talk*, as all these unendeavouring Prayers for Grace are, and give a Blessing upon such *hypocritical and feigned language*? To dissemble thus with God Almighty, is not to honour, but to abuse him: And so fits us, not for any expressions of his *love*, but only of his *wrath* and *indignation*.

indignation. It is to pass affronts, instead of begging kindness; to make a mockery of his condescensions; and to turn that sacred and inestimable liberty, which he has graciously indulged Mankind, of making known their desires to him for a supply and satisfaction of them, into a fraudulent trick and opprobrious cozenage. And since all these unendeavouring Prayers for God's Grace, are an Hypocrisy so gross, and a Mockery so reproachful; we must needs conclude, that he will utterly reject them, as well as our Prayers for Pardon, whilst we continue in our Sins, and instead of granting and fulfilling, deride and avenge them.

But if ever we hope to have our Prayers heard, the true and only way is to observe S. John's rule, of asking only what is according to God's Will. For this, says he, is the confidence which we have in him, that if we ask any thing according to his Will, he heareth us, 1 Joh. 5. 14. And what that Will of God is, concerning any of those things which we have to pray for, we can learn no where, but from his Holy Gospel.

Now in that we are plainly told, that as for Pardon of Sins, his peremptory Will is, That no Man shall meet with it, but he only who has Repented of them, and obeyed him. REPENT, says S. Peter, that your sins may be blotted out, Acts 3. 19. And except you REPENT, says our Saviour, you shall all Perish, Luk. 13. 3. For when we are all brought to Christ's Tribunal at the great day, to be there Eternally acquitted or condemned, we are taught in the most express words, that Judgment shall pass upon every Man according to his WORKS, Rev. 20. 12, 13. So that if we would ask pardon and forgiveness according to God's Will, and in such sort as he has promised to grant it, and we may justly hope to receive it; we must desire it in c Repentance, and in true Resolutions and readiness to obey.

And then as for Strength and Grace to enable us to overcome any Sin, and to perform any Virtue; we are expressly informed, that his Will is to grant it to such Persons only, as endeavour after those Graces which they pray for, and are careful to exercise the same, and work with them. For God will not bestow New Grace upon us, till he see that we have made good use of that which he has bestowed already. We must improve those Talents

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which have formerly been intrusted with us, before he will think us qualified to receive more. For so we are taught in the Parable of those Men, who had received the Talents, Mat. 25. As a conclusion whereof, we have this laid down as a rule of divine Dispensations: *to him that hath, i.e. hath wrought with, and made use of that Talent of Grace which was granted to him, as those Servants had done who are mention'd v. 20, 22. to him shall be given still more, and he shall have more abundance: But from him that hath not, i.e. hath not exercised and improved that wherewith he has already been intrusted, as that wicked Servant had not done, who had hid it, v. 25. so far is he from receiving more, that, like as it was from the idle unworking Servants, vers. 26. from him shall be taken even what he hath, vers. 29.* And in that very place, where S. Paul tells us that God worketh in us both to will and to do; he acquaints us moreover, that the way whereby he doth that, is, by blessing our own endeavours, and giving success to our own working; and accordingly he useth it as an argument thereunto, *Work out your own Salvation, and doubt not but you will be able to go through with it, for it is God that prospers your endeavours, and, by giving strength and success to them, worketh in you both to will and to do,* Phil. 2. 12, 13. So that if we would ask grace and strength according to God's Will, and in such sort as he will grant them, at the time of Praying, we must sincerely resolve; and when our Prayer is over, we must carefully and honestly endeavour after them. An * effectual desire shall serve our

* Jam. 5. turn: And a working Prayer shall procure a blessing: But besides it, no other will.

Whatever therefore vain and wicked People may imagine, there is no Prayer that will avail them, when Obedience is wanting. If we pray for Pardon and Mercy, God will by no means hear us, unless our Hearts are Penitent, and our Lives Obedient. And in our Prayers for forgiveness, we must pray for Obedience too. We must be as solicitous, for the doing of our Duty, as for the receiving of our Reward; and never in our Prayers omit to ask for that, which Christ thought fit to give us as the highest instance of those things which we are to pray for, viz. the Holy Spirit, Luk. 11. 13. And when we do pray for that, or for any particular Graces of it; we see that

that we have not done our work barely by desiring it, till we go on also to endeavour after it. We must resolve when we pray, to seek that Grace which we ask for; and we must effectually labour after it, in the diligent use of all those means whereby it is either acquired or increased, when our Prayer is over. All the way, it is only our Obedience which can effectually recommend our Prayers; so that whensoever we ask for any thing, if we would have any just hope of receiving it, we must be sure to obey with it.

And for this, the Scriptures are express and plain. If I regard iniquity in my Heart, saith the Psalmist, the Lord will not HEAR me, Psal. 66. 18. And God himself says the same by his Prophet Isaiah, in words most full and forcible. When you spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you; yea, when you make many Prayers, I will not hear; your hands are full of Blood. Wash you, make you clean, put away the EVIL of your DOINGS from before mine eyes, cease to DO evil, learn to DO well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. When you have done this, you are fit to be hearkned to, come now and let us reason together; pray for Pardon and I will forgive you, and though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow, Isa. 1. 15, 16, 17, 18. Thus also the wise Man tells us, that he that turns away his ear from HEARING the Law; even his PRAYER shall be an abomination, Prov. 28. 9. And, the eyes of the Lord are over the Righteous, saith S. Peter, and his ears are open to THEIR Prayers: but the FACE of the Lord is against them that DO evil, 1 Per. 3. 12. And the acceptableness of a Christians Prayer, consists, as S. Paul intimates, in lifting up holy hands, 1 Tim. 2. 8. Before God will Pardon any Man upon his Prayers, Christ's Gospel must absolve him; it must promise, before God perform with him. And no Man has any other assurance, that he shall receive what he desires, but his having done what God commands. If my words abide in you, says our Saviour, you shall ask what you will, and it shall be done unto you, Joh. 15. 7. And whatsoever we ask we receive of him, says S. John, because we KEEP his Commandments, and DO those things that are pleasing in his sight, 1 Joh. 3. 21, 22.

And by all this it clearly appears, that no Prayers will avail us unto *Life* and *Pardon* at the last day, unless we keep God's Commandments, and obey with them. There is no *Grace* to be obtained, without *endeavours*; nor any *Pardon* to be purchased, without *Obedience*. God will not hear us, if we refuse to hearken unto him. Nothing can maintain a good understanding betwixt him and us, but only the *D O I N G* of our Duty; Upon this condition he will grant us any thing, but without it we can procure nothing. So that after all, it is only our Obedience which can make our Prayers available; and if ever we expect that God should grant them, we must be sure to work and obey with them.

C H A P. VI.

Of Pardon promised to our fear of God, and trust in him.

Seventhly, That condition whereupon we shall be Eternally accepted at the Last day, is sometimes call'd our *fear of God*, and sometimes our *trust* and *hope* in him.

As for our *fear of God*, it is made the great means of our *Pardon* and acceptance. *I will teach you the good and right way to your Bliss and Happiness*, said *Samuel* to the *Israelites*: *only fear the Lord, and in virtue of that fear, serve him*, 1 Sam. 12. 24, 25. This fear has given right to *pardon* in all times, and will eternally secure it.

Psal. 115. 11, 13. For *God's Mercy is on them that fear him, from Generation to Generation*, Luke 1. 50. From *Everlasting to Everlasting*, Psal. 103. 17. So that well might *Solomon* say, *The Fear of the Lord is a Fountain of Life*, Prov. 14. 27. And that he surely knew it will go well with them that fear the *Lord*, Eccle. 8. 12.

And then, as for our *Hope*, or *Trust* in God; great things are spoken of it. *Blessed is he*, saith the *Psalmist*, *who maketh the Lord his Trust*, Psal. 40. 4. He is secure from all effects of his *Wrath* and heavy *Displeasure*; for the

the Lord taketh pleasure in them that hope in his Mercy, Psal. 147. 11. In particular, our relying on Christ, and confiding in him for our pardon and eternal salvation, is said to be that, which will never fail or deceive us. For he that hopeth or believeth on him, says S. Paul, shall never be ashamed, by a misplaced confidence or expectation, Rom. 10. 11.

Now our fear of God, and our hope or trust in his mercy, are of all our passions the most active Causes, and powerful Springs of our good Works and Obedience.

As for our fears, no passion puts us upon so much pains and industry, as they do. They make us act to the utmost of our power, and do all that is to be done, to get protection from that evil which excites them. For fear has the deepest root in our natural self-love, and desire of our own preservation ; being raised in us by the nearness of such things, as either utterly destroy, or in some degree impare it. And therefore in them, the activity of our self-love is shewn to the utmost : And as vehemently as we desire, and endeavour to preserve our selves, and our own ease ; so vehemently must we desire, and endeavour likewise to remove the matter of our fears, which hangs over us, to destroy or to torment us.

The most natural effect of fear then, is a most vigorous endeavour by all means to remove that evil, which we are afraid of. And according as this may be done several ways ; so doth our passion of fear exert it self after several manners. If we think the evil may be conquered, it pushes us on to fight and subdue it. If it be above our strength, but may yet for all that be avoided, it puts us upon all means of concealment or escape, and makes us seek either to lie hid, or to fly from it. But if there is neither any prospect of withstanding the power, nor of escaping the eye of him, who is ready to inflict it ; as there never can be, when God, who is both Almighty and All-seeing, is the Person feared ; then it hurries us on by all means to regain his favour and good will, that thereby we may prevent it. And in Times of Ignorance, when Men had great fears and little knowledge, when they were grievously afraid of God, but knew not what things he loved and delighted in, nor wherewith they might please him ; this fear of God put them upon all the nonsensical services, and foolish propitiations of Superstition. But where God

God has plainly and clearly revealed his Will, and manifested to all, that it is their Obedience alone can continue them in his favour, or restore them to it after they have lost it : Here the only effect of fear, must needs be that which is known to be the only means of favour, viz. our keeping his Commandments; or Obedience. So that our fear of God, is a most sure Principle, and effectual means of our serving and obeying him.

And then as for our *hope*, or trust in God's Mercy, it is a most natural cause of our doing our *Duty* likewise. For all *hope* implies, both desire, and a likelihood of getting that which is desired ; which two are all that is at any time needful, to make us vigorously endeavour after it. For if Men will beat no pains for a thing, it is either because they have little or no desire of it, or no probability of succeeding in it. But when once they are push'd on by an *eager desire* it is only *despair* that can dull their endeavours in pursuit of it. So that if we *hope* for Mercy, we shall be at some pains for it, and, by an active Service and Obedience, seek to procure it.

Indeed, when the good thing that is hoped for needs no labour of ours, but our naked *trust* and *reliance* is all that is required to it on our side, our *hope* will effect no endeavour after it, because none is necessary to obtain it. But as for that *eternal Life* and pardon, which Christ's Gospel proposeth to our hopes, they are offered to us only upon certain *Terms* and *Conditions*, and will never be attained by us, without our *Service* and *Obedience*. And seeing *Obedience* here is the *necessary means*, to the acquisition of that which we *desire* ; the same *desire* and *hope*, which carries us on towards *mercy* and *life*, must spur us on withal to works of *Duty* and *Obedience* also. They must be a Spring of industry and good endeavour, because they make us resolve to procure that, which is not to be got without them.

And in regard our *fear* of God, and our *hope* or *trust* in his *mercy*, are such powerful Principles of our *Obedience* to his *Laws* ; therefore are *Pardon* and *Life*, which are the rewards of *Obedience*, so frequently promised to them. God never intends to reward an *idle fear*, or an *inactive and careless trust*, but such only, as are *industrious* and *obedient*.

'Tis true, indeed, the generality of Men have taken up a dangerous error, especially in the latter of these, and are bold and presumptuous in their *hopes*, at the same time that they are most wicked and disobedient in their Lives and Practice. They find no Service of their own works wherein they may be confident, and therefore they fly from them to God's Goodness. They know this full well by themselves, that *they are wicked*; but they know withal, that *God is gracious*, and their *hope is*, that He will be *merciful* to them notwithstanding *their impenitence in their sins*. They find themselves *condemned* indeed by his *Gospel*, but their trust is to be *relieved* by his Nature. And the Revelations of his Word, breath out nothing to them, but Death; but their hope is, that he will be better than his Word, and that through the infiniteness of his mercy, they shall at last be adjudged to pardon and eternal life.

But such *bold hopes* and *presumptuous confidences* as these, are the ready way to provoke and offend *God*, but by no means to *atone* and *appease* him. For thus to *hope in his Mercy* against the *plain Declarations of his Will*, is to cashier those measures of life which he hath given us, and by usurping the place of Judge and Governour of the World, to make others of our own. It is plainly to oppose his *Nature* to his *Gospel*, by making it *bless* those whom *this condemns*, and to become *Infidels* to his *Religion and Truth*, under colour of *promoting his Mercy and Goodness*. It *reproacheth his Nature* under a pretence of *Honouring* it, by making his *Vertues* interfere, and his *Excellencies* inconsistent, and robbing him of one most glorious Attribute, to exalt another. But when he comes at last to judge the World, he will effectually assert the truth of his *Gospel*, and vindicate the Honour of his injured Attributes, in passing a just sentence, and inflicting a most severe punishment, on all such Blasphemous presumptions as these are. For it is not an *idle trust in God*, or an *ineffective recumbency and reliance on Christ for Salvation*, that shall avail any Man at that Day. But if they have despised his *Laws*, and their Lives are incorrigibly Disobedient, let them be as presumptuous as they please with *God*, and as bold as they will with their *Saviour*, they shall certainly go to Hell in the midst of all their high flown hopes and daring confidences. For *God will be as good as his Word*, and punish Disobedience according as he has threatned it. And moreover,

moreover, it is not only in his *Word*, but in his very *Nature*, that he hates and abhors Sin : So that he can never be brought to reward and encourage it, being determined by his *Natural Inclination*, as well as by the *Truth* of his *Gospel*, eternally to punish and avenge it. *He is not a God*, saith the *Psalmist*, *who hath pleasure in Wickedness*; no, as an Argument of that, he will not endure it in his *Presence*, *Evil shall not dwell with him*. *The Foolish*, or *Disobedient*, *shall not be suffered to stand in his sight*, for *he hateth all the workers of iniquity*. *Psal. 5. 4, 5.*

No Man therefore must dare to place his *hope* and *trust* in *God*, till in his *works* he *honestly obeys him*. A *Faithfull Obedience*, is the only firm Foundation of a *sure trust*; and it is only our *doing* what he requires, that can give us sufficient grounds to *expect* the performance of those *Mercies* which he *promises*.

When *God* says then, that he who *fears the Lord* shall be *blessed*, and that he who *trusts and hopes in him* shall not finally be *ashamed*; he speaks not of such *fear and trust*, as are separate from *Obedience*, but of such only as are conjoined with it. The Phrase is *metonymical*, our *Obedient Works* are implied, although they are not expressly mentioned; for we must *obey him through fear*, and do what he commands us, in *hopes* of obtaining those *mercies* which he promises, or else we shall never attain those *blessings* which we hope for.

And for this, the *Testimonies* of the *Scriptures* are *many*, and *plain*.

For as for our *fear of God*, it is of no account with him, further than it makes us *Obedient*; *The fear of the Lord*, says *Solomon*, *is to hate evil*, *Prov. 8. 13.* It must be an instrument of amendment and reformation; a *fear*, whereby *Men depart from evil*, *Prov. 16. 6.* A means of perfecting our *Obedience* and *holy living*; for that is *S. Paul's Character* of it, when he tells us of *PERFECTING holiness in the fear of the Lord*, *2 Cor. 7. 1.* And of *WORKING out our own SALVATION with fear and trembling*, *Phil. 2. 12.* It is only when *Obedience* thus follows upon our *fear*, and is effected by it; that *God accepts and rewards it*. *I will teach you the right way to Pardon and Happiness*, said *Samuel*, *Fear the Lord*, and, together with that, *SERVE him*, *1 Sam. 12. 24, 25.* For if we would hear the conclusion of the whole matter,

as, saith the Wise Man, we must fear God, and keep his Commandments ; this Obedience and fear together is the whole Duty of Man, Eccles. 12. 13. No Man therefore can lay a just claim to God's Mercy at the last day ; but he who has fear'd him in such a sort, as out of that religious fear intirely to obey him. But whosoever fears so, Mercy shall rest on him for ever. For the mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting on them that fear him, provided that out of that fear they keep his Covenant, and his Commandments to DO them, Psal. 103. 17, 18.

And then, for our trust and hope in God's mercy, it is no saving trust, but a reproachful and bold presumption, if we hope in him, whilst we are impenitently Disobedient and Rebellious against him. For a good Man's trust, is only in promised Mercies, which are never made to such as wilfully and impenitently transgress God's Laws, but only to those who honestly obey them. It is a trust, as the Psalmist speaks, in God's Word, and not against it, Psal. 119. 42. And because that word denounces nothing, but woes and threatenings to all wicked Men, therefore, as he speaks in another place; *Shall the Righteous alone trust in him*, Psal. 64. 10. And every Man that hath this Hope, as S. John saith, must purifie himself, 1 Joh. 3. 3. Disobedience, so long as Men continue in it, is a most desperate and forlorn Condition, there being no just hope to any Man but in well-doing. It is, says S. Paul, in teaching us to deny all Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, and to live Godlily, Soberly, and Righteously in this present World, that the Gospel encourages us to look for the fulfilling of our blessed hope, Tit. 2. 12, 13. And the way to hold fast the confidence, and joy of a just hope in Christ firm unto the end, he informs the Hebrews, is only by hearing, and thereupon obeying God's voice, and not hardning their Hearts, as the Israelites did, in the provocation, or in those transgressions wherewith they provoked him, in the day of their Temptation in the Wilderness, Heb. 3. 6, 7, 8. And the full assurance of hope, as he again declares to them, is no otherwise to be upheld, but by Men's diligence in obeying, and in the work and labour of love ; which implies the whole of our Obedience, Heb. 6. 10, 11. So that, as the Psalmist says, they must trust in the Lord, and, together with that, do good, who are to receive mercy from him, Psal. 37. 3.

If Men therefore will dare to Sin, and yet presume ; affront God's Majesty, and still trust in his Mercy ; They must needs deceive their own Souls to their utter destruction. For it is a vain confidence, and an impudent presumption in any Man, to rely upon God's goodness for the pardon of his Sins, without repenting of them, and obeying him ; when as he has plainly told us, That his goodness it self shall pity and pardon none, but the Penitent and Obedient. He trusts to a false hope, and leans upon a broken Reed ; for as long as his transgressions continue to separate between him and his God, whatever God CAN do, yet he WILL not save him. The Lord's hand, saith the Prophet Isaiah to the afflicted Jews, is not shortened that it cannot save, nor his ear heavy that it cannot hear : But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your Sins have hid his face from you, that he will not bear. For your hands are defiled with Blood, and your fingers with iniquity, your Lips have spoken lyes, your Tongue hath uttered perverseness : None calls for Justice, nor any pleads for truth ; and since your Disobedience is so heinous, your hope must needs be false, you TRUST in vanity, Isai. 59. 1, 2, 3, 4.

Even our Blessed Lord himself, died not to reconcile God to Men's Sins, and to procure hopes of Pardon for the finally impenitent and unperswadably disobedient. So that no Man may ever think himself delivered, to act Wickedness ; or wilfully transgress God's Laws, and still dare to trust in him. But if any are so bold and shameless, Christ will rebuke them at the last Day, as God doth the presumptuous Jews by the Prophet Jeremiah. Behold, says he, you trust in lying words, which cannot profit you. Will you Steal, Murther, and commit Adultery, and swear falsely, and notwithstanding all that, come and stand before me in this House which is called by my Name, as Men who own my service, and dare trust in my love, and say as in effect you do by such usage, we are delivered to do all these abominations ? Dare you, by this presuming upon my favour in the midst of all your Transgressions, make me become a Patron and Protector of your villainies ? And is this House, which is called by my Name, become a Den or Receptacle and Sanctuary of Robbers in your eyes ? Behold I, even I have seen it, saith the Lord ; and that surely not to encourage and reward, but most severely to punish

punish it ; for I will utterly cast you out of my sight, Jer. 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 15.

Thus will God by no means endure to have his own most holy Nature become a support to Sin, nor his Religion to be made a refuge for disobedience; nor his Mercy and Goodness turned into a Sanctuary to wicked and unholy Men. So that no Man must dare to hope and trust in him, but he only who honestly observes his Laws, and uprightly obeys him.

The fear of God then, and trust in his Mercy, which the Gospel encourages, and which Christ our Judge will at the last Day accept of, is not a fear and trust without obedience, but such only as implies it. We must serve him in fear, and obey him through hope, as ever we expect he should acquit and pardon us. For no fears or hopes will avail us unto Bliss, but those which amend our Lives, and effect in us an honest service and obedience.

C H A P. VII.

Of Pardon promised to the love of God, and of our Neighbour.

EIGHTHLY, That condition, which the Gospel indispensibly requires of us to our pardon and happiness, is sometimes called Love. For of this S. Paul says plainly, that it is the fulfilling of the Law, Rom. 13. 10. It is the great condition of Life, the standing Terms of mercy and happiness. We have the same Apostle's word for it of our love of God. Those things, which neither Eye hath seen, nor Ear heard, neither have entered into the Heart of Man to conceive, are prepared for them who LOVE God, 1 Cor. 2. 9. And again, Chap. 8. If any Man love God, the same is known or accepted of him, vers. 3. And S. John says as much of the love of our Neighbour. Beloved, let us LOVE one another, for LOVE is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God, 1 John 4. 7. And again, God is Love, and manifested his Love in giving Christ to die for us. And if we love one another, God dwells in us : For hereby,

by this mark and evidence, we know that we dwell in him, and he in us; because he hath given us of this loving temper and Spirit of his, ver. 8, 9, 12, 13. And to the same purpose he speaks fully, in the third Chapter of that first Epistle; We know, says he, that we have passed from death unto life, because we LOVE the BRETHREN, ver. 14.

Now our hearty love both of God and Men, is a most natural and easie Principle, of an intire service and obedience. For the most genuine and proper effect of Love, is to seek the satisfaction and delight of the persons beloved. It is careful to behave it self unseemly in nothing but to keep back from every thing that may offend; and is forward in all such services, as may any ways pleasure and content them; if they rejoice, it congratulates; if they mourn, it grieves with them. If they are in distress, it affords succour; if in want, supply; in doubts it ministers counsel; in business dispatch. It is always full and teeming with good offices, and transforms it self into all shapes whereby it may procure their satisfaction, and render their condition comfortable and easie to them. So that it exerts it self, in pity to the miserable, in protection to the oppressed, in relief to the indigent, in counsel to the ignorant, in encouragement to the good, in kind reproof to the evil, in thanks for kindnesses, in patience and forbearance upon sufferings, in forgiveness of wrongs and injuries: In one word, it is an universal Source and Spring, of all works of Justice, Charity, Humility and Peace.

Now the Body of our Religion, is made up of these Duties. For what doth the Lord thy God require of thee, O Man, saith the Prophet Michah, but to do justly, to love Mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God, Mic. 6. 8. Those things which God hath adopted into his Service, and made the matter of our duty towards one another, are nothing else but these natural effects of love and kindness and expressions of good nature towards all Men. For all the Precepts of Religion, only forbid our doing evil, and require our doing good, to all the World. And since, as the Apostle Argues, Love seeketh all things that are good, and worketh no evil to our Neighbour; therefore Love must needs be the fulfilling of those Laws which concern them. This Commandment; for instance, as he illustrates it, Thou shalt not commit Adultery; thou shalt not kill; thou shalt not steal; thou shalt

shalt not bear false witness; thou shalt not covet: All these, and if there be any other Commandment relating to our Brethren, it is briefly comprehended in this Saying, *Thou shalt LOVE thy NEIGHBOUR as thy self.* For LOVE worketh none of all these ills to our Neighbour, therefore LOVE is the fulfilling of the Law, Rom. 13. 9, 10.

Thus doth our Love of our Neighbour, fulfil all those particular Laws, which contain our Duty towards them: And in like manner, our Love of God fulfils all those other Precepts, which comprehend our Duty towards him. For all that he requires of us towards himself, is neither more nor less, than to honour and worship him; to do nothing in all our behaviour, that savours of disrespect towards him; nor by any thought, word or action, to disgrace or contemn him. But now nothing renders any person so secure from contempt, as our love and affection for him. For affront and reproach, do not only shew neglect, but are expressions of enmity and ill-will, and so can never proceed from us towards those persons whom we love and value. And if we are kindly affected towards any person, we shall not fail to express a just respect for him; and if he is cloathed with excellence and power over us, to bear him all due Honour and Veneration. So that if we do indeed love God, he is secure from all affront: And disobedience being a plain and open reproach, since our Love will not permit us to dishonour him, it can never suffer us to disobey him.

Thus mighty and powerful, easie and natural a Principle of an universal obedience, both towards God and men, is an universal Love: It doth the work without difficulty, and carries us on to obey with ease; in as much as all the particular Precepts and Instances of obedience, are but so many genuine effects, and proper expressions of it. The effects of our love, are the parts of our obedience; the products of our Duty and Religion, as well as of our Passion. So that it is a most natural Spring of our obedient service, because it prompts us to the very same things, to which God has bound and obliged us by his Precepts.

But besides this way of an universal Love's influencing an universal obedience, through this coincidence of the effects of Love, and the instances of Duty; our Love of God, who is our King and Goverour, were a sure principle of

our obedience to him, were his Precepts instanced, not in the same things which are the effects of a general Love, which is the true Case, but in things different from them. For although our Love would not prompt us to perform them by its natural tendency towards them, and for their own sakes ; Yet it would, through submission and duty, and for his sake who enjoy'd them. It would make us deny our selves to pleasure him ; and produce other effects than our own Temper enclines us to, to do him service. For as Love is for doing hurt to none ; so least of all to Governours : It will give to every one their own, but to them most especially. Now Duty and Service is that, which we owe to our Rulers ; and the proper way of Love's exerting it self in giving them their dues, is by obedience. If we love, we shall be industrious to please ; and there is no way of pleasing them, without doing what they command us. For it is always an offence to a Governour to transgress his Laws ; and a very provoking injury, to oppose his Will, and despise his Authority. To do this, is to renounce our subjection, and to cast off his Yoke ; which no reasonable Man can look on as the way to please him, but to defy him ; nor as the way to express Love, but to declare enmity against him. For disobedience to our Governours is clearly the most profest hatred, as the obleviance of our Duty is the most allowed instance of friendship and good-will.

So that Love is a Spring and Principle of our Obedience, not only because the Commandment and it run parallel, and the instances of God's Laws are the same with the effects of a general Love ; but also because our love of God would make us obey him, even in such instances of Duty as differ from them. For all that aversion which we have to the thing commanded, would be outweighed by our desire to please him who commands it ; and although we should neglect it upon its own account, yet for his sake we should certainly fulfil and perform it.

And because our Love of God and men, is so natural a Spring, and so sweet and easie a Principle, to produce in us a perfect and intire obedience to all those Laws, which concern either, or to any other ; therefore has God promised so nobly to reward it. He never intends to crown an idle and unworking Love ; but such only, as is active and

and industrious. For when he says, that he who loves God and men is known of God, and accepted by him, and born of him, and that God dwells in him, and has prepared Heaven for him; He speaks metonymically, and means all the while a love with these religious effects, or a love that is productive of an entire service and obedience.

And to this Point, the Scriptures speak fully: For as for our Love of God himself, and of our Saviour Christ; that is plainly of no account in his judgment, but when it makes us keep his Commandments, and become industriously obedient. *If ye LOVE me, saith Christ, keep my Commandments; for he that hath my Commandments, and KEEPETH them, he it is that loveth me; and he only who so loveth me, in obeying me, shall be beloved of my Father, and I will love him,* John 14. 15, 21. *Whoso keepeth God's Word, saith S. John, in him verily is the love of God made perfect: And hereby it is, by this perfection of Love in Obedience, that we know we are in him,* 1 Joh. 2. 5. But if we have only a pretended verbal love, or an inward passion for God, and shew no Signs or Effects thereof in our obedient works and actions; we shall be as far from being accepted by him, as we are from any true and real service of him. He will look upon all our Professions, as vain speech, and fawning flattery; but will not esteem the same, as having in them sober serviceable Truth, and rewardable Reality: For whosoever hath this World's goods, and seeth his Brother hath need, and obeys not God's Command of shewing mercy (and the Case is the same in other instances) but shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him; how dwells the love of God in him? 1 Joh. 3. 17.

And then, as for our love of our Brethren; it doth not at all avail us unto Mercy and Life, unleis it make us perform all those things which are required of us, by the Laws of Justice, Charity and Beneficence towards them. *My little Children, saith S. John, let us not love only in word, and in Tongue; but in deed also and in truth.* For it is hereby, by this operative love, that we know we are of the truth, and shall assure our hearts in full confidence of his mercy before him, 1 Joh. 3. 18, 19. Our love to them is to be manifested, as Christ's Love was to us, viz. in good effects and a real service; yea, when occasion requires it, and when their eternal weal may be very much promoted, and their Faith confirmed thereby, in giving up our

selves to Martyrdom, and laying down our own lives for their advantage. Hereby, says this same Apostle, *perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us.* And if we would be reputed to have that love, which, as we are told at the fourteenth Verse, transfers us from Death unto Life; we ought, upon a fit occasion, not to flinch from the most costly service, but even to lay down our very * lives for the Brethren,

* S. Clemens R. tells us of these heights of Charity, which were practised in his Time, διστάψει πολλὰς ἐν ἡμέρᾳ οὐδείσθωκότας ἑαυτὰς τοῖς στομαῖς ἐπως ἐτέρης λύτρώσανται πολλοὶ, ἑαυτὰς παρέσκεψαν εἰς διατίαν, καὶ λαβεῖντες τὰς πνιὰς αὐτῶν, ἐτέρης ἐπάνταν, i Ep. ad Cor. c 55. And the Parabolani, or Men who hazarded their own lives to redeem the lives of others, were very numerous among the Christians in the first times. Which Offices S. Paul tells us, Priscilla and Aquilla, and Epaphroditus had done for him, Rom. 16. 3, 4. Phil. 2. 30. This practice is a most excellent Comment upon this Text.

i John 3. 16. Our Love will not be rewarded as a thing that is absolute in it self, but only as an Instrument; in as much as it makes us, as S. Paul says, to fulfil the whole Law, which makes any thing an instance of Duty towards them, Rom. 13. 8. But if we only profess love to them in kind words and tender expressions, but shew none in our works and actions; this idle, useless Love, will be of no account to us, nor benefit us more than it profits them. For if a Brother, or a Sister, says S. James, be naked and destitute of daily food; and one of you gives them only some good words, and says unto them,

Depart in peace, be ye warm'd, with Clothes, and filled with Food; but notwithstanding all this affectionate language, ye give them not in the mean while those things which are needful for the Body; what doth it profit? Nothing at all surely, nor will it ever advantage your selves as an instance of that mercy which rejoiceth against judgment, ver. 13. more than it profits them, James 2. 15, 16.

So that when Christ comes to Judgment at the last Day, we see plainly, that no Love, either of God or Men, will avail us, but only that which has kept the Commandments. If we are acquitted at that Bar, it must be for a loving Service, and not upon any pretence of Love without Obedience.

And thus at last we have fully seen, that as for all those other things besides Obedience, whereunto the Gospel promises pardon and happiness; they are by no means available to our bliss when they are separate from Obedience,

dience, but then only when they effect and imply it. They all aim at it, and end in it, and are of no account in God's Judgment, further than they produce it. For it is not, either our knowing Christ, or our believing Christ, or our being in Christ, or our trusting in Christ, or our loving Christ, or our fears of God, or our confessions of Sins, or our pouring our many Prayers ; or any thing else that will save us whilst we go on to disobey. No, at the last Day we shall certainly be condemned notwithstanding them, without a Faith that has wrought, or at least that effectually would work if it were tryed, and if the obedience of our works is wanting. It is only such a *working service*, that will please our Judge, and secure us. Christ's Gospel, whereby all of us must stand or fall in that Court, has fully declared this already ; and Christ himself will then confirm it. So that 'tis in vain to cast about for other *marks*, and to seek after other *evidences* of our title to bliss and happiness ; nothing less than our Repentance and Obedience will avail us unto life ; and through the *merits* of Christ, and the *Grace of his Gospel*, it shall.

And now at last we see clearly what that Condition is, which the Gospel indispensibly requires of us, and which is to mete out to us our last doom of bliss or misery ; that in the *general* it is nothing else, neither more nor less than our *obedience*.

BOOK II.

Of the Laws of the Gospel, which
are the Rule of this Obedience, in
particular.

C H A P. I.

*Of the particular Laws Comprehended under the
Duty of Sobriety.*

BUT in regard our *working* and *obeying* is that, whereupon all our *hopes* and *happiness*, our *security* and *comfort* hangs ; it is very necessary, that after all which has been hitherto discoursed of it in the *general*, we go on still further, and enquire of it more *particularly*. For if it be our *Obedience* or *Disobedience*, that must dispense our *Life* or *Death* to us, and eternally *save* or *destroy* us at the last Day ; then whosoever would know before-hand what shall be his *final Sentence*, must enquire what is his *present state*, and what have been his *past actions*, whether in them he have *obeyed* or *no*. And the way to understand that, is first to know what those *Laws* are whereto his *obedience* is due, and in what *manner* and *degrees* he is to *obey* them : And when once he has informed himself in these, he may quickly learn from the *Testimony* of his own heart and *Conscience*, whether he has *performed* that *Obedience*, which is indispensably required to his *happiness*, or has fallen *short* of it.

And to give the best assistance that I can in so weighty a Case, I will here proceed to enquire further into this *Obedience*, and shew concerning it these *two things* ;

- I. *What those Laws are, which the Gospel bids us to obey under the Sanctions of Life or Death.* And,
- II. *What degrees and manner of obedience, is indispensably required to them.*

I. Then

I. Then I will enquire, what those *Laws* are, whereby at the last Day we must all be judged, and which the *Gospel* binds us to obey under the *Sanction of Life or Death*.

And that I may render this enquiry as useful as I can, I will set down, as I go along, the meaning and explication of those several *Vertues* and *Vices*, which are either required or forbidden in the particular *Laws*, that so we may more truly and readily understand, whether the *Vertues* have been performed, or the *Vices* incurred; and whether thereby the *Laws* have been broken or kept by us.

As for the *Laws* and *Commands* of *God*, they are all reduced by *S. Paul* to three Heads. For either they require something from us towards *God himself*, and so are contained in *works of Piety*; or towards our *Neighbours*, all which are comprehended in *works of Righteousness*; or towards our own selves, as all those Precepts do which are taken up in *works of Sobriety*. In these three general *Vertues* is comprised the *Sum* of our *Christian Duty*, even all that which is required by the *Gospel* as the *Condition of Salvation*. For the *Gospel*, saith he, or that *Grace of God* which brings us the welcome offers of *Salvation*, hath appeared now to all *Men*, teaching us, as ever we expect that *Salvation* which it tenders to us, *that denying ungodliness and worldly Lusts, we should LIVE SOBERLY, GODLY and RIGHTEOUSLY, in this present World*, Tit. 2. 11, 12.

I begin with that, which contains all our *Duty* towards our selves, viz. *Sobriety*.

Sobriety is in the general, such a regulation of all our actions, whether they concern our Bodies or our Souls, as makes it appear that they are guided by a (b) sound mind presiding in Flesh, and that the animal Body which they flow from, is under the Command of a spiritual Reason. It is a doing that which is becoming and fit for such Creatures, as are Soul the Greek as well as Body; or that have a wise and discerning Spirit, Lexicons which should govern and give Laws in this lump of Flesh. So that Sobriety is a taking care, and giving what is due and becoming to both the Parts of our Natures, viz. our Bodies and our Souls.

As for our Bodies all the things in the World which affect them, are of a limited goodness or illness; but yet in their desires and aversions of them, they do not of Mind or them- Reason.

(b) So *Co-*
pegovn,
the Greek
name for
sobriety is
from *Cō*:
and *øgvn*,
from its
preserv-
ing and e-
videncing
a *sound*
Mind or
them- *Reason*.

themselves know any Limits: So that in their desires and actions, that dueness and decency which Sobriety prescribes, is keeping within due bounds or moderation.

And this Moderation is either,

- 1. Of their *desires and use* of such things, as *gratifie and delight* them, whether that *inveigling delight*, which causes such *excess of use, and desire*, be
 - 1. In *Meats*, and our desire, and use of them, both as to their *quantity and quality*, is moderated by *Temperance*.
 - 2. In *Drinks*, and the like moderation there is by *Sobriety*, more particularly so called.
 - 3. In other *bodily pleasures* which are particularly called *Lust*, and our bodily desires and use of them are moderated by *Chastity*. And the (c) ability to contain our selves, and to restrain the violence of our desires herein, is called *Continence*.
 - 4. In *Riches and Honours*, and the desire, and use of these are moderated, by *contempt of the World*, and *contentedness*.

In our bodily desires, and use of all these things, by reason of the unbridled temper of our bodily Appetites, which stop at no bounds, nor ever know when they have enough, we are in great danger to exceed: And therefore our desires and use of them stand in need to be moderated and retrenched by these Virtues, that it may appear we understand and act, not as *Brute Beasts*, who have nothing else but *bodily appetite* to guide them; but as *Men*, who have wise Souls presiding in Flesh, to keep the exorbitant inclinations of our Bodies within *decency and due bounds*: Which Souls moreover, as we shew by such actions, are of an *immortal and invaluable nature*, whose *interest thereof* is *infinitely dearer to us*, and calls *incomparably more for our care and pains*, than our *Bodies either do, or in reason ought to call for*.

- 2. Of their aversion and avoidance of such things, as grieve and trouble them. Whether that matter of our bodily avoidance be,
 - 1. The *troubles and losses*, that are laid in the way of our *Duty*; and our avoidance of these is moderated, by the Duty of *taking up the Cross*.

2. The

(c) εγνε-
τηα, is
that
whereby a
Man κατέ-
χει δύνα-
ται τὸ λο-
γισμὸν τὸν
διπλωμάν
εργάσαν
θη φαύλας
κακῶν.
Andron.
Rh. lib.
μεγί μα-
τῶν.

2. The *irksome pains* which we take in going through it, and performing it ; and our avoidance of this is moderated, by the Vertues of *diligence* and *watchfulness*.
3. The *great evils* which we have already *fallen under*, and are suffering for it ; and our avoidance and flight of these is moderated and restrained, by *patience*.

Our *hatred* and *avoidance* of all these evils, which in themselves are naturally prone to be excessive, are so to be moderated and over-ruled by these Vertues, that all the world may see how we are not acted as the *brute Beasts* are, by *meer sense* and *appetite*, which know no Rules of *decency*, nor stop at any *limits*; but *know and do as becomes men*, who are endowed with *spiritual* and *discerning Souls*, which understand how to give *Laws*, and prescribe *Rules of decency* to our *fleshly Appetites*, and whose *sins* are far *worse evils*, than any, or all the sufferings which can befall our *Bodies*: So that to *keep back from them*, we will not *avoid and fly from these*, but willingly *embrace and undergo them*.

And to *enable us the better thus to moderate* all the *desires* and *aversions*, and to *keep perfectly under Command*, and within just bounds, these *naturally extravagant tendencies* and *propensions* of our *Flesh*; we must curb and keep it in, and *dead in great degrees*, not only its *immoderate* and *excessive*, but also its *innocent eagerness* and *inclinations*, lest they become a *Snare* to us, and acquire so much strength by our *indulgence* of them, as will carry us on to *gratifie them* at other times when they are not *innocent*, but *sinful*; which, but for such *curbing* and *conquest* of them, they would be *sure to do*. And this is done by the *general Vertues of mortification* and *self-denial*.

The great matter indeed, and principal Object of *mortification* and *self-denial*, is our *sinful appetites*, and such *disobedient actions* as we are tempted and drawn into, by the *untamed inclinations* of our *Bodies*. And this S. Paul affirms, is an *indispensible Duty*, and a *Vertue of absolute necessity unto life*. *If ye live after the Flesh, saith he, you shall die; but if you through the Spirit*

rit do mortifie the D E E D S of the Body, you shall live,
Rom. 8. 13.

But as our *sinful* and *disobedient appetites*, are the prime Object of all religious *self-denial* and *mortification*, and that which is *absolutely necessary*, as the end: So likewise are our *innocent appetites* an inferior object of it, and our *mortification* of them is a necessary means and *instrument*, without which we shall never be able to *mortifie the other*. For a *free allowance* of our bodily desires in all things *lawful*, and an *unlimited gratification* of them in all instances whatsoever where they are *innocent*, would certainly prove a *Snare* to us, and betray us into a like indulgence and satisfaction of them in some Cases, where they are *sinful* and *disobedient*.

And the reason of this is plain, because if we should *gratifie* them in all things where we may *lawfully*, and never deny them any thing but what is *sinful*; they must needs come, by long use and indulgence, to *rule* in us, and to have a great Power and Empire over us. By indulgence and custom, they will grow strong, and we shall find it a matter of great *difficulty* to put them by, and a very *painful task* to *deny* them any thing; so that whithersoever they lead us, it is odds but we shall follow them. But now as for their Parts, they make no difference between an *innocent* and a *sinful enjoyment*: They do not distinguish things into *good* and *evil*, they are not moved by *Law* and *Decency*, but by *Pleasure*; and desire what is *delightsome* and *agrees with them*, whether it happen to be *allow'd* to them, or *forbidden*. So that let them but once be strong, and come to *rule* in us, and they will *over-rule* us in instances which are *prohibited*, as well as in those which are *allowed*; and make us fulfil them in things *sinful*, as well as in things *innocent*. And therefore we must learn to *mortifie* and *deny* our Bodily Appetites in all instances, that they may be weak and governable in all instances; and that we may have the Rule of them in all, and they not have the Rule of us in any.

And this *mortification* and *denial* of our *lawful* and *innocent* bodily Appetites, being thus plainly necessary to the *denial* and *mortification* of our *sinful* and *unlawful* bodily *desires and actions*; our Lord Jesus Christ, who best understood

understood the necessities of our Nature, what instruments were most necessary, and what means most proportionate for us, has inacted it into a Law. So that now 'tis every Man's Duty to mortifie and deny, not only all *sinful bodily actions and d-sires*; but, so far as is necessary unto that, all such as are innocent and lawful also. And according to the different degrees of Men's progress herein, are their different perfections in Vertue, and their different measures of security and assurance that they shall continue in it. It being only the *unmortifiedness* of their fleshly desires, which can prove a Snare to them, and a dangerous temptation; *Every man*, as S. James says, being tempted then, when he is drawn away of his own Lusts, and inticed, Jam. 1. 14.

And all the forenamed Vertues, *viz.* Temperance, Sobriety, Chastity, &c. are Duties incumbent upon us, and implied in that care, which this general Vertue Sobriety takes of our meaner Part, our Bodies.

And then, as for what more directly concerns our Souls, that *dueness* and *decency* which Sobriety prescribes in their Actions, and towards them, is either,

- 1. In thinking no better of our selves than we deserve, but having a just sense of all our *weaknesses*, and *defects*; which is *Humility* and *lowliness* of Mind.
- 2. In taking all that just care and thoughtfulness after their *future Good* and *Happiness*, which their worth requires; which is *Heavenly-mindedness*, or contriving and designing for the things of Heaven.

And as he has commanded us to exercise all these *Vertues* towards our own selves, whether in relation to our Souls, or Bodies; so has he as strictly forbid us to act those *Vices*, which are contrary to them: As are these that follow.

First, To *Humility*, or lowliness of Mind, is opposed,

(d) θεοφ.

- 1. An over-high conceit of our own excellence and preminence above others, making us set our selves and strive to appear above them, and (d) contemn and despise them as persons that are below us; Which is *Pride*.

νοεανια is
τηλαργων-

οις της

πλην αυτος

της αιλλων.

Theoph.

Char. E-

thic. c. 25.

(e) αλαζωνεια and ειρωνεια are reckoned by

2. An outward expression of this, in making a *false shew* of more excellence than indeed we have, whether in *religious, natural, or civil endowments*, which implies (e) *Hypocrisie joyn'd with Pride*; and is called *Arrogance, Ostentation, Boasting*.

Arist. as the extremities of varacity, and speeches of a lye, αλαζων he says is one, who is περσπονικος της ερδεξιας και μετεχοντων ην ερδεχει, Ethic. ad Nicom. l. 2. c. 7. & l. 4. c. 7. *Theophrastus* defines it to be a raising a greater opinion of us than we really deserve, περσπονικα τινων αιγαδων εκ εντονων. Char. Ethic. c. 24. And *Hesych.* explains αλαζων by θευσις, η δη αλαζων, i. e. πλανην ζειν.

3. An industrious affecting in all things by setting out our own praise, and exposing our achievements, to get the honour and praise of others answerable to the conceit which we have of our own selves; which is *vain-glory*.
 4. A restless pursuit of honour and *great Places*, which we conceit our selves to be worthy of; which is *Ambition*.

And the effects of this *pride* and *elation* of mind are,

1. In our behaviour, a *scornful* and *contemptuous* disrespect and sleight of others; which is *haughtiness*. And if it go on to an *unusual* and *enormous* degree, it is *insolence*. And this *haughtiness* when it is expressed in a *commanding* way, as if we had *Lordship* and *Authority* over them, is *imperiousness*. Which when tis shewn in exacting their submission to our *dogms* or *opinions*, is *dogmati-
cality*, or *impatience of contradiction*.
 2. In our *Speeches* of others, an *envious depression* and *disparagement* of them, the better to set off our own selves, which is *backbiting*.
 3. In our *Conversation*, a mixture of *pride* and *envy*, or an (f) *envious provoking strife* of *out-doing* others and being better thought of our selves, or of *hindring* their designs, lest they should enjoy what we, who in our own opinion deserve it better, are deprived of; which is *emulation*.

Secondly, To *heavenly-mindedness*, is opposed an *over-industrious care* of present things; or being *wholly, or chiefly taken up with this World*; which is *worldliness*.

(f) ζηλοι επονει ει-
σι, μη-
μετατοι,
Hesych.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, To *moderation* is opposed *luxury* or *excess*.

And as that moderation which sobriety prescribed was either in *meats* or *drinks*, &c. So is this breach of sobriety in excess likewise. For,

First, To *temperance* is opposed *intemperance*, which when it is a *Luxury*,

{ 1. In the *quantity* of Meat is called *Gluttony*.

{ 2. In the *deliciousness* or *quality* of it, is called *Voluptuousness*.

Secondly, To *sobriety*, or a moderate and undisturbing use of *Drink*, is opposed a stupifying and intoxicating use of it: which is *Drunkenness*. And this, when it is accompanied with (g) *boisterousness*, *unchast Songs*, (g) κῶμοι, and *riotous mirth*; is called *revelling*. ὁ στελγῆς,

Thirdly, To *Chastity* is opposed *unchastness* and that *weaknes* which betrays us into it, viz. our *subjection* ποσηκάδ. to our bodily Lusts, and inability to contain them καματίς, within due bounds, is called *incontinence*: Which τευφῶν issues out and expresses it self, μετ' αὐ- δίς. Hesych.

{ 1. In preparatory enticements, by an *indulgence* to provoking gestures, touches, words or action; which is called *lasciviousness* or *wantonness*. The particular expression whereof in obscene and (h) shameful words, is *filthiness*. (h) α' Κερ. And if they be uttered in picquancy of wit, τὰ αἰχνύ- and smartness of conceit, it is *foolish* or (i) νην ἐνεγ- obscene Jesting. κεῖν δυνα-

2. In the acting or execution of it; which may be done,

{ 1. By one Person, upon their own Body alone; and then 'tis *impurity* or *uncleanness*. (i) εὐτελε- πλία, αι-

2. By two Persons, each with other. Which if they are both Men, is called *Sodomy*; and by S. Paul, Rom. 1. 27. Men with Men working that which is unseemly; and the Persons who are guilty of it are call'd the abominable, Rev. 21. 8. And the Persons suffering themselves to be so abused, are called the effeminate, 1 Cor. 6. 9.

But if they be Man and Woman, then either,

{ 1. One, or both are married to another; and so 'tis *Adultery*.

{ 2. Both are unmarried, and so it is *Fornication*. Which if it be, i. By

- (k) *ἀγνω-*
τεστ.
- (l) *πλεο-*
νεξία.
- 1. By the joint-consent of both, is Whoredom, or bare Fornication; and this, when the Parties are too nearly allied, is called Incest.
 - 2. By forcing of one; and then 'tis Rape or Ravishing. Which Vice S. Paul expresses by that (k) word which we translate Extortioners, I. Cor. 5. 11. and Chap. 6. 10.

Fourthly, To contempt of the Wor'd and contentment with our present condition, is opposed covetousness, which is an immoderate love of the World, or an unsatisfiednes with what we have, and an (l) insatiable desire of more; and grudging or repining.

Fifthly, To taking up the Cross, is opposed our being scandalized, or turn'd out of the way of Duty and Obedience, by reason of it; or a politick and selfish deserting of our Duty to avoid the Cross.

Sixthly, To diligence and watchfulness in doing of our Duty, is opposed a heedlesnes of it, and remiss application to it; which is carelesness and idleness.

Seventhly, To patience in suffering for it, is opposed an immoderate dread of pain, and dishonest avoidance of it; which is softness and fearfulness.

Eighthly, To mortification and self-denyal, is opposed self-love and self-pleasing; which, as it is an industrious care to please and gratifie our bodily senses, is called sensuality; and as it is a ready and constant serving and obeying the lusts and desires of the Flesh; especially when they carry us against the Commands of God, is called Carnality.

These are thole Vices and breaches of Duty towards our selves, which God's Laws have prohibited under the pains of Death and Hell: As the other were such Virtues, as under the same penalty he exacts of us.

C H A P. II.

Of LOVE the Epitome of Duty towards God and Men, and of the Particular Law comprehended under Piety towards God.

FOR the two remaining Members in S. Paul's Division, viz. Godliness or Piety, and Righteousness, which require something from us to God or to our Neighbour; they may yet be reduced into a narrower compass, and are both comprised in that one word LOVE. For all that God requires of us, either towards himself or towards other Men, is only heartily and effectually to LOVE them. And this abridgment of our whole Duty, in respect of these two remaining parts of it towards God and Man, into that one compendious Law of LOVE, is no more, than what our Saviour Christ, and his Apostle Paul, have already made to our hands. For hear how they speak of it: *Jesus saith unto the Lawyer, Thou shalt LOVE the Lord thy God, with all thy Heart, and all thy Soul, and all thy Mind. This is the first and great Commandment: and the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self. On these two, which in the thing commanded, LOVE, are but one, hang all the Law*(of the ten Commandments, viz. which meddle not with our Duty towards our selves, but only towards God and our Neighbour) *and the Prophets, Matt. 22. 37, 38, 39, 40.* And S. Paul speaks home to the same purpose: *By Love, says he, serve one another; for all the LAW is fulfilled in one word, even this, Thou shalt LOVE thy Neighbour as thy self, Gal. 5. 13, 14.* And speaking again of the Laws concerning our Neighbour, he tells us, that LOVE worketh no ill to his Neighbour, and therefore LOVE is the fulfilling of the Law, Rom. 13. 10.

Thus kind and good natur'd a Religion, is that of our Saviour Christ; A Religion, that is not content to have only great and eminent measures of goodness in it, but is perfectly made up of LOVE and good Nature. All that it requires from us, is only to be kind-hearted, and full of good Offices both towards God and Men. Every

Man of a *loving good Nature*, is inclined by his *temper* to do all that is demanded by God's *Law*; so that he has nothing remaining to turn his *Temper* into *Obedience*, but to direct his *intention*: and to exert all the effects of love for the sake of God's Commandment, which he is otherwise strongly excited to by the natural Propensities of his own Mind. His own Passion and his God require the same service, and that which is only a natural fruit of the first, may become, if he so design it, a piece of Religion and Obedience to the latter. For the particular effects of *Love*, are the particulars of our *Duty*. *Love* is the great and general *Law*, as *ill-will* and enmity are the prime *transgression*: And the instances of *Love* are the instances of our *Obedience*, as all the particular effects of *ill-will* are those very instances wherein we disobey. So that by running over all the special effects of *Love* or *ill-will*, we may quickly find what are the Particulars of *Duty* and *Transgression*.

Now the prime and most immediate Effects of *Love* are,

- 1. To do no *evil* to the Persons beloved, nor to take away from them any thing which is theirs, and which they have a right to. And this founds all the Duties of *Justice*. But,
- 2. To do all *good Offices* and shew *kindness* to them, which founds all the Duties of *Charity*.

And these two take in our whole *Duty*, both in *Piety* towards God, and also in *Righteousness* towards Men.

1. The proper and genuine effect of *love to God*, is to do no *evil*, but with great readiness to do *all the good* and *service* which we can for him: In which two are implied all the branches of *Piety*, which is the great and general *Duty* towards him.

To be *kind* and *serviceable* to God, is nothing more than to honour him. For his nature is so perfect and self-sufficient, that it cannot receive; and ours so impotent and poor, that we cannot give any thing else but Honour to him. As on the other side, to do *evil* to him, is only to *Dishonour* him. For he is out of our power as for any other injury, and there is no way possible left for us to reach him, but by only our contumelious usage and dis-respect for him.

To do no *evil*, I say, but to be *kind* and *serviceable* to God, is nothing more but to *honour* him. It implies our having in our *Minds* honourable *opinions* of him, and expressing in our *carriage* and *behaviour* a *respect* and *acknowledgment* of those glorious *Attributes* and *Perfections* which are in him. The former, *viz.* the *high opinion* of his *Excellencies*, those particularly which are instances of *Power* and *Goodness*, in our *Minds*, is called *Honour*. The latter, *viz.* the *expressions* of this honourable opinion and acknowledgment in our *Thoughts*, *Words* and *Actions* is called *Worship*.

And this *Worship* is an acknowledgment either,

1. Of his *Truth* and *Knowledge*, in believing his *Word*, and taking things upon his *Authority*, seeing he neither can be deceived himself, nor will deceive us; which is *Faith*.
2. Of his *Power* and *Goodness*,
 1. In our *good will* or kind affection for him as a most beneficial and lovely Being, which is called *LOVE*. And this, as it effects a warm concernedness for his honour, chiefly when any thing opposes it, is *zeal*.
 2. In relying on him for the supply of our wants, as one that is most able and ready to relieve them, which is *trust* and *dependance*. A particular effect whereof is a hopeful making known our desires to him, in begging such good things at his hands as we stand in need of; which is *Prayer*.
 3. Of his *bounty* and *beneficence*, in a grateful sense, and affectionate owning, that all the good things which we receive proceed from him; which is *thankfulness*.
 4. Of his *Power* and *Justice*, in an awful backwardness to offend him, in regard he will not excuse, and can most severely punish all *Offenders*; which is *fear*.
 5. Of his *Wisdom*, and *Rule* or *Authority* over us.
 1. In *acquiescing* in his *Disposals*, as being most wise and most authoritative; which is *submission* or *resignedness*.
 2. In *performing* his *Commands*, as requiring things most fit for us, and most due from us; which is *Obedience*.

These are those particular effects, which flow from our love of God, and which make up that part of Duty, which he requires from us towards himself.

And opposite to this love of God, and these effects and expressions of it, which are made our Duty, and particularly commanded under this Head, are our ill-will and hatred of him, with all the particular ways of expressing it, which are the contrary instances of sin, and those very Vices that are forbidden.

Now God, as I said, being out of our reach as to any possible way of being injured by us, or suffering evil from us, otherwise than by our vilifying him, and lessening of his Honour: The prime effect of our hatred of him can be no other than our Dishonouring him. And this may be instanced,

1. In denying either his Being or Existence, that he is God; which is Atheism: Or his Cognizance, and Government of the World, and of the Actions of Men, in order to reward or punish them; which is Epicurism or denying Providence.

2. In thinking or speaking reproachfully of him, which is Blasphemy. And this, when it is such a disfiguration of his Being or Nature, as instead of a most just, wise, and lovely God, sets him out for an arbitrary and unwise one, and such as Men may dread and * hate, but cannot love him; is Superstition.

* δεινοδαιμονία, says Theophrastus, is δε-

λία πρέσ τὸ δαιμόνιον, Char. Eth. c. 17. ὁ εὐτεκῆς φιλοθεῶ, ὁ δὲ δεινοδαιμόνιος κόλαξ θεός. ὁ πρόσωπον τοῦ θεοῖς ἀρευ δεινός, ὁ δὲ μελαπλάσιος δεινός διστάτης καὶ δεινός τὸς δεινούς ωστε τὸς περιγράφεις, Maximus Tyrius Dissert. 4. Agreeably whereto Plutarch says in Alexandro, ἐκ τεταρτοῦ ὁ ἀθεοθεός δεινός, ὁ δὲ δεινοδαιμόνιος ἐβέλεται.

3. In having other Gods besides him; or worshipping him alone, by false and lying Similitudes and limiting Resemblances (such as all material Images are) not in true and spiritual manner as he is a God, which is Idolatry. And for the former sort of Idolatry, viz. worshipping other Gods besides him, if it be a worshipping of wicked Spirits, and that by contracting with them; it is witchcraft or sorcery.

† The Idolatrous Images mention'd If. 44. are called a Lye, v. 20. & Hos. 7. 1.

Jer. 13. 25. in which sense 'tis true of the Romans, that in changing the Glory of the incorruptible God into an Image made like to a corruptible Man; they turned the Truth of God into a Lye, Rom. 1. 23, 25.

4. In *acting cross* to all his honourable *Attributes* and *Perfections*, and *behaving our selves* in such *disrespectful sort*, as instead of honouring and acknowledging him, doth *disown* and reproach them.

And these *Actings* are either,

1. *Inwardly in our Minds*, when by some work of theirs we deny or reproach either,

1. His *Truth* and *Knowledge*, by giving no heed to what he says, nor taking any notice of it, but continuing ignorant of his word and pleasure; which the Apostle calls *foolishness*; An effect whereof is *acting against it rashly* and *inconsiderately*, which is *headiness*. Or, when we do know it, by giving no credit or assent to it, but doubting of it or distrusting it; which is *unbelief*.

2. His *Power* and *Goodness*.

1. By our *ill-will* and *wishes* to him, when we grieve at any thing that makes for him, and take *delight* in such things as we our selves or others can devise, either *against himself*, or against *Vertue* and *Goodness*, which he owns above all things and is most tender of, as bearing his own *Image*; and this is called *hating of God*. Which, as 'tis shewn in an unconcernednes at such things, as dishonour and affront him, or his *Religion*; is *coldness* or *want of zeal*.

2. By our *distrust* of him and his *Providence* when we *dare not rely* upon him for a supply of thole things which we stand in need of, as if he were either *careless*, and mattered not what becomes of us; or *envious*, and grudged to have any of those good things which we want to besal us; which is *distrust*. One effect whereof is our omitting to *seek* unto him, as *expecting nothing* from him; which is *not praying to him*.

3. His *bounty* and *beneficence*, by an *utter disregard* of what he doth for us, when we either *wholly overlook* it, or after some small time *forget* it, and are not touched with any grateful sente or affectionate resentments upon it; which is *unthankfulness*.

- 4. His Power and Justice, by a bold venturing upon any thing that offends him, as if we neither valued his favour, nor displeasure ; which is fearlessness.
- 2. Outwardly, In our Life and Practice, when by something in them we reproach and vilifie either
 - 1. His Wisdom and Authority.
 - 1. In disputing and striving against his Disposals, when we quarrel at them as unwiseley ordered, and would correct and better them our selves ; which is contumacy or repining.
 - 2. In breaking his Commands, when we reject his pleasure, and prefer our own ; which is Disobedience.
 - 2. His Name, when we use it irreverently, by invoking or calling upon him to judge us according to our faithfulness in what we speak, either customarily and lightly, upon trivial or no occasions ; which is common swearing : Or falsely when we either at present mean, or afterwards perform no such thing, as we promised or affirmed before him ; which is perjury or forswearing.
 - 3. His Word, or Ministers, or other things consecrated to him, when we treat and use them as cheap as common things, in a careless unmannerly way, or as it often happens in mirth and mockery ; which is prophaneness.

And these are such expressions and effects of our hatred of God, as make up the Body of impiety, or transgressions immediately against God himself, all which he has most strictly forbidden.

And then as for the

2. Sort of Love, our love to Men ; it implies in it all the Duties contained in the third Branch of St. Paul's Division, viz. Righteousness ; as shall be shewn in the next Chapter.

C H A P. III.

Of the particular Duties contained under Justice
and Charity.

FOR the third general Duty, Righteousness, or our Duty towards our Neighbour; our love of Men will lead us into the several Laws which it containeth. Whilst in every matter, wherein we are concern'd with them, we have Love for them, we have no Temptation to commit any Sin against them, nor are in Danger of failing in any point of our Duty towards them. *He that loveth his Brother, says S. John, abideth in light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him,* 1 Joh. 2. 10. For the first effect of love, our doing no hurt or injury to any Man, founds all the Laws of Justice; and the latter our doing good and shewing all kindness, founds all the particular Laws of Charity; in which two, are comprehended all those several Duties, which God has enjoyned towards other Men.

The first, I say, founds all the particular Laws of Justice. For in that we do no evil or injury to our Neighbour, nor hurt him by prejudicing his just Rights, or taking away from him any thing that is his; is implied that we do not wrong or endamage him,

1. In his Life, by taking it away either,
 1. In private force and violent assassination, which is Murder.
 2. Under colour of Justice; by a false charge of capital crimes; which is false-witness joyned to Murder, taking away at once both his Life and Reputation too.
2. In his Reputation, by sullying or impairing it through a lying and false imputation of disparaging things to him; which is Slander or calumny.
3. In his belief and expectation, by reproaching and abusing it, either,
 1. By deceiving him against his Right, to his hurt, in a false speech of what is past, or present; which is lying.
 2. By frustrating his expectations, which were raised by our promise of something that is to come; which is unfaithfulness or perfidiousness.

4. In his *Bed*, by invading that, which the Contract of Marriage has made inviolable ; which is *Adultery*.

5. In his *Goods* or *Estate* ; and all wrong herein proceeds, from our *unsatisfiedness* with our own, and our greedy *longing* and ungovernable desire of that which is his ; which is *Covetousness*. The effects and instances whereof are,

1. In *taking away* from him that which is his, either,

1. *Directly*. By secret or open force, and without his knowledge and consent ; which is *stealing* or *robbery* ; or by giving in a false Testimony against him in Courts, to get the same under colour of Law and Justice ; which is a *Complication of Lying, Forswearing, and Robbing*, and is *bearing False witness*.

2. *Indirectly*, Or by *forcing his allowance*, and extorting a necessitated consent from him. Which is done by taking advantage

1. Of his *impotence*, and inability to resist and contend with us ; which is *Oppression*.

2. Of his *Necessity*, when he cannot be without something which we have, and so is forced to take it upon our own terms ; which is *extortion and depressing in bargaining*.

3. Of his *ignorance*, when we out-wit him, and trepan and over-reach him in Bargaining and Commerce ; which is *Circumvention, Fraud or Deceit*. The *wilyness* and subtle Art wherein is called *Craftiness*.

3. In *denying* all kindnesses and good things to him in *unmercifulness, uncharitableness, &c.* Of which I shall discourse under the next Head.

All these particulars of *Justice* now mentioned, are natural effects of *Love to our Neighbour*, in as much as it makes us keep off from offering any *injury*, or doing any *evil* to him. Upon which account S. Paul says of it, that as for these particular Laws of *Justice*, it fulfils them all. Which he shews by an induction of such Particulars, as I have named. *He that loveth another, saith he, hath fulfilled the Law, viz.* that part of it which requires Duties of *Justice* towards others. *For this, Thou shalt not commit Adultery, thou shalt not Kill, thou shalt*

not Steal, thou shalt not bear false Witness, thou shalt not Covet; which are the five last Commandments of the Decalogue: and if there be any other Commandment, it is briefly comprehended in this Saying, Thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self. Now Love worketh no ill, neither these nor any other, to his Neighbour; therefore Love is the fulfilling of the Law, Rom. 13. 8, 9, 10.

And as this first effect of Love to our Neighbour, viz. its keeping us back from offering any injury or doing any evil to him, contains in it all the Laws of Justice: So doth its other effect; our doing all good offices, and shewing kindness to them, comprehend in it all the particular Laws of Charity, wherewith we stand obliged towards other Men.

Love is not only innocent and harmless, and careful to create no trouble, nor occasion any prejudice; but moreover it is all kindness, benevolence and good nature, and diligent in creating all the pleasure and delight it can to its beloved.

Now this goodness, kind heartedness, or desire to please and delight others, will be an universal cause of beneficence or doing good to them, and make us cast to please them in so many ways, and advantage them in so many relations, as we can at any time be placed in. In particular, it will effect these Vertues in the Cases following:

1. As to what we see them to be in themselves, and in this respect it produces in us,
 1. If they are worthy and vertuous, a great Opinion and venerable esteem for them; which is Honour.
 2. If they have honest Hearts, but yet are weak in Judgment and Knowledge, a compassionate sense of their weakness, and an endeavour to relieve them; which is pity and succour.

And if this weakness be instanced in judging those things to be a matter of Sin, and so unlawful for them to do, which no Law of God has forbidden; and which therefore we, who better understand it, see plainly that we lawfully may do; and our practice of it before them, who, distrusting their own skill, are swayed more by our example than by their own Opinions, would draw them on to practise it too, though their own Conscience condemns it, which would be to them a sin; in this Case the way of Loves affording pity and succour,

is by making us foregoe the lawful practice of it at that time ; which is restraining of our Christian Liberty for our Brothers edification.

For this Virtue there was great place in the Apostles Times, among the Christianized Jews. For the Jewish Law placed Religion in forbearing certain sorts of Meats as unclean and unlawful ; and particularly in abstaining from Meats offered to, and set before an Idol God, as it was in the Gentile Sacrifices ; part whereof was afterwards very often brought to the Shambles, to be sold there, as other Meat was, for the use of private Tables, where they would scruple to eat of it, who still retain'd their Jewish Opinions. And the simpler sort and weaker People, who had all along placed so much Religion in these things, could not be brought over without much patience of instruction, and a long usage, to know and see that Liberty, which they had obtained, either to use, or forbear these meats upon their becoming Christians. And whilst the judgments and opinions of many good People, were in these things thus weak ; the Apostles, (that they might secure the innocency of their practice under their error, and prevent their being scandalized or drawn on to do what themselves condemned as evil, through the authority of other Men's Examples, whom they looked upon as wiser Christians,) are wont very much to press this part of Charity, our using of our Christian Liberty, not in all things for our own ease, but for our weak Brethrens edification. Particularly S. Paul is earnest in it, Rom. 14. and 1 Cor. 8.

3. If they are wicked and vicious, this kind-heartedness will effect in us a pious admonition to reduce and reclaim them ; which is friendly reproof.

And whether they be good or evil, weak or strong ; it will produce an affectionate tenderness and concern for them, such as we have for those of our own Blood and near kindred ; which is Brotherly kindness.

2. As to what we see them receive from others. And in this respect , this kindness and desire to please effects in us,

1. If it were good, an expression of pleasure and rejoicing in it; which is *Congratulation*.
2. If evil, then
1. If we cannot redress and remove it, it will make us help to bear it, in concern and sorrow for it; which is *Compassion*.
 2. If we can, it makes us relieve and ease them of it. Which it doth if the evil be
 1. Of want, by supplying it according to our power; which is *Alms and Distribution*.
 2. Of disgrace, by endeavouring to hide and smother it, where it is deserved; which is covering and concealing of our Brethren's defects; and by confuting and wiping it off, where we know they have not deserved it; which is vindicating our Neighbours injured reputation.
 3. As to that place and quality, which they bear in respect of us, this kindness and desire to please will exert it self, if they are persons
 1. Below us, in a freedom of access, and easiness of being spoke with; which is *affability or graciousness*.
 2. Equal to us or below us, in a readiness * to do good Offices, and to make their concern our own; which is *courteousness or officiousness*. And in pursuit of this, in stooping down to some things below our *Rank and Quality*, either in words or actions; which is *condescension*.

And if this courtesie be used towards Strangers, and expresed in entertaining them at our own house; 'tis *hospitality*.
 3. Towards all men whomsoever we converse with, it will beget
 1. A quietness of temper, and tameness of intercourse; which is called *gentleness*.
 2. A fair interpretation, and putting the best sense upon any thing, that is done, or spoken by them; which is *candor*.
 3. A maintenance of good agreement and correspondence with them; which is *unity*.
 4. And as to what we our selves receive from others; this *kindness of nature and desire to please* will produce,
- * *Xερσότης*
says *An-*
dronicus
Rhodius, is
Ἐξοί-
ως εὐποι-
τική, lib.
τεῖ κα-
τεύ.

{ 1. If it were good, a grateful sense and affectionate resentment of it, with a longing desire to requite it ; which is thankfulness.

2: It evil and injury ; then it will effect,

{ 1. * Slowness to take provocation, and to be angry at it ; which is meekness or lenity.

* περιότης
is a virtue
that makes
us δύνασθαι.

φέρει τὴν ἐγκλήματα καὶ ὀλιγωσίας μέτειως, καὶ τὸ μὴ ταχέων; ὁρμῶν δὲ τὴν τιμωρίαν, τὸ μὴ ευκίνητον πέρις ὀργῆς· ἀπικεντρών τῷ οὐθεὶς καὶ αἰφλόνετον.
Andron. Rhod. lib. περὶ πατῶν.

{ 2. When the wrong is such, that we may justly and reasonably be angered at it, an easiness of being intreated, and readiness to be appeased ; which is placableness.

{ 3. And for the requital of the wrong, if it were,

{ 1. Only an affront of light injury, it makes us seek none, but pardon and put it up ; which is forgiving injuries. And instead of that to render kindness in return to it, and such good Offices as are in our power, as praying to God for them, and blessing, or speaking all the good which we can of them as often as we have occasion to mention them, always are, which is doing good to enemies ; or, as our Saviour says, blessing them that curse us, and praying for our enemies, Matt. 5. 44.

{ 2. Too burthensome or scandalous to be past over, so that 'tis fit to punish it : Then in exacting,

{ 1. Punishment, as being an unpleasant work, it makes us bear long before we come to it ; which is long-suffering.

{ 2. Satisfaction, it suffers us not to go to the utmost of what might be exacted ; but through a care of our enemies, as well as of our selves, to take up with such a competency, as is no more than they can bear ; which is mercifulness.

These are such particular Laws of Charity, as naturally flow from this effect of love to men, our kindness and desire to benefit and please them. And all these effects of love

love are parts of Duty towards them, and those several Precepts, which God has commanded us to keep and obey.

And as our *love of men* with this effect of it, *our desire to benefit and pleasure them*, includes in it all the instances of *Charity*: So doth our *hatred of them*, with a *delight to spite and trouble them*, which naturally flows from it, comprehend in it all the contrary instances of *uncharitableness*.

For this *ill-will* and *habitual hatefulnes* of temper, will * πονηρία effect in us, (opposite to *goodness* and a *desire to please and delight others*,) an *universal mischievousness*, or *forwardness σκευῆς εἰς* to make others work, to put them to * *pains and trouble, πένια πάθος* and create them sorrow; which is called *wickednes*. And this will expiess it self in creating our Neighbour discontent and vexation, in all those ways wherein we are concerned with him, or conversant about him.

vitium animi, quo homo inclinatur ad nocendum aliis, etiam sine causa, sed ex quadam in malum proclivitate; qualis est malitia Demonis; quem ea de causa πονηρία appellamur. Tolet. in Cap. I. Ep. ad Rom. v. 29.

For instance,

1. As for any thing, which we see he has,
 1. Of *Vertue and Goodness*; instead of *honouring*, it will make us *wish ill* to him, and *set him at nought*; which is *bating and despising him*.
 2. Of *weaknes* and *ignorance*; it will make us not to restrain our selves at all in the *use of our Christian Liberty*, for his sake; but to act to the utmost of what is lawful, though he be *scandalized* by it, or encouraged, upon the authority of our example, to commit what his own Conscience tells him is a sin; † *Scandal* which is † *scandalizing, or making him to offend*. is an occa-
sion of sin:
 2. As for what we see him do, or receive; if it be
 1. *Good*, it expresses it self in *grief and trouble at it*; which is *envy or an evil eye*.
 2. *Evil*, instead of *raising pity and compassion*, it makes us to take a *pleasure in it*, and to be *glad of it*; which is *rejoycing in evil*.
- And if the evil be
1. Of *want*, it will effect a *refusal of all supply*; which is *uncharitableness*.
 2. Of *disgrace*; then if it were

- { 1. *Unjust and undeserved*, it lets it stick without any endeavours to wipe it off ; which is *not vindicating him*.
- 2. *Just and truly chargeable*, or but any way *suspicious*, instead of concealing, it publishes and proclaims it in disparaging Characters, and Representations of him ; which sort of detraction is *evil-speaking*.

This in the general, as it is shewn in a *forwardness to pass Sentence against men* in undervaluing and disparaging judgments upon what they do or say, overlooking all the Vertues, and detecting only the faults and failings of it, is *censoriousness*.

In the objecting and publishing whereof, from the different *manners and ends* of the publication, it passes under several names.

For as for the *manner*, if that publication be,

- { 1. In their *absence*, in a *softer*, and, as it often happens, in a more *secret* way, under a pretence of favour and kindness to them to get a greater regard to what we say against them ; 'tis *backbiting*. Which when it is not published *aloud*, nor spoken out for *any*, or *all* of the Company indifferently to hear ; but is told in secret, to some *one*, or *more* ; 'tis *whispering*.
- 2. Either in their *absence*, or *openly* and before their face, in a more *violent* and *severer* way, being expressed in *bitter words*, and with great *vehemence* ; 'tis *railing* or *reviling*.

And as for the *end*, if that disparaging publication be

- { 1. To make them *infamous*, by objecting to them,
 - { 1. Our own favours ; 'tis *upbraiding*.
 - 2. Their *failings* ; 'tis *reproaching*.
- 2. To make them *ridiculous*, by exposing their *lesser* and more innocent infirmities, or such as have in them more of shame than mischief ; 'tis called *mocking*.

[†] Maledictio si petulantius jactatur, convitium est, Cic. Orat. pro M. Cælio.

3. As for that Place and Quality, which they bear in respect of us, this *forwardness* to vex and *distaste* them will have these effects.

1. If they are Persons below us, it will exert it self in making us stately, and *hard to be spoken with*, contrary to *affability*; which is *difficulty of access*. And if this *inferiority* be, as we apprehend, in *Parts or Endowments*, it will effect a *contemptuous* and undervaluing behaviour towards them, expressed either in words or actions, for our *support or interest*; which is *affront or contumely*.

2. If equal to us, or below us, in an *aversness* to all good Offices, and an *utter unconcernedness* for them, which is opposite to courtesy, and may be called *uncourteousness*. And as a further effect of this a scorning to stoop down to any thing below us, whereby we may serve or pleasure them; which is a mixture of *pride and ill nature*, opposite to *condescension*, and may be called *stiffness*. And if this *uncourteousness* be towards Strangers, and expressed in denying them *entertainment* when a reasonable occasion calls for it; 'tis *unhospitable-ness*.

3. Towards all Men with whom we converse, it will beget,

1. A *fowardness of temper*, and *imperious churlishness of intercourse*, opposite to *gentleness*; which is *surliness*.

2. A *cross interpretation*, and † *perverting to an ill sense*, all that is done or spoken by them, opposite to *candour*: which is *malignity*.

3. An *unquietness of behaviour*, in picking quarrels, and creating difference with them; which is *turbulence and unquietness*.

4. As for what we receive from them, it will produce,

1. If it were good and beneficial, an *utter disregard of it*, and *unconcernedness of him who did it*; which is *unthankfulness*.

2. If evil and injury, then

1. A *hasty catching at the smallest provocation*, and a *sudden violent displeasure upon it*, which is *passionateness, anger or fierceness*. The expressions whereof are,

i. In

† *κακοή-*
θεια, δέιτο-
δητὶ τὸ χεῖ-
εγν από-
λαμβάνειν
α παντα.

Arist.

Rhet. l. 2.

c. 13.

- { 1. In *strife* of arguing and debate, *variance*.
- 2. In *earnestness* and violent degree of heat, *bitterness*.
- 3. In *loudness* and noise of words, *clamour* or *brawling*.
- 2. When 'tis once admitted, a retaining a *lasting impression* of it in our minds, and malicious thoughts and designs against him who did it; which is *hatred*, *wrath*, *enmity* or *malice*.
- 3. A great difficulty in laying this conceived grudge aside, and being appeased when they seek for a reconciliation; which is *implacableness*.
- 4. An *impatient desire* of requiting the injury, and returning it upon him who offered it; which is *revenge*. Some particular expressions whereof are, instead of *blessing* or good language, and *praying for them*, a return of *cursing*, or reproachful speech and *imprecation*.

And in effecting this *requital*, it will produce in exacting,

- 1. *Punishment*, as being a most pleasant and desired work: *hastiness* and *impatience*, opposite to *long-suffering*.
- 2. *Satisfaction*, a going to the utmost limits of power and extremities of infliction; which is *rigour*.

And all these Particulars, as they are most natural effects, and expressions of *ill-will* and *hatred* towards our *Neighbour*, are transgressions also of the Law of *Charity* towards him, and so many several instances of disobedience, which under this Head of *uncharitableness* God has most straitly forbidden.

And from both these general *Laws of Justice* and *Charity to our Neighbour*, or our keeping off from all things that may offend and injure him, and doing all that may please or any way delight him, will result that *state of good agreement* and intercourse of friendliness, which is called *peace*. Which, as it implies an *union of minds* opposite to *Controversies* and *Disputes*, is called *unanimity*; and as containing an *agreeableness* and mutual correspondence of *hearts* and *affections*, *concord*.

In order to the procurement of this *peace*, there is required, : In

- { 1. In the *temper*, such a mixture of *love* and *quietness* as renders Men *tame* and *contented* under the present state of things, and averse from contention and controversie ; which is *peaceableness*.
 2. In the *practice*, a doing such things as,

- { 1. Prevent *strife*, whether that be done,
 { 1. Towards our *Equals* and *Inferiors*, by complying and bearing with their *weaknesses*, and going from our own *Liberty* where the exercise of it would give offence and cause difference ; which is *condescension* and *compliance*.
 2. Towards our *Governours*, by keeping within our own *Sphere*, and medling only with those things which are parts of our own *Duty*, not incroaching upon their *Office*, or thrusting our selves into their *Administration* ; which is *doing our own business*.
 2. Compose and put an end to it, and this is done by *making amends*, and recompencing that *contumely* or *wrong* which occasion'd it ; which is *satisfaction for injuries*.

And a care not only thus to preserve peace our selves but also to maintain it amongst others ; by an *industrious endeavour* to keep up a right understanding and agreement amongst Men, and when they happen to differ, to reconcile them and make them friends again ; is *peace-making*.

And then from the two general transgressions opposite to these, *viz.* *injustice* and *uncharitableness* to our *Neighbour*, or an *industrious aversness* from all things that may please and advantage him, and a *forwardness* in all things to hurt and vex him, will arise that *state of difference*, and intercourse of ill *Offices*, which is called *enmity* : Which as it implies a *separation and clashing of hearts* and *affection*s ; is called *discord*.

To the production of this evil state concurr

- { 1. In the *temper*, such a mixture of *heat* and *ill-nature*, as renders Men *restless* under their present state, and pleased and delighted in scuffling and *strife* ; which is *unpeaceableness*.

2. In the *practice*, a doing such things, as at first raise and engender, and afterwards torment and maintain it ; and of this sort, besides all the instances of wrong and injustice, which we heard of before, is,

- 1. An *envious strife* of being better thought of and out-doing one another ; which is *emulation* or *provoking one another*.
- 2. A *going beyond our own place or business*, and either *usurping upon other mens Offices*, or *sawcily intermeddling* with their affairs ; which is *Pragmaticalness*, or *being busie-bodies*. And this, when it is taken up in *reporting between the Parties at odds*, such things as we have heard or seen, which are fit still more to *exasperate their Minds*, and to *widen the Breach*, is *tale-bearing*. Which when it is of things, not only *seen*, but even *suspected*, and in a secret dissembled manner ; is *whispering*.

And if the Difference was at first occasioned by *injury* and *wrong*, that which goes most directly to continue it, is *avowing* what was done, and making no amends for the same ; which is *not satisfying for injuries*.

And for the outward effects and expressions of this enmity and discord ; it shews it self,

- 1. In a *struggling* for mastery and victory ; which is *strife or contention*.
- 2. In *separating* themselves into *Parties* and *Companies*, according to the difference of their love or hatred, and of their espoused interests ; which is *Division or Faction*. And this in *religious affairs*, when the obstinate espousal that leads on to it is of *damnable Opinions*, is *Heresie* ; when of *needlessly Separated Parties*, it is *Schism*.
- 3. A rude concourse of *Parties* in scuffling and blows ; which is *Tumult*.

So that besides all the Particulars above-mentioned, which are contained under the general Heads, *Justice* and *Charity*, there is included moreover in this third Head of Duty, *Righteousness*, all these Laws of *Peace* which result from the combination of them both.

And as for all the things which are commanded or forbidden by all these Laws of *Justice*, *Charity* or *Peace*, they are due to our *Neighbour*, in the greatest latitude and utmost generality of that Name, as it signifies any whom we have to do with of *all mankind*.

The *Jews*, indeed were of a narrower *Spirit*, and of a more contracted *kindness*. They thought themselves bound to exercise all that *Justice* and *Charity* which their Law required, towards the *men of their own Nation*, or such of the *Gentiles*, who leaving their Heathen Idolatries would become *Proselytes*, and turn to their Religion. But as for all the world besides, they accounted themselves *disobliged* from all expressions of *kindness*, and *good affection* towards them; nay, even from *all intercourse of common civility*, and *conversation* with them. They would not so much as come under their *Roof*, or eat with them at the same *Table*, or either give or receive any *civilities* or friendly expressions from them. S. Peter, when he entred into the house of *Cornelius*, a *Gentile Centurion*, told them, that they *all knew very well, how it is not LAWFUL for any Man that is a JEW to KEEP COMPANY, or COME IN unto one of ANOTHER NATION*: For which cause he himself had not come to them, had not God taught him to correct his *Country-custom*, and to *call no man*, of what *Nation* soever, *common* or *unclean*, *Acts 10. 28*. And upon the account of this freedom which he then took, the *Christian Jews*, who were of the *Circumcision*, contended with him when he came up to *Jerusalem*, reproving him for this. That he went into men uncircumcised, and did eat with them, *Acts 11. 2, 3*. The *Woman of Samaria* wondred, that *Jesus*, being a *Jew*, should vouchsafe to ask so much as a *Cup of cold water* from her who was a *Samaritan*; this being the stiffness of the *Jewish Principle*, *To have no dealings with the Samaritans*, *John 4. 9*. Nay, to that height of unkindness had they arrived, as to deny even the most common *Offices of Humanity and Charity*, to shew the way, or give directions for a journey to any *Gentile*

* Non mon- man: Which several of the learned * Heathens have
 strare vias smartly reproved, and most justly complained of. All
 eadem nisi which they did upon a supposition, that the † Neighbour,
 sacra coen- to whom love and kindnes was required by their Law,
 tenti: Questi- was only a Fellow Jew, a Brother-Israelite, and a man of
 tum ad fon- their own Nation. Which narrow and contracted sense they
 tem solos thought they had good reason to fix upon it, from an ex-
 deducere preption in their own Law, *Lev. 19.* where in the repeti-
 verpos. Juv. Sat.
 4. Apud tion of this great and general Duty of *Love to our Neigh-*
ipsoſ fides *bour,* the word *Neighbour*, is set in conjunction with, and
obſtinat.i, explained by one of the Children of their own People. For
mifericordia thus 'tis said, *Thou ſhalt not avenge, nor bear any grudge a-*
in promptu: *gainſt the Children of thy People, but thou ſhalt love thy*
ſed adver- *Neighbour as thy ſelf.* v. 18.

Thus limited and confined was the Jewish Love; God had chosen them out of all the Nations of the World for a peculiar people, and had hedged them in from the rest of mankind, by peculiar Laws and a peculiar Government. Tac. Hist. And upon this they concluded, that whatsoever God required of them, he did it as their political King, and as the particular Head of the Jewish Nation; and that he intended those Laws which he gave them, as Rules for their behaviour towards their own Brethren, and Fellow Subjects, not towards Strangers of Foreign Nations.

† Excipit But as for our Lord and Sovereign Jesus Christ, he is a Governour, and has enacted all his Laws, not for the guidance of any one Nation or People, but of all the omnes Gen- World. He told his Disciples when he sent them out to tiles, cum dicit proxim- preach the Gospel, That all power was given unto him both in Heaven and in Earth; and thereupon commissioned them to go out, and proclaim his Laws, not to the Jews alone, but to all Nations, Mat. 28. 18, 19. And by this universality of his Empire, he has taken away the partition-wall which was between Jews and Gentiles, having made them both one, Epheſ. 2. 14. So that now there can be no further colour or prenre for a limited and restrained affection; all the World by this means being now again made one People, Fellow Subjects and Brethren, and Neighbours unto one another.

Whatever the Jews conceived of their Laws therefore, 'tis plain that all the Laws of Christ, which commanded all manner of Justice, Charity, and Peaceableness, and forbid all expressions of uncharitableness, injury, and unpeacableness.'

peaceableness towards our Neighbours, make these things due from us to all mankind. It is not either *distance of Country*, nor *contrariety of interest*, no nor, what is most of all presumed to exempt us from the obligation of these Duties, *diversity of opinion or persuasion in matters of Religion*, which takes away from any man his right to all that kindness and advantage from us, which all these fore-mentioned Laws give him. But of whatsoever *Country, Calling, or Religion* he be, he is the Neighbour here meant, to whom all these instances of Love, which are the particular Laws of Duty, must be performed.

And this our Saviour has determined once for all, in his answer to the Lawyer, Luke 10. For when he put the Question to him, *Who is my Neighbour*, to whom the Law commands all these things to be done? ver. 29. Jesus answers him by a Parable, that it is every man in the World whom he may at any time have to do with, although he be never so much a *Stranger* to him, nay, of a party and opinion in Religion never so contrary unto us. For what Religion was ever more *odious* unto any one, than the *Samaritan* was to the *Jews*? So great a detestation had they of it, that when they would give a Name of the vilest ignominy and greatest hatred to *Christ* himself, they told him he was a *Samaritan*, and joined with it such a farther Character, as they thought would best suit with it, *his being possessed with a Devil*. *Say we not well*, answer'd they, *that thou art a Samaritan, and hast a Devil?* Joh. 8. 48. But yet for all this height of enmity between the *Jews* and *Samaritans*, he tells the *Jewish Lawyer*, who demanded of him, *who was his Neighbour*, that a *Jewish man* fell among Thieves, who wounded him, and left him half dead; and that a *Samaritan* coming by, had compassion on him, and bound up his wounds, and took care of him. Hereby insinuating, That any man, though so contrary to him in Religion as these two were to one another, is the Neighbour whom the Law intends; and therefore in full answer to his Question, he bids him, *Go, and do so likewise*, Luke 10. 30, to 38.

C H A P. IV.

Of our Duties to Men in particular Relations.

BUT besides all these Laws contained in the general Command of *Love* to our Neighbour, which require something of us, to be performed or forborn towards *all Mankind*; there are yet some more particular instances of it, which make some things due from us, not as we are left at large towards *all Men indifferently*, but as we stand more peculiarly related towards *some*: whether that relation be,

- { 1. *Publick and Political*, of *Prince and Subjects, Ministers and People*.
- { 2. More *Private and Domestick*; as is that between
 - { 1. *Husband and Wife*.
 - { 2. *Parents and Children*.
 - { 3. *Brethren and Sisters*.
 - { 4. *Masters and Servants*.

For in all these special Relations, *love to our Neighbour* exerts it self in *special effects*; which are all such peculiar Laws, as bind us, not towards *all men indifferently*, but *only towards them whom we stand so related to*.

To begin with the first.

1. The first relation, from whence result several effects, of *Love*, and instances of *Duty* towards *some particular Men*, *distinct* from what we owe to the *rest of all Mankind*; is that which is between *us*, and our *Publick or Political Governours and Rulers*. And because we are Members of *two great Societies*, *one a Society in things outward and temporal*, for *our happiness in this World*, which is called the *State*; and the *other in things sacred, spiritual and eternal*, for *our happiness in the next World*, which is the *Church*; and God has his *Representatives and Vicegerents* in them both: Therefore under this Head, are *two sorts of effects of Love and instances of Duty*.

- { 1. Towards *Civil Governours*, viz. *Kings and Princes*.
- { 2. Towards *Ecclesiastical*, viz. *Biskops and Ministers*.

i. Then

I. Then towards our Publick Civil Governours, our Kings and Princes, the fruits of Love, both in abstaining from all evil, and shewing all kindness and good-will to them; will be as follows:

{ 1. Since they are both placed above us, and set over us, our Love to them will produce in us, both an opinion of their preheminence and excellency, as being God's Deputies and Viceroyes here on Earth, which is Honour; and the bearing of an awful regard and behaviour towards them, as to such, who can of right command and punish us; which is Reverence.

2. A readiness, and resolved industry, to maintain and support them in their Persons and Government, either,

{ 1. By doing such things towards it, as are in our own power, viz.

{ 1. For the maintenance of their grandeur, in a willing payment of such contributions, as are appointed for it; which is Paying Tribute and Customs.

2. For the preservation of their Lives or Reigns, by revealing to them such Plots or Practices as make against them, and by endeavouring all that in us lies, according to our promises and obligations of allegiance, to maintain and preserve them; which is fidelity or loyalty.

2. For things that are above our power, by recommending them earnestly to Almighty God, that he would bestow them on them; which is praying for them.

3. A more direct owning of their Authority and Pre-
fidence over us, by carrying suitably,

{ 1. To the things which they command, in doing or performing them; which is Obedience.

2. To the penalties, which upon our omission or transgression they impose, by a quiet suffering and resting under them; which is Subjection.

All these are effects of Love to Kings and Princes, and so many particular Commands of God, and Instances of Duty in this relation.

And opposite to them, are all the contrary effects and prohibitions of hatred and ill-will towards them.

For from our averseness to all good Offices, and our readiness to create offence and evil to them, which are the natural effects of our hatred of them, will flow,

1. Our having undervaluing and lessening thoughts of them in our *Minds*, by looking *only*, or *chiefly* upon their failings and defects, and esteeming them *no better than common Men*; which is *dishonour*. And if this be expressed in a *lightness* and *contemptuousness* of behaviour towards them, which argues us to have no *fear* or *awe* of them, but to neglect and despise them; 'tis *irreverence*. Which, when it breaks but further into *reproachful Speeches*, and a discovery or inveighing against their defects, is, as *S. Jude* calls it, *speaking evil of Dignities*, *Jude 8*.
2. A *seeking* through our *envy* and *ill-will* to them, to *lessen* or *destroy* their *Persons* or *Power*; or at least to withdraw all our own contributions towards the maintenance, and support of them; by *denying*,
 1. Such things as are in our *own Power*,
 1. Towards the sustaining of their *splendor* and *grandeur*, in refusing to bear our share of the charge towards it, in *paying Taxes* and *Tribute*,
 2. Towards the preservation of their *Lives* and *Government*; in not helping and defending them, but either plotting, and endeavouring our selves to give away their Lives and Kingdoms unto others; or consenting to, and concealing them that do so, contrary to our obligations and promises of *allegeance*; which is *traiterousness*.
 2. Such things as being *above our power*, might yet be obtained for them from God at our *request*; which is *neglecting to pray for them*.
 3. A more direct *disowning*, and casting off their Power and Authority over us, by going cross,
 1. To their *Commands*, in omitting what they enjoin, or doing against it; which is *Disobedience*.
 2. To their *injunctions* and *penalties*, by not submitting and subjecting our selves to them, but violently resisting and opposing them; which

is called by S. Paul *resisting of power, or (f) (f) ἀνθε-*
standing up against it, Rom. 13. 2. And this, *συνόπτει τῷ*
when it is made by great Numbers, (as it will *δέχεται*).
be, when it is not only a secret attempt, but an
open and avow'd resistance, wherein none will
have the Heart to engage against them without
Numbers,) and when it goes on to extremities ;
when Men are, as the Apostle there says, (g) set *(g) αὐγή-*
in array and posture of defence against it, and θαρρούντες
ready by force of Arms to contend and wage *τῆς ἔστιας.*
War with it ; is *Rebellion.*

And all these are effects of *hatred* to Princes, and instances of Disobedience in this relation.

And then,

2. For the other sort of *publick Governors*, viz. those of the Church, as are *Bishops* and other *Ministers*, the effects of *love* in *shewing all kindness*, and in *keeping back from all evil and offence* towards them, will be as follows.

1. A good and awful *opinion* of them, and of their Office in our *Minds*; looking on them as Men that bear the *great Character of Ambassadors from Christ*, as S. Paul calls them, 2 Cor. 5. 20. and are commissioned by God to treat with us in a matter of *incomparably the highest concernment*, viz. our *eternal Salvation*; And this is *Honour*, or *esteeming them highly in love*, though not for their *personal worth*, yet for their *works sake*, 1 Thess. 5. 13. Which honour is expressed,

1. By such an *awfulness* of behaviour, and *respectful, loving carriage* towards them, as argues in us a *just sense of the Greatness and Majesty of Christ* whom they represent, and of the *goodness of that Concern* which they come about ; which is *reverence*.

2. By making such *outward provisions* for them, as may at least set them *above*, and secure them from *contempt*, although it keep them *below envy* ; and that is the *honour of maintenance*, whereof S. Paul speaks, 1 Tim. 5. 17. And as for those things which are not in our power to confer upon them, by recommending them to God's boun-ty, in *praying for him*.

2. As to our *Lives*, a careful heed and observance of those things, which, as the Ministers of Christ, and in his Name, they teach and enjoyn us ; which is, *Obedience*.

These are the Fruits of Love, and instances of Duty towards our *Spiritual Rulers*, the *Bishops* and *Ministers* of Christ's Church.

And opposite to all these, are the effects of *hatred*, or doing nothing towards them that may *benefit* and *please them*, but all things that may any way *vex* and *offend* them. In particular,

1. In our *Minds*, a *low* and *disparaging opinion* of them, looking on them as persons of no worth or value, and setting at nought both them and their *Office* ; which is *dishonour*, or *setting them at nought for their works sake*. And this is outwardly expressed,
1. In *words*, by *vilifying* and *undervaluing* them, either in picking up, and proclaiming their *Faults* and *failings* to reproach their *Persons*, or in talking to *disparage* and *debase* their *Office* ; which is *speaking evil of Ministers*. And if this be in smart jests and opprobrious mirth, to render them and their *Calling* *ridiculous*, 'tis *mocking* them.
2. In *contemtuos* and *slightful behaviour* towards them, thereby shewing that we have no regard or value for them ; which is *irreverence*.
3. In denying them all *outward maintenance*, such as should preserve them from want, and from meanness and contempt ; which is *not providing for them*. And if this be instanced in taking away from them, either by *force* or *fraud*, those earthly Properties and *just Dues*, of *Tythes*, &c. which the Piety of good People has most solemnly devoted to God for their use, and which our *Country Laws* have confirmed to them ; it is *stealing of consecrated things*, or *sacrilege*.

And as for thole things, which must be derived to them by God's peculiar *Bounty* and *Providence*, a neglect to seek them at God's hands on their behalf ; which is *not praying for them*.

2. In our *Lives* and *Actions*, a proud neglect, or rejecting of what they impole, and acting against those things; which, in the name of *Christ*, and as his *Messengers*, they enjoyn us; which is *Disobedience*.

All which are the *effects of Hatred*, and *Breaches of Duty* against them.

And these are the several effects of *Love* and *Hatred*, and the particular commanding and forbidding Laws, which God has given us for the measure of our more special Duties to this first sort of Neighbours, our publick Governours both in *Church* and *State*. And,

2. As for the other sort of *relation*, which finds some *special Duties*, distinct from those which we owe to all Mankind in common, viz. that which is more *private* and *domestick*; in as much as a *Family* is compounded of several states and conditions of People, whereof some are *Parents*, some *Children*, some *Masters*, and some *Servants*, it includes in it these four,

1. That of *Husband* and *Wife*.
2. That of *Parents* and *Children*.
3. That of *Brethren* and *Sisters*.
4. That of *Masters* and *Servants*.

1. The first and principle *domestick relation*, wherein Love has some peculiar effects that bind us then particularly when we are in that condition, is the relation betwixt *Husband* and *Wife*. And here *Love*, through its forwardness to delight and benefit, and its great averseness in any thing to give offence, will have these effects:

1. Such as are *mutual* and *common* to them both; as are,
 1. A most tender care and heightned kindness, arising from the most intimate union and nearness that is betwixt them; which expresses it self chiefly,
 1. In the partaking in each others blis and misery, or being both equally concerned in those things, which befall either; which is communicating in each others condition.
 2. In the bearing with each others infirmities, and not falling into hard thoughts and estrangedness upon them.

3. For those things which are not in their power to bestow, in seeking them mutually on each others behalf from God by *Prayer*.
2. A faithful performance of that appropriate use of each others Bed, which they promised mutually at marriage; and this is *fidelity*. Which must include, both their not admitting others into it, and not separating and shutting out each other from it, which S. Paul calls *rendering due Benevolence*, 1 Cor. 7. 3. to their Lives end.
2. Such as are particular, and concern them in *special*, one towards the other; either,

1. The *Husband* towards the *Wife*.

And because the relation of a *Husband* implies *power* and *dominion*, that these may be rendered as easie and grateful as may be, the effect of Love here will be such a *tempering* and *sweetning* of them, as makes them contribute as much as may be to her pleasure and contentment; which it doth by making him,

1. When it is for her benefit, to employ all his *power* and *authority* to procure her *necessaries*, and *due conveniences*; which is providing for her, or giving honour, i. e. * *maintenance* to her, because She is the weaker *Vessel*, as S. Peter says, and so unable to provide it for her self, 1 Pet. 3. 7; and also to guard off all *inconvenience*, and *injury* from her; which is *protection* of her.
2. When 'tis over her as his *Subject*, to lay them in great measure aside, and to win her rather by the *sweetness* of *love*, than by the *force* of *authority*, which is *flexible*, *winning* *Government*. And this, as it causes him to yield to her in several things, which in strictness of power he might stand upon; is *compliance* and *condeſcenſion*.

2. The *Wife* towards the *Husband*.

And the relation of a *Wife* implying *subjection* and *dependance*, the effects of *Love*, which doth nothing that *affronts* or *injures*, but all things that may any ways *pleasure* and *delight*, will be,

* *Tiμην.*

1. An opinion of his preheminence and authority over her, which is honour. And this, as 'tis joyned with a fear of offending him, that expresses it self in *respectful carriage*; is reverence.
2. A free and forward dispatch of all such things, as she knows he either *likes*, or *requires*, which is *obsevance* and *odedience*.
3. In *undergoing restraint*, a chearful submission of her self to his pleasure; which is *subjection*.

And opposite to these effects of Love, which are so many bounden Duties; the effects of *ill-will* and *hatred*, which are so many sins in this relation, will be as follows:

1. Such as are *mutual* and *common* unto both; as are;
 1. An *unaffectedness* in each others condition, and an *intensibleneis* in *one part* of those things which befall the *other*; which is *unconcernednes* in each others condition.
2. A not bearing each others *infirmitiess*, but either cutting out work and exercise for them, by doing or speaking such things, as are fit to irritate; which is *provocation*: Or being ill-affected towards each other upon them; which, as it is expressed in a *privation* of all that tenderness of love and kindness, which should result from the intimate nearness of their relation, is *estrangedness*: And as proceeding higher, to *ill-will*, and expressions of an imbibtered mind, as it causes for the present wrangling and debate, it is *strife* or *contention*: And as festering into an habitual displeasure, and lasting regret, it is *hatred* or *enmity*; and as breaking out in a proclamation of each others weakneses, *evil-speaking* or *publishing* each others infirmitiess.
3. As doing no good to each other themselves, so seeking none from God, which is *not praying for each other*.
4. An avoidance of each others Bed, which S. Paul calls *defrauding one another*, and *Denying Due Benevolence*, 1 Cor. 7. 3, 5; and being False to the Marriage Covenant, by admitting others into it, which is *Adultery*. But if this unfaithfulness

ness really be not, but through the suspicious temper of one side is only groundlessly presumed; it is Jealousie.

2. Such as are peculiar, and concern one particularly towards the other, either,

1. The Husband towards the Wife, and here the effects of hatred will be,

1. A neglecting to use his power for her benefit; through an insensibleness of her wants, and regardlessness of what hardships she struggles with, either as to necessaries or conveniencies, which is not providing for her, or not maintaining her; or as to injuries and affronts, which is not protecting her.

2. Using all his authority over her by a harsh and magisterial peremptoriness of Command, which is imperiousness; or by an unyielding, inflexibleness of will and pleasure; which is uncompliance, uncondescension.

2. The Wife towards the Husband; where it will produce a light, and low opinion of him, which is disconour; which being joyned with a contemptuous and fearless behaviour towards him, is irreverence. And this will effect,

1. A backwardness and utter averseness to do unbidden what will delight and please him, which is non-observance; or what is required and commanded by him, which is disobedience.

2. A refusal or open reluctance; in undergoing that restraint which he imposes; which is casting off his Yoke, or unsubjection.

2. The second domestick relation is that of Parents and Children; and in this, the effects of Love, and particulars of Duty, are either,

1. On the Parents side towards their Children, as are,

1. From the extraordinary nearness that their Children have to them, being parts even of their own Bodies, that most heightned tenderness and kindness, which, because it is found in all Animals in nature towards their own Off-spring; is called natural affection.

2. From their Childrens helplessness and wants, their care over them. Which is taken up,

1. With respect to this *World*, and that in behalf,
 1. Of their *Bodies*, by *providing* for them all due *necessaries* and *conveniences*, both whilst they are under them, and against the time that they go out from them; which is *provision* and *maintenance*.
 2. Of their *whole persons* both *Body* and *Soul*, by *training* them up in the best ways they can whereby to render them profitable in their *station*, and useful *Members* of *Society*; which is *good* and *honest Education*. In the management whereof, the using of their *Power* over them, not in a *rigorous* and *austere*, but a *tender obliging way*; is *loving Government*.
 2. With respect to the *next World*, and that is by causing them to be duly instructed in *Religion*, and stamped with *virtuous Impressions*; which S. Paul calls *bringing them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord*, Eph. 6. 4.

And as for those things, which they cannot procure for them by themselves; *begging* of them from God's bounty by *Prayer for them*.

2. On the *Childrens* side towards their *Parents*, where, besides the Duty of *natural affection* common to them with the *Parents*, *Love effects*,
 1. An *opinion* of their *preheminence* and *authority over them*, which is *Honour*: And this, when it is joyned with an *awful regard* to them, and a *fear* of offending them; is *Reverence*.
 2. Whilst they are *under them*, a *ready chearfulness* in *performing* all that they *command*, which is *obedience*; and in *bearing* and *undergoing* all that they *impose*, which is *submission or subjection*.
 3. When either they are *under them*, or gone from them, a *readiness* upon occasion to require all their *care* and *kindness*, in *supporting* and *relieving* them; which the Apostle calls *requiting their Parents*, 1. Tim. 5. 4.
 4. And in such things wherewith they cannot supply them of themselves, *entreating* God on their behalf; which is *praying for them*.

And opposite to these effects of *Love* which are so many commanded Duties, the effects of *hatred* in this relation, which are so many particular forbidden sins, are these that follow:

- 1. In *Parents* towards their *Children*, it will produce a *coldness of heart* and *unconcernedness* for them, which is being void of natural affection. Which will effect,
 - 1. As to their *care* for them, a neglecting to provide for their present maintenance, or future support; which is condemned by S. Paul under the name of *not providing for those of our own house*, 1 Tim. 5. 8.
 - 2. As to their *Government* and *Conduct* of them, an untoward exercise and employment of it where there is no *just need*, or a neglect of it where there is. For it will produce,
 - 1. As to the things that are *good and necessary* for the *Children*, an utter *carelessness* of them, when the *Parents* neglect to teach and inure them to such things as may render them *dutiful* to God, and *useful* in Society; and contrariwise accustom and bring them up in *idleness, vanity* or *wickedness*; which is *irreligious* or *evil education*.
 - 2. As to things that are *unnecessary and indifferent*, a great *strictness* and *severity*, whether it be in commanding or imposing things without *reason, necessity* or *convenience*; or convenient things with *imperious harshness* or *unreasonable rigour*, only out of wantonness of authority and plentitude of Power, which instead of exciting them to a *cheerful Obedience*, is apt to move in them an *irksome regret*; which is provoking them to anger.
 - 3. And instead of praying for them, *not praying* at all, or using passionate curses or imprecations; which is *imprecating* or *praying against them*.
 - 2. In *Children* towards their *Parents*, it will cause, besides the want of *natural affection*,
 - 1. A *low esteem*, and undervaluing opinion of them in their minds; which is *dishonour*. And this, if it be joyned with a *contemptuous disregard* and

and fearless behaviour towards them ; is *irreverence* : Which is expressed,

1. In *disowning* or *disregarding* them by reason of their meanness ; which is *being ashamed of them*.
 2. In *entertaining* their *weaknesses* and infirmities not with pity and sorrow, but with *sport* and *delight*, turning them into a matter of mirth and laughter. This is a mixture of *hatred* and *scorn*, and is *mocking them*.
 3. In *divulging* in words, and, instead of *concealing* and *excusing*, *publishing* their faults and defects with reproaching of them, and inveighing against them upon the account thereof ; which is *malediction*, or *cursing of them*.
2. Whilst they are under them, a *spiteing* and going *cross*,
1. To their *Commands*, by *not performing* what they require, but doing against it ; which is *Disobedience*.
 2. To their *impositions*, by not submitting to that *restraint* and *burthen* which they lay upon them ; which is *contumaciousness*, or *casting off subjection*.
 3. To their *interest*, by imbezelling or *secret wasting* of their substance ; which is *robbing them*.
3. When either they are *under* them, or gone *from* them, not recompencing their *care* and *kindness*, by their *relief* and *service*, when their Parents need requires it ; which is *not requiting them*.
4. And instead of *praying for them*, *not praying at all*, or hasty wishing ill to them ; which is *imprecation*.
3. The third sort domestick relation, which concludes some instances of *Love* that are not due towards *all Men* indifferently, but peculiarly towards *some* ; is the relation of *Brethren* and *Sisters* ;

And these being so *nearly allied*, and partaking of the *same blood* ; *Love* betwixt them will exert it self,

1. In a most *passionate concern* and *tender affection* for each other ; which, because we seem to be carried on to it by the very force and instinct of

our nature, without any help of reason, or need of being argued up to it, is called natural affection.

2. And as an effect of this, a helping each other by a reciprocal service, and, when occasion requires, by communicating mutually of their substance; which St. Paul calls a providing for those of our own Family, I Tim. 5. 8. And in those things which they cannot afford themselves, seeking them mutually for each other by prayer.

And opposite to these, which are Breaches of Duty are the effects of Hatred; effects of Love, which are instances of Duty, betwixt them, which will effect,

- { 1. An unconcernedness for each other, or a want of natural affection.
2. A not helping of each others needs, or not providing for them: And not praying to God in each others behalf, but making ill wishes mutually; which is imprecation.
4. The fourth and last relation, is that of Masters and Servants. And in this, the effects of Love, and instances of Duty, are either,
- { 1. From the Masters to the Servants. Where Love will produce,
- { 1. A care of their Servants, as of Members of their own Families; both,
- { 1. Of their Bodies, in provision and maintenance.
- { 2. Of their Souls, in religious instruction and admonition.
2. A Government of them that is not harsh and severe, but kind and gentle, such as we expect and desire that God, who is our Master, should use over us; which therefore is called by the Apostle our dealing justly and equally with them, i. e. so as we would have our Master to deal with us, Col. 4. 1. In particular observing,
- { 1. In our Commands to them, Mercy as well as Justice; in requiring nothing that God forbids, which is unlawful; nothing for imperiousness and commands sake, only that we may create them work though we our selves receive no benefit, which is unprofitable; and even where we

we are advantaged by it; nothing lastly, which is either above, or at least very hard and oppressive to their power and strength; which is unproportionable. And this is kindness and equity in commanding.

2. In our threatenings and punishments, tenderness and pity; in not threatening and punishing out of will and power, or either more or oftner than need requires; which the Apostle calls forbearing, or moderating threatening, Ephes. 6. 9.
3. In our rewards, paying them punctually and justly what they have wrought for; which is punctual payment of the wages of the Hireling.
4. And besides all the kindness which we can do for them *our selves*, whether by rewarding or promoting them, procuring moreover all the good which we can for them at God's hands, by praying for them.

2. From the Servants to the Masters:

And the nature of service, being a setting over all our power and abilities for the time, to their benefit whom we are to serve, in all things where we are to serve them; the effects of Love in this relation will be,

1. An opinion, and esteem in the mind, of their Masters preheminence and lordship over them; which is Honour. And this being joyned with an awfulness and fear of offending him, who has both Authority to command, and Power to punish; is Reverence.
2. In things which they know he desires and delights in, a forward care, and ready industry to please him, by doing them before they are bidden; which is observance. And this among other things effects,
 1. As for his, or his Families defects at home; concealing or excusing them.
 2. As for his reputation abroad, when 'tis injured, vindicating and defending it.
 3. A care of their Master's Goods, and carrying suitably to his pleasure; always exercising,

1. In those things which their Master *intrusts* them with, a *true discharge* of that trust and care of the things committed to it ; which is *Fidelity*,
2. In those things which their Master *commands* a ready *performance* and execution of them ; which is *Obedience*. The *vigorous application* of themselves to the dispatch whereof, is *diligence*. Which they are to shew, not only from the *terrour* of their Master, so long as his eye is over them, which the Apostle calls *eye-service* ; but from the ready *willingness* of their own *Minds* ; which will make them do it whether he be with them, or absent from them ; which in the same place is called *obeying with good will and from the Heart*, Ephes. 6. 6, 7.
3. In those things which he *imposes* and *inflicts*, whether they be *just*, or even *unjust*, if *light* and *tolerable*, a *quiet* and *uncontending submission* ; which is *patience* and *subjection*.
4. And in those things wherein they cannot advantage him themselves, commanding him to Almighty God, by *Prayer for him*.

And opposite to these, are all the effects of *Hatred*, which will be instanced in these Particulars, that are all so many breaches of Duty.

1. From the *Masters* towards their *Servants*, it will produce,
 1. A *carelessness* of what becomes of their *Servants*, whether as to,
 1. Their *Bodies*, in not *duly maintaining* or *providing for them*.
 2. Their *Souls*, in *not catechizing* or *instructing of them*.
 2. A *Government* of them which is *cruel* and *rigo*
rous : And this being a dealing *otherwise* with them, than we are willing to be dealt with our selves ; is *unequal Government*. Which is expressed,
 1. In the *injustice* and *severity* of our Commands, when we enjoyn *what God forbids*, which is *unlawful* ; or *what tends not to benefit our selves* ; but

but only to vex and trouble them, which is *unprofitable*; or what is either above their strength, or exceeding hard for it; which is *unproprietary*: And this is *unjustness*, and *wantonness*, and *rigour in commanding*: Which, if it be acted in a *contemptuous haughtiness*, and *peremptory way*; is *Imperiousness*.

2. In the *injustice* and *hardship* of our *threatnings* and *punishments*, when we use them *without occasion*, or more than needs when there is *occasion* for them; which is *immoderate threatening or punishing*. And this, as it vents it self in *bitter words*, and *vehemence* of *vilifying expreſſions*, a fault that is incident to *proud, hasty Folk, and lordly Masters*, is *railing at them*.
3. In the *dishonesty* and *dilatoriness* of our *Rewards*, when we either *pay not at all* that which was *covenanted* for their service, or cut it *short*, or *delay it long* when their necessity calls for it *instantly*; which is *defrauding or keeping back the wages of the Hireling*.
3. And besides all the *kindnesses* which we deny them our selves, neglecting to seek for any thing for them at God's hand, by *not praying for them*, or cursing and imprecating them, which is *praying against them*.
2. From the *Servants* towards their *Masters*, where the effects of *hatred* are,
 1. A *disceſteem* and *contemptuous opinion* of their *Masters*, as Persons of no *worth* or *preheminence* above themselves, which is *dishonour*. And this when it is evidenced in a *careless* and *disrespectful behaviour* towards them, which argues them to stand in *no fear or awe* of them, is *Irreverence*.
 2. An *industrious neglect* of such things, as they know are *pleasing* and *acceptable* to him; and venturing upon others, which will *disgust* and *offend* him; which is *non-observance*: Two particular *expressions* whereof are,
 1. As to *his, or his Families defects at home*; a *publishing* and *aggravation* of them.
 2. As

2. As to his reputation abroad, a suffering it to lie under imputations that are undeceived ; which is *not vindicating him*.
3. An endamagement of their Master's Goods, Concerns, and Authority, by shewing,
1. In what their Master *intrusts* them with, *falseness* or *non-performance* ; which is *un-faithfulness*.
And if it be instanced in *making away* such *Goods* or *Money*, as were committed to them,
 1. To their own *luxury* and *pleasure*, by such ways as our Saviour sets down, of *eating*, *drinking* and *keeping ill company*, Mat. 24. 49. it is *wastfulness* of their Master's Goods.
 2. To their own *private profit*, and secret enrichment ; it is *purloining*.
 2. In what their Masters *command*, a *careless omission* of it, or *acting against* it ; which is, *disobedience*. Whether this be expressed,
 1. In *questioning*, and *disputing* the *fitness*, and convenience of what they enjoyn, instead of *doing* and *performing* it ; which S. Paul calls *answering again*, or * *speaking against and contradicting it*, Tit. 2. 9.
 2. In a *slow* and *lazy application* of themselves to it, when they do set about it ; which is *lothfulness*.
 3. In a *laborious dispatch* of what they are commanded, *only* whilst their Master's eye is over them, but slackning all again when he is gone from them ; doing all things out of *dread*, but nothing out of *choice*, and *good will* ; which is *eye-service*.
 3. In what their Master *imposes* or *inflicts*, a *not enduring* or *resting* under it ; which is *contumacy* or *resistance*.
 4. And in such things as God is to bestow on them, as not seeking to him by *Prayer* on their behalf ; but *praying against* them.

And thus we have seen what are the particular effects of love and hatred, both towards *all Men in general*, and also towards *all in those several relations*, wherein we stand concerned with one another in the World. And

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ποντες.

in them are contained all the particular Commands and Prohibitions which make up this third Branch of Duty, *viz.* Righteousness, or our Duty towards our Neighbour. All that God requires of us towards other Men, is only to have a *hearty kindness* for them, and in this manner to express it. And all that he forbids, is only our hatred of them, with all the forementioned effects of it. So that in the above-named instances and effects of *Love*, in *Justice*, *Charity*, *Peace*, with those others in the relations now recited, is comprised the whole of this last Member of St Paul's Division of Duties, *viz.* Righteousness.

Thus at last we have seen what are all the particular instances of those three general Laws, *Sobriety*, *Piety* and *Righteousness*; wherein, if we add two or three more, is comprised the Body of our whole Duty.

If we add *two or three more*, I say; for besides the several Laws already mentioned, there are three particular Duties yet remaining, two whereof are of a more *positive* and *arbitrary* Nature, which Christ has bound all Christians to observe; and they are the Law of *Baptism*, of the *Lord's Supper*, and of *Repentance*.

Baptism is our incorporation into the Church of Christ; or our entrance into the *Gospel-Covenant*, or into all the duties and priviledges of Christians, by means of the outward Ceremony, of washing or sprinkling, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

The *Eucharist* or *Lord's Supper*, is our *Federal Vow*, or repetition of that engagement which we made at *Baptism*, of performing *Faith*, *Repentance* and *Obedience* unto God; in expectation of remission of sins, eternal Happiness, and those other promises which by Christ's Death are procured for us upon these terms: Which engagement we solemnly make to God at our eating *Bread* and drinking *Wine*, in remembrance and commemoration of Christ's dying for us.

Repentance is a forsaking of *Sin*, or an amendment of any evil way upon a sorrowful sense, and just apprehension, of its making us offend God, and subjecting us to the danger, of *Death* and *Damnation*.

And if to all the forementioned instances of those three grand Virtues, which by the Apostle, Tit. 2. 12, 13. are made the summ of our Christian Duty, we join these three additional, whereof the two first are *positive Laws*; we have all that whereby God will judge us at the last

Day, even all those particular *Laws*, whereto our Obedience is required as necessary to *Salvation*.

And thus we have seen what those particular *Laws* are, which the *Gospel* indispensibly requires us to obey. They are no other, than those very instances, which I have been all this while recounting and describing. all which I will here repeat again, and place in one view, for the greater ease of all such pious Souls as desire to direct, or try themselves by them.

A Catalogue of all the foregoing Laws.

The commanding *Laws* then whereby at the last Day we must all be judged, are these that follow.

The Law of *Sobriety* towards our selves, with all its Train, which are the law of *Humility*, of *Heavenly mindedness*, of *Temperance*, of *Sobriety*, of *Chastity*, of *Continen-*
ce, of *Contempt of the World* and *Contentment*, of *Cou-*
rage and taking up the Cross, of *Diligence and Watchfulness*,
of *Patience*, of *Mortification and Self-denial*.

The Law of *Piety* towards God with all its Branches, which are the *Laws of Honour* towards him, of *Worship*, of *Faith and Knowledge*, of *Love*, of *Zeal*, of *Trust and Dependance*, of *Prayer*, of *Thankfulness*, of *Fear*, of *Sub-*
mission and Resignedness, or *Obedience*.

The Law of *Justice* towards Men in all its parts, which will be seen by the contrary prohibitions of *Injustice*.

The Law of *Charity* in all its instances; which are the *Law of goodness or kindness*, of honour for our *Brethrens Vertue*, of pity and succour, of restraining our *Christian Liberty* for our weak Brother's edification, of friendly reproof, of brotherly kindness, of congratulation when they receive good, of compassion when they suffer evil, of alms and distribution, of covering and concealing their defects, of vindicating their injured reputation, of affability, or graciousness, of courtesy and officiousness, of condescension, of hospitality, of gentleness, of candor, of unity, of thankfulness, of meekness or lenity, of placableness, of forgiving injuries, of doing good to enemies, and, when nothing more is in our power, praying for them, and blessing or speaking what is good of them, when we take occasion to mention them, of long-suffering before we proceed

proceed to punish, of *mercifulness* in exacting punishment or *satisfaction*.

The Law of Peace and Concord with all its Train ; as are, the Law of *peaceableness*, of *condescension* and *compliance*, of *doing our own business*, of *satisfying for injuries*, of *peace-making*.

The Law of *love* to *Kings* and *Princes* in all its Particulars ; which are, the Law of Honour, of Reverence, of *paying Tribute and Customs*, of Fidelity, of Praying for them, of Obedience, of Subjection.

The Law of *Love* to our *Bishops* and *Ministers* with all its expressions ; which are the Law of Honour, or *having them highly in esteem for their works sake*, of Reverence, of Maintenance, of *praying for them*, of Obedience.

The Law of *Love* in the particular relation of *Husband* and *Wife* with all its Branches ; which are on both sides, the Law of *mutual concern*, and *communicating in each others bliss or misery*, of *bearing each others infirmities*, of *prayer*, of *fidelity*, of *rendering due benevolence* : On the *Husband* towards his *Wife*, the Law of *providing for her*, of *protecting her*, of *flexible and winning Government*, of *compliance and condescension* : On the *Wives* towards her *Husband*, the Law of Honour, of Reverence, of *Observance* and *Obedience*, of Subjection.

The Law of *Love* in the particular relation of *Parents* and *Children*, with its several effects ; which are, from the *Parents* towards their *Children*, The Law of *natural affection*, of *maintenance and provision*, of *honest education*, of *loving government*, of *bringing them up in the institution and fear of God*, of *praying for them* : From the *Children*, towards their *Parents*, besides the *Duty of natural affection common to both*, the Law of Honour, of Reverence, of Obedience, of Subjection, of *requiring upon occasion their care and kindness*, of *Prayer for them*.

The Law of *Love* in the particular relation of *Brethren* and *Sisters*, with all its instances ; which are the Law of *natural affection*, of *providing for our Brethren*, of *praying for them*.

The Law of *Love* in the particular relation of *Master* and *Servant*, with its several expressions ; which are, on the *Master's* side, the Law of *maintenance*, of *religious instruction*, of *a just and equal Government of them*,

them, of kindness and equity in commanding, of forbearance and moderation in threatening, of punctual payment of the wages of the Hireling, of praying for them: On the Servants, the Law of Honour, of Reverence, of Observance, of concealing and excusing their Master's defects, of vindicating their injured Reputation, of Fidelity, of Obedience, of Diligence, of willing and hearty service, of patient submission and subjection, of praying for them.

To all which we may add the two arbitrary institutions and positive Laws of the Gospel, Baptism, and the Eucharist or Lord's Supper; and when we transgress in any of the instances forementioned, that great and only remedy of Christ's Relation, the Law of Repentance.

This, so far as I can call to mind at present, is a just enumeration of those particular Injunctions and Commands of God, whereto our Obedience is indispensibly required, and whereby at the last Day we must all be judged either to live or die eternally.

But supposing that some particular instances of Love and Duty are omitted in this Catalogue, yet need this be prejudicial to no Man's Happiness, since that defect will be otherwise supplied. For as for such omitted instances, where there is an occasion for them, and an opportunity offered to exercise them, Men's own reason and passion will represent and suggest them, for a Rule of Obedience; and when they wilfully transgress them, their own Conscience must needs check and reprove them, which will be sufficient to them for a rule of trial. For all the Laws of this second, which is the Gospel-Covenant, are so agreeably suited to our natural reason and conscience, that every Man's own mind may be a sufficient Monitor. What our own understanding tells us is fit, and becoming us that we should do; that has God bound upon us by his Laws, and made it our Duty to do. His Precepts are the very same, with the best results, and purest dictates of our own reason; so that every pious and honest Conscience, cannot but of it self approve all that God has enjoyned it. Which God himself has clearly intimated, when he says of all the Laws of the second which is the Gospel-Covenant, that he will put the Laws contained in it into their minds, and write them in their Hearts; so that, in regard they have them so legible within themselves, they shall not need to be still enquiring

quiring of others, and to teach every Man his Neighbour, and every Man his Brother, saying Know the Lord ; and that in this, or that particular you must serve him ; for all shall know him and his Laws, without any other Monitor than their own Conscience from the least to the greatest, Heb. 8. 10, 11.

Besides as for all the Laws of Piety towards God, and of Righteousness towards Men, which make up by far the greatest part of our Duty ; they are only so many several effects, and various expressions of our Love to them. So that he who acts nothing against love, breaks none of all these Laws, but keeps them every one. Whereof Christ himself (who has given these Laws, and who is to judge of our Obedience to them) and his Apostle Paul have given us sufficient assurance, when they both affirm of Love, that, as to these two general parts of Duty, it is the fulfilling of the Law. And therefore any Man who knows what Love is, may quickly understand what is Law ; and when he is about to venture upon any action, it is but asking his own Soul whether it be against Love, and he has his answer whether or no it be against Duty.

And since, whensoever we have occasion for it ; we shall be admonished of our Duty both these ways, both from our reason, and our passion ; though this Catalogue prove defective in some instances, and omit them, that defect can be no danger, seeing it will be otherwise supplied. We may by its help know those Duties, which it mentions ; and by the help of the other two those particulars wherein it fails us. So that we shall still be sufficiently directed in our Duty, and shewed what we should do ; and when we Sin against it wilfully, our own Conscience is privy to it, which will enable us to examine also whether indeed we have done it, or no.

This then may suffice for a particular enumeration of all the Commanding Laws of God, whereto our Obedience is required, as an indispensable condition of our Life and Happiness.

And as for all the forbidding Laws, which contain those things which under the highest pains of Death and Misery we are indispensably required to abstain from, they are these that follow :

The Law against unsoborness towards our selves, with all its particulars; which are, the Law against pride, against arrogance or ostentation, against vain-glory, against ambition, against haughtiness, against insolence, against imperiousness, against dogmaticalness, against envious backbiting, against emulation, against worldliness, against intemperance, against gluttony, against voluptuousness, against drunkenness, against revelling, against incontinence, against lasciviousness, or wantonness, against filthiness, against obscene jestings, against impurity or uncleanness, against sodomy, against effeminateness, against adultery, against fornication, against whoredom, against incest, against rape, against covetousness, against grudging, and repining, against refusing or being scandalized at the Cross, against idleness and carelessness, against fearfulness and softness, against self-love, against carnality, against sensuality.

The Law against impiety towards God, with all its Retinue; which are, the Law against dishonour of him, against atheism, against denying Providence, against blasphemy, against superstition, against idolatry, against witchcraft and sorcery, against foolishness, against headiness, against unbelief, against hating God, against want of zeal for him, against distrust of him, against not praying to him, against unthankfulness for his Mercies at his disposals, against fearfulness of his Power and Justice, against contumacy or repining at his Laws, against disobedience, against common swearing, against perjury or forswearing, against profaneness.

The Law against injustice towards Men, in all its instances; which are, the Law against murder, against slander or calumny, against lying, against unfaithfulness or perfidiousness, against adultery, against covetousness, against stealing or robbing, against bearing false witness, against oppression, against extortion and depressing in bargaining, against circumvention and deceit, against craftiness.

The Law against uncharitableness with all its Train; which are, the Law against maliciousness or hatefulness, against wickedness, against despising and hating them that are good, against giving scandal to weak Brethren, against envy or an evil eye, against rejoicing in evil, against uncharitableness in alms, against not vindicating an innocent Man's reputation, against evil speaking, against censoriousness,

ness, against back-biting, against whispering, against railing or reviling, against upbraiding others with our favours, against reproaching them with their own failings, against mocking, against difficulty of access, against contumely or affront, against uncourteousness, against stiffness or undescension, against unhospitaleness, against surliness, against malignity in passing constructions, against turbulence and unquietness, against unthankfulness, against anger and passionateness, against debate and variance, against bitterness, against clamour and brawling, against hatred and malice, against implacableness after injuries, against revenge, against cursing and reproaching enemies and imprecation of them, against hastiness to punish, against rigour.

The Law against enmity and discord, with all its Dependents; which are, the Law against unpeaceableness, against emulation or provoking one another, against pragmaticalness or being Busie-bodies, against tale-bearing, against whispering, against not satisfying for injuries, against strife or contention, against division and faction in the state, against heresie, and against schism in the Church, against tumult.

The Law against hatred in the particular relation of Subjects towards their Princes, with the several effects of it; which are, the Law against dishonour, against irreverence, against speaking evil of Dignities, against refusing Tribute and Taxes, against traiterousness, against neglecting to pray for Kings, against disobedience, against resisting lawfull Powers and Authority, against rebellion.

The Law against hatred to our Ecclesiastical Governors, Bishops and Ministers, with all the particulars implied in it; which are the Law against dishonour of our Bishops and Ministers, especially against setting them at nought for their works sake, against irreverence to them, against speaking evil of them, against mocking them, against not providing for them, against sacrilege or stealing from them, against not praying for them, against disobedience.

The Law against hatred in the relation of Husband and Wife, with all its Particulars; which are, on both sides, the Law against unconcernedness in each others condition, against not bearing each others infirmities, against provoking one another, against estrangedness, against strife or contention, against hatred and enmity, against publishing each others infirmities, against not praying for each other, against

against defrauding one another, or denying due Benevolence, against adultery, against jealousy : On the Husbands towards the Wife, the Law against not maintaining her, against not protecting her, against imperiousness, against uncompliance, or uncondescension : On the Wife's towards her Husband, the Law against dishonour, against irreverence, against unobservance, against disobedience, against casting off his yoke, or unsubjection.

The Law against hatred in the particular relation of Parents and Children, with all its instances ; which are on both sides, the Law against want of natural affection, against not praying for each other, and imprecation : On the Parents side, the Law against not providing for those of their own house, against irreligious and evil education, against harsh Government, or provoking their Children to anger. On the Childrens, the Law against dishonour, against irreverence, against being ashamed of their Parents, against mocking them, against cursing or reproach, and speaking evil of them, against disobedience, against contumaciousness, against robbing them.

The Law against hatred in the particular relation of Brethren and Sisters, with its effects ; which are, the Law against want of natural affection, against not providing for our Brethren, against not praying for them, against imprecation or praying against them.

The Law against hatred in the particular relation of Master and Servant, with all its expressions ; which are on the Master's side, the Law against not providing maintenance for his Servants, against not catechizing or instructing him, against unequal Government, against unjustness, wantonness, and rigour in commanding, against imperiousness, against immoderate threatening, against railing at him, against defrauding or keeping back the wages of the Hireling, against not praying for them, against imprecation : And on the Servants, the Law against dishonour of his Master, against irreverence, against non-observance, against publishing or aggravating his Master's faults, against not vindicating his injured reputation, against unfaithfulness, against wasting his Goods, against purloining, against disobedience, against answering again, against sloathfulness, against eye-service, against contumacy and resistance, against not praying for them, against imprecation or praying against him.

To all which we must add the two positive and arbitrary prohibitions of the Gospel, the Law against neglecting *Baptism*, and the *Lord's Supper*. And when we wilfully transgres any one, or more of the Commands foregoing, a perleverance in it without amending it ; which is *impenitence*.

And these are those particular prohibitions, whereto our Obedience is indispensibly required by the Gospel, and whereby at the last Day we must all be judged.

And for the performance of all these *Commands*, and keeping back from all these *Prohibitions* when it is become any Man's habitual course and practice ; it is oft-times expressed by the general word *holiness*, as the contrary is by *unholiness*.

C H A P. V.

Of the Sanction of the foregoing Laws.

NOW it is upon our Obedience to all those Laws, which are mentioned in the foregoing Chapters, that all our well-grounded hope of Pardon, and happy Sentence at the last Day, depends. They are that Rule, which God has fixt for the proceedings at that Judgment, whereby all of us will be doomed to live or die eternally. There is not any one of them left naked and unguarded, for Men to transgres at pleasure, and yet to go unpunished : But the performance of every one is made necessary unto Life, and the unrepented Transgression of it threatned with eternal Damnation.

And that it is so, is plain from this, because almost the whole Body of them, viz. all those which are implied in *Piety towards God*, and in *Justice, Charity and Peaceableness towards Men*, are nothing else but instances, and effects of *Love*, which is plainly necessary, and that in the greatest latitude. For the words of the command are as comprehensive, as can be. That thou mayest inherit eternal Life, thou shalt love the Lord thy God, with all thy Heart, and with all thy Soul, and with all thy Strength, and with

with all thy Mind ; which plainly take in our whole affection towards God, and every part and expression of it : *And thou shalt love thy Neighbour as thy self*, which again implies all instances of love towards other Men, seeing not any one of them is wanting towards our own selves : *This do, and thou shalt live*, Luke 10. 25, 27, 28. So that in shewing of them all, that they are *natural effects* of an *universal love*, I have shewn withal that they are *necessary means of Life*, and *conditions of Salvation*.

This is a plain mark, whereby it is obvious and easie for us all to understand, what Laws are necessary terms of Life. For every Man's Heart can inform him, what are the *natural effects of Love*, they being such things as the meanest reason may discern, nay such as every Man's affection will suggest to him. And because they are so, the Apostles themselves, when they set down Catalogues of indispensable Laws, never descend to reckon up all particulars ; but having plainly declared the absolute necessity of an *ample and universal love* in the general, they content themselves with naming some few instances of it, and leave the rest, which are like unto them, to be suggested to us by our own Minds. And the same course they take in recounting those Sins, which are opposite to them, and which, without Repentance, will certainly destroy us. Thus, for instance, in St. Paul's Catalogue of damning Sins, Gal. 5. he doth not trouble himself to name all particulars, but having mentioned several of them, he concludes with this *general intimation* of the rest---*and such like*, v. 28.

But because our belief of the necessity of our Obedience in all the preceding particulars is of so great moment, and it is so infinitely our concern to be fixt and settled in it ; I will here set down such express declarations of it in every one of them, as are to be met with in the Scriptures.

And to begin with the several *Classes* of them in the same order, wherein they are laid down ; for *sobriety* ; and all the particular Laws comprehended under it, we have their sanction set down, and the necessity of our Obedience unto them to our life and pardon, expressed in the following Scriptures.

For the Law of *Humility* and *Lowliness* of Mind, take these :

Put on as necessary qualifications of the elect of God, ho-Humility. ly and belov'd, humbleness of mind, Col. 3. 12. It is this Poverty and Lowliness of Spirit, which must prepare us for eternal happiness. Blessed are the poor in Spirit, Mat. 5. 3. For as our Saviour says, 'tis by learning of him who is meek and low'y; that we shall find rest to our Souls, both here and hereafter, Matt. 11. 29.

And for all the rest, their Sanction is expressed in these ensuing places.

Labour not for the meat that perisheth, but for that which endureth to everlasting life, Joh. 6. 27. This is a necessary evidence, of our being risen with Christ now at present; if ye be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth at the right Hand of God. Set your Affections on things above, and not on things on the Earth, Col. 3. 1, 2. And a necessary condition to our being blessed with him for ever hereafter, the blessednes which our Saviour pronounces, being to those which hunger and thirst after righteousness. Mat. 5. 6.

Add to temperance patience, for he that lacketh these is Tempe-blind, and shall not be looked on as a new man, seeing he rance. has forgot that he was purged from his old sins, 2 Pet. 1. 6, Patience. 9. The fruit of the Spirit, saith S. Paul, is temperance, Continence, or * continence, and it is against this, among others, that * ἐγκέ-there is no law to condemn it, Gal. 5. 23. And to the He-Teta. brews, he lays, that they have need of patience to inherit the promises of life and happiness, Heb. 10. 36. And therefore they must not cast away, but hold fast their confidence, or courageous and † open owning even of a suffering Reli- + ταππή- gion, which hath great recompence of reward; v. 35. It oīar. being to them only, who by patient continuance in well doing, seek for glory and immortality, that God will give eternal life, Rom. 2. 7.

Dearly beloved, I beseech you as strangers and pilgrims, Chastity. abstain from fleshly lusts, which war against the Soul, to vanquish and destroy it, 1 Pet. 2. 11. This Abstinence is one chief thing, which we are called to at our Call to Christianity. God hath not called us to uncleanness, saith S. Paul, but unto holiness, or * purity and cleanness. * ἐκ αἵμα- For this is the will of God, which you are first to per-form before you expect his Reward, your purity or san-ctification, and particularly in one instance, wherein you are so generally defective, that you abstain from fornic-

fornication, and every one of you possess his Vessel or Body in purity or sanctification and honour. And this Commandment you know we gave you by the Lord Jesus's order, so that whosoever among you despiseth it, despiseth not man, but God, 1 Thess. 4. 2, 3, 4, 7, 8. For the wisdom which cometh from above, and which must carry us thither, is in the first place pure or * chaste James 3. 17.

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Contempt
of the
World.

Content-
ment.

Self-denial. Christ said unto them all, If any man will come after me, Taking up the Cross. and be accounted one of my Disciples, let him deny himself, and take up his Cross, and follow me, Luke 9. 23. If Mortification. ye through the Spirit, do mortifie the deeds of the Body, saith S. Paul, ye shall live, Rom. 8. 13. Yea, its affections and desires, as well as its sinful actions, are to be mortified and brought under. For they that are Christ's, whom he will own for his at the last Day, and reward accordingly, †Rom. 13. have crucified the flesh, with the affections and † lusts or desires thereof, Gal. 5. 24.

Sobriety.
Watchful-
ness.
Diligence.

They who would not be accounted in God's judgment, as Children of the night and of darkness, S. Paul says plainly, must watch and be sober, 1 Thess. 5. 5, 6. For watching is necessary unto bliss; Blessed is that Servant, whom his Lord when he cometh shall find watching, Luke 12. 37. And give diligence, to make your calling and election sure, saith S. Peter, for this is one of those things, which if you do you shall never fall, either from your duty, or your reward, 2. Pet. 1. 10.

Thus are all the particular Laws recited in the first Class, Sobriety, expressly bound upon us, by all our hopes of Heaven; and our obedience to them is made plainly necessary to our life and pardon, when we come to be judged according to them.

And

And the Sanction is the same, for all the Particulars of the second Class, our piety towards God, as will appear by *Piety*, the following Scriptures.

Them that honour me, saith God, I will honour, or make Honour: honourable; but they who despise me, shall, on the other hand, be as lightly set by, 1 Sam. 2. 30. *And if any man Worship, be a worshipper of God, him, said the man who had received his sight most truly, he heareth,* Joh. 9. 31.

He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved, but he Faith: that believeth not shall be damned, Mark 16. 16. *For this is the will of him that sent me, saith our Saviour, that who-soever believeth on me, may have everlasting Life,* Joh. 6. 40.

40. And what we hear of *Faith*, is also said of *Knowledge*: *For this is life eternal, saith Christ, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent,* John 17. 3.

The good things, which neither eye hath seen, nor ear hath heard, i. e. the joys of Heaven, are laid up for those who love God, 1 Cor. 2. 9. *And if any Man love God, the same is Love: known, or accepted, by him,* 1 Cor. 8. 3.

It is he who believes Christ's promises, or hopes on him, Hope: that shall never be ashamed, Rom. 10. 11. *And we trust Trust: in God, saith S. Paul, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of those that believe or trust in him,* 1 Tim. 4. 10. *And a Dependence: cheerful dependence upon God's Providence, for our food and maintenance, &c. and not being sollicitous about them,* is one of the particulars of Christ's Law, Matt. 6. 25. *the Sanction whereof is expressed in the fifth Chapter in these words, He who breaks the least of these Commandments, shall be least in the Kingdom of Heaven, i. e. according to the Hebrew manner of speaking, he shall be none at all,* v. 19.

Pray without ceasing, 1 Thess. 5. 17. *It is this that Prayet: must bring all blessings down upon us. For the Pro- mize is, Ask and you shall have,* Matt. 7. 7. *But no Petition being put up, no Grant can in reason be expe- cted;* You have not, saith S. James, because ye ask not, James 4. 2.

God's Mercy is on all that fear him, Luke 1. 50. *I will Fear: warn you, saith our Saviour, whom you shall fear; fear God, who after he hath killed, hath yet further power to cast you into Hell, if you are fearless and contemptuous,* I say unto you, Fear him, Luke 12. 5.

Thankful- In every thing give thanks, for this is the will of God concerning you, 1 Thess. 5. 18. It is one part of our walking as Children of the light, to give thanks always, and in all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. Ephes. 5. 8, 20. And the Apostle's Exhortation is, Offer to God the sacrifice of praise continually, giving thanks to his name; and that because we have no abiding City, but seek one to come, Heb. 13. 1, 15.

Zeal.

The Church of Laodicea, to the end that she may be rich and cloathed, is advised to be zealous and to repent, Rev. 3. 18, 19. And one effect of a godly sorrow and a saving repentance, S. Paul saith, is zeal for God and goodness, 2 Cor. 7. 11.

Obedience. In Christ Jesus or the Christian Religion, neither Circumcision* availeth any thing, nor Uncircumcision: but keeping of the Commandments of God, 1 Cor. 7. 19. For it is this only, that gives right to life and happiness; Blessed are they that do his Commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, Rev. 22. 14.

**Subjection.
or Resign-
edness.**

Our Fathers after the flesh corrected us, and we gave them reverence, and shall we not much rather be in subjection to the father of spirits, and live? Heb. 12. 9.

And thus are all the particulars of this second Class of Duties, Piety, bound upon us with the same sanction as the former, and our Obedience to them all, is made necessary to our being pardoned at the last Day, and eternally rewarded by them.

**Righteous-
ness.**

And the same is further true, of the Duties of the third Class, righteousness towards our neighbour.

Justice.

For as for the necessity of Justice, S. Paul is clear, Owe no man any thing, but to love one another, Rom. 13. 8. For if you wrong and defraud one another, saith the same Apostle, know that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6. 8, 9.

**Charity,
Goodness or
Kindness,**

And as for all the particular Laws of Charity, their necessity will appear from what follows.

**Brotherly-
kindness
Honour of
our Bre-
thren for
their Ver-
tues, &c.**

Be kindly affectioned one to another, as if you were of the same Blood and * near Kindred, with brotherly love, in honour, † preferring one another for your Vertues before your selves, and * κοινωνεῖτε. much more vindicating each other from the unjust aspersions of others. Distributing or Communicating to the necessity of saints; given to, or earnestly

* φίλοσογγρα.

† Phil. 2. 3.

* κοινωνεῖτε.

neftly † pursuing hospitality : bless * or speak well of them Hospitality, which persecute you ; bless and curse not. Rejoyce with them that do rejoice, in congratulation ; and weep with them that weep, in compassion. Be of the same mind one towards another ; mind not state and high things, but be affable and condescend, by * going even out of your way to bear them company to men of low estate. Recompence to no man evil for evil ; but if thine enemy hunger, feed him ; if he thirst, give him drink, Rom. 12. 10, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20. Doing good All which Precepts, with several others delivered in that Chapter, he gave in command, as he tells them, through the Grace or Authority of the Apostleship, which is here and * elsewhere called Grace, given unto him, v. 3. and *Rom. 1.5. that is a plain Proof of their indispensable necessity. For & 15. 15. he that despiseth you Apostles, says our Saviour, despiseth me, Luke 10. 16. And if the transgression and disobedience of the law of Moses spoken to him only by Angels in the mount, received a just recompence of reward, such Offenders dying † without mercy ; how shall we escape the same Death or greater, if we neglect, and much more if we despise so great a means of salvation, as Christ's Gospel and his Laws are, which was at first spoken to us by the Lord Jesus himself, who is far above all Angels, and was afterwards confirmed to us by his Apostles, or them that heard him ? Heb. 2. 2, 3.

The Wisdom from above, and which must bring us thither, is gentle, easie to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, James 3. 17. And S. Paul bids the Colossians, to put on as the elect of God, holy and beloved, these Vertues; viz. bowels of * mercies, kindness or † courtesie, meekness, long-suffering or forbearing one another, and * forgiving one another ; if any man hath a quarrel against any, even as Christ forgave you, so do ye, Coloff. 3. 12, 13, 15. The fruits of the spirit, saith the same Apostle, are love, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, meekness ; against such there is no condemning force of any Law, Gal: 5. 22, 23.

The description, which S. Paul gives of Charity, is this, Charity suffers long in great meekness before it be provoked, and is kind or † courteous towards all men ; 1 Pet. 3. 8, 12.

Speaking
well of E-
nemies.
Congratu-
lation.
Compassion.
Unity.
Affability.
Condescen-
sion.
Doing good
to Enemies.

† Heb. 10.
28.

Gentleness.
Placable-
ness.
Merciful-
ness.
Courtesie.
Meekness.
Long-suf-
fering.
Forgiving
injuries.

* James 2.13.

† χειρότητα.

* Mat. 6. 14,

15.

is not puffed up with supercilious and haughty behaviour, (for men do not assume state over those Persons whom

Affability. *they love) but is lowly and affable; doth not behave it* * *unseemly or contumeliously, but with much respect*

and civility; seeks not her own Praise and Glory, at other mens cost or discredit; is not easily provoked, or not

*(x) & περι-
ευελατ.* *provoked to the (x) height, but mixes mercifulnes with*

anger, opposite to rigor; rejoices or (y) congratulates the truth, or sincerity and integrity of men; and as for their

infirmitiēs, it bears or (z) covers and conceals all things that are defective; believes all things to their advantage,

*(y) ζυ-
γαιης.* *in putting the most candid and favourable sense upon any* thing which they do or say; and where there is no excuse

(z) σύγεια. *for the present, it hopeth all things good for the future;* and for injuries offered to it self, it is not hasty and vin-

*Covering
mens de-
fects.* *dictive, but patiently endureth all things, 1 Cor. 13, 4, 5,*

Candor. *6, 7. And for the necessity of that Charity, which includes*

Patience. *all these, S. Paul is express in the same Chapter, when he*

tells us, that although he have all faith, and all know- ledge, and bestow all his goods to feed the poor, yea, and

give his body to be burned in Martyrdom, yet, if still he have not Charity in all these other effects, and in that lati-

tude wherein he is here described, it profiteth him nothing,

ver. 2. 3.

I say unto you, love your enemies, and bless, or

(a) speak all the good you can of them that curse, or

reproach you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for

them who despitefully use you, and persecute you, that by

this means you may be the children of your father which is in

Heaven, Matth. 5. 44, 45. Which Laws are of the number

of those, which are contained in Christ's Sermon on the

Mount, at the beginning whereof he declared, that who-

soever should break the least of these Commandments which

he was then about to deliver, and should teach men to do so,

he should be least, or none at all, in the Kingdom of Heaven,

ver. 19.

Thou shalt not hate thy Brother in thy heart; thou shalt

in any wise rebuke thy Neighbour, and not suffer sin to rest

upon him: I am the Lord, who will surely punish thee,

if thou neglect this, Lev. 19. 17, 18. But when any

man, by such charitable admonition, doth convert a Sin-

ner from the error of his way, let him for his encoura-

gement know this, says S. James. that he shall save the soul

of

Friendly
reproof.

of him who is reproved from death, and besides that, (b) Their shall hide also a multitude of his own sins, James 5. 19, practice in 20. And as for the method of performing this, what course we are to take, and how far we are to proceed in it, our Saviour may seem to have set that down, according to what had obtained in the (b) Jewish custom, Matth. 18. If thy Brother shall trespass against thee, take this course to reclaim him: Go first and tell him of his fault, privately, between thee and him alone; if he shall hear thee, and amend upon thy admonition, thy work is done, and without any more ado, thou hast gained thy Brother. But if he be not to be won thus easily, and will not hear thee admonishing him thus privately by thy self alone; then give not over, but go one step further; take with thee one or two more to join with thee in thy admonition, that by the authority of their concurrence, he may be the more prevailed upon, and that the reproof now appearing, not in thy mouth alone, but also in the mouths of thy two or three Witnesses, every word may have the more effect, and be the firmlier established. And if he shall be incorrigible still, and neglect to hear both thee and them too; yet give him not over for a lost man, but try one means more, which is the last that I look for, tell it unto the Church, and reprove him before all them. But if he prove obstinate against this last means, and neglect to hear them; then thou hast discharged thy self, and needest to look no further after him till he shews a better mind, but mayest let him be unto thee thenceforward as a lost and hardened man, whose Conversion thou art no longer bound in vain to labour after, such as we are wont to express by a heathen Man and a Publican, v. 15, 16, 17.

Take heed, lest by any means this Christian Liberty of yours become a stumbling-block, or scandal to those that are weak, by seducing and encouraging them, on the authority of your example to do that against their Conscience, which you, who know more, do according to it; and so through thy knowledge, shall thy weak Brother perish, for whom Christ died: But when ye sin so against the Brethren, and by such unrestrained liberty, wound gendi sunt their weak Consciences, you sin against Christ, 1 Cor. 8. 9, Hypocritæ. 11, 12. It is a most uncharitable thing, and without Charity all things else will profit nothing, 1 Cor. 13. 3. For if by Drusius.

if thy brother be grieved, or scandalized with thy liberty in meat or other things, now walkest thou not charitably, if for all that thou abstain not from it ; destroy not him therefore with thy meats for whom Christ died, Rom. 14. 15.

But if any Man will still be prone to give Offence, his Sentence is severe and dreadful. For he that shall offend, or scandalize one of these little ones, which believe in me ; 'twere better for him that a milstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea, Mat. 18. 6.

And thus are all the particular Laws of Charity, and Justice also, imposed with the same strictness, and under the same necessity with the former.

Peace. And that the sanction is the same in the Particulars of the next Class, viz. Peace ; will appear by what follows.

Peace. *Follow peace with all men, without which no man shall see the Lord, Heb. 12. 14.* It is not enough that we accept of it when it is offered, but we must enquire it out and seek after it ; nay, if it be denied us at first, we must endeavour after it still, and ensue it when it flies from us ; and that not coldly or carelessly, with weak desires, or little industry, but with the greatest concern, and utmost diligence that possibly we can. *He that will love life and see good days, saith S. Peter, let him seek peace and ensue it, 1 Pet. 3. 10, 11.* Be of the same

(e) 1 Pet. 5. 8. (e) mind, saith S. Paul, among those Laws which he enjoins by his Apostolical Authority, Rom. 12. one towards another ; mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. If it be possible, and as much as in you lies, live peaceably with all men, ver. 16. 18. Yea, we must pay dear for it rather than want it, and bear long, and suffer much from Men before we contend with them, and use all arts and shew all kindness to pacifie and reconcile them. *Not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing ; but contrariwise blessing, or Benediction,*

knowing this That we are thereunto called in Christianity, that from our Lord Christ, who was so exemplary for it, we should inherit this Virtue of (f) speaking well and kindly of Men, or blessing, 1 Pet. 3. 9. I say unto you, says our Saviour, resist not the evil, or injurious (g) man, which is the way to inflame and consummate contention, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn

(f) εὐλογία.

(g) τῷ πόνῳ.

F) be-
rancce or
Long-suf-
fering.

to him the other also, and if any man will sue thee at the Law, and take away thy Coat, bear a little more, and rather than contend with him, let him have thy Cloak also, Mat. 5. 39, 40. Which Precepts, with all the others delivered in that Sermon, are bound upon us, as was observed, under the Forfeiture of all Right to Happiness and Heaven, ver. 19.

The Wisdom which cometh from above, and which must raise us thither, is peaceable, saith S. James, Jam. 3. 17. And S. Paul reckons it as one of the Commandments, which were given to the Thessalonians by the Lord Jesus, that they should study, even so as to be (b) ambitious of it, to be quiet (b) φίλον- or to acquiesce in their present state, and not to in- μετάδει. rrupt the quiet and tranquillity of other men, and to do Quietness. their own business, 1 Thess. 4. 2, 11. Doing our

The method of procuring Pardon for Injustice, is pre-
scribed thus in the Law of Moses, if a man commit a trespass against another Man, and be guilty, he shall come and recompence his trespass with the principal thereof, and over and above that (i) add unto it the fifth part thereof more (i) Luke and give it unto him against whom he hath trespassed, Numb. 19. 8.

5. 6, 7. And Christ, although he do not define the par-
ticular proportion of the Compensation, doth yet esta-
blish this Satisfaction and Reconciliation of our selves to
our injured Brother in the general, as an indispensible Du-
ty, without which nothing, not our very Prayers or Obla-
tions, shall be accepted, If thou bring thy gift to the
Altar, and there remembrest that thy Brother hath ought a-
gainst thee, having been injured by thee; leave there thy
gift, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy Brother, by
giving him Satisfaction for thy Offence, and then come and
offer thy gift, Matth. 5. 23, 24. Which command is
moreover one of those, whose sanction is the loss of heaven,
ver. 19.

Blessed are the peace-makers; for they shall be called the children of God, Matth. 5. 9. Peace-ma-
king.

And thus we see of all the Laws, which make any thing due to God, ourselves, or all mankind in general; whether they are instances of sobriety, piety, justice, charity, or peace; that our obedience unto them all is made necessary unto Life, and that they are bound upon us by all our Hopes of Happiness and Heaven.

And the sanction is the same for all those Laws, which make some things due in particular relations likewise.

Laws in the relation of Subjects to our Kings. For as for the Laws, that bind us in the particular relation of Subjects to our Kings, their Sanction appears plainly from these places:

Kings. Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers; for there is Subjection. no Power but of God; whosoever therefore resisteth the Power, resisteth the Ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves Damnation. Wherefore you must needs be subject, not only for Wrath, but also for Conscience-sake. render therefore to all their Dues; as these following are, to.

Paying Tribute and Custom. Kings, Tribute to whom Tribute is due, Custom to whom Custom, Fear or Reverence to whom Fear, Honour to whom Honour. (i) Rom. 13. 1, 2, 5, 7. And all these are part of Reverence that Catalogue of Laws, which he begins to reckon up, and Honour. and declares to them by his Apostolical Authority, Chap. (i) 1 Pet. 12. ver. 3.

2. 17. These things speak and exhort, rebuke with all Authority, and let no man despise thee, who shall surely be punished as Obedience a Contemner of Christ if he do. Put them in mind to be (k) 1 Pet. subject to Principalities and Powers, to (k) obey Magistrates, 2. 2, 13, Tit. 2. ver. ult. & Chap. 3. ver. 1.

14, 15. I exhort therefore first of all, that Prayers of all sorts, supplications, intercessions, petitions, and giving of thanks, be made for all Kings, and such as are in Authority; for this is in it self, and will render us good and acceptable in the sight of God our Saviour, 1 Tim. 2. 1, 2, 3. and a proof moreover of that good conscience, which Timothy is charged to keep, Chap. 1. ver. 19.

And for Fidelity and Allegiance, this may suffice to shew its necessity, that among the men of corrupt minds, who are reprobate concerning the Faith, and who should render the last times perilous, S. Paul reckons Traitors, 2. Tim. 3. 1, 4, 8.

So that as for all the aforementioned Duties of this relation, we see their indispensable necessity, and that as ever we hope to be saved by them, we must perform and obey them.

Laws in the relation of people to their Pastors. And so it is in the particular Law of the next relation, that of people towards their spiritual Governours, viz. their Bishops and Ministers, as is plain from these Texts following.

We beseech you, Brethren, to know them who labour among you, and are set over you in the Lord, and to esteem or honour them very highly, or (*l*) more than abundantly, in for their love for their works sake, *i Thess. 5. 12, 13.* And this is one of those Precepts, which are pressed upon them, as they would be *Children of light, and not of darkness, ver. 5;* and as they are to avoid wrath, and to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, ver. 9.

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Let him who is taught or (m) catechized in the Word, (n) 1 Tim. communicate unto him that teacheth or catechiseth in all (n) 5. 17, 18. good things. Be not deceived, God is not mocked; for what- 1 Cor. 9.4, soever a man soweth in this and other things, that shall he also reap, Gal. 6. 6, 7. • 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14.

(o) Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves ; for they watch for your souls. Pray for us, Heb. 13. 17, 18. Which are part of the Precepts enjoyned as the way, whereby to serve God acceptably, who is a consuming fire to destroy and devour all who dare offend him, Chap. 12. 2 last verses.

περὶ ὀπίσκοπων αἰκιαλεθῆτε ὡς Ἰησὸς Χειρὸς τῷ πατέρι καὶ τῷ πρεσβύτερῷ ως πτῖς Ἀποστόλοις, Ignat. Ep. ad Smyrn. Ed. Voss. p. 6.

And for the necessity of the several Laws, in the particular relation of *Husband and Wife*; that will appear by what follows.

For as for that Love which is strictly required betwixt them, it ought, says S. Paul, agreeably to the Words of God at the institution of Marriage, They two shall be one Flesh, to be such as People have for their own Bodies, Ephes. 5. 28: 31. Which cannot imply less, than an affectionate concern, and communicating in each others joy cating in or sorrow ; for if one member of a man's Body suffer, all the rest, as the Apostle observes, suffer with it ; and if one be honoured, all the rest rejoice with it : the Members all having the same care one for another, 1 Cor. 12. 25, 26. And also a bearing with each others infirmities, as every man will do with thole of his own Body ; and praying for each other. And for particular Duties, we are told in the same fifth Chap. to the Ephesians, that the Husband must condescend and comply with his Wife, and part, not only with his own self- will, but, even with his own life for the greater Advantage. Husbands love your Wives, saith he, even as Christ condescended to love the Church, and gave himself for it. So ought men on, &c.

to love their Wives, as their own Bodies. And how that is, we all experience, for no man ever yet hated his own flesh, for her. but protecteth it and provideth well and duly for it, or Protecting nourisheth and cherishest it, v. 25. 28, 29. In which love her. of his Wife, as of his own flesh, is implied moreover, that Flexible, his Government of her be (p) flexible and obliging ; nothing winning Go- being more contrary to our self-love, than to be command- vernment. (p) Col. 3. ed in peremptoriness and rigour. And then, as for the par- 19. ticular Duties of the Wife, she is bid to be observant, or to 1 Pet. 3. 7. take care how to please her Husband, 1 Cor. 7. 34. To sub- On the mit her Will to his, and to be ready to perform what he Wife's side enjoyns, as she is to do what God commands her. Wives Observance, submit yourselves unto your own Husbands, as unto the Lord ; Subjection. for the Husband is the Head of the Wife, as Christ is of the Church : therefore as the Church is subject unto Christ ; so let (q) Tit. 2. the Wives be unto their own (q) Husbands in every thing, Eph. 5. 15. 5. 22, 23, 24. And this submission she must shew in re- Respectful Carriage, and such behaviour as argues in her a fear to give offence. Let the Wife see that she reverence her Reverence. Husband, v. 33. And all these commands enjoining Duties both on one side and on the other, which are delivered in that Chapter, are required, as part of our walking as Children of the light, and providing what is acceptable unto Rending the Lord, v. 8, 10. Let the Husband render unto the Wife Due Bene- Due Benevolence, and likewise also the Wife unto the Husband. For the Wife hath not Power, &c. 1 Cor. 7. 3, 4, 5. Fidelity on Marriage is honourable, and the Bed undefiled ; but Whore- both sides. mongers and Adulterers God will judge, Heb. 13. 4.

Obedience, Wives are to be taught to be obedient to their own Husbands, that the word of God, or Doctrine of the Gospel, be not on the blasphemed, Tit. 2. 5. Let Wives be in subjection to their Wife's. own Husbands. For with this in old time the holy women adorned themselves, even as Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling and observing him as her Lord, whose Daughters ye are as long as you do well, and imitate her; but no longer, 1 Pet. 3. 5, 6.

So that all the Laws in this relation, are enjoined under the same necessity, and confirmed with the same sanction, as the former.

And as for the Particulars of the next relation, they are imposed with the same strictness.

Children. For natural affection, the want of it, as S. Paul affirms * 2 Tim. 3. plainly, makes men * worthy of death, Rom. 1. 31.

3.

The Children ought not to lay up [†] Treasure, or provide for [†] Snowe; the Parents, but the Parents for the Children, 2 Cor. 12. 14. [¶] And if any man provide not for his own house, he hath denied On the Pa- the Faith of Christ, which indispensibly enjoyns it; nay, de- rents side, spising such a notorious and necessary Precept of mere Na- Main- ture, he is worse than any honest Infidel, 1 Tim. 5. 8. nance or Provision.

Fathers provoke not your Children to wrath against you, by a harsh and austere Government of them, but rule them with Love and Gentleness; and bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. And ye Children, on the other side, * obey your Parents in the Lord, for this is right. ^{* Col. 3. 20, 21.} [†] Honour your Father and Mother, that it may be well with you, Ephes. 6. 1, 2, 3, 4. Which Precepts are of the number of those, which he imposes on them as parts of their walking as Children of the light, and proving what is acceptable unto the Lord, chap. 5. 8, 10. ^{† Mat. 15. 4.}

If any man have Children or Nephews, let them first learn to shew piety at home, and require their Parents, for this is good and acceptable to God. But if any man provide not for his own, especially those of his own house or Family, as Parents are in the first place, he hath denied the Faith, and in his unnatural actions, is worse than an honest Infidel, 1 Tim. 5. 4, 8.

And thus are all the Laws of this relation likewise established in the greatest strictness, and our obedience to them is made plainly necessary to our bliss and happiness.

And as for the particular Laws of natural affection, and communicating upon occasion to each other of their Substance, relation of in the relation of Brethren and Sisters; they are proved to be necessary in the proof of the former: For the same places, which require them in that relation, require them in this also.

And then, as for the Particulars of the last relation, viz. that of Masters and Servants; they are of equal necessity with all the foregoing.

If any man provide not for his own house, whereof Servants are one part, he hath denied the Faith, and is worse than an Infidel, 1 Tim. 5. 8.

Masters, give unto your Servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in Heaven, who will punish your unequal dealing towards them, Col. 4. 1. If ye despise the cause of my man-servant, or cf

my maid-servant, when they argue in their own defence and contend with me; what then shall I do when God rises up? and when he visiteth, what shall I answer him? Job 31. 13, 14.

Punctual *Thou shalt not oppress an hired Servant that is poor and payment of needy, whether he be of thy Brethren, a Jew or a Stranger, of the Gentiles. At this * Day thou shalt give him of the Hire his hire, neither shall the Sun go down upon it; for he is poor, and setteth his heart upon it,* Deut. 24. 14, 15.
 * Lev. 19. *Weep and houl, O ye rich men, says S. James, for the miseries that shall come upon you; for behold the hire of the Labourers, who have reaped down your Fields, and which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth against you, and the Cries are entred into the ears of the Lord, who hearkens to them, and in great Justice will one Day avenge them,* James 5. 13. *Jer. 22. Labourers, who have reaped down your Fields, and which is of you kept back by fraud, crieth against you, and the Cries are entred into the ears of the Lord, who hearkens to them, and in great Justice will one Day avenge them,* James 5. 13.

I, 4.

Religious instruction. *To Masters do the same thing (viz. good, whether to their Bodies, in providing for them, or to their Souls, in religious instruction, with a good will, in expectation of Forbearing a reward from the Lord) to your Servants, forbearing threatening; knowing that your Master also is in Heaven, who has threatned you if ye neglect this necessary Duty, neither is there any respect of persons with him,* Ephes. 6. 8, 9.

On the Servants side, Honour. *Let as many Servants as are under the Yoke, count their own Masters worthy of all honour, that the name of God be not blasphemed, as certainly it would upon their contrary practice. And if any man teach otherwise, he is proud, knowing nothing,* 1 Tim. 6. 1, 3, 4.

Obedience. *Servants, obey in all things your Masters according to the Flesh; not with eye-service, but in singleness or * sincerity of heart, without Fraud or double dealing, as persons fearing God. And whatsoever you do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, not to men;* knowing that of the Lord you shall receive the reward of the inheritance for such your obedient practice; for in thus serving them, you serve the Lord Christ,

Reverence. *Col. 3, 22, 23, 24. Servants obey your Masters with fear and trembling; not with eye-service, as Men-pleasers, but from the heart, with good-will, doing service as to the Lord, who demands this of you, and not only to men; knowing that whatsoever good or ill in this particular any man doth, the same shall he receive of the Lord,* Ephes. 6. 5, 6, 7, 8.

Exhort Servants to be obedient to their own Masters, and Observe to please them well by all manner of observance in all things, vance. either as to their Reputation in vindicating it, when 'tis injured, or concealing such defects as would stain and sully it, tiring their or their other Interests, shewing all good fidelity. For the injured reputation. Grace of God, which brings salvation, hath appeared to all Concealing Men, teaching them, as ever they hope to be saved by it, their den- that denying all ungodliness and worldly lusts, whereof feets. the contrary practices to these are the effect and off- Fidelity. spring, they should live soberly, &c. Tit. 2. 9, 10, 11, 12, 13. And moreover, these Precepts are part of that sound Doctrine, which Titus is required to speak, v. 1. in opposition to their Doctrine, who in the Verse before, are said to be abominable, disobedient, and to every good work reprobate.

*Servants be subject to your own Masters, with all fear or reverence; not only to the good and gentle, but also to the * hard or hasty and forward. For this is thank- * ἀκολούθης. worthy, if for Conscience towards God you patiently endure grief, suffering wrongfully. This is acceptable to God, and likewise necessary for you; for even hereunto were you called, that you may be like to Christ, who has left you an example of such patient suffering for this end, that you might follow his steps, 1 Pet. 2. 18, 19, 20, 21, &c.*

And thus are all the particular Laws of this last relation, imposed in the same strictness of Obligation, and under the same severe sanction with all the rest that went before.

And as for the Law of Baptism, and of the Lord's Supper, and of Repentance and Amendment whensoever we fail in any of the former, which are all the commanding Laws yet remaining; their necessity will appear from the Scriptures following.

Except a man be born again of Water as well as of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God, says Baptism. Christ to Nicodemus, John 3. 5. And when Christ sends his Apostles out to preach to all the World, the Doctrine which he commissions them to declare is this, He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, Mark 16. 16.

Take, eat, this is my Body; Do this in remembrance of Lord's Supper. me. For as often as you eat this Bread, and drink this per. Cup,

Cup, you do shew forth the Lord's death, which you must do till he come the second time to judge us, and to punish all impenitent Transgressors, as well of this, as of all his other Precepts, 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25, 26. And this command, he further says, he received of the Lord to deliver to them, v. 23. And for the fuller proof of the necessity of this Sacrament, that is very remarkable, which as some have observed, the Jewish Doctors have taken notice of, viz. that whereas God forbade twenty three things under pain of being cut off from the people, to them who committed them; yet in the whole Old Testament there are but two things commanded under that penalty, to thole who should neglect them; and they are Circumcision and the Passover, which are Types and Figures of and answer to our two Sacraments, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. And for that necessity particularly of the Passover among the Jews, which answers to the Eucharist among us Christians, where, as the Apostle says, Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us, 1 Cor. 5. 7. we have a plain Text at the institution of it, Exod. 12. Whosoever, in the Feast of the Passover, eateth leavened bread from the first Day to the seventh Day, that soul shall be cut off from Israel, v. 15.

Repentance.

Repentance and remission of sins thereupon, is commanded to be preached to all Nations, Luke 24. 47. And as Christ ordered, so his Apostles practised. Repent, says S. Peter, in his first Sermon, and be baptized for the remission of sins, Acts 2. 38. But without this, there is no mercy for any wilful Offenders; for except you repent, says our Saviour, you shall all perish, Luke 13. 3.

And thus we have seen all the commanding Laws particularly, that our obedience to every one of them is plainly necessary to our salvation. They are that rule, which God has fixt to measure out to us either Life or Death, and which at the last Day we must all be eternally acquitted or condemned by.

C H A P. VI.

Of the Sanction of all the forbidding Laws:

AS for all the Vices opposite to the several Vertues in the foregoing Chapter, which are the number of the negative or forbidding Laws; they must needs be under the same sanction, and our observance of them be bound upon us by the same necessity, with our observance of the former. For whatsoever any of the particular Laws commanding any Vertues threaten, it is to these opposite Vices, which are the several transgressions of them. So that in shewing the severe sanction and necessity of the one, I have shewn it sufficiently of the other also.

And this might very well excuse me all further trouble, in searching after an express sanction of every particular forbidding Law.

But on the other side I consider, that men are infinitely concerned to be fully convinced of the particular necessity of abstaining from every Vice, as well as of performing every Virtue. And that there is much more force to work this full Conviction, in an express and particular proof, than there can be in a general and implicit intimation. And because I would shun no pains, which may be likely to quicken the obedience, or lecture the interests even of any one soul; I will not leave it to mens selves to collect and infer this necessity, although the meanest capacities may do it without any great difficulty, but proceed still to set down such sanctions of all the particular forbidding Laws, as I meet with in the Holy Scriptures.

And to take the several Classes of them in that order, wherein they are described above, for the penalties threatened to all the particulars of *unsoberness*, they will appear from the places following.

The works of the Flesh are manifest, saith S. Paul, which are adultery, fornication,* uncleanness, lasciviousness,† drunkenness, revelling, emulation, of the which I tell you, that they who do such things, shall not inherit the Kingdom of God.

Unsoberness. Adultery. Fornication. Uncleanness.

Lasciviousness. Drunkenness. Revelling. Emulation.

* Matt. 5. 28.
30.
† Luke 21. 34.

Vain glory. And besides these, if we live in the Spirit, without which
 * Pr. 27. 2. there is no hopes of happiness, Rom. 8. 6. let us not be
 desirous of * vain-glory, provoking one another, Gal. 5. 19,
 verēs ut- 20, 21, 25, 26.

Clem. * Μαλακοί.

Rom. 1.

Ep.ad Cor. + ἀρπάγες.

chap. 30. * 1 Cor. 5. 11.

Effemi- and 6. 10.

nateness.

Sodomy. But the fearful and soft, the abominable, or* abusers of
Ravishers. themselves with mankind, and whoremongers shall have
Fearful- their part in the Lake which burneth with fire and brimstone,
ness. which is the second death, Rev. 21. 8.

* ἐβδυλλοί

μένοι

Whoredom.

* Col. 3. 8.

Filthiness.

+ εὐεξηπελία.

Obscene

Festing.

Covetous-

ness.

Let not filthiness nor + foolish or* obscene
 talking nor jesting in + filthy jests be so much
 as named among you. For this ye know, that
 no whoremonger, or covetous man, &c. hath
 any inheritance in the Kingdom of God, and of Christ.
 Let no man deceive you, for these things sake cometh the
 wrath of God upon the Children of disobedience, Ephes. 5.
 3, 4, 5, 6.

In the last Days perilous times shall come, for men shall
 be lovers of themselves, or of their own

Carnality.

* Rom. 8. 6,

Covetous-

ness.

Pride.

18.

Arrogance.

I Tim. 5. 6.

Inconti-

nence.

Haughty-

ness.

Insolence.

for they are men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning

Sensuality.

the faith, I Tim. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8.

Being filled with Covetousness, Backbiters, Boasters, or

Backbi-

ters.

* ἀλαζών.

vas.

Gluttony.

in the place where there shall be weeping and gnashing of

teeth, Matt. 24. 49, 51.

Voluptu-

ousness.

Worldli-

ness.

+ James

5. 5.

Neither the effeminate, or who* suffer
 themselves to be unnaturally abused, nor
 the abusers of themselves with mankind, nor
 extortioners or + ravishers, and men who
 commit * rapes, shall inherit the Kingdom
 of God, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.

Sodomy. But the fearful and soft, the abominable, or* abusers of
Ravishers. themselves with mankind, and whoremongers shall have
Fearful- their part in the Lake which burneth with fire and brimstone,
ness. which is the second death, Rev. 21. 8.

Let not filthiness nor + foolish or* obscene
 talking nor jesting in + filthy jests be so much
 as named among you. For this ye know, that
 no whoremonger, or covetous man, &c. hath
 any inheritance in the Kingdom of God, and of Christ.
 Let no man deceive you, for these things sake cometh the
 wrath of God upon the Children of disobedience, Ephes. 5.

3, 4, 5, 6.

In the last Days perilous times shall come, for men shall
 be lovers of themselves, or of their own

* Flesh, covetous, proud, boasters, or + arro-
 gant, incontinent, high-minded, or* enor-
 mously haughty in behaviour, or insolent,
 lovers of pleasure more than lovers of God, or
 + sensual, having a form of godliness, but de-
 nyng the power thereof: from such turn away,

for they are men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning
 the faith, I Tim. 3. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 8.

* arrogant, which in the judgment of God are worthy of
 death, Rom. 1. 29, 30, 32.

The Servant, that shall begin to eat and to drink with the

drunken, shall have his portion appointed with Hypocrites,

in the place where there shall be weeping and gnashing of

teeth, Matt. 24. 49, 51.

Many are enemies of the Cross of Christ, whose God is
 their Belly, which they carefully serve in voluptuous eat-
 ing, who are altogether + worldly, and mind earthly
 things; whose end is destruction, Phil. 3. 18, 19. Ye

have

have lived in pleasure on the earth, and have been wanton ; or * ἐτρυφή-
ye have * lived deliciously, and fared luxuriously : Ye ^{σατε} καὶ
have nourished or † fed your hearts as men use to do Cat- ^{ἐσποταλά-}
tle which they intend for the Shambles, against, or in a day ^{σατε.}
of slaughter. Weep therefore, and houl for the miseries that ^{† θλέτα-}
shall come upon you, James 5. 1, 5.

Love not the world, nor covet and ambitiously pursue the rich and splendid things of the world. But if any man do love the world, the love of the Father is not in him, 1 Joh.

2. 15.

Blessed is he, who shall not be offended in me, or not † can-
dralized and turned out of the way and profession of my Religion, through any difficulties or persecutions that befall him in it, Matth. 11. 6. For he who will save his life in this world, by fleshly policy and wicked compliances against his Duty, shall lose it in the world to come ; but whosoever shall lose his life, or other temporal enjoyments for my sake, or for an honest owning of my Laws and Religion, that same man shall find it, Matth. 16. 25.

And for the prohibitions of the second Class, *impiety*, * Exodzo.
we have their penalty expressed in the Text ensuing. 4, 5.

The works of the Flesh are manifest, * idolatry, witchcraft ; of which I tell you, that they who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21.

But the † unbelievers, and sorcerers, and idolaters shall have their part in the Lake which burns with fire and brimstone ; which is the second death, Rev. 21. 8.

The wicked man hath said in his heart, God hides his face, he will never * see what men do, and therefore he will not require an account of it. But thou, Lord, dost behold mischief and spite, and that too to punish and requite it with thy hand, Psal. 10. 11, 13, 14.

Being haters of God, without † understanding, or foolish, which in the judgment of God are worthy of death, Rom. 1. 30, 31, 32.

In the last days perilous times shall come, for men shall be * Blasphemers, unthankful, unholy, heady, ; and these are men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith, 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2, 4, 8.

They that despise and dishonour me, shall be lightly set by, 1 Sam. 2. 30.

+ σκαρδα-
λιδῆ.

Refusing of
the Cross.

Impiety:

Exodzo.

Idolatry.

Witch-

craft.

Mark 16.

Unbelief.

Sorcery.

Psal. 64.

5, 7.

Denying

Provi-

dence.

Mark. 7.

Tit. 3. 3.

Hating

God.

Fool-

ishness.

Mat. 15.

19, 20.

Blasphemy.

Unthank-

fulness.

Headiness.

Because Dishonour.

Want of
Zeal.

Because thou hast no zeal for me, but art lukewarm, and neither hot nor cold; I will spew thee, as men do warm water, which the stomach loathes and nauseates, out of my mouth, Rev. 3. 16. If we deny him, he also will deny us, 2 Tim. 2. 12. And our being ashamed of, and not owning and maintaining him and his Religion, although it be at a time when impiety is barefaced, in an adulterous and sinful Generation, is interpreted by him for such damnable denial of him. For what is called denying me and my words, Matth. 10. 33. is upon another occasion repeated in S. Mark and expressed by being ashamed of them, Mark 8. 38.

Perjury.

† Deut. 5. Ye have heard that it hath been said in old time, Thou shalt not forswear or † perjure thy self, but shalt perform unto the Lord thy Vows. But in addition to this I say unto you, Swear not at all in your common * converse, but let your communication or ordinary discourse be yea, yea, and nay, nay; for whatsoever be more than these, cometh of evil, Matth. 5. 33, 34, 37. And these Precepts are of the number of those, whereof Christ had expressly said, ver. 19. He who breaks the least of these Commandments, shall be least or none at all in the Kingdom of Heaven.

Disobedi-
ence.

The Law, with its terrors and severe sanctions, is not made for a righteous man, who would do what it requires without them; but for the Lawless and disobedient, for ungodly, for unholy and profane, for perjured persons, that by means of its dreadful punishments, it might either fright them from sinning, or take vengeance on them after they should have sinned against it, 1 Tim. 1. 9, 10.

* 1 Cor.

10. 10, 11.

Contumaci-
cy.

Inju-
cy.

Adul-
tery.

Mur-
der.

Cove-
tousness.

Deceit.

Perfidy.

Circum-
vention.

Op-
pression.

Wo unto him that strives, through * contumacious and repining carriage, with his Maker, Isa. 45. 9.

And for the necessity of observing the prohibitions of the third Head, injustice towards men, take these places:

The works of the Flesh are manifest, Adultery, Murder; of which I tell you, that they who do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, Gal. 5. 19, 21.

Being filled with all unrighteousness, covetousness, deceit, covenant-breakers, or perfidious, who in the judgment of God are worthy of death, Rom. 1. 29, 30, 31, 32.

This is the will of God, That no man go beyond and defraud his Brother in any matter, or way whatsoever, whether it be extortion, oppression, or plain † cozenage; for the

Lord

† 1 Pet. 2.

1, 2, 3.

Lord is the avenger of all such, as we also have forwarned you, and testified, 1 Thess. 4. 3, 6.

Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the Kingdom of God? Be not deceived, neither thieves, nor covetous shall inherit the Kingdom of God, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10.

In the last Days perilous times shall come; for men shall be Slander, Truce-breakers, false Accusers, or Slanderers and Calumniators; from such turn away, for they are men of corrupt minds, and reprobate concerning the faith, 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2, 3, 5, 8.

Out of the heart proceed thefts, false witness, murders; these defile or pollute the man, and so exclude him from Heaven, where nothing can ever enter that is unclean, Mat. 15. 19, 20.

Thou hast greedily gained of thy Neighbour, by extorti- on, therefore I have smitten my hand at thy dishonest gain. Can thy heart endure, or thy hands be made strong in the day when I shall deal with thee? Ezek. 22. 12, 13, 14.

All Lyars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death, Rev. 21. 8.

And as for all the particulars of uncharitableness, we have their sanction in these scriptures following:

Being filled with wickedness, maliciousness, full of envy, malice, whisperers, back-biters, despiters; or connexions, tumultuous, implacable, unmerciful; who in the judgment of God are all worthy of death, Rom. 1. 29, 30, 31.

Recompence to no man evil for evil, avenge not your selves; but rather, instead of that, give place unto wrath, Rom. 12. 17, 19. For if ye forgive not, but revenge upon them their trespasses; neither will your heavenly Father forgive you your trespasses, Mar. 6. 15. Deal thus therefore with your enemies, not rendring evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise blessing or benediction, knowing this that hereunto are ye called in Christianity, to inherit from Christ's example this Vertue of blessing or speaking well of them, who revile you. And this is no indifferent thing. For he that will love life, and see good days, must thus refrain his tongue from evil, 1 Pet. 3. 9, 10.

Let all bitterness and anger, and wrath or hatred, and clamour or brawling, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. Eph. 4. 2, 3.

Wrath.

Clamour.

Evil-

speaking.

Malice.

† Mat. 6.

Whisper-

ing.

Back-

biting.

Implaca-

ble.

Un-

merciful.

Contumely.

Revenge.

Reproach.

Enemies.

† Mat. 5.

22. Bitter-

ness.

Anger.

phel. 4. 31. And that if you have been taught as the truth is in Jesus to put off the old man, and to put on the new, ver. 20, 21, 22, 24.

Exhort and rebuke with all authority, and let no man despise thee, (lest in doing so he be judged as a Despiser of Christ also, Luke 10. (6.) Put them in mind to speak evil of no man, to be no Brawlers or † Quarrellers; but gentle, shewing all meekness, opposite to surliness, unto all men, Tit. 2. ult. & Chap. 3. 1, 2.

* αριθά-
ρεοι. In the last days perillous times shall come; for men shall
Unthank- be unthankful, fierce, Despisers and * Haters of those that
fulness. are good. From such turn away, for they are men of corrupt
Despising minds, and reprobate concerning the faith, 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2,
and hating 3, 5, 8.

Charity suffers longbefore it be provoked, and so is not
Hastiness hasty to punish; and is also kind or * cour-
to punish. * χειρεύειαι. teous, and so not uncourteous. Charity is
Uncourte- † φυστία. not puffed up, doth not † swell and exalt it
fulness. self above others in stateliness or difficulty
Difficulty of access and uncondescension, but is condelscensive and
of access. * αγχιμόνως. affable; doth not behave it self unseemly or
Unconde- * αγχιμόνως. * contumeliously; seeks not her own praise
scension. or pleasure at other mens loss or shame, and therefore
Contumely. neither mocks, nor upbraids, nor reproaches any; is not
Mocking. provoked easily, or not unto the † height, but mixes mer-
Upbraid- cifulness with anger in exacting punishment; which
ing. Re- is opposite to rigour; thinks or * imputeth no evils or
proaching. † παρεξύ- vices to men, who are guilty of them, in railing and re-
velat. proach, but kindly overlooks or lessens them as we are
Rigour. wont to do with persons whom we love; rejoiceth not in
* ελογίζε- evil, and least of all in the highest sort of it, iniquity of
ται κακῶν. men, 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5, 6. And without this Charity, all
Rejoycing in evil. other things whatsoever will at the last Day profit nothing,

v. 3.

Variance The works of the flesh are manifest, which are hated, en-
or Debate. wying, variance or * debate, Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21.

* 2 Cor. 12. Be not deceived, no revilers shall enter into the Kingdom
20. of God, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10. I write unto you, that if any
Railing or Christian Brother be a railer, to excommunicate him, and
reviling. with such an one to use no conversation, no not so much as to
eat, 1 Cor. 5. 11. And our Lord himself hath determined
whatsoever you shall bind by excommunication on earth shall
be bound also in heaven, Mat. 18. 18.

Judge not, or be not forward to pass † undervaluing Censorious and censorious judgments upon what other Men do or *ness*. say, that you be not judged. For with what Judgment † Steph. you judge others, you shall be judged your selves, both M S reads by God and Men, who will repay you in your own kind, *μη κατα-*
Ματ. 7. 1, 2. Which Precept we must note moreover, is *δικαιο-* one of those whereof Christ affirms, that *whosoever breaks* *καὶ μη κα-*
the least of them shall be least in the Kingdom of Heaven, *ταδικα-*
Chap. 5. v. 19. *στε.*

Make not your self a Judge to censure and give Sentence against any one, and you shall not have Sentence given against you.

At the Day of Judgment Christ will say unto the uncharitable, depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire. Uncharitable, depart from me ye cursed into everlasting fire. For in my poor Members I was hungry, and you gave me tableness no meat; thirsty, and you gave me no drink; naked, and you gave me no cloaths; a Stranger, and you were unhospitable, and took me not in. For in as much as ye refused it, *Σκανδαλιζω and did it not to the very least of these, ye did it not to me, λα. Scandalizing *Mat. 25. 41, 42, 43, 45.*

Woe unto the World because of offences or *scandals; for weak Brethren. It must needs be that offences come, but woe unto that Man by whom the offence or scandal cometh, Mat. 18. 7.

And as for all the prohibiting Laws under the sin of discord, their penalty is expressed in these places:

The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these, hating one another. or provoking one another. Hatred or † enmity, variance, emulation, strife or contention, seditions or divisions, heresies, envyings; of the which Strife or I tell you, that they who do such things shall not inherit the Contention. Kingdom of God, Gal. 5. 19, 20, 21. And if we live in Seditions. the Spirit, let us not be desirous of vain-glory, provoking one Heresies. another, v. 25, 26. Schism.

Mark those which are turbulent and contentious, or Unpeaceablemen. cause divisions and offences among you, contrary to the ableness. Doctrine which you have learned, and * avoid them. For *μη τωλε-* they that are such, serve not the Lord Jesus Christ; Rom. *ναδε α-* 16. 17, 18. Whereas there is among you strife and divisions, *δελοι με.* are ye not carnal? 1 Cor. 3. 3. And what the punishment *ετισσοιχε-* of that is, we are told in plain terms, for to be carnally *ζοντι ακο-* minded is Death, Rom. 8. 6, 13. *λαθει εα-*
σιλειαν

Study so as to be † ambitious of it, to be quiet, which *δεις και λη-* directly forbids all unpeaceableness, and to do your own bu- *εγομει.*

† Ignat. Ep. ad Phil. Ed. Voss. p. 40. φιλοτιμηται. Unpeaceableness.

* 2 Thes. *sins*, nor * busying your selves in other Men's Matters.
 3. 11, 12. Which are of the number of thole Commands, that were
 1 Pet. 4. given them by the Lord Jesus ; so that he who despiseth them,
 15. Busie- despiseth not Men, but God, 1 Thess. 4. 2, 8, 11.
 bodies.

Tale-bear- Thou shalt not go up and down as a Tale-bearer among
 ing. thy People : I am the Lord, to judge and punish any Man
 that doth, Lev. 19. 16.

Tumults. I fear when I come, there will be found among you de-
 Lawns in bates, tumults ; and I shall be forced to bewail many, or
 the relati- excommunicate them with mourning over them, as over
 on of Sub- a Dead Body at a Funeral, which was the custom of the
 jects to our Apostles times, 2 Cor. 12. 20, 21.

Sovereigns. And as for the prohibitions in the particular relation
 of Subjects to our Sovereign Princes, their sanction is ex-
 Dishonour. pressed in the Texts ensuing.

Irrever- The filthy Dreamers who despise dominion, which implies
 ence. both dishonour and irreverence of it, and speak evil of Digni-
 Speaking ties, were before ordained to condemnation, Jude 4. 8, 9.

Dignities. Let every Soul be subject to the higher Powers ; for they
 Resisting that resist and rebel against the Men in power and autho-
 lawful rity, shall receive to themselves damnation. Render there-
 Powers. fore, in fear of that penalty, Tribute to whom Tribute, and
 Rebellion. Custom to whom Custom is due, Rom. 13. 1, 2, 5, 6, 7.

Refusing Submit your selves to every Ordinance of Man, and be
 Tribute obedient to it, for the Lord's sake, from whom you shall
 and Taxes. receive a severe recompence of all your Disobedience ;
 Disobedi- whether it be to the King himself as supreme, or unto lower
 ence. Officers and deputed Governours, as unto those who are sent
 Traitors. by him, 1 Pet. 2. 13, 14.

Laws in In the last Days, perillous times shall come, for Men shall
 the relati- be fierce, traitors, &c. from such turn away, for they are Men
 on of Peo- ple to their of corrupt Minds, reprobate concerning the faith, 2 Tim. 3.
 Pastors. 1, 4, 5, 8.

Dishonour. And as for the particular prohibitions, in the relation
 Irrever- of people to their Bishops and Pastors, their penalty is the
 ence. same with the others already mentioned.

Speaking. He that despiseth you, (either your Persons, by disho-
 Mocking. nour, irreverence, evil speaking, mocking, setting you at
 Setting nought for your works sake ; or your Message and Com-
 them at mands, by Disobedience;) in God's account despiseth me
 nought for also, whose Messengers and Ambassadors you are ; and
 their works Luke. Dis- in like manner he that despiseth me, despiseth him withal
 edience. who sent me, Luke 10. 16.

D^o you not know, that they which minister in the Jewish Worship and Temple about holy things, live of the maintenance of the Temple? And that they which wait in sacrificing at the Altar, are partakers of some portion of the Sacrifices with the Altar; even so hath God ordained amongst us, like as he did among them, that they who preach the Gospel should for that have a due maintenance and livelihood, and * live of the Gospel. And say I this as a * Gal. 6.6. Man, only from common reason, equity and custom; or Matt. 10. saith not God, by a preeminent way of command in the 10. Law, the same also; For there it is written, Thou shalt 1 Tim. 5. not muzzle the mouth of the Ox, which treadeth out the 17, 18. Corn. Which is said not for the Oxen alone, but for our sakes no doubt, that we might not grudge the Labourer his hire, 1 Cor. 9. 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14. And as he who should despise this Law under Moses, could not escape death; so much less can we, since Christ has made it one of his Laws, if we despise it now, Heb. 2. 2, 3.

Thou that sayest a Man should not steal, dost thou steal? Thou that abhorrest Idols, dost thou commit sacrilege? By such scandalous Sins as these, the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles through you, as it is written, &c. Rom. 2. 21, 22. 24.

And as for the prohibitions in the relation of Husband and Wife, their sanction is the same also;

No Man ever yet hated his own Flesh, so as to be estranged to it, or unconcerned for it, or not to bear with its infirmities, but by rubbing upon every sore place to vex and provoke it; or not to hide and conceal its weaknesses, but to publish and discover them. And as unnatural is this usage between Man and Wife, for they two are one flesh, Ephel. 5. 29, 31. Which prohibition of hatred between Man and Wife, as between a Man and his own Flesh, is set down as a necessary part of ceasing to be darkness, and becoming light in the Lord, v. 8.

No Adulterer shall inherit the Kingdom of God, Gal. 5. 19, 21.

Husbands love your Wives, and be not bitter or passionate, uncomplying and imperious, against them. And this you must do, as you would be accounted the holy and elect of God, Col. 3. 12, 19.

He that provides not convenient maintenance, especially for his own house, whereof the Wife is the chief Member, hath denied the Faith of Christ, and is worse than an Infidel, 1 Tim. 5. 8.

Not providing for them, or not maintaining them.

Sacrilege.
Laws in
the relati-
on of Hus-
band and
Wife. Un-
concerned-

E-
stranged-
ness.
Not bear-
ing each o-
thers in-
firmities.
Provoking
one ano-

ther. Pub-
lishing
their mutu-
al defects.

Adultery.
On the Hus-
bands side,
Imperious-
ness. Un-
compli-

Teach Wife.

Disobedience of the Wives. Teach Wives to be obedient to their own Husbands, lest if they disobey them, the Word of God or the Christian Religion, be blasphemed, for such Disobedience of Women that profess it, Tit. 2. 5.

Laws in the relation of Parents and Children. And as for the prohibitions in the relation of Parents and Children, what their sanction is, these places will inform us.

In the last days, perilous times will come; for Men will be without *natural affection, disobedient to Parents; from such turn away, for they are People of corrupt minds and reprobate concerning the Faith, *Ro. 1. 31, 32. 2 Tim. 3. 1, 2, 3, 5, 8.

Want of natural affection. They who provide not for their own house, and especially for so near a part of it as their own Children are, have denied the Faith, and are become worse than Infidels, 1 Tim. 5. 8.

Disobedience in Children. Fathers provoke not your Children to wrath and hatefulness of you, by a rigorous and harsh Government of them, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, Ephes. 6. 4. which are part of those Precepts, the Obedience whereof is necessarily required to our being accepted as Children of the Light, Chap. 5. v. 8.

Irreligious education. He that *Curseth, by reproaching and publishing the shame of his Father and Mother, shall surely be put to death, *Prov. 20. 20. Gen. 9. Exod. 21. 17.

Reproaching Parents. Contempt and mocking them. The eye that mocketh at his Father, and despiseth to obey his Mother, although the offence be not come so far as words, but is only a scornful and contemptuous look, a jeering and abusive countenance; The Ravens of the valley shall pick it out, and the young Eagles shall eat it, Prov. 30. 17.

Robbing them. He that robbeth Father, and Mother, and saith it is no Transgression, but an innocent action, in regard he takes nothing but what either is, or one day will be his own; the same is the Companion of a destroyer, i. e. he deserves to die as well as a Murtherer, Prov. 28. 24.

Contumacy. If a Man have a stubborn or contumacious and rebellious Son, who will not obey the voice of his Father or Mother when they have chastened him; let them bring him to the Elders or Rulers of his City, and to the Gates, (wherein were the Courts of Judicature,) of his place, and let him be stoned to death, Deut. 21. 18, 19, 20, 21.

And as for the prohibitions, in the relation of Brethren and Sisters, we have their penalty established in these words.

Without natural affection, who in the judgment of God are worthy of death, Rom. 1. 31, 32.

He that provides not for his own, is worse than an Infidel, 1 Tim. 5. 8.

And as for the prohibitions, in the last relation, viz. that of Masters and Servants, their sanction is expressed in the places following.

Masters give unto your Servants that which is just and equal, knowing that you your selves also have a Master in Heaven (who will recompence your injustice, rigour, and unequal Government of them upon your own heads, as Christ hath plainly shewed to us in the Parable of the Servants, Matt. 18. from v. 23. to the end of the Chapter) Col. 4. 1.

Masters love your Servants, forbearing threatening, and what is near akin to it, opprobrious language or railing; knowing that your Master also is in Heaven, who, in judging and punishing such offences as these, is no respecter of persons, Ephes. 6. 9.

If any Man provide not for his own house or Family, whereof his Servants are one part, he is worse than an Infidel, 1 Tim. 5. 8.

Weep and howl, O ye rich Men, for the miseries that shall come upon you. For the hire of the Labourers, which is of you kept back by fraud, cryeth against you for vengeance, and the Cries are entred into the ears of the Lord, who will most severely punish this injustice. James 5. 1, 4.

Exhort Servants to be obedient to their own Masters, and not to be unobservant of them, but to give all diligence to please them well in all things. Not answering again, not purloining; not being false or unfaithful in any matter, but shewing all good fidelity. These things speak and exhort with all authority, let no man dare, under the pain of God's high displeasure, to despise thee, Tit. 2. 9, 10, 15. which things, amongst others, he is bid to teach, in opposition to some who vented contrary Doctrines, who upon the account of those Rules, which they gave their Followers opposite to these, are called abominable, disobedient, and to every good work reprobate, Chap. 1. 16.

Dishonour. Let as many Servants, as are under the Yoke, count their own Masters worthy of all honour, and not despise and dis-
Irreve- honour them by their irreverent behaviour, publishing
rence. their faults and wounding their reputation ; that the Name
Publishing of God, and the Christian Doctrine, be not blasphemed
or aggri- or evel spoken of through the contrary usage. If any
vating man teach otherwise, he is proud, knowing nothing, 1 Tim.
their Ma-
sters
faults.

Eye-ser- Servants obey your Masters, not with eye-service, but
vice. heartily and in singleness or * simplicity of heart without
*** εὐαπλό-** acting double, viz. something whilst their eye is over
τερο. you, but nothing when it is off you ; which you are
 bound to do, not only out of a dread of your Master's
 anger, but as fearing God, who will be sure to punish
 you, although your Master should not take notice of you,
 Col. 3. 22.

Contuma- Servants be not stubborn and contumacious, but sub-
cy. ject to your Masters with all fear and reverence ; and that
+ ἐμει- not only to the good and gentle, or † equitable and moderate,
κοι. but also the hasty and morose or Froward. For if
 when you do well and suffer for it, you yet take it patiently ;
 this truly is thank-worthy and acceptable to God. And indeed hereunto are you called in Christianity, to suffer many
 times unjustly, but still with patience, as Christ did, that
 hereafter you may reign with him also, 1 Pet. 2. 18, 19,
 20, 21.

This is our observation of these particular prohibitions, plainly necessary unto life, and indispensibly required to Mercy and Salvation. And as for that small remainder of them, which are not expressly insisted on in this proof, their necessity is sufficiently evidenced by the indispensableness of the opposite Commands, which in the proof of the affirmative Laws is shewn expressly.

As to all the particular Laws then recited in the foregoing Catalogues, whether they be affirmative or negative Commands or Prohibitions, 'tis plain that they are all bound upon us by the severest sanction, no less than our fears of Hell and hopes of Heaven. They are the adequate and compleat matter of that Obedience, which is to make us sure of a happy Sentence. At the last Day, we must all stand or fall by them ; where they promise, God will bestow rewards, but if they threaten, he will eternally condemn us.

And thus at length it plainly appears, what those particular laws are, which under the sanctions of Life or Death, the Gospel indispensably binds us to obey. And upon the whole we see, that when we become Christians, we are not turned loose, and set liberty to do what we list ; but are put under a most strict Rule, and bound up by a most exalted purity, and a most compleat and perfect love. The height of our Duty, is answerable to the greatness of our Privileges and Advantages ; For as never any People had so much * Grace given to them, as we Christians have by the Gospel, so never was there of any so much Duty required.

The poor *Heathens*, who knew nothing more, either of God's Laws, or of his rewards and encouragements, than they could argue themselves into a belief of by the strength of their own wit and reason ; knew nothing of, nor shall at the last Day be condemned for the Transgression of several of those Commands, which we shall die for. So far were they from thinking, that in the judgment of God, *lasciviousness, uncleanness, † filthy talk, and obscene jests,* deserved death, that as wise men as any among them did not believe it of * *Fornication* and *Whoredom* it self. They were in no fear of being called to account then, and being found liable to eternal punishment for being angry at an enemy, for * cursing or reproaching, for praying to the Gods against him, nay nor for other higher acts of malice and revenge. They never dreamed of being condemned for censoriousness, uncourteousness, surliness, malignity, mockery, upbraiding, reproach ; and least of all for scandalizing Fornice, an ignorant and weak Neighbour, or not relieving an enemy, for not taking up the Cross, or not mortifying their own bodies. † Vain-glory and emulation they looked upon, as deserving commendation rather than reproof : And boasting and ostentation, when it had no mixture of ill design, but was only for boasting sake, even they, who would find fault with it, rebuke it only as a * vanity, but not as a mortal crime. The most that any of them could say of these, or of several others, which it would be too tedious to mention, was that it would be a point of praise *vetat, quin*

+ *Placet Stoicis*
suo quamque rem
nomine appellare.
Sic enim differunt,
nihil esse obscenum,
nihil turpe dictu, * To pre-
&c. Cic. Ep. ad vent Adul-
Famil. l. 9. Ep. 22. teries, this
quaest ad L. Pa- sage Cato
pyrium Petum. advisest

to, Qui-
dam notus
homo cum
exieret
Macte vir-
tute esto,
inquit Sen-
tentia Dia-
Catonis,
&c. Horat:
lib. 1. Ser.
Sat. 2. Ne-
mo hic pro-
bibet, nec
for quod palam

est venale, for Men to observe them, but not of Duty; they might si argentum be advised to it by a sage Philosopher, but had it not im-est emas. posed upon them as they thought, and commanded by Nemo ire quenquam a Judge and Lawgiver.

publica pro-

hibet via; dum ne per fundum septum facias semitam; dum tete abstineas nupta, vidua, Virgine, Juventute & Pueris liberis, ama quod lubet, Plantus de usu Meretricum in Circuleone, Act. 1. Scen. 1.

And Cicero in his defence of *Marcus Cælius: Vincat aliquando [in adolescentibus] cupiditas rationem, dummodo parcat juventus pudicitia & suæ, ne spoliæ alienam, &c.* Si quis Meretriciis amoribus interdictum juventuti putet, est ille quidem valde severus, abhorret non modo ab hujus seculi licentia, verum etiam à majorum consuetudine ac concessis. Quando enim hoc non factum est? Quando reprehensum? Quando non permisum? Cic. Orat. pro *M. Cælio.* Upon the account of this Gentile opinion of the lawfulness of Fornication, and because they reputed it as an indifferent thing, although really and in itself it were most necessary, it is sorted amongst other indifferent things in the Canons made for the Gentile World at the Council of *Jerusalem*, Acts 15.20, 28, 29.

* *Minerva* in *Homer*, when she advises *Achilles* to cease the quarrel with *Agamemnon*, and to keep off from fighting and blows: doth yet allow him this liberty, ἀλλ' ἦ τοι ἔποιν μὴ ὄντει δέσποτος, Ili. a.

† *Nullum aliam Virtus mercedem laborum periculorumque desiderat, præter hanc Laudis & Glorie: qua quidem detraha, quid est quod in hoc tam exiguo vite curriculo, & tam brevi, tantisonos in laboribus exerceamus?* Cic. Orat. pro Arch. Poet. sub finem.

* Ο μείζω οὐδὲ παρχόντων τερσποίενται [Which is his definition of αλεῖζων] μηδεὶς ἐναφαυλῷ μὴ τοκεν, οὐ φάνηται μᾶλλον η παχὸς, Arist. Eth. Nicom. I. 4. c. 7.

Thus dark and defective was that sense of Duty, which governed the *Heathen World*. The privilege of a clear and full revelation of it, which God in great degrees afforded to the *Jews* under the *Law of Moses*, and to us *Christians* in the completest measures under the *Gospel of Christ*, was a Grace and Favour, which he did not vouchsafe them. He shewed, as the *Psalmist* says, his *Word unto Jacob, and his Statutes unto Israel*; but he hath not dealt so with any of the *heathen Nations*; for as for his *Judgments*, or those *Laws* which we are to be judged by, they have not known several of them, Psal. 147. 19, 20.

And since not only the poor and ignorant, but even the more wise and learned sort of *Heathens*, were thus void of knowledge in the simplicity of their hearts, and did

did not discern several of those to be Laws of God which every one of us may discern most clearly if we will : although we must stand or fall by them, yet they shall not ; but when they are brought to Judgment, they shall go unpunished for their transgressions of them, because they did not know them. They shall not be condemned for acting against they knew not what, nor suffer for the breach of such Laws as were not sufficiently published and proclaimed to them. *They that sinned without our Law, shall also perish,* not by it, but without our Law, according to the Sentence of such other Laws, as are, not ours, but their own ; and it is only as many as have sinned in or under our Law, that shall be judged and condemned by the Law, Rom. 2. 12. Whatsoever they may suffer then, for their Transgressions of their own plain natural Laws, which all of them might have known who had a mind to it : They shall not be punished for their ignorant breach of such as are peculiarly ours, but that part of their offences shall be overlooked, and graciously connived at. For these times of Ignorance, saith the Apostle, God winked or connived at, Acts 17. 30.

And as for the Jews, although they had a stricter rule and a more perfect precept, answerable to their clearer light and expresser promises ; yet were many (m) things still for the (n) hardness of their hearts indulged to them ; for which without Repentance we shall smart most severely, if we are guilty of them. A man might be innocent in the charge made against him by the Law of Moses, although he should return ill for ill, or (o) retaliate injuries and curse and pray against his Enemies. (p) Matt. 5. 38. And this their most righteous Persons, and greatest Prophets, even * Jeremiah, and (p) David himself, who was the Man after God's own heart, have done frequently. They had no express Law threatening death to bare sensuality and worldliness ; but the very constitution of their Law which consisted mainly, if not wholly, in temporal promises, seemed much to encourage it. They were in no danger of being condemned by Moses, for not bearing with the infirmities and weaknesses of their wives, since their Law it

(m) Plus tunc indulgentiae erat, & plus licentia : tunc e suis carnium prædicabantur, nunc abstinenter, nunc * Jer. 18. 21. tia: tunc in (p) Psal. 5. 8. omni vita 10. and 7. 6. and jejuniorum 28. 24. and 35. paucissimi 8. and 109. dies, nunc from vers. 1. to quasi unum the 20. all jejunium which Curses Vita om- appear to be di- nis tunc rected against lœsis ulti- his adver- mo suspen- ries, vers. 20. tebat, nunc self pati-

patientia: tunc irascientibus Lex ministra, nunc adversaria: tunc accusatori gladium self allowed them to put them away when they did not please them; yea and even whilst they continued with them, to marry and take others to them. For all which, with others that might be mentioned, although we Christians are liable to condemnation, yet they were not. For they will be judged at the last Day, according to their Obedience to their own Laws not to ours. As many as have sinned in the Law of Moses, says the Apostle, shall porridgebat, be judged by that Law, Rom. 2. 12.

nunc Char-

ritatem: tunc etiam carnali illecebra Lex indulgebat, nunc evangelium nec aspergunt: tunc corporeæ voluptates habebant quandam licentiam, nunc jubentur etiam oculi custodire censuram: tunc ad multas uxores recipiendas unius Marititorum Lex dilatabat: nunc etiam ad unam excludendam casti affectus devotione constringit. Superest enim inquit Apostolus ut qui habent uxores, &c. I Cor. 7. 29, 30, 31. says Salvian of the strictness of the Christian above the Jewish Law, de avaritia, l. 2. p. 383. Ed. Oxon. The reason whereof he adds, p. 385. *Majora solvimus, quia majora debemus.* Judæi habebant rerum umbram, nos veritatem: Judæi fuerunt servi, nos adoptivi, &c. And to the same purpose S. Chrysostom, Τὸ μὲν γὰρ ταλαιὸν ἐποῖεντον οὐκέτις πρόκειστο μιτροφ, αλλὰ γὰρ ἀμύνασθαι τὸν αἰσθῆτα καὶ ἀνθίστασθαι τὸ λοιμωδεύοντα, καὶ χρημάτων δημιουργοῦσθαι ἔξην, καὶ ἐνορκεῦσθαι ὅμινύνας, καὶ ὄφθαλμὸν ἔξορυξαν αὐτῷ ὄφθαλμον. καὶ μισθοῖσι τὸν ἔχθρον, καὶ ἔτε τερυφῶν, ἔτε δρυγίζεσθαι, ἔτε γυναικα τῇ μὲν ἐνβάλλειν, τῷ δὲ ἀντεστήγειν μικώλυσο. καὶ τὸ τοῦ μόνον, αλλὰ καὶ δύο καὶ τρία αὐτὸν ὅμες γυναικας ἔχειν ὁ νόμος πεπέρατε, καὶ πολλὴ, καὶ ἐν τέτοις, καὶ ἐν τοῖς ἀλλοις ἀποστολοῖς Cunctis legibus, οὐκέτι δὲ τὰ χειστὰ παρεστῶν πολλῷ σενωτέρῃ γέγονεν ὁ ὁδός. Chrys. de Virgin. c. 44.

But as for us Christians we must walk by a more perfect rule, and live up to a nobler pitch than ordinarily either Jew or Gentile did; or at the last day we shall be eternally condemned. For take even those Sects among the Jews, which in the judgment of S. (q) Paul are the strictest of any in their Religion, viz. the Scribes and Pharisees; and yet, as our Saviour himself has peremptorily and plainly affirmed, our Obedience must of necessity surpass theirs. Except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees, you shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of Heaven, Matt. 5. 20.

In the accounts of our Religion we are guilty and punishable, when no other Law would take hold of us. For by the Gospel of Christ, as we have seen, we shall be condemned, not only for Adultery, Fornication and Whoredom; but also for Uncleanness, for Lasciviousness, nay,

(q) Acts 26. 5.

nay, for *filthy jests* and *obscene discourses*. We are liable to die, not only for *drunkenness* and *revellings*, for *gluttony* and *surfeiting*; but also for *carnality*, *sensuality* and *voluptuousness*. There is enough against us to condemn us, although we do not *kill our Enemy*, if we *hate him*, or *rail at him*, nay, if we *refuse to do good to him*, to *speak well of him*, where we can do it truly and honestly, or to *pray for him*. We are strictly charged, not only that we should not *lie* and *slander*, but moreover that we should not so much as *revile*, or *reproach*, or *mock*, or *upbraid*, or *censure*, or *speak evil of our Brother*. We are severely threatned, not only if we *offer violence to our Neighbour*; but if we are *surly* towards him, if we are *hasty* and *fierce* with him, if we are *stately*, *uncondescensive* or *uncourteous* towards him. So far must we be from *fighting* and *blows*, from *seditions* and *tumults*; that under the highest penalties we must abstain, from *clamour* and *brawling*, from *debate* and *variance*, from *unquietness*, yea, from *pragmaticalness*, or *busying our selves in other mens matters*. We must keep back from *dishonour*, *irreverence*, and *speaking evil of Dignities*, whilst we submit to them; as well as from *disobedience* and *resistance* of our lawful Prince in open rebellion. To *exhort*, *depress*, or *circumvent our Brother in any matter*, is an Article of our Condemnation, as well as *direct theft*, and *downright robbery*. To *refuse the Cross*, to *scandalize a weak Brother*, to *envy our Neighbours praise*, and to be *vain-glorious*, *arrogant*, and *forward* upon all occasions to *boast* and *set off our own*; are all mortal sins in the accounts of our Law, and such as subject the impenitent Actors of them to eternal destruction.

These, and all the other instances set down in the foregoing Catalogues, which are too many to mention here, let us plainly see the height of that holiness, and the perfection of that love, which we are to live or die by. Our Law is the most perfect Rule, that ever the World heard of; and, as ever we hope for mercy and bliss, ours is to be the most perfect obedience. For as all these Laws, which under the pains of Death we are bound to obey, are most Heavenly and Divine; so is that a most perfect obedience, which is indispensably required to them. Which will more fully appear, by clearing up what I am to shew in the next Book, *Viz. What degrees and manner of Obedience is indispensably required to them*.

BOOK III.

What degrees and manner of Obedience is required to all the Laws forementioned.

CHAP. I.

Of Sincerity.

THE Qualifications which must render our Obedience acceptable to Almighty God, and make it avail us unto Life and Pardon at the last Day, are comprehended in these *two*;

1. Sincerity.
 2. Integrity.

1. To render our Obedience to the foremention'd Laws of God acceptable, and available to our Salvation at the last Day; it is necessary that it be *sincere*.

* εἰλικρίνη. Sincerity is a * true and undissembled service of God, opposite to hypocrisy, or a false and feigned pretence of obeying him, when in reality we only serve our own selves.

v & that being true, and not counterfeit, doth not fear the light, but is willing to be tryed in the brightest Sun. And the Apostle joins these two ἀπλότητα καινούργια, opposing sincerity to fraud, and a double heart, and making it the same with simplicity, 2 Cor. 1. 12. And again he joins it with Truth, The unleavened Bread of sincerity and truth, 1 Cor. 5. 8. And so *sincerus* by the Latin Grammarians is derived from *Cūr* and *xīng*, as signifying the same with *cum corde*, heartily and unfeignedly.

For we must take notice that God has been so gracious to us in chusing out the instances of our Duty, as to adopt, for the most part, those particular sorts of actions into the matter of our obedience, which by the

natural Order and Constitution of Things make for our own present *Pleasure*, *Reputation*, or *Interest*. And every one of these, from the first and fundamental Principle of our Natures, *Self-love*, are sufficient inducement to us to practise them, although he had never laid his Commands upon us. So that although we have no kindness at all for God, nor would do any thing for his sake; yet shall we observe many things which he enjoyns us, not for *his pleasure* but our *own*. Thus for instance, may we be *chast* and *sober*, and practise all other Vertues which are gainful, not because we love God, but only because we *love Money*. We may be *just* and *honest*, and *seemingly religious*, not for the sake of a *Commandment*, but of our *own credit*, and because the contrary Practice would wound our good Name in the World, and stain our Reputation. And now when our own *lusts* and *vices*, our *carnal pleasures*, and *temporal advantages*, strike in after this manner with God's Laws, and command the same service which he enjoyns us; we may pretend, if we will, and as too oft we do, that all is for his sake, and that these performances, which are really owing to our own *self-interests*, come from us upon the account of *Religion* and *Obedience*. And when we falsifie and feign thus, it is flat Dissimulation. It is no more but *acting the part* of an obedient and religious Man, seeing, like an (b) Actor on the Stage, we are that Person whom we represent, not in *inward Truth* and *Reality*, but only in *Outward shew and Appearance*, which is the very Nature of Hypocrisie.

But for a Man to be *sincere* in God's Service, is the same as *really to intend that Obedience which he professes*. It is inwardly and truly to will and do that for his sake, which in outward Shew and Appearance we would be being thought to do. It is nothing else, as the Psalmist says, *ken from but truth in the inward parts*, Psal. 51. the having publick our inward Design and Intention, to agree with our outward Profession; and being verily and indeed those obedient Persons which we pretend to be.

And as for this Sincerity of our Performance of what God requires, *viz. our doing it for his sake, and because he commands it*; It is altogether necessary to make such performance become *obedience*, and to qualifie us for

the rewards of those that obey. For without it, we do not observe (c) God's Will, but our own; his Command

(c) *Si pro arbitrio suo Servi Dominis obtemperant, nec in iis quidem, in quibus obtemperant, obsequuntur. Quando enim Servus ex Domini iussis ea facit tantummodo quae vult facere; jam non Dominicam implet voluntatem, sed suam.* Salvian. de Gub. Dei, l. 3. p. 79. Ed. Oxen.

had no share in what we did, because it had been done although he had said nothing; so that in our performance of it we served not him, but our own selves. And what has God to thank us for, if we do nothing but our own pleasure? Wherein do we serve him, by acting only according to our own liking? That cannot be charged on him, which is not designed for him; and if we do what he commands no otherwise than

thus, it is all one as if we had done nothing.

But if ever we expect that God should judge us at the last Day to have obeyed him, we must be sincere in our obedient performances. For the Lord looketh not on

(d) Rom. 2. 28, 29. the (d) outward appearance and pretence, saith Samuel, but he looks on the inward intention and design, which is the heart, 1 Sam. 16. 7. He saves, as the Psalmist tells us, the upright in heart, Psal. 7. 10. And again, As for the upright in heart, they, and they alone, shall glory, Pl. 64. 10. For it is not from the bare outward appearance and profession, but from the heart, says Solomon, that the issues of life proceed, Prov. 4. 23. And this is plainly declared, in the express words of the Law it self. For it accepts not a heartless service, nor accounts it self obeyed by what was never intended for it. But thus it bespeaks us: The

(e) Mat. 22. 36, 37, 38. Lord thy God requires thee to serve him, with all thy (e) heart, and with all thy soul. For he is a great God, a mighty and a terrible to all who do otherwise, and who in his Judgment regardeth not persons, nor, to corrupt him, taketh rewards, Deut. 10. 12, 17. And the Apostle tells the Philippians, that their being sincere, is the way to be without offence 'till the Day of Christ, Phil. 1. 10.

And thus we see, that to render our obedience acceptable at the last Day, it is absolutely necessary that it be sincere and unfeigned. We must do what God's Laws prescribe, not only because our own credit or interest sometimes requires it, but because God has commanded it. And in all our obedient performances, our heart and design must go along with him, before ever he will recompence and reward us.

So that 'tis plain, we cannot obey God, either against our will and intention, or without them ; seeing our wills and intentions themselves, are the very Life and Soul of our Obedience. The Prime part of our Duty, consists in the directing of our Design. For even that which is done agreeable to God's Command, must be aimed and intended for him, or else it will never be owned and approved by him.

But that we may the better judge of this *sincerity* of our service, which is measured by our *Intention* and *Design*, we must take notice of a two-fold Intention. For it is either,

1. *Actual and Express*: Or,

2. *Habitual and Implicit*. Now it is this latter, which is always and indispensably required to the *sincerity* of our service ; but as for the *former*, it is not always necessary, tho' oftentimes it be.

Intention, is the tendency of the soul towards some end which it likes, and which it thinks to compass and endeavour after. And this is one prime requisite in the actions of Men, and that which distinguisheth our Operations from the actions of brute Beasts ; for what they do, proceeds from the necessary force of *uncontriving Nature* and *Instinct* ; but what we, from *Reason* and *Design*.

And the cause of this difference is this ; because God has given the *brute Beasts* no higher Guide and Commander of their Actions, than *appetite* and *passion*, whose Motions are not chosen with freedom, and raised in them by *reason* and *thought* ; but merely by the necessitating force of outward Objects themselves, and by those impressions which they make upon them. For they act altogether through *Love* and *Hatred*, *Hopes* and *Fears* ; and they *love* and *hate*, not through *Reason* and *Discourse*, but through the *natural* and *mechanical* *suitableness* or *offensiveness* of those Objects which they act for.

But as for us *Men*, he has put all our Actions under the Power, and in the Disposal, not of *outward things*, but of something within us, even our own *Free-will*. They are not imposed upon us by the force of any thing without us, but are freely chosen by us ; we are not their Instruments, but their Authors ; and they flow from our own Pleasure, and undetermined Choice.

Now as our actions are at the disposal, and command of our wills, so do our wills themselves command and dispose of them, not *blindly* and by *chance*, but always for some *reason*, and upon some *design*. For in themselves they are *indifferent*, to make us either *omit* or *act*, *neglect* or *exert* them. And therefore to determine our wills one way rather than the other, to act them rather than to let them alone; they must be moved and persuaded by such Arguments as are fit to win upon them. Now that which can move and gain upon our wills, is only *goodness*, or what we think tends some way or other to better and advantage us. For what we believe is *insignificant* and *useless* we *contemn*; and what is *hurtful* and *evil*, from the first Principle of our Natures, *self-love*, we straitway entertain with *hatred* and *avoidance*, but never with *love* and *good-will*. So that whensoever we will and chuse to *act*, rather than to sit still, it is always for some *end* which we propose to our selves, and by reason of some *good* or other which we expect to get by it: For no Man will be at pains for nothing, or labour without aiming at any recompence; but our Actions are as *means*, and there is always some *end* or other of them; something which we like, and which we think they tend to, that makes us employ our Powers in the Production of them. And this *eying* or *aiming* at the *End* or *Motive*, whereunto we see our Action *tends*, and for the *sake* whereof we set about it, is our *Intention* of it.

Thus we see all our Actions agree in this, that they are chosen for the sake of some end, and are exerted upon some intention and design.

But in the manner of this Intention, there is some difference. For sometimes in acting, we actually and expressly think of that Good or End we are moved by, and look up and operate in direct order, and respect to it; which is an *actual* and *express* intention. But at other times, we do not look expressly further than the act it self: But having before fixed our selves upon the End, and upon this way of acting for it, our intention of the end, and our choice of the action are already determined, and we readily do the Act as we were wont, without ever expressly eying or designing of the end we are to serve by it. Our Wills now need nothing more to

make

make them command such action to be done, than to be offer'd the opportunity of doing it, and their *constant temper* and *inclination* is to close with it. So that when such particular action occurs, they need not *actually* to think of the end, to move them to chuse it; but are sufficiently inclined of themselves to do that through their *habitual tendency* and *propension* towards it. And this being no *express intuition*, and *particular designing* of the end which we act for, but only a *settled tendency* and *inclination* in the Soul after it, which through long *use* and *custom* is become its *constant temper* and *habitual*, it may be called an *habitual* or *implicit intention*.

Now both these sorts of intention have their place, as in all our other *Actions*, so particularly in those of *Virtue* and *Obedience*. For sometimes, our performances of those things which God requires, are *studied* and *deliberate*; we pause at them before we exert them, and think and perswade our selves into the production of them. And in regard the *great motive* or *end* of exerting them, (*viz.*) God's command and injunction of them is the *great Argument* to win us over to them, when we take time and ponder so, we act through a *particular* and *express intention*. But then at other times, we do what God enjoyns before we are aware; we need not deliberate about it, or argue our selves into the practice of it; but stand ready to perform it, as soon as opportunity is offered. And here the will being already inclined of it self to exert the action, because God has commanded it, it needs no arguments to move, nor any *express intuition* of the end to perswade it, but indeliberately chuses to obey, out of its own *habitual temper*, and *implicit intention*.

And as for the *cause* of this difference of our *Intention*, in doing those things which God commands; it is plainly the *different degrees* and *perfection* of our *Obedience*. For when our *Virtue* and *Obedience* are of *small strength*, and in an *imperfect degree*; there our *Lusts* have a considerable *Power* with us, as well as our *Religion*; and although they have not force enough eventually to hinder, yet they have so much as will suffice them to contend with, and oppose the doing of our duty: So that even when we do obey in *this state*, and close with God's command, it is by a *strife* and a

war, by conflict and victory. Now here our Wills are in doubt what way they shall determine their Choice, for they are canvassed and beset on both sides, both by God and by our own Flesh, or by our Duty and our Appetites. And to enable Religion to prevail with them in this Conflict above our Passions, there is a Necessity of representing all its Force, and of setting all its Motives before them, that thereby they may be induced to strike in with it, and to chuse what it commandeth. But now, as for the main End and Motive of all our Religious Services, it is Gods having enjoyned and commanded them. And when we trouble our selves to perform them, it is for his sake, that we may endear our selves to him. So that to enable us to chuse Obedience to God's Laws, rather than to our own Lusts, we must set him and his Command before us. And therefore all the Obedience which we perform here, is through a particular and express Intention.

But then at other Times, and in other Cases, our Virtue and Obedience is of full growth, and we are so accustomed to do what God requires, that we find no Reluctance or Opposition to it, but Use hath made it become, not so much our considerate Choice, as our natural and indeliberate Performance. Here we need not to consider and think our selves, into a Choice and Practice of that which is commanded: For our Natural Bent and habitual Tendency is towards it, and nothing more is wanting to our Performance of it, than our being shew'd it.

For Custom, as it is truly laid, is a second Nature; and such things as have been long used by us, stick as close to us, and flow as easily, as quickly, as indeliberately and naturally from us, as those things that are born with us. They do not stay for our particular Contrivance and Designation of them, but run before it. For a Man by long Custom, shall have his Fingers move so fast upon a Lute, that Thought it self shall not be able to keep Time with them, and answer every stop with a particular Intention and Command thereof. And an habitual Swearer, when occasion is offered, or without any, will rap out Oaths when he is not aware; and so little many times was there of actual Contrivance and express Design in it, that when he hath done he doth not know it. And the Case is the same

in other habitual sinners, whose transgressions, proceeding not so much from a particular and express choice, as from an habitual temper, and even natural inclination, are unconsidered, and indeliberate.

And therefore when our Obedience it self is become customary, and use has wrought it into our very Nature; we have no need upon every return of opportunity to eye God's command, which is the end, and to intend his service as a motive to our wills, to engage them to chuse the Action before us which tends to it. We stay not to bethink our selves, what it tends to, and who is to be served by it, and after that to intend expressly to serve him in it. For all these were done to our hands before the time of obeying came; so that now, when we have the opportunity, we do not busie our selves in exciting them, but in this habitual state of things, and perfection of Obedience act ordinarily in the force of them, which is obeying through an habitual and implicit intention.

And now from what has been said of this *Perfection and customariness of our Obedience*, being the cause of our obeying only through an habitual intention; it plainly appears, that not the *actual*, but *habitual intention* of serving God, is that which is always and indispensably required to a sincere service of him.

Indeed when we pause, and deliberate, and take several things into our consideration; a particular intention of his service, is necessary to make what we do upon such deliberation, an acceptable Obedience. For if in the deliberation our choice was doubtful as to the event, whether we should do the Act or not, such particularity of intention was necessary, to make us chuse the Action of Obedience. And if it were doubtful as to the motive, whether we should do it for God's sake, when other things sufficient to make us act as we did (as the service of our Lusts or Interests) concurr'd to it as well as God's Command; then is it necessary to make us chuse the acceptable service of Obedience.

But for that intention, I say, which is not only here in this case, or some others, but universally, and in all, indispensably necessary to the sincerity of our Obedience, it is an habitual intention. For the very reason, why we do intend his service particularly

ticularly and expressly, but only habitually and implicitly, is because our obedience has arriv'd to good perfection, and long use and custom has made it, not so much at every turn our considerate choice and contrivance, as our very Nature, and unstudied Inclination. Now this exaltation of Obedience into a natural Temper, is so far from rendering it *unsincere*, and making God look upon it as none at all, that in very deed it is the height and perfection of that which his Gospel commands us to aspire and aim at.

- (f) John 3. 3. For there our Duty is expressed, by our being (f) born again, by our becoming (g) New Men, (h) and New Creatures, and by our being made (i) partakers of the Divine Nature, and so like unto God himself, who is carried on Colos. 3. to all actions of *Vertue* and *Holiness*, not by the motives 10. of Reason and Argument, but by the exact and infinite (b) Gal. 6. goodness of his own Nature it self.

15. So that in measuring the sincerity of our Obedience, 2 Cor. 5. by the reality of our intention and design for God's ser- 17. vice, we see that we are not always to exact of our (i) 2 Pet. selves a particular and express intention, because God 1. 4. requires it not; but may, and often must, when our Matt. 5. 48. Obedience becomes natural and habitual, take up with an intention that is so too.

But for the fuller understanding of this condition of our Obedience, viz. *Sincerity*, we must consider, not only the *reality* and *undissembledness* of our service and intention, which have been discoursed of hitherto, but their *uncorruptness* and *unmixedness* likewise. And this, as well as the former, is sometimes signified by *sincerity*, which is used to denote, not *truth* only and *reality*,

(k) Thus *ficerum* in opposition to *Fiction* and *Hypocrisie*; but (k) *Purity* also, in opposition to *mixture* and *alloy*. And thus we *mel*, is ho- read of the *sincere milk of the Word*, (i. e.) the pure and ney with- unmix'd parts of it, or the Christian Doctrine as freed out any from all adulterate mixtures of *Gnostick Impurities*, and mixture of *Jewish Observances*, which were those false Ingredients wax in it; wherewith in the Apostles times so many went about to and *sincerum* is ex- corrupt the the Word of God, 1. Pet. 2. 2.

So that to serve God *sincerely* in this sense, is to per- plain'd by the Gram. form what he commands us for his sake, and with a demariansto sign to please him, without mixing therewith any by-ends signify the same as of our own, or intending our own self-interests together with him.

But this we are to understand with much restriction. For it is not all intention of *Pleasure, Profit, or other Interest to our selves*, in the performance of God's commands, which he hath forbidden us. We may design to advantage our selves by our Obedience, and be sincere still; provided that this design be only upon those spiritual and eternal advantages which God himself promises to the Obedient; or upon temporal ones so far as they minister to Obedience, and are subordinate under it. But that mixture of intention only is corrupt and unsincere, when, together with our intention of serving God, we join another intention of serving sin; or when we design some temporal ends, as much, or more than we do God's service, which makes our self-interest, instead of being subservient to Obedience, to become fit to oppose and undermine it.

First, I say, God has not forbidden us all intention of our own advantage, in the performance of his holy Commandments. When he requires us to obey him, he doth not prohibit all Love of our own selves, and regard to our own self-interest; which will appear from all these Reasons, both because some eye at our own good, and respect to our own advantage, is of that nature, that it cannot be forbidden us; because God's Laws themselves have offered, and proposed it to us; because the necessity of our faith to our obedience, shews plainly, that it cannot be denied us; and because the best men that ever were, have not been able to obey without it, and yet their obedience has been most graciously accepted.

First, Some respect to our own good, and intention to advantage our selves by our obedience, is of that nature, that it cannot be forbidden us. It cannot fall under a Law, or be a matter of a Commandment, because it can never be performed.

As for any one particular advantage, and self-interest indeed, we may deny our selves in it, and therefore any Law may very well require it. For we have many particular self-interests to serve, and they clash and interfere among themselves: and so long as we are in pursuit of any one, by virtue of it we are able to restrain and deny our selves in any other. And thus all men daily deny their Ease for their Interest, and their Gain for their Liberty, and their Liberty for their Lives. And

And all good Men daily over-rule that Love which they have for their *Bodies*, by that higher and stronger love which they have for their *Souls*; and deny them-selves in any *Temporal Interests*, to secure their *Eternal*. And because all men have this power of denying their own Self-love in small instances, to serve it in greater, and of parting with any goods and advantages of this world, to purchase to themselves incomparably better in the next; God has enacted the *denial of our selves, in all such particular interests as hinder our Obedience*, into a Religious Duty, and made it universally obliging to all the world.

But as for the casting off this *love of our selves, and respect to our own advantage*, not only as to some particular interests, whilst our eye is upon others, but as to all Self interests whatsoever; this in the matter of *Duty and Obedience*, no man can perform, and therefore no Law can command it. For in that constitution of Nature, which God has given us, *self-love* is the first and over-ruling Principle. It has a share almost in all our actions, and influences all our faculties; so that in all that variety of operations which flow from us, there are very few wherein we have no eye at our own advantage.

In some actions, 'tis true, we are influenced chiefly, and almost wholly, by our *love of others*, which is a noble and a generous Principle. For there are several good Offices which we daily do to others, in doing whereof we no way prejudice our selves; and these our *love of others* make us perform, and our own *self-love* doth not withstand it; which is seen in all the Offices of humanity and common courtesie. And other things again there are wherein we advantage them, though it be considerably to our own trouble, and our own hindrance; and here, although our own *self-love* oppose it self, yet our *love of them* prevails and over-rules it; as is daily shewn, in the Offices of Christian Charity, and particular friendship. In these Cases, our *love of others* and of *our selves*, are separate; our kindness for them shews it self in such things, wherein our own *self-love* is either not concerned at all, or wherein it is opposed and overpoured: so that here we are not influenced and governed by it.

And if this were the Case in all our obedient actions, there might be more pretence for performing them purely out

of love to God without mixing therewith any love of our own selves.

But in them quite contrary, our love of God, and of our selves, are neither repugnant, nor so much as separate; but most closely conjoined. For God hath made the same things, the matter both of our Duty, and of our Interest; so that in serving him, we do in the highest measure serve our selves too. And in this Case, where our own self-love is so much concerned, and has not the love of God to oppose and over-rule it, but to jump in and conspire with it; it is not possible, but that we shall be influenced, and acted by it. For it naturally issues out upon our own good, and here it has an object in the highest advancement, and there is nothing to hinder or restrain it. So that whatsoever we may do through a bare abstracted love of others without any regard to our own selves, in those Cases, where our own self-love and it are separate or repugnant: yet in the matter of obedience, where they are so closely conjoined as God's service is, and is known by us to be so infinitely our own interest; 'tis plain that we cannot perfectly abstract our minds from it, or be wholly free from Regarding.

And since no man can wholly abstain from intending his own advantage in God's service, no Law can require it. It is no fit matter of a prohibition, nor capable of being retrenched by a Commandment; being it is at no man's choice whether or no he shall observe it. So that God must work a Change in his own Creation, and form us into something different from what we are, before he can in reason demand it of us.

2. Some respect to our own advantage, in performing what God commands, is lawful and allowable in us; because God's Laws themselves do authorize, and propose it to us.

God has not required us to serve him for nothing, but has offer'd us an abundant recompence for all our labour; and added such allurements to his Laws, as infinitely surpass all the difficulties of our Duty. He has proposed every thing to us, that may any way work upon our self-love, and care for our own advantage; whether it be the promises of good to intice, or the threats of evil to affright us into obedience.

For thus saith our Law, Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that keepeth my sayings, or Commands, shall never see death, John. 8. 51. To my Sheep that follow me, and bear or obey my voice, I will give eternal life, John 10. 27, 28. Blessed are they that do his Commandments, for they shall have right to the Tree of Life, and enter in through the Gate into the City, Rev. 22. 14. But on the other side, The Wrath of God cometh upon the Children of disobedience, Col. 3. 6. For at the day of Judgment, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from Heaven with the Guards and Attendance of his mighty Angels; then will he in flaming fire take vengeance on them that obey not the Gospel, who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord. 2 Thess. 1. 7, 8, 9.

Thus have we in Christ's Laws, to omit other things, a promise made to us of Heaven and endless joys, to induce us to obedience; and a threatening of Hell and eternal misery denounced to us, to make us afraid to disobey. And these make our obedience to become infinitely our greatest self-interest, and render it impossible for us not to serve our own advantage in the highest measure, if we do obey at all.

And since God's Laws themselves propose such incomparable Arguments to perwade us to obedience; they can never forbid us to have an eye to them, or to be excited to obedience by them. For the very end why God annexes such allurements to his Commands, is, that they may be a motive to win our choice, and make us willing to obey them. But now our wills are moved by nothing, further than they desire it, and intend to purchase it. For we must always design the end before we chuse the means, since it is only for the sake and hopes of that, that the trouble of these is undertaken. So that if any thing must be the final caule and encouragement of our endeavour, it must be the matter of our intention and design also. And therefore seeing God himself has placed such infinite advantages and self-interests at the end of our Duty, to perwade and excite us to a willing performance of it, 'tis evident he designs first of all, that we should have an eye to them in obeying, because otherwise it is not possible that we should be moved by them.

Nay, so far is God from forbidding all respect to our own advantage, in our obedient performances of his Laws; that,

3. In asserting, so clearly as he has done, the necessity of faith to our obedience, he plainly tells us, that if we must obey at all, it cannot be denied us.

Faith, is a most necessary Principle, of all *natural*, as well as *Gospel service*. For without *faith*, saith S. Paul, *it is impossible* for any Man, whether he be Heathen or Christian, to please God; because he that cometh to God, in whatsoever Religion, *must believe* thus much of him at least, that *he is*, and also that *he is a rewarder of all them that seek him*, without an Eye whereat no Man would ever be perswaded to seek after him, *Heb. 11. 6.* And as for the *belief of the Gospel* in particular, which is the *faith of us Christians*; so necessary is it to make us obey the *Laws of Christ*, that our *obedience*, as being effected by it, is called the *obedience of faith*, *Rom. 16. 26.* and *disobedient Men*, in the Scripture language are ordinarily styled *unbelievers*; and *disobedience, unbelief*.

But now what is there in our *faith* so indispensably necessary to effect this *obedience*, but our *belief*, as S. Paul says, of *God's readiness to reward us*, and of those *advantageous promises*, which the *Gospel* proposes to us upon our performance of it? And how it is possible for our *belief* of them to carry us on to obey, further than we concern our selves, for those things which are promised, and intend by such *Obedience* to procure them? The *Gospel* indeed has furnished us with all manner of *Motives* if we will believe it, without which it is not *possible* that we should be moved by it. It tells us of a most *surpassing love* and infinite kindness, which God and Christ have shewn to us; and if we believe this, it is fit to raise in us a most exalted *love* which will make us *perform* any thing for their *sakes* out of very *gratitude*. Now this is a most *noble* and *ingenious Principle* of *obedience*, which although it have *something*, has yet the *least of self-love* in it. But it is *weak* and *insufficient*, unable of it self to carry far, and to bear us through our whole *Duty*. And therefore besides it, for a perfect supply of all our wants, we have therein moreover the *greatest good things*, and such as we are

are most in love with, promised to our obedience; and the greatest evils, such as we most fear, threatned if we disobey. And if we believe these, we must take obedience to be our highest, not service only, but self-interest; and that no temptation can either promise or threaten so much to our own self-love, as God doth. And this indeed carries us through all, and makes us obey intirely. It overcomes every difficulty, and over-ballances all contrary inticements. But this it doth not only so far as we intend to purchase all those surpassing advantages by our obedience, which infinitely exceed all those other enticements that are attained by Men who disobey.

And as this respect to our own advantage in our obedient performances, is nothing more than the condition of our Nature absolutely requires, than the necessity of Faith supposes, and than God's Law it self offers and propoles to us; so neither is it any thing more,

4. Than the best Men have always used, who yet were graciously accepted upon such obedience. For just Noah obeyed God's Law through the fear of that destruction which it threatned, and with a design of escaping it himself when all the wicked of the World should be overwhelmed in it. Noah, saith the Text, was moved with fear to the preparing of his Ark, as God had commanded, and to the saving of his house thereby. And for that very reason, because he believed God's threatening, and was effectually afraid of it, he is in that very place called an Heir of the Righteousness which is by faith, Heb. 11. 7. The obedience of Moses is ascribed in plain words, to his design upon those rewards which God hath promised, and which he hoped to compals by it. For he had respect, saith the Apostle, to the recompence of reward, Heb. 11. 26. And to put it beyond all doubt, that this respect to our own advantage in our performance of God's Laws, is not only the necessity of some Men, but as I said before, the very frame and constitution of the humane nature: we are told, that it was found in it in the highest advancement, which it either ever did, or possibly can receive; I mean in our Saviour Christ himself. For even of his obedience, and of the highest instance of it, his death it self, the Apostle assures us, that it was performed through a design upon his own advantage, as well as upon

on that Glory which would thereby redound to God. It was, says he, for the sake of the joy that was set before him, that he endured the Cross, and despised the shame of it, *Heb.* 12. 2.

Thus, upon all these accounts it appears, that the having respect to our own advantage in our obedience to God's Laws, is not only an innocent, but an absolutely necessary thing. God can never be offended with it, because the necessity of our nature requires it, because his own Laws propose it, because our faith is made effectual by it, and lastly, because the best men that ever lived, have stood in need of it, and obeyed through it.

And since some respect to our own good, and intention of our own advantage in God's Service, is so plainly lawful; that surely must be such, where the good things, which we intend for our selves, are only those spiritual and eternal advantages, which his own Law has promised to the obedient, or other temporal ones, so far as they minister to obedience, and are subordinate under it.

For the spiritual and eternal advantages, which we are to reap by our obedience, they are the forgiveness of our Sins, the peace of Conscience, the assistance of the Spirit, and the joys of Heaven; together with deliverance from all the contrary evils, of Guilt and Hell. And these, God himself has expressly promised to us upon our obedience, to persuade us into a performance of it. he uses them as Arguments to gain our Choice, which they must do by actuating our intention; and annexes them to our obedience for this end, that we may be won to perform it for their sakes, when we should not barely for its own. So that it must needs be lawful for every man to intend these in God's Service, because God himself has proposed them expressly in his Laws to every man's intention.

And as for the temporal advantages which accrue to us from God's Service, they are length of Days, and health of Body, and riches, and honour, or good reputation; with such a freedom from all the opposite evils, of sickness, and death, and shame, and poverty, as suits with our own Good, and our Condition in this World.

And these also are promised to the obedient. Let thine heart keep my Commandments, saith Wisdom; for length

of days, and long life, and peace shall they add unto thee, Prov. 3. 1, 2. And as length of days is in her right hand, so in her left are riches and honour, ver. 16. The memory of the just shall be blessed, when the name of the wicked shall rot, Prov. 10. 7. There neither is, nor shall be any want to them that fear the Lord. For though the Lions, that seem best able to get it, and are most careleſs how they come by it, do lack and suffer hunger; yet they that seek the Lord, shall not want any good thing, Pſal. 34. 9, 10.

But if there were no express promises of these temporal advantages propoſed to us upon our obedience, in God's Word; yet were it enough to warrant our intention of them, that God has annexed them to it, in the very order of Things, and course of Nature. For, according to the ordinary course and constitution of the World, Sobriety, Justice, Peaceableness, Diligence, and other instances of Virtue and Obedience, are naturally fitted to bring down all these temporal advantages upon us. And this Course of Nature, and Order of Things, is of God's establishment. It is as much his appointment as the promises and revelations of his Gospel are. For he is the Author of the World as well as of the Bible. He made the Frame and Order of it to be what now it is, and after he had formed it, he saw that all was very good, Gen. 1. 31. His Word and Works are both his own, and the advantages of Virtue and Obedience in the one, are as much of his appointment as in the other.

So that as for our temporal advantages also, which are much improved and ministred to by our obedience, they are such as God has given us, for motives and encouragements in his service. He has set before us things present as well as future, to quicken us in our performances of his Commandments, and has appointed us to intend both, because otherwise it is not possible that we should be quickened, and excited by them.

But the only thing, which we are to take care of in this matter, is, that as these temporal advantages are established by God, whether in the course of Nature, or in the express revelations of his Word, as motives and inducements to our Obedience: So we use them accordingly, as helps and instruments to enable us to Obey.

We must make them *assistant* and *subservient* to those *Laws*, which they are annexed to ; they are to *minister* to them, but by no means to *exalt* themselves *above* them, or to make *against* them. But if once they *lose* this *serviceableness*, and *subordination* to the *doing* of God's *Will*, they *lose all* that can *warrant* them, and all the place which he has assign'd for them, and make our *performance* of God's *Commands*, to be *no Obedience* to him, nor to give right to any *recompence* or *reward* from him. For, as I said then,

Secondly, our *intention* of our own *advantage* in God's *service* is *forbidden*, and renders our *obedient performances* *corrupt* and *unsincere* ; when, together with our *intention* of *serving* God, we join another *intention* of *serving sin* ; or when we design some *temporal ends*, as much, or more, than we design God's *Service*, which makes our *self-interest*, instead of being *subservient* to *obedience*, to become fit to *oppose* and *undermine* it.

Sometimes, I say, together with their *intention* of *serving* God, men join another *intention* of *serving sin*. And this is done in these and the like cases : (*viz.*) If a man prosecutes a *malefactor*, which is an *action agreeable* to the command of *Justice*, out of the *sinful end* of *spite* and *revenge*, as well as out of a *purpose of Obedience*. If a *Priest* shall take *Confessions* from *Women*, with a *design of Lust* as well as of *Religion*. If a man shall be *temperate* and *sober*, *chaste* and *industrious*, out of a *principle of covetousness*, as much as out of *duty*. If he do, as our *Saviour* tells us the *Pharisees* did, *make long Prayers*, and other *professions of Religion*, to enable him the better and without *suspicion*, to *devour widows houses*, as well as to *serve God*. In these instances, and in all others that are *like unto them*, there is a *Mixture of light and darkness*, of *good and evil design*. Men join *God* with *Belial*, and *Obedience* with something of a quite *contrary nature*, intending at once to *serve both their Lord and their Sins* too.

But as for their performances, which flow from such a *mixture of design* as this, they will in no wise be owned as an *obedient*, but punished as a *sinful service*. For that *evil motive*, which is mixed with the *good*, is such as God has *expressly threatned*. He has plainly declared, that he will condemn men eternally, for *Revenge*, for *Lust*,

for Covetousness and Rapine, and for all those actions which proceed from them. So that as for such performances, as arise from such sinful principles, they are judged already, and the dreadful sentence is long ago gone out against them.

And then as for their mixing this damnable design of Sin, with a design of obedience to God in the same action ; so far is that from lessening, that it is rather an aggravation of their crime. For it adds to all that evil, which it contains within it self, a prophanation also of what is holy, or an abuse of what is sacred ; and together with the service of the Sin, joins an immediate and direct affront of God too.

At other times, I say, men design some temporal ends for themselves, as much, or more, than they design God's service. And this also renders their performances unsincere, and qualifies their own temporal self-interests instead of being subservient to obedience, to oppose and undermine it.

Their temporal advantages, they intend sometimes as much, as they do God's service. They make them equal and co-ordinate, loving the world, as much as they love God ; and they are induced to perform what he commands them, as much for its sake, as they are for his.

Now this is an indignity, which God will by no means endure. For it is plainly an intolerable degradation of him, and a bringing him down to nothing more than equal amiableness, with those earthly pleasures, and temporal interests, which we join in co-ordination with him. It is a setting up the world for his rival, and making the Creature equal in our estimation to him, who is the Creator and Lord of all. But the peremptory words of his Law are,---*Thou shalt have no other Gods before me, or in my presence, Exod. 20. 3.* He will be served and respected above all ; and to bring other things into competition with him, he looks upon to be the same thing, as to renounce him. For he is jealous of the prebeminence of his service above all other things, as a Husband is of his Wife's love to him above all other Men; *I the Lord, saith he, am a jealous God, Exod. 20. 5.*

And since this intending of our temporal Advantages equally to God's Service, is look'd upon to be so great an Affront and Degradation of him; the making them superior to him, and being won more for their sakes, than for his, must do so much rather. For this is a letting up other things above him, and is like making and serving of another God. Upon which account, as some expound it, Covetousness, which is a loving and serving of Riches more than God, is called Idolatry. Col. 3. 5.

And when any Temporal Interest of our own, has got as great Power over us, or greater, than God himself has; as it makes for the performance of his Command at one time, so will it at another be as ready to make against it. For although our Duty and our temporal Interest, do ordinarily strike in together; yet they do not always do so, but are sometimes divided. And then this Hank, which our own worldly Advantage has got over us, will not determine us for God, but contest with him. It will make us neglect his Service, that we may serve our selves; and carry us on to transgress his Commands, whensoever we may thereby promote our own worldly Interests.

So that the intending to serve our Sins, together with our intending to serve God; or the Intention of our own temporal Interest, in a degree, either equal, or superior to our Intention of Obedience to him, by both which ways, all worldly advantages are qualified to oppose him: This Mixture of Intention, I say, makes our Performance of his Commands to be no sincere or acceptable Obedience, which he either should or will Recompence.

As for that unmixedness of Intention therefore, which is implied in Sincerity, and which is necessary to the acceptance of our Obedience of all the forementioned Laws, it excludes not all Intention of our own Advantage together with God's Service. For to have respect to the spiritual and eternal Advantages, which in God's Laws themselves are expressly promised to our Obedience, is always lawful: And to have an eye upon those temporal advantages, which will accrue to us by obeying, is lawful so far, as we intend them, not in a degree, either equal to God's service, or superior to it, by both which ways they are empower'd to undermine it. But then only our mixing a design of our own self-interest, together with our Design of serving God, makes our service unsincere, and cuts

off our Hopes of Reward for the same, when, together with our Design of serving God, we join a Design of serving Sin; or when we design some temporal Ends of our own, as much, or more, than we design Obedience unto him.

And therefore it is a vain Fear, wherewith many good People are wont to perplex their Souls, when they doubt of the Sincerity of their Obedience, because it was perform'd with an Eye at their own Advantage; through their Fears of Hell, or their Hopes of Heaven. For whatsoever some, out of a mistaken Zeal for God's Honour, may have said to the contrary, this is not only innocent, but, as I have shewn, plainly necessary. If they scruple at this, they must scruple eternally. For it is not their Choice, but their very Nature to act thus, and they cannot help it. This, I say, is their very Nature, and they must leave off to be men, before they can get quit of it. Men may speak loftily, and talk of obeying purely for God's sake, without seeking any thing at all for themselves. But this is mere Talk, and empty Vaunt, that can never come beyond Words, or appear in Action. For they must be made something else than what they are, before they can practise it.

If any man doubts then, whether God will accept his Obedience, because in obeying he had an Eye at his own self-interest; he doubts whether God will accept him, because he obeys as a Man. *Noah*, and *Abraham*, and *Moses*, nay *Christ* himself might have doubted at this rate; for in their Obedience, they all intended their own Good as well as God's Glory, and had respect unto the Recompence of Reward. If this be a sufficient Ground of Scruple, every Christian Man must of necessity scruple without end. For all our Obedience, is an Obedience of Faith; and our Faith or Belief of Heaven and Hell, makes us chuse to obey, in making us first to intend by such Obedience to obtain the one, and escape the other. So that either our own Nature, and *Christ's* Gospel, must be changed into something different from what they are; or we must acknowledge, that such honest Intention of our own Good, as I have mentioned, is lawful for us in God's service, since it is made so necessary and unavoidable for us in the one, and so much encouraged by the other.

And thus at last we see, what is the first requisite to an acceptable Obedience, viz. *Sincerity*. And that it implies,

plies, both the *reality* of our Intention in God's Service, or our performing it truly for God's sake, as we pretend to do ; and also the *uncorruptness* of it, or our performing it for his sake more than for any thing else whatsoever, and without regard to any other Advantages of our own, than such as are allowed by him, and are subordinate under him.

But in regard the *Degrees* of our *Intention* and *Design*, are not so *obvious* and easily discoverable in themselves, but are better known to us in their *Fruits* and *Effects*, than in their *own Natures*: For the greater ease in judging, whether we do intend God's Service *most* of all, and so are *sincere* in our *Obedience*, or no, I shall, before I conclude this Point, lay down a *plain* and *certain* Mark, whence any Man of common Apprehension may easily discern the same.

And the Rule, which I shall lay down for it, is this ; *If our Obedience be intire it cannot but be sincere likewise*. For he who obeys God in all Times, and in all Instances, cannot but serve him with both these *Ingredients* of *Sincerity*, *viz.* *Truth* and *Preheminence*. He must needs intend God's Service *really* and *above all*; who intends it so, as to serve him *constantly*, and *universally*. And the Reason is this, because although our *temporal Interest*, and present Advantage, be for the *most part* united with God's Service, yet it is not so always : But sometimes in all Instances of Obedience, and at most times in some, it is separated and divided from it. So that as long as we are true to our own Principle of Acting, which we may safely conclude we always are, if we either design not God's Service at all through *Hypocrisie*, or design it not above all through a corrupt mixture of *Intention* ; at those times, when these Instances happen, we shall not be acted by the Command, but through the love of our own *temporal Interest*, which we intend *really*, and design *more*, we shall certainly act against it. For our Actions go where our Wills lead them; and our Wills always follow that, which is the prevailing Motive to them, and has most Power with them. And therefore if we still chuse God's Service in all its parts, and in all Times, whether it make for our present Advantage, or against it ; we may be assured that we intend his Service *truly*, and also that we intend it *most* ; since we serve him, when no *By-interest* of our own

own can be served, and *disserv*e all other Interests for his sake. He must needs be our highest Aim, because, where we may please him, though no secular Advantages concur, we chuse any thing ; and where he would be offended, though all other advantages invite, we chuse nothing.

So that in the Matter of Obedience, our Integrity is the great and *last Measure* of our Acceptance. And if upon Examination we find, that our Obedience is *intire*, we need not doubt but that it is sincere also.

And this is the very *Mark*, from which according to that Version of the Psalms which is used in our Liturgy, the Psalmist himself concludes concerning the Obedience of the *Israelites*. For he collects it to have been a *dissembled* and *unsincere*, because it was not a *whole* and *intire* Service. They did but flatter him with their Mouth, saith he, and *dissembled* with him in their tongue ; for their heart was not whole or entire with him, Psal. 78. 36, 37.

To clear up this enquiry then, *What Qualifications of our Obedience to all the forementioned Laws of God, must render it acceptable to him, and available to our salvation at the last day*, I shall proceed to discourse of the second Condition of all acceptable Obedience, viz. Integrity ; of which in the next Chapter.

CHAP. II.

Of the Second Qualification of all acceptable Obedience, viz. Integrity.

INTEGRITY of Obedience, is such a perfection and completeness of it, as excludes all maimedness and defects, which is well intimated by S. James, when he explains *intire* by wanting nothing ; Let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and *intire*, which you will be by wanting nothing, Jam. 1. 4.

And this, in another Word, is ordinarily expressed in Scripture by *uprightness*. For in the most common Metaphor of the Holy Books, our Course of Life, is called our *Way* ; our *Actions*, *Steps* ; and our *Doing*, *Walking*. And to carry on the Metaphor, our Course of Obedience

is called our right or straight Path; our Course of sin and transgressions, a crooked Path; our committing sin, stumbling and falling; and our doing our duty, walking uprightly. So that for a Man to be upright in God's ways, is not to stumble, or fall by Sin and Disobedience; i. e. to be perfect and intire, or wanting nothing in our obedient Performances.

Now this Integrity or Uprightness, which is necessary to our Obedience, that it may stand us in stead at the last Day, is three-fold.

1. An Integrity of our Powers or Faculties, which I call an Integrity of the Subject.
2. An Integrity of Seasons and Opportunities, which is an Integrity of Time.

3. An Integrity of the particular Laws of Duty, and Instances of Obedience, which is an Integrity of the Object.

And all these are necessary, to render our Performance of God's Laws an acceptable Service. For if ever we expect, that he should reward our Obedience at the last Day, we must take care before-hand, that it be the Obedience of our whole Man, in all Times, to the whole Law of God. To begin with it.

1. That our Obedience of the foremention'd Laws may avail us to Life and Pardon at the last Day, we must take care to obey with all our Powers and Faculties, which is an Integrity of the Subject. And for this, the very Letter of the Law is express. For when the Lawyer asks, *What shall I do to inherit eternal life?* Christ sends him to what is written in the Law, and repeats that to him for an Answer; *Thou shalt love (and serve, as it is Deut. 11. 13.) the Lord thy God, with all thy heart, or will, Mark 12. and with all thy soul, or affections, and with all thy strength, 30.* or executive and bodily powers, and with all thy mind, or understanding, *Luke 10. 25, 26, 27, 28.* Obedience with all these Powers and with our whole Nature, is the means of Life, and the indispensable Condition of our eternal Happiness.

First, We must keep all Gods Commandments, with our Minds or Understandings. It is a dangerous Conceit for any man to phansie, that he may be as sinful as he will in his thoughts, so long as he only loves and chuses, projects and contrives for the forbidden instance in

in his mind, but doth not proceed so far, as to obey it in his outward Practice. For at the last Day we must be called to account, and justified or condemned, by the Counsels and Imaginations of our Minds, as well as by the Works of our Lives. For not only the Works and Practice, but also the thoughts of the wicked, or of Wickedeness, are an abomination to the Lord, Proverbs 15. 26. *The thought of foolishness is sin*, Prov. 24. 9. And since God forbids and hates them; as ever we hope for his Favour, we must repent of them, and forsake them. *Let the wicked man forsake his thoughts*, saith the Prophet, and turn them from his Sin unto the Lord; and then he will have mercy upon him, and abundantly pardon him, Isai. 55. 7. For the warfare that God has set us, after which we are to attain the Reward of eternal Happiness, is a casting down imaginations, as the Apostle tells us, and bringing into Captivity every rebellious thought to the obedience of Christ. 2. Cor. 10. 4, 5.

In particular, this Obedience of our Minds to the Law of God must be, as a doing what he enjoins, so likewise a keeping off from every thing which he forbids.

First, In our Imaginations. We must not phansie it in our Minds with Love and Delight, nor indulge to any Thoughts of it with such Pleasure, as may be a Bait to our Choice, and weaken our Aversion and Hatred of it, and thereby ensnare us in the Practice thereof. Our warfare, as we have heard from the Apostle, must not be against actions only, but against Imaginations also, and insinuating Phansies of Evil; casting down rebellious Imaginations, and making every thought obedient to the Laws of Christ, 2 Cor. 10. 4, 5. And in the old World, when the imaginations of mens thoughts were always evil, it repented the Lord that he had made Man, insomuch as he resolved to destroy him, Gen. 6. 5, 6, 7.

Secondly, In our Counsels and Contrivances. We must not study what Means are fittest, what Times are best, and what manner is most advantageous, for the acting of our Sins. For if we cast about in our Thoughts, and consult about the most commodious way of committing any Sin; although all our Designs be defeated before we come to any effect, yet shall we be condemn'd for our Contrivance, as well as we should for the compleat Action. And this

this our Lord himself has plainly determined in one instance, and the Case is the same in all the rest. For of the contrivances and machinations of murther he assures us, That they, as well as murther it self are of the number of those things which pollute a man, and so utterly unfit him for Heaven, where nothing can enter that is polluted or unclean. Out of the heart, saith he, proceed (a) ~~stale~~^{evil thoughts} or (a) murtherous machinations, and besides ~~πονητις~~^{πονηρι} them, compleat murthers, adulteries, &c. and these defile ~~πονητις~~^{πονερι}, the man, Matt. 15. 19. Which being set im-

mediately before πόνοι, and the sins here being reckoned up according to the order of the Ten Commandments, may seem to determine the wicked machinations to this particular, viz. murtherous only.

And as for that particular sort of contriving for sin, which is the height and perfection of Villany; viz. the inventing of new, and before unknown ways of transgressing: It is sure to meet with a more severe punishment than others, and to thrust men down deeper into the Abyss of Hell. Of this sort, are all inventions of new Oaths, new Nick-names, or Evil-speakings, new frauds and methods of cozenage, new incentives of lust, new modes of drinking, and arts of intemperance. But of these, and of all others which are like unto them, God will one day exact a most rigorous and terrible account: For he that deviseth to do evil, saith Solomon, although he himself doth not act, but only devise it, he shall be called and dealt with as a mischievous and wicked person, Prov. 24. 8. And S. Paul tells us expressly, that in the judgment of God, inventors of evil things shall be declared worthy of death, Rom. 1. 30, 32.

As for our minds or understandings then, they are one faculty, which is plainly implied in the Integrity of our service, and without the obedience whereof, at the last day God will not accept us.

And another faculty implied in it likewise is,

Secondly, Our Soul or Affections. It is a vain thing, for any man to love and set his heart upon any particular sin, and yet for all that to expect that God should love and reward him. If I regard iniquity in my heart, saith the Psalmist, the Lord will not hear me, Psal. 66. 18. No man, as our Saviour says, can serve two masters; for if he love the one, for his sake, when their interests interfere;

fere, he will hate the other; so that we cannot serve God, if with our affections we continue to serve sin, Mat. 6. 24. To pretend obedience to God, and yet to love what he forbids; to make a show of his service, and yet in our very hearts to hanker after his vilest Enemies, whom above all things his Soul abhors; this surely is not honestly to serve him, but *greely* to *collogue*, and *flatly* to *dissemble* with him. For in very deed, if any man love sin, he sides with God's enemy; but for the service and fear of the Lord, it is to hate evil, Prov. 8. 13.

If ever we expect that God should accept even our good works, we must offer up our affections with them. For if our hearts go along with our lusts, whilst our practice is against them, we serve God only against our wills; we submit to him, as a *Slave* doth to a *tyrannous* Lord, not through any kindness for him, but through a hateful fear of him. We utterly dislike what he bids us, but yet we do it, only because we dare not do otherwise. But now this is such a way of performing obedience, as God will never endure to accept of. For he scorns to be served by a slavish fear, and an unwilling mind; he will never look upon a heartless sacrifice; but it is the affection wherewith we do it, which makes him set a price upon any thing that we do, and our love that he regards, more than our performance. For this is that very thing, which was thought fit to be mentioned in the Command it self, *Thou shalt love the Lord with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy mind,* Mat. 22. 37.

'Tis true indeed, we do not find our affection so quick and sensible for God and his Laws, as it uses to be for the things of the world; neither can we reasonably expect it should. For our affections are *bodily powers*, and it is their very nature, as *Philosophy* instructs us, to be a *vehement sensation upon some certain commotions of our bodily spirits*; so that God and his Laws, which are things *immaterial and insensible*, are no proper and proportionate object for them. For it is only matter, that is able of it self to affect matter; and material and sensible objects which can excite our *material and sensitive passions and appetites*. One bodily faculty, is no more fit in its own nature to be moved by a spiritual object, than another is; and we may as well expect, that our eyes should see,

see, or our fingers handle it ; as that our affections should of themselves issue out upon it, either to love, or desire, or delight in it.

So that considering things barely in themselves, I say, and the natural agreeableness that is betwixt them, which is the ground of their natural operations ; it is only bodily pain or pleasure, that is of it self fit to move our bodily passions. But as for spiritual and insensible objects, such as God and Virtue are, whatever fitness to work upon our affections they may have upon other accounts, yet in themselves they have none. Virtue and Obedience, which are spiritual things may gain upon our wills and understandings ; which are spiritual and rational faculties ; but upon our bodily appetites and affections, for their own sakes barely they never can.

But that which makes our affections to issue out upon God and Virtue ; is not the spiritual nature of God and Virtue themselves ; but those sensible and bodily things, which flow from them, and are annexed to them. For although God be immaterial in himself, yet infinite are those material and bodily delights, which we receive from him. And although Virtue and Obedience are in their own natures spiritual and insensible, yet exceeding great, and exceeding many, are the sensible goods and pleasures, which are annexed to them. For Heaven, and eternal life, which are promised to our obedience, will give a full delight, not only to our souls and spirits, but even to all our senses likewise. It will endlessly entertain our eyes, with most splendid sights and glorious objects ; it will feast our ears, with melodious songs, and most ravishing hallelujahs ; and refresh our whole bodies, with a most exalted, and everlasting ease and pleasure. As on the other side, hell, and eternal misery, which are the established punishment of all sin and disobedience, will bring, not only upon our spirits, but upon our bodies too, as full a scene of most exquisite pain and sorrow. For so violent and intolerable will the torments of our bodies there be, that God could find nothing too high to set them out by, but has expressed them by one of the most raging and tormenting things in nature, eternal fire.

Now as for Heaven and Hell, they indeed are such things, as can of themselves stir our affections and bodily passions

passions with a witness. When they are set before us, they are able to make us *love God* and our *Duty* above all things else, and to *hate* nothing so much as *Sin* and *Disobedience*. For no *Sin* can promise us so much *bodily delight*, as is to be enjoyed in *Heaven*; neither can *Obedience* in any *possible* instance expose us to so great *bodily pains*, as the *damn'd* for ever undergo in *Hell*. So that when once *Heaven* and *Hell* are proposed to our *affections*, and act upon them, they will prevail with them more than any thing else can, and make nothing so dear to them as the *performance* of their *duty*, nor any thing so *hateful* as the *transgression* of it.

And thus may *God* and *Vertue* become a fit object even of our *bodily passions*, and a most cogent matter of *love*, *desire*, and *joy*; as, on the contrary, *sin* and *wickedness* are, of *sorrow*, *slight* and *hatred*. They are most powerful to excite all these *affections*, although not in their *bare spiritual selves*, yet in their *bodily dependants*, and *annexed consequences*. For the greatest *bodily joys* shall one day crown our *Obedience*, and the *acute*st *bodily torments* will certainly befall us if we *disobey*. And these, although as yet they are at a *distance*, and *future* to us, are most fit to work upon us, and most strongly to affect us. For we are *Creatures* endowed with *understanding*, and have *Reason* given to us to set *future* things before us, and to think our selves into *passions* and *affections*, and not to be *idle* and altogether *passive*, like the *brute* and *unreasonable Creatures*, and suffer the *bare force* of *outward* and *present objects* to excite them in us. So that with our *bodily affections*, we may *love* and *delight* in *God* and *Religion*, which are *spiritual* things, because of their *bodily joys* and *attendances*; and *sensibly hate* and *grieve* at our *sins* and *disobedience*, which are *moral* and *immaterial evils*, because of their *sensible pains* and *punishment*. And we may *love* the *one*, and *hate* the *other*, above all things else; because no *bodily joys* are in any the least comparison so great, as those which are laid up for the *good* in *Heaven*, nor any *bodily pains* so tormenting, as those which are prepar'd for the *damn'd* in *Hell*. And since *God* has given to our *bodily affections*, even in their *own way*, the greatest motives to *love him above all*, and *above all things to hate sin*, it is the highest *Reason* that he should require it of us, and demand the *preeminent service*,

vice, not only of our spirits, but also of our lower soul or affections also.

But although our *bodily affections*, when they are employed about *Vice* and *Vertue*, which are *spiritual* things, by reason of this *supereminence* of *sensitive rewards* in the *one*, and *punishments* in the *other*, be more strong and powerful; yet are they not, as I said, so warm and sensible as they use to be, when they issue out upon *sensible* and *bodily objects*. We feel one in our own souls, and are affected in them, much more violently, than we are in the *other*. And that it must needs be so, is plain: For our affections for *worldly* things, are raised in us by the *things themselves*, and by those impressions which they make upon us; and they act to the *highest*, and according to the *utmost* of their power. But our *affections* for *spiritual* things, are to be raised in us by our *own Reason*, and we are to argue and think our selves up to them; and our thoughts are free, and go no further than we please to suffer them. And indeed we find so much difficulty in fixing them upon any thing, and there are so many other things obtruding daily upon them, to divert and call them off from these, that we seldom stay so long upon them, or are so well acquainted with them, as to be wrought up into a very *warm* and *inflamed* affection for them.

Besides what is the chief Reason of all, that *good* and *evil* in *worldly* things, which *affects* us is *present* with us; and therefore our *passions* for or *against* them, are raised in us by our *sense* and *feeling*. But as for *spiritual* things, and those *bodily* joys and sorrows which are *annexed* to them, for the *sake* whereof we are *sensibly affected* with them, they are not present with us, but future and at a distance; and therefore our passion for them cannot be railed by our *sense*, whose objects are only *present* things, but merely by our *fancy* and *imagination*. But now, as for the *sensible warmth* and *voilence* of a *passion*, it is nothing near so *quick*, when it is excited by *fancy*, as when it is produced by *sense*. For no man is so *feelingly affected* with hearing a sad Story, as he would be by *seeing* of it. And a Man will be moved abundantly less, by *imagining* a *battle*, a *murder*, or any other dreadful thing, than by *beholding* it. And the reason is, because the impressions upon our *sense* are *quick* and

and violent, and their warmth is communicated to our affections which are raised by them : whereas our imaginations are calm and faint in comparison, and the passions which flow from them partake of their temper, and are more cold and less perceptible. So that our passions for worldly things being passions upon sense, and our passions for things spiritual with their bodily pain or pleasure annexed, being only upon fancy and imagination ; we must needs be more warmly and sensibly, although not more powerfully, affected with the things of this world, than of the other.

But that which is to distinguish our passion for God and Virtue above all things else, from our passion for worldly things, is not the warmth and sensibleness, but the power and continuance of it. For it must be a prevalent affection, which doth more service, although it make less noise ; which gets the upper hand in competition, and make us when we must despise one, to disregard all things else, and to adhere to God's service, what other things soever be lost by it. What it wants in warmth, it has in permanency and power ; in sticks faster to us, and can do more with us, than our love of any thing besides. For in our affections, we must needs prefer God and his service before every other thing when they stand in competition ; or we have none of that Love with the whole soul, which the Commandment requires of us ; as will be shewn

• Chap. 8. more fully * afterwards.

And because our thoughts and affections have in them a great latitude, and in a matter of so high concern, every good soul will be inquisitive after some determinate accounts of that compass and degree of them, which is necessary to our acceptance : Before I conclude this Point, I will set down what measures of obedience in these two faculties, what thoughts and imaginations of our minds, and what degrees of love and delight in our affections, shall be judged sufficient at the last Day, to save or to destroy us.

As for our thoughts, there is one more elaborate and perfect sort of them, viz. our counsels and contrivances. And when they are employed about the compassing of forbidden things, they are our sin, as I shew'd before, and without repentance, will certainly prove our condemnation :

And as for other of our thoughts, which are not come up to the height of a *contrivance* or *consultations*, but are only *simple apprehensions*; some of them also are *properly* and *directly good*, or *evil*, and an *article* of our *life* or *death*. God has imposed several *Laws*, which he has backed both with threats and promises, upon our very thoughts themselves, of which sort there are some to be met with under all the three *general Parts of Duty*, viz. to *God*, our *Neighbour*, and our *selves*. For our thoughts of *God*, are bound up by the *Law of honour*, which forbids us to lessen or prophane him by *dishonourable Notions* and *Opinions*; our thoughts of our *Neighbour*, by the *Laws of Charity and Candour*, which suffer us not either to reproach or injure him by *undervaluing Ideas*, or *groundless Suspicions*; and our thoughts of our own *selves*, by the *Law of humility*, which prohibits us to be exalted in our own conceits, through *false* and *over-high apprehensions* of our own *excellence*. *Pious* and *Reverend thoughts* of *God*, and *charitable opinions* of *Men*, and *humble* and *lowly* *conceits* of our own *selves*, are *Duties* incumbent upon our very *Minds* themselves. And all the opposite vices of *impious* and *reproachful Ideas* of *God*; of *censorious*, *suspicious*, and *lessening thoughts* of other *Men*; and of *proud* and *arrogant* *conceits* of our own *worth*; are transgressions within the sphere and compass even of our *understandings*. For the exercise of the first, is not only a *cause* and *principle*, but a *part* and *instance* also of *obedience*, and an *article* of *life*; as the exercise of the other, is an *instance* of *disobedience*, and an *article* also of *damnation*.

So that as for all our *perfected* and *studied thoughts* of *evil*, viz. our *counsels* and *contrivances*; and as for all such *simple thoughts* and *meer apprehensions*, as have *particular Laws* imposed upon them, they are not only *principles*, but *parts* and *instances* of *disobedience*; and if we are guilty of them, unless we retract them by *repentance*, we shall be liable to be condemned for them.

But then there are several other *bare imaginations* and *simple apprehensions*, which are not under any of these particular *Laws*, that are imposed upon our thoughts themselves, but are employed upon things commanded or forbidden by any of the other *Laws* foremention'd. And as for all these apprehensions, in them-

selves they are neither *Sin* nor *Duty*, nor a matter either of reward or punishment ; but so far only, as they are causes and principles, either of a sinful or obedient choice or practice of those good or evil things, which they are employed upon.

In themselves, I say, these mere apprehensions are neither *Sin* nor *Duty*. We may perceive sin in our Minds, and have it in a thought or notion, without ever being guilty of it, or liable to answer for it. For the Sun shines upon a *Dunghill* without being Defiled by it ; and God sees all the wickedness in Hell, but is not tainted with it. And so long as we sojourn in a world of *Iniquity*, every good Man must needs know, and behold all the vices of the Earth ; but bare understanding of them, doth not make him partake with them, or subject to be punished for them.

But to make these mere apprehensions and imaginations, either of good or evil, an instance of obedience or disobedience ; they must be * causes and principles of an obedient, or disobedient choice or practice. For our inward thoughts and imaginations, are Springs and Principles, both of our inward choice, and also of our outward operations. And the service which God requires of them, is the service of the Principle. He demands the obedience of our *Minds*, as a means, and in order to a further obedience of our hearts and actions. And expects that we should think so long, and so often, upon the absolute ness of his authority, the kindness of his nature, the reasonableness of his commands, the glory of his rewards, and the terror of his punishments ; till in our hearts we chuse those things which he has commanded, and perform them in our works and practice. And when Apprehension or Knowledge carries us on to performance, it is an acceptable service, but no otherwise. For hereby alone, saith S. John, we know that we know him, with such knowledge as shall be accepted by him, if we keep his Commandments, 1 John 2. 3. And on the other side, our bare imaginations and apprehensions of some forbidden *Sin*, are then only disobedient, when they carry us on to chuse or practise those things that are sinful. And we must go on from thought, to choice, or practice, before the vices thought of become our own, and our apprehensions of sin become themselves sinful. For the thoughts of *Sin*, have the

* See this
stated,
Lib. 5.
Chap. 4.

sinfulness of means and causes; and are sinful so far, as they help on either our consent, or performance. So our Saviour has determined in one instance, viz. that of lustful looks and apprehensions, Mat. 5. He that looks upon a woman so long as to lust after her, or to consent in his heart to the enjoyment of her, he hath committed Adultery with her already in his heart, v. 28.

And then, as for our affections. their measures are the very same with those already mentioned, of our bare imaginations, and simple apprehensions. For their service and obedience, is that of the principle, and their Sentence shall be according to those effects, either in our wills or practice which flow from it.

If we love and desire obedience, so far as to chuse and act it; this degree of affection will gain us God's love and favour, and secure his rewards; but less than it, no other shall. *He that keeps my Commandments, saith Christ, he it is that loveth me, and they only who so love me in obeying me, shall be loved again of my Father, and I will love them,* John 14. 15, 21.

But if our love and desire of evil things, carry us on to * chuse or act any instance of disobedience, for the sake of that which is loved and desired; then are our affections sinful, and such as will destroy us. The desire of evil, is not so truly the state of mortal sin, as of dangerous temptation; it is not deadly in it self, but kills by carrying us on, to a sinful and deadly choice and actions. For when once it has got to that degree, it is obnoxious to a dreadful sentence. Whereof the Psalmist gives us one instance, in the love of violence. *Him that loveth violence, the soul of the Lord hateth,* Psalm 11. 5. And S. John says the same of the love of lying, and the Cate is alike in every other sin. *Without, in outer darkness, are murderers, and whatsoever loveth or maketh a lye,* Rev. 22. 15.

And thus we see what measure of obedience is required in these two faculties, and what kinds and degrees, of thoughts and affections are to be used or restrained, to make theirs an acceptable service. For we must abstain from all evil counsels and contrivances; from all simple apprehensions, which are particularly forbidden, and put in use all such as are particularly enjoined. And as for all other our bare thoughts and imaginations, and all our

* See this
stated,
Book 5.
Chap. 4:

affections and desires, we must fix them upon our Duty so long, till they make us perform it; and never suffer them to issue out upon evil so far, till they carry us on, either to chuse, or to practise it; and till they have carried us to do one of these, they are imperfect things, and not truly grown up to the perfect stature, either of Obedience, or of Disobedience.

But besides these two faculties, viz. our minds and affections, there is yet another, whose service is necessary to render ours an acceptable obedience; and that is,

Thirdly, Our hearts or wills also.

It is an absurd Dream, for any man to think of serving God without his will, because without that, none of his actions can be called his own. For that only is imputed to us, which is chosen by us, and which it was in the power of our own Wills, either to promote, or hinder; no man deserving praise, or being liable to answer for what he could not help. But of all things, God most of all regards our hearts in all our performances. He perfectly discerns them, and he estimates our services according to them. So that it is not possible for any of us to obey him against our wills, in regard the choice of our will and heart it self, is that which renders any action a saving and acceptable obedience. For out of the heart, as Solomon saith, proceed the issues of life, Prov. 4. 23.

The choice then, as well as the practice of our Duty, is plainly necessary, to render it available to our salvation. But on the other side, if we chuse sin, although we miss of opportunity to act it, the bare choice, without the practice is sufficient to our condemnation. For even by that, when we proceed no further, our heart has gone astray from God, and we are polluted by the sin which we resolve upon in our own choice, since out of the heart, as our Saviour tells us, proceeds the pollution of the Man, Math. 15. 16, 20. We may commit all sorts of transgressions, and incur the punishment of them, merely by consenting to them inwardly in our hearts, without ever compleating them in our outward operation. For our Lord himself has thus determined it in one instance, and the Case is the same in all the rest. Whoever looks upon a Woman to lust after her, or so long till his heart consent to commit lewdness with her if he could, he though

though he never met with an (*e*) opportunity to act it, (*e*) Cum ab
or before any, *hath committted adultery with her already homine ma-*
in his heart, Matth. 5. 28.

*la res sola
necessitate
non agitur, ipsa rei turpis cupiditas pro actione damnatur,* Salvian. de Prov.
l. 6. p. 205. Ed. Oxon.

No Man then may venture to will and chuse any one Sin, and yet presume he is innocent. For if Fear, or Shame, or Interest, or other by-motive and worldly End, or want of Opportunity, hinder him from the outward acting and compleating of his Sin; yet if his Heart stands for it, and all the while he *wills* and *chuses* it, he is guilty in the Accounts of God, as if he had committed it. We disobey, in *willing* as well as in *doing*; and shall suffer for a wicked *Choice*, as well as for a wicked *Practice*. So that as ever we hope, to have our Obedience to the fore-mentioned Laws avail us unto *Life* and *Pardon* at the last Day, we must take care to perform it, as with our *Minds* and *Affections*, so with our *Hearts* or *Wills* likewise.

As for these three Faculties therefore, *viz.* our *Minds*, our *Wills*, and our *Affections*; they must necessarily be devoted to God's Service, to make up an *intire* Obedience. As ever we hope for *Heaven*, we must employ our *Minds* upon God and his *Laws*, so far at least, till we *love* them in our *Souls*, and *chuse* them in our *Hearts*, with full Purpose and Resolution of performing them. Our *Understandings* must consider of our *Duty*, and of the *Motives* to Obedience, so *long*, and so *well*, till our *Affections* are inflamed with a desire of it, and our *Wills* are firmly resolved upon it. And as ever we expect to escape the Torments of *Hell*, we must take care that we entertain no *Thoughts* or *Desires* of any *Sin* so long, till in our *Hearts* we become concerned for it, and *willing* to fulfil it. But if we look on it, it must be in order to loath and *disdain* it. We must consider how *disingenuous*, how *shameful*, and how *mischievous* a thing it is; and indulge to no Apprehensions of it in our *Minds*, which are like to insnare, either our *Choice*, or *Practice*; nor dwell upon any, but those that are apt to kindle our *Indignation* and *Zeal* against it, and arm our *Wills* with full Purpose to overcome it.

This must be the Use and Exercise, of all our inward Powers, and Principles of Action, They must be used as Instruments of good Life, and made the great Springs, and productive Causes of all vertuous Practice and Obedience. It is this holy and obedient Practice that is the End, whereto all these obedient Thoughts, Desires and Resolutions, are directed; so that if they fall short of this they miss of their chief effect, and appear to be weak and idle things, that are insignificant and useless.

C H A P. III.

Of Obedience with the Fourth Faculty, viz. our Executive or Bodily Powers, and outward Operations.

A Fourth Faculty, that is indispensibly necessary to the Integrity of our Obedience, and which is the chief End and Perfection, and gets Acceptance for all the rest is our Strength, or bodily and executive Powers.

For the completion and crown of all, we must do, as well as think and desire; and our obedient choice, must end in an obedient practice. For all our inward Motions, are in order to outward Operations; they must go on to good Effects, before they are fit for the great Reward: and we must work as well as desire; and not only will, but do our Duty, because upon nothing less than that we shall be accepted at the last Day.

This, indeed, is the severe Service, and the distastful part of Duty. It is a Matter of much Labour and Pains, of much Strife and Contention. For the doing of our Duty, is the top of all; every Hindrance must be removed, and every Difficulty overcome, before we can attain to it. Our Scruples and gainsaying Reasonings, must be silenced; our discouraging Fears, quieted; and all our repugnant Desires cooled, or conquered: Every Doubt of our Minds must be solved, and every hostile Lust subdued, e'er we can act what we are required. A secret Wish, or a sudden Desire of Obedience, may start up in our Souls

Souls unawares, and there is not much opposition made to it, because our Lusts receive no great Hurt from it. For the Pleasure of our Lusts, lies in acting and fulfilling them ; and they are secure of their own Delights, so long as they are of our Practice. And therefore they will allow us to think of Good, to spend a faint Wish, a sudden Inclination, or a fruitless Desire upon it. But if once we would go on to do our Duty, and to work Obedience, then begins the Conflict. Our Lusts then bestir themselves with Might and Main, and set every Faculty at-work to Resist and Defeat it. For our Thoughts begin to argue, and to pick Quarrels with our Duty. They suggest all its Difficulties and Dangers. They represent all the Pains of the Undertaking, to cool our Love ; the appendant Dangers, to raise our Fears ; and the great Hazards, to shake our Hopes, and make us despair of Success. For the sake of our Sins, we arm all discouraging Passions, and quite stifle all the obedient Suggestions of our Consciences. For either we soften our Sin by Excuses, or Justifie it by Argument, or over-look it by Ignorance, heedless Inconsideration and Forgetfulness. Either we will act it rashly, through the Power of a strong Lust, and not consider it at all ; or else think of it, only to lessen or defend it. And when, by the Opposition of our Lusts to the perfecting and performing of our Duty, our spiritual Strengths are thus weakened, and our Lusts advanced, when our Passions rise, and our Minds plead against it ; then is the Strife, and there's the Toil and Difficulty of Obedience.

And because in this Obedience of our Works and Actions, there is so much Difficulty, therefore are most People so desirous to shift it off, and so forward to take up with any thing, which will save them the Labour of it. They persuade themselves, that God will admit of easier Terms, and build their Hopes upon cheaper Services ; in particular upon these Four :

First, A true Belief, or orthodox Opinions.

Secondly, An Obedience of idle Desires and ineffective Wishes.

And if for all these, they continue still to do what God forbids, and to work Disobedience ; then their Hope is to be saved notwithstanding it, because,

Thirdly, Their falling is through the Power of a great and overpowering Temptation, which they see and resist, but cannot prevail over. So that,

Fourthly, Their Transgression is with Reluctance and Unwillingness, their Service of Sin is an unwilling, and a slavish Service.

1. The first false Ground, whereby Men elude all the Necessity of serving God with their Strength or executive Powers, in outward Works and Operations, is their Confidence of being saved, for a true Belief, or a right Knowledge in Religious Matters and Orthodox Opinions. They turn all Religion into a matter of Study and Speculation, as if it required only a good Head, and a discerning Judgment. They make it a matter of Skill, but not of Practice; an Exercise of Wit and Parts, but not a Rule of Action. For the Faith which they expect should save them, with some Men goes no farther than the Mind, and consists barely in right Notions and Apprehensions. They take it to be nothing more, but an Understanding what Christ has said, a being able to reason upon it, and to argue for it, and in their own Minds, approving and consenting to it: And that not to all that Christ has revealed neither. For the Precepts or Commands, it overlooks, and doth not meddle with; the Threatnings, it either considers not at all, or if it do, it makes them not to be due to that whereunto God has fixed them, (viz.) Disobedience of Practice, but only to Ignorance and Unbelief. But all that which their Faith eyes, and which their Minds solely, or at least principally approve of, is the historical Passages of Christ's Life and Death, the doctrinal Points which he has told us concerning God or himself, and the comfortable Promises of the Gospel. They believe what Christ is, what he has done and suffered for us, and what he has promised to us. They think right in all the Religious Controversies that are on foot in the World, joining themselves with the orthodox Men, and siding, as they presume, with the true Opinion; they profess Christ's Religion, and are Members of his Church, and adhere to the Right Party of Christians, and to the purest Congregation, and that they conclude is enough to bring them to Heaven.

But if any think, as God be praised, many do, that God requires more than the bare Service of our Minds and

and right Apprehensions ; yet even a great part of them fansie, that all which he requires besides, is only the Obedience of their Tongues and Discourses. If they believe with the Mind, and confess with the Mouth, although they are rebellious and reprobate in their Practice, they are satisfied of their Godly Estate, and presume that God is so too. Their Religion is made up of Lip-service, for they think to content God by heavenly Talk, and pious Conference, by larding all their Discourses with the Name of God, and Shreds of Scripture ; all their Conversation is holy Phrase and sanctified Form of speaking ; and this they hope will atone for all the Lewdness and Disobedience of their Lives and Actions.

And if they proceed yet further to a Faith that reacheth beyond the Mind and the Tongue, and think it necessary that it sink down from the Head into the Heart ; yet there they will allow God to expect no great Matters. They hope he will be well pleased, although it summons not up all our Affections for his Service, if it produce in us these two easie Passions, which are raised without much ado, and may well be spared, (*viz.*) a strong Confidence, and a warm Zeal. If, to make it saving, it must imply a joint Concurrence of our Affections, it shall be only of these two. It shall add Hope to Knowledge, and be a Belief that God will save Sinners, with a special Hope, and fanciful Confidence, that he will in particular save them : It shall add Zeal to Orthodoxy, a warm Heart to a sound Head, and be no more, but a maintaining of, and stickling for right Opinions, and against erroneous and false ones, with Heat and Fierceness.

Thus do Men delude themselves, into great Confidences, and vain Expectations, from a Faith that is without Fruit, from an orthodox, but empty Knowledge, which is void of all obedient Practice.

But a Knowledge and Belief, which is not more comprehensive in its Nature, nor has other Effects than these ; they will find to their Cost in the Event of things, is miserable, delusive and vain. It will serve to no other end, but the heightning of their Crimes, and the encreasing of their Condemnation. For do but consider :

If we will believe and understand Christ's Doctrines and his Promises, but overlook, or deny his Laws and Pre-

Precepts; what is this, but instead of Honour and Service, to affront and renounce him? For by picking and chusing at this rate, we cast off his Power of Molding for us a Religion, and fixing the Terms of his own Mercy, and make to our selves a Condition of our own Salvation. We follow him so far only, as we please our selves, but no farther. And the compass of our Belief it self, is not bounded by his Authority, or measured according to his Mind, but our own. For we understand and assent, not to every thing that he has said, but only to what we our selves like. We refuse to take every thing upon his Word, and credit him in what he speaks, no longer than it agrees with us, or than we matter not whether what he says be true or no; but we either give no heed to him, or flatly disbelieve him, where we have any Temptation. So that his Veracity and Truth it self, has no Power over our very Minds, beyond what our own Lusts, and beloved Sins will suffer it: But the Devil and the World must be served in the first Place by our Opinions, and God must be forced to take up with their Leavings.

Nay, what is yet more, by such a partial and squeamish Belief as this, we do not only give or take, at our own liking, from that Attribute of his, which in believing we would be thought to honour, viz. his Truth: But even where we seem to submit to it, we wrong and pervert it. For we wrest his Sense, and spoil his Meaning, and undermine all that he intends: So that even that which we do believe, is not his Mind, but our own. For the true Meaning of his Promises, which run all upon Condition of our Obedience, we pervert; the Force of all his Threatnings, which denounce Woes to every Sin and Transgression, we cancel. We do as much as in us lies, to corrupt his Word, and to bely his very Gospel. We make his whole Religion to signify another thing than what he intended. For we make it allow, what he forbids; and encourage such, as he threatens; and save those, whom at the Day of Judgment he will condemn. And since this perverse Faith and Knowledge, which believes what it likes, and is infidel to all the rest; which sets up one part of his Word against another, by making his Promises to undermine his Precepts, and the Truth of his Doctrines to render all his Threatnings false and use-

useless: I say, since such an untowardly, partial, and gainsaying knowledge and belief as this, is in very deed so plain a *Libel* to his Person, so hateful a violence to his Truth, and such a contradicting piece of infidelity to his Gospel, it can never be thought to be that Obedience which he commands and encourages, but such a piece of contumelious flattery and fawning Disobedience, as he will most severely punish and condemn.

But if we believe his whole Gospel, and besides the faith of his *Doctrines* and *Promises*, take moreover all his *Precepts* to be such as he enjoins, and all his *threatnings*, in their true meaning, to be such as he will execute; and yet, for all that, in our *works* and *practice* despise and sin against them; then is such our *faith* and *knowledge*, so far from rendering our condition *safe* and *comfortable*, that in very deed it makes it more *desperate*, and utterly bereft of all *colour* and *excuse*. For it takes from us all *pleas* for disobedience, and leaves us not so much as the common refuge of all misdoing; the pretence that *we did offend but did not know it*. It makes every sin which we commit, to be acted with a *high hand*, and all our *offences*, to become *contempt*, our *disobedience*, *rebellion*; and our *transgressions*, *presumptuous*. For we sin then with *open eyes*, we know God's Commands, but refuse to practise them; we discern our duty, but despise it. It makes us not only to renounce his *Authority*, but also to *desie* his *Power*. For we know his Almighty Strength, but we will not fear it; we see his dreadful *threatnings*, but yet dare to commit the things which he has threatened in despite of them. We see and believe that our Death is entailed upon our disobedience, but for all that we chuse and run upon it. And such a state as this, every man must needs see is so far from gaining his favour, and ascertaining his acceptance; that in reality it is a continued heightning of every provocation, an habitual hostility, and state of *crying sin*.

But if ever our *orthodox* *faith* and *professions* avail us unto *life* and *Pardon*, they must end in our *obedient works* and *actions*. We must do that which we know God requires, and practise that pure Religion which we profess; *If ye know these things*, says our Saviour, *happy are ye if ye do them*, Joh. 13. 17. *It is not every verbal Professor*, every one that *faith unto me*, or *calls me Lord*, *Lord*,

Lord, that shall enter into the Kingdom of Heaven; but he only that doth the will of my Father which is in Heaven, Mat. 7. 21. We are condemn'd out of our own mouths, if we commend Christ's Religion, whilst we contemn and disobey it: every word which we speak in its behalf, is a charge against our own selves, and every plea which we make for it, is to us an accusation. For if it be a Religion so pure, so good, so worthy of God, and so beneficial to Men, as we profess it is; the more unpardonable wretches we, who transgress and act against it. All the praises which we heap upon our Duty, are a most bitter invective upon our own practice; and the more we commend Christ's Religion and Laws, the more we condemn our own Transgressions; so that now God in exacting the punishment, be it as severe as it well can, only executes our own sentence. We are made the worse for our Knowledge, if our actions are not ruled by it; for it shews plainly, that our Lusts are most obstinate, and our Wills most wicked; when for all we are clearly shewed the Laws, the Promises, and the Threats of God, we can yet despise them all, and for the short pleasure of a silly sin, transgress, and act against them. And since it doth thus enhance our Sin, we may be sure that it will proportionably encrease our Punishment. For he that knows his Master's will, and doth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes, Luke 12. 47.

And thus we see, that this thinking to be saved by the labour of our minds, without any works of our lives and practice; and coming to Heaven barely by a True Belief, and Orthodox Opinions, and Right Professions, without ever obeying in our Works and Actions; is one of those false and delusive grounds, whereupon Men shift off the necessity of this service with all their strength, the service of their actions.

And another false ground of shifting off the same service is,

2. The delusive confidence which wicked Men have of being saved at the last Day, for an obedience of idle desires, and ineffectual wishes.

It is a strange conceit which some people have been taught, viz. that the desire of Grace is Grace, and that God will at the last Day judge Men to have obeyed, although they have not wrought, but only desired it. There is

is a *complaisant* sort of *Casuistry*, and a much easier than ever God made, that has been brought into the World, which bids men to *hope well*, though they *do nothing*, so long as they find in themselves a *desire* that they could do it. They wish they were what God expects, and that they performed what he commands; but they do no more but wish it. They sit still, and work no more now they have wished it, than they did before. Theirs is a *weakly infant desire*, it *just lives*, but that is all, it can effect *nothing*. For the *smallest lust* is *too strong* for it, and the *least temptation overbears* it; the desire of the *Vertue* is hush'd when the opportunity of the *Sin* returns, for notwithstanding all the contrary desire, this is acted at the next offer. Obedience is not desired so much as their *eate*; for they love it not so well, as to be at the necessary pains for it. It is a squeamish, delicate desire, it would obey if that could be without trouble, but it will undergo nothing for Obedience.

But this is a conceit as *strange*, as it is *destructive*; and such, wherewith the *simplest* of Men suffer themselves to be imposed upon in no *other* matters, but only this, which most of all requires their care and caution, *viz.* The *eternal welfare of their Souls*, and the *truth of their Obedience*. For who ever took his *desire of gain* to be *gain*, his *desire of ease* to be *ease*, his *desire of meat* to be *food*, his *desire of cloaths* to be *rayment*, or his *desire of knowledge* to be *knowledge*? And why then must that be *true in Religion*, which is always *false in common life*? and the *desire of grace* be said to be *grace*, and the *desire of obedience*, *obedience*? Our *desires* are *one thing*, but the *thing desired* is *another*. Our *desires* are *within*, but the *Object desired* is *without us*. Our *desires* are *our own*, but the *thing desired* is *wanting*. For so far is our *desire* of any *thing* from being the *very thing* it self which is *desired*, that it is not always joined with it, but we possess *one*, whilst we are without the *other*. For alas! we find that those *things* which we *need*, and have a *mind to*, do not come at the *beck* of a *desire*, nor are procured by a *wish*; but we must do more than *desire* them, *endeavour* after them, and *work* or *act* for them, or else we shall sit *without* them. A Man doth not presently possess *meat*, because he is *hungry*; or is owner of a *great estate*, because he is *covetous*; no, he must *labour* and

and seek as well as desire, both for the one and the other ; or else, let him desire what he will, he shall get neither.

'Tis true, a desire of money is a great preparative to get money, and a desire of knowledge is a good disposition to attain knowledge ; because our appetites and desires, are of all the passions, the great and most immediate spring of our outward works and operations. For delight begets love, and love ends in desire, and desire carries us on to work and labour for the thing desired. And thus our desires of Grace and Obedience, are Grace and Obedience. That is, Our desire of Grace, is not Grace it self ; nor our desire of Obedience, Obedience ; but a good step and degree towards them. It is so metonymically, it is the Principle and the Cause of it. For therefore we acquire Grace, and perform Obedience, because we desire them. We should take no pains about them, were it not for our desires of them, but because we have a mind to them, therefore we labour after them.

But till our desires come on to this effect, they have no title to the rewards of it. Because although they are a gift of God's Grace, 'tis true, as well as Obedience it self is ; yet are they not that Grace, which in the Judgment shall entitle us to pardon and happiness. For the promise to the desire of Obedience, is one ; but the promise to Obedience it self is another. If we sincerely desire to do God's will, i. e. if we desire it so, as according to the best of our power to endeavour after it ; the promise to that is, That we shall be enabled to do it. For one promise of the New Covenant is, That God will grant unto us to serve him in holiness and righteousness, Luke 1. 74, 75. which he will then do, when we desire it of him, by giving his holy Spirit to them that ask him, Luke 11. 13. But if we do indeed obey it, the promise to that is, that we shall be saved by it. For Christ is become the Author of eternal salvation, to them that obey him, Heb. 5. 9. And it is said expressly of them that obey, that they shall have right to the tree of life, Rev. 22. 24. So that to the honest desire of obedience, all that God promises, is the power to perform and work obedience ; but that whereunto mercy and life is promised, is nothing less than obedience it self. For, to the working out our salvation, it is required, as Saint Paul says, that we be wrought upon, not only,

only, to will what God commands, but also to do it,
Phil. 2. 12, 13.

The great pretence, whereby Men of idle unworking desires, would plead for their unfruitfulness, and support their hopes of a happy Sentence under a life of disobedience; is a mistaken sense of these words of S. Paul in his Epistle to the Galatians: *The Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh: so that you cannot do the things that you would*, Gal. 5. 17. Which words they interpret thus: The Spirit in all good Men lusteth against the Flesh, but not so far as to prevail over it: for although they may will and desire with the Spirit, yet they cannot do those things which they would. And if this be so, 'tis plain that we have warrant enough to hope for mercy, notwithstanding we only desire, but are not able to perform.

But this is a plain perverting of the Apostle's words, from the Apostle's own meaning. For although he says, that the lusting is on both sides, both of the *Flesh* against the *Spirit*, and of the *Spirit* against the *Flesh*; yet as for ineffectiveness, or not doing what is willed and desired, that he charges only upon one. He leaves it purely and solely to the *Flesh*'s share, which can indeed lust and desire evil things even in regenerate Men, but is not able to prevail so far, as to work and effect them, because the overruling will of the *Spirit* checks and restrains it.

And to shew this to be his sense, I need do no more than set down his words in that order wherein they stand; which is as follows: *This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not work and fulfil the lusts of the Flesh.* Not work and fulfil them, I say, notwithstanding you will still feel an ineffective and unconquering stirring of them. *For the Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh, and these two are contrary one to the other.* So that in walking or working, as I said, after the lustings and desires of the *Spirit*, you fulfil not the lusts of the *Flesh* which are contrary to it; *ye cannot do*, or you do not the things that your *Flesh* lusts after, which yet, through its lusting, *ye would*, ver. 16, 17. Whereas, if this last Clause were expounded thus, *Ye do not the things that your Spirit lusts after, which yet, through its lusting, ye would do;* it would destroy that which the Apostle brings it to confirm, viz. their not willing and desiring

desiring only, but doing or walking, also after the Spirit; so as not to fulfil the Works of the Flesh, ver. 16. Which in plain English, is to make the Apostle in the same breath, to say and unsay; to tell them of walking in the Spirit, and not fulfilling the lusts of the Flesh, because they do not after the Spirit, but do fulfil the lusts of the Flesh. Which is flatly to make the Apostle's proof, to contradict his affirmation.

If therefore we would approve our selves regenerate, and have a just hope of life and pardon at the last Day; we must not only wish and desire, but live and walk after the Spirit. The service of the Flesh, indeed, must go no further than desire; and although we shall all of us more or less, have lustings from it, yet must we not * fulfil them. But as for the service of God, it must have our hands as well as our hearts; for it is not enough to will and desire what he commands, but we must moreover practise and perform it.

As for the affirmative Commands of God, it is not required that we perform every one of them at every time; for so our whole life would be taken up in the keeping of one Command, and we could never observe all, since we cannot do any two things, and much less such a multitude, at the same time. But all that Obedience which God requires of us to them, is that we act them, as his Providence, and ordering of times and occasions, gives us opportunity. Now although for the main Body and greatest Number of them, *every man* has opportunities returning almost *every day*; yet for a perfect and compleat performance of some of them, *some men* have not opportunity at *some times*, nor others in *all their lives*. I instance in the affirmative Command of Alms-giving: a Man who has but little, can give but little at any time; and a rich Man, if he be in a strange place, and have no great stock about him, although he have a great Object of Charity, can yet make but small relief. So that in both these, the work of Alms and outward performance, must needs be very strait; although both of them in their hearts and desires, are never so liberal. They have not power and opportunity to act as they would; and would perform more, if their circumstances would allow it. And now in this Case, God doth not measure their obedience, by the size of their outward performance; he looks not so much at what

* Rom. 13.
14.

what was done, as at what would have been done, had they had ability. So that they shall be accepted according to the greatness of their will, and not according to the narrowness of their deed; and their reward shall be fitted to what was in their heart, and not that which appeared in their action.

And this very Case, is expressly determined by S. Paul, in his second Epistle to the *Corinthians*. For exhorting them to contribute to the relief of the Saints in *Judea*, as the poor Christians in *Macedonia* had already done most liberally, he encourages them to give what they could out of their present livelyhood, by telling them, that albeit it were not so much as they could wish, and were forward in their own hearts to give if they were able; yet in God's acceptance it should be estimated, as if it were. *For if there be first a willing mind, saith he, it is accepted according to what a man hath; and not according to what he hath not*, Chap. 8. v, 11, 12.

This is the very case, for which the Apostle lays down this rule, as any man may see who will be at the pains to peruse that Chapter. He speaks it upon no other occasion, but where our Wills are really ready to perform farther, than our outward fortune enables us. For where our heart is indeed ready to do more than in our necessitous circumstances we can do, there God looks upon the will, and not upon the work; and rewards us according to the compass of our desires, but not according to the scantiness of our performance.

But if any man shall conclude from hence that when it is in his Power to do what is commanded, God will still accept of an idle desire without an active performance; he may use S. Paul's words indeed, but he perverts them wholly to his own meaning. For the Apostle spake them in one case, and there they are true; but he applies them to another, and there they will deceive him. Because the will is never accepted for the deed, when it is in our power to do as well as to will; and wheresoever we have opportunity to do what we desire, it is not the willing, but the doing that must save us; as the Apostle himself intimates in this very place, when he presses them to compleat their readiness of will, by performing according as they were able, verse 11.

So that this thinking to be saved by an *idle desire*, and an *ineffective wish* of obedience, without ever obeying in our works and *actions*, is every whit as false and delusive, as the former deceitful ground was of being saved at the last day, barely upon the account of an *Orthodox Faith and Opinion*.

Thirdly, Another false ground, whereupon men hope to be saved, tho' they *work* disobedience, is because when they do so, it is through the *violence* of a great and *overpowering temptation*, which they *see* and *resist*, but cannot prevail over. They are drawn in by a *great gain*, or a *great pleasure*, the *bait* laid for them is *very enticing*, and there is no *withstanding* it.

* οὐ μέν

καλῶν This indeed is a great and unusual pretence. For men *ωργίζεων* would gladly shift off their *sin*, and charge it upon any *πολλάδις* thing but their own selves. They would have the *pleas-*
τις ἐπιτίν *sures of their flesh*, and the *pride of their hearts*, both *ἀντιτάται*, served at once; enjoy all the *pleasures of sin*, and yet *τῷ δὲ αἰ-* have the *praises of virtue*. * *Whensoever they do well, as* *χρῶν. & χ* a great Philosopher has observed, *they would arrogate that* *ἐπιτόν,* *αλλὰ τὴν* *to themselves; but when they do amiss, they would impute* *ὑδούσι.* *that to the pleasure that misled them, and to the strength* *Andron.* *of temptation.*

Rhod. Pa-
raph. in
Eth. Arist.
I. 3 c. 2.

But this is a very vain shift, and a thin pretence. For what is it that makes any *temptation* strong, but the *wick-*
edness of mens own hearts? They are slavishly in love with it, and therefore they cannot resist it, but are over-
come by it. † *It is ridiculous to think*, saith the same excellent Philosopher, *that the pleasure of the sin which is without us, is the cause of our sinful action; and not rather that we our selves are, who are so wickedly inclined, as to be so easily taken by it.* It is only the strength of our own *sinful lusts*, that gives such an irresistible strength to the *κολεῖς καὶ ὑπερβολῆς* outward temptation. A great offer of *gain* indeed cannot be withstood by a covetous heart; and an *inviting beauty*, and a *fair opportunity*, are irresistible to a *slave of lust*, and a *lascivious reigning inclination*. But if the man is *above the world*, and his *heart is chaste*, they are of no force, nor can they offer any violence at all.

Ibid. &
Arist.
Eth. ad
Nicom.
I. 3. c. 1.

It is the *wickedness of our own hearts lusts* therefore, which are so deeply in love with them, and so unbridledly bent after them, that gives all the *prevailing force*, and *overpowring strength*, to outward temptations. But now

now tis our *Sin*, and so can by no means plead our *excuse*; it is our *damnable disease*, and therefore it can never prove our *saving remedy*. For this is that *reigning power of Sin*, which the *Gospel* has indispensably required us to *mortifie*, but not to *submit* to. It is only if you through the *spirit*, do *mortifie the deeds of the body*, says S. Paul, that you shall live, Rom. 8. 13. Col. 3. 5.

But if we are not under this *damnable servitude to Sin*, there are no *temptations so strong*, but that God has given us *sufficient defensatives* against them. For the present offer of a *Gibbet*, would fright away the most *endearing temptations*; the near expectation of a great *Estate*, or of a *Crown* would make us prevail over it. And what are these to *Hell-fire*, and an *eternal Crown of Glory*? *Heaven* therefore and *Hell*, when they can be considered of, are an answer to all temptation in the world; they will engage our hearts more, than all the *endearments of a lust*, and infinitely *out-do* all the *baits and allurements of Sin*.

If we commit sin then, it is no *sufficient excuse* to us that the *temptation was strong*, because it was only the *strength of our own unmortified lusts* which made it so. For we *loved the sinful pleasure too well*, and that was the reason why it *overpower'd us*. And since the *strength of temptation is owing only to the strength of sin*, it can never excuse us from undergoing punishment. So that this must needs be a *false hope*, to think of being excused for our sin, because we acted it through the *violence of a great temptation*.

Fourthly, Another ground of false confidence, whereupon men hope to be saved, although they do not *obey* in their *works and actions*, but are workers of sin and disobedience; is, because when they do *transgress*, it is with *reluctance and unwillingness*. Albeit in their *actions* they do *serve sin*, yet in their *minds* they do not *approve* of it, their service of it is an *unwilling and a slavish service*. They cannot sin freely, and at their own ease but with *fearfulness and regret*. For the *Conviction of their duty abides in their Consciences*, the *fear of hell torments*, sticks fast in their *Souls*; they cannot shake off either their *sense of duty*, or their *fears of punishment*. So that even when they do sin against God, it is with *remorse of mind*, and *fearfulness of apprehensions*.

They cannot embrace their sin with a *full choice*, because they know it is not an *unmixed pleasure*. They believe and know it to be of a *compound*, and *mixt nature*; to have some *present pleasure* which will delight, but withal much *future punishment* which will torment them. And since they know it to be a *composition of good and ill*, they do not perfectly either *love or hate, chuse or refuse it*. Their will is *distracted* by different motives in the same choice; for the *future pains* would draw them to *reject*, but the *present joys* invite them to *embrace it*. So that in a different *degree*, they both *will and nill* the same thing; ; they would *have it*, and yet they would *avoid it*. For they would *enjoy what they desire*, but withal they would *keep off from what they fear*: They have a mind to commit the *sin*, because it will please them for the *present*; and yet they are afraid of it, because of that *wrath* which it treasures up for them against the time to come.

But notwithstanding all their *conflict* in their own *choice*, yet at last their *sin prevails*, and they obey it. For they had rather *hazard* all its torments, than miss of its delights; they are unwilling to venture upon those dangers which it brings, but yet they had rather venture on *them* than go without it. They *sin unwillingly*, just as a *labourer works*, or as a *Soulder fights unwillingly*; that is, they do not *will it for it self*, they would *not do it unless they were hired to it*. For, considering all things, they will to act, and not to omit it; their Will is against it indeed at the *first sight*, but upon better consideration it resolves upon it, and, all things laid together, they chuse to commit the *sin* rather than to forbear it.

But now this is such a *State*, as will never bring any man to *Heaven*: For whether he transgress *willingly* or with *reluctancy*, is not the question; but if he *chuse* at last to *disobey*, when God comes to Judgment, he will be sure to pronounce upon him that *death*, which he has established for the punishment of *disobedience*. Because for all he *fears and mistrusts, grumbles and repines*; yet he *serves and obeys his lusts* all the while notwithstanding. He works at their will, and doth what they command him. He serves not with a *full heart*, or a *fearless mind*; but yet is their servant still.

'Tis true indeed, it is some mitigation of his Sin, that he doth it with *regret*, and the Transgression is something the less, for being acted not without Reluctance and Aversion. It shews that his *sense of Duty*, is not quite lost ; his *Conscience* wholly seared ; or his *Fear of God* utterly extinguished. It is some Extenuation, that he startles at the Offence ; for it argues that his Soul is not wholly depraved, or his Heart *harden'd* in Disobedience. But although his Sins be not of the highest rate, yet he is a *lost Sinner still*. For so long as his *Lusts* prevail, and he chuses at last to *act* and *commit* them, he *serves* and *obeys* them. It is his *Works* and *Actions* that must determine his *Service* and *Obedience* ; so that if he *commit* Sin, he is the *Servant of Sin*. *Willing* or *unwilling*, may extenuate or heighten his Disobedience, but not utterly *destroy*, or *alter* the *nature* of it.

For, indeed, something of *struggling* and *regret* is to be found in the *Obedience* and *Disobedience* of the greatest part of the World. There being few so good, as to obey without all *Reluctance*, and few so wicked, as to Sin without all *Remorse*. For as long as we are in *this Life*, we are a *mixt* and *compound Substance*, of *Soul* and *Body*, *Flesh* and *Spirit*. Our *carnal appetite* draws us on to *forbidden* things, and to *transgress* those *Restraints* which *God's Law* has set to it. And our *Conscience*, being enlightened with the *Knowledge* of *God's Laws*, and allured by his *Promises*, and affrighted with his *Threatnings*, would persuade us to keep within *his Bounds*, and to *act Obedience*. Now these *two contrary* and *gainsaying Principles*, distract our *Choice*, and divide our *Wills*, so that when we close with *one* of them, it is not without the *Grudging* and *Reluctance* of the *other*. We would, and we would not ; one inclines us for a thing, and the other against it. *The flesh*, says *S. Paul*, *lusteth against the spirit*, and *the spirit against the flesh* ; and these are *contrary one to the other*, so that you cannot fulfil both their Desires, and do each of the things that you would, Gal. 5. 17. For if we obey, it is through the repining of our *Appetites* ; and if we transgress, it is with the *Remorse* and *Lashings* of our *Consciences* : On both sides, there is something that is evil, whereof we are afraid, and which we would not ; our Will is *imperfect*, and with *Reluctance* ; and we will and chuse in some

measure unwillingly, whether it be to work Obedience or Sin.

As for the Saints in Heaven, after the Resurrection, it is true, they shall have no gainsaying Appetites. For their Flesh will be in perfect Subjection to the Spirit; their Will shall have nothing to seduce it, but shall stand always firm and entire for God; so that they shall obey without any thing of Reluctance or Regret.

And as for some of the profligate, and profane Sinners here on earth, they have now already so quite benumb'd their Consciences, that they neither allure nor threaten, admonish nor accuse them. And they sin without all Contention; they transgres, and do not dispute; their lusts hurry them without any Opposition; so that they disobey most willingly, and free from all Remorse.

But as for all the Good, and the generality of the Wicked here on Earth, they are of a middle rate. They both of them act through Strife, and Conquest; their Consent is courted on both Sides, and when they comply with one, they must refuse the other. Both Flesh and Spirit struggle in them, although at last but one prevails. For in the Regenerate good Man, the Flesh stirs, but it cannot conquer; they have bodies, and bodily Appetites, but they subdue them, and, as S. Paul says, keep them under, 1 Cor. 9. 27. So that all the while the Spirit rules in them, when the Flesh doth but in vain solicit; this may tempt, but it cannot govern; for the Spirit gives them Laws, and what it commands, that in their Actions they obey. But in the Wicked and Disobedient, the Case is quite opposite. For in them, although their Consciences finite them, yet can it not prevail with them; it suggests, but they will not hearken; it shews the way, but they will not follow it; in all things their Lusts are the Governours of their Lives and Actions; so that although the Lashes of their Consciences may sharpen and embitter, yet they are not able to disappoint the Service of their Sin.

In all the Obedience therefore, and in the greatest part of the Transgressions here on Earth, there is still something of Struggling and Reluctance. Men act not by a Will that is void of all Restraint, or by a Desire and Choice, which is free from all unwillingness; but there is a mixture

of Love and Hatred, an unwilling Will that carries them on, either to act obedience, or to disobey.

But notwithstanding their *ineffective wishes*, and *imperfect woudlings* to the contrary; it is their *peremptory Will* and *last Choice*, which shall determine their *condition*. For if they will and chuse to do what God commands, in spite of all the gainsaying wishes raised by their fleshly Appetites; they shall be pardoned and acquitted. But if they will and chuse to do what God forbids, in spite of all contrary Admonitions and Threatnings of their Consciences; they shall die in their Disobedience.

And the Reason is plain; for he *serves his Sin*, and *fulfils his Lust*, and his *Thralldom* to it is so *absolute*, that no *Aids of the Spirit*, nor any *Suggestions of his Conscience* can *deliver him from it*. He that committeth *Sin*, saith our Saviour, *is the servant of sin*, John 8. 34. So long as it *conquers*, it doth indeed *inslave him*: *For of whom a man is overcome, of the same*, says S. Peter, *he is brought in Bondage*, 2 Pet. 2. 19. If we yield our selves up to *serve it*, we do indeed *obey it*; and must expect that *Death* which is denounced upon such Obedience. *Know you not*, saith another Apostle, *that to whom you yield your selves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey*; *whether of sin unto Death, or of obedience unto Righteousness*, Rom. 6. 16. If we are at the Beck of our Lusts, and go where they send, and do what they command us, and acknowledge their Pleasure in all things to be a Law to us; we are perfect Slaves to them, and liable to all that Misery which is denounced upon them. We serve and obey them; and that shall surely bring us to suffer for them. For it is the *fulfilling* of our Lusts, the *doing or walking after them*, and the *obeying* of our *Sin*, which Christ's Gospel threatens so severely, whatever *Mind* we do it with. *If you live after the flesh*, saith the Apostle, *you shall die*; and it is only, *if you through the Spirit do mortifie the Deeds of the Body*, that *you shall live*, Rom. 8. 13. When Christ comes to Judgment, the Enquiry will not be, whether we sinned with a full delight, or with fear and reluctance; but whether in very Deed, without repenting of it afterwards, we sinned wilfully, or transgressed at all: For we have what shall be his Sentence at that Day,

from his own Mouth already, *Depart from me ye that work iniquity*, Mat. 7. 23.

So that it will be no sufficient Plea for any Man at the last Day, who has disobeyed in Deed and wrought *Wick-edness*, to say, That he did it with *Backwardness* and *Re-morse*. For that which God indispensibly requires, is that he should not do it at all; and he will only deceive himself, if he ever expect to be accepted otherwise. For as the *Hopes of Salvation* upon mere *Orthodox Opinions*, or *ineffective desires of Obedience*, or *sinning through a strong Temptation* are utterly *Delusive*, and sure to fail them who trust to them; so is the *fourth Ground* likewise, viz. *Our Hopes of being accepted notwithstanding our Sins, because we transgressed with reluctance and unwillingness.*

C H A P. IV.

A further Pursuit of this last Ground of shifting off the Obedience of our Actions, in an Exposition of the seventh Chapter to the Romans.

THAT which has been the great occasion of this last Pretence, whereby Men justifie themselves in the practice of Disobedience, viz. because when they do transgress, it is with Reluctancy and an unwilling Mind; is a wrong understanding of the Words of S. Paul, in the seventh Chapter of his Epistle to the Romans. For thus, says he, *That which I do, I, being sufficiently instructed in the Law which forbids it, in my Mind and Conscience, allow not. For what, through the Laws, commanding, I would do, that do I not; but what, from the Laws prohibiting, I hate, and would not do, that do I. The good that I would do, I do not. For although to will it is present with me, yet through the prevailing Power of my Flesh, how to perform and practise that which is good I find not.*

- 18.** *But the evil which I would not do, that do I. And all this happens to me, by reason that the Law of my Lusts, or Members, wars against the Law of God in my Mind or Conscience, and that with so much Success as to make me act against my Conscience,*
- 19.**
- 23.**

ence, and bring me into a slavish Observance or Captivity to the Law of sin, which is in my members. So that I myself, or the * same I, who, with the Mind and Conscience, * *αὐτὸς* in approving and willing serve the Law of God, do yet ἐγὼ, with the Flesh, in my bodily and outward Works and Operations, serve the Law of Sin.

Now since no less a Man than S. Paul himself speaks thus of *sinning against his will*, of doing what he disallows, and transgressing through the Power of a ruling Lust against his Conscience: It may well be thought reasonable, for any other Man to Conclude himself in a safe condition, alth'ough he do so likewise. For who would desire to be more perfect than S. Paul? Who would ever scruple to have the same Lot in the next World with an Apostle? If an unwillingness in Sin, and transgressing with Reluctance, could bear him out notwithstanding he did against his Duty, and in Works and Actions disobeyed his Lord; who can ever question, but that it will be a sufficient Plea for us also?

And indeed if S. Paul had spoken all that of himself, and meant it of his own Person; the Inference is undeniable, and it is not to be doubted but it would. But for a full Answer to this Allegation, I think it is plain, that S. Paul, when he expresses all those things in the *first person*, uses that merely out of *modesty*, but not out of *truth*.

For he was upon an *odious* Topick, representing the *unmortified state*, and *sinful condition* of *those Persons*, who had no other help against their *Lusts*, but the *Religion* and *Law of Moses*. And because this was a *Charge*, which they who were most guilty would not love to hear of, that he may soften the matter as much as may be, and discover things of so much Reproach with the least Offence, he wisely takes all the Business, and fathers all the *shameful Narrative* upon himself; and expresses it, not in *theirs*, to whom it *really* did belong, but in *his own person*.

And as for this *Metaschematism*, or speaking things that are *odious* in *his own name*, when indeed they belong not to him, but to other Men, it is very usual with the Apostle. For in this Disguise he recites a most blasphemous Perversion, which some Men had made of his most pious Doctrine, Rom, 3. *If the truth of God*, or *his faithfulness* in performing his Covenant

with us, hath more abandoned to his Glory, through my lye, or unfaithfulness in breaking my Covenant with him (which makes the most that can be for the Honour of God's Faithfulness, since no perfidiousness of ours can weary or provoke him out of it) *why yet am I, not I Paul,* who could never act thus falsely, or argue thus prophane-dy, but I blasphemous objector, judged as a Sinner & v. 7. And the same way of Speech he observes again, when he charges the wicked Lives of those, who have given up their Names to Christ, not upon his Religion, but upon their own selves. *If while we seek to be justified by Christ, in the Profession of his Religion and not of Moses's Law, we our selves are still found Sinners, and flagitious in our Lives as ever, is therefore Christ the Minister of sin? God forbid.* For if I build again the things which at my very Baptism into Christianity I destroyed, as 'tis plain all Christians do, who after Baptism prove customary Sinners; it is no longer Christ who would rescue and free me from Sin, but I my self, not I Paul, but I flagitious Christian that make my self a Transgressor, Gal. 2. 17, 18. Thus also he speaks in his own Person, when he only personates the strong, but uncompromising Christian, 1 Cor. 6. *All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient, ver. 12.* And when he personates the uncharitable Christian, 1 Cor. 13. *If I have all Faith and have no Charity, what doth it profit me? ver. 2.* And the same inoffensive way he uses, in noting Faults

* 1 Cor. in * other places.

10. v. 22, And such an obliging Disguise, in reprobating and
23. & 29, exposing the Faults of others, is most usual among our
30. selves. Nothing being more common in our ordinary Discourse, than when we would be sharp in reproving and inveighing against any thing, by a most courteous Fiction to put it in our own Case, and to suppose that we our selves should do this or that. When as in the mean time we are no further concerned in it, than to be able under this Disguise with more Success, and less Offence, to disparage and chastise it.

And this way of transferring odious things to our selves, when we would describe and reprove them, which is so usual with all the World, and with St. Paul in other Cases, is particularly used by him in his Character of the ineffectual Striver in the seventh Chapter of

the Epistle to the Romans. He speaks not those things above recited, of *willing, but not performing, &c.* in his own person, or in the person of any regenerate man ; as will plainly appear from this reason.

Because in that Chapter, such things are said of the person there spoken of, as can by no means agree to S. Paul, or to any *regenerate* person ; so that the Apostle must be made to falsifie, if he should be understood to speak of them.

Such things, I say, are there spoken, as can by no means agree to S. Paul himself. for we read

*Of the person spoken of
there,*

That he lived and was alive without the law of the ten Commandments, once, ver. 7. 9.

*Of Saint Paul himself
elsewhere,*

That he was both born and bred up under the Law, being circumcised the eighth Day, of the Stock of Israel, an Hebrew of the Hebrews : or an Hebrew both by his Father and his Mothers side, Phil. 3. 5.

That the Law of his members wars against the Law of his mind, and brings him into captivity to the Law of sin, which is seated and rules in his members, v. 23.

That he keeps under his Body, and is not led captive by it, but on the contrary brings it into subjection and Captivity, 1 Cor 9. 27.

That how to do or perform what is good, he finds not, v. 18.

That he can do all things which are good through Christ that strengthens him, Phil. 4. 13.

That sin works in him all manner of lust or concupiscence, v. 8.

That it works none, but that instead of lusting and coveting worldly things, the world is crucified to him, and he unto the world, Gal. 6. 14.

That he is captivated and conquered, and as a van-

That he has fought a good fight against it, 2 Tim.

quished slave, sold under sin,
v. 14. 23.

That he sinned against his Conscience. For what I do, says he, in my practice, that I allow not in my Mind or Conscience: but what I hate and disapprove, that I do, v. 15. 19.

That he is in a state of death: For sin revived and he died, vers. 9. and by deceiving him, it had slain him, vers. 11. The good law he had found to be unto him the occasion of death, by his falling into that disobedience whereto it had threatned it, vers. 10. For the motions of sin, which were not, and could not be restrained by the law, wrought in his members to bring forth damning sins, or fruit unto death, v. 5.

4. 7. And that by the † Grace of God + χριστός through Christ δεῖ in exem. he is deliver- Clara & vers. ed from it; La. No εὐχα- Rom. 7. 25. εἰσώ τῷ δεῖῳ.

That he knew or was * conscious of * οὐνοίᾳ nothing by himself, 1 Cor. 4. 4. but that he trusted he had a good Conscience, and that in all things, being willing to live honestly, Heb. 13. 18. Acts 23. 1. For this had all along been his care; he having made it his busines, and exercised himself to have, not now and then, but always a conscience void of offence, or not wounded and smitten with the sense of any offences, either towards God or men, Acts 24. 16.

That the law of the spirit of life hath made him free from the Law of sin and death, Rom. 8. 2. That he has finished his course to his advantage; so as there is laid up for him, not a painful death, as the punishment of his disobedience; but a Crown of Glory, as a reward of his righteousness, which the righteous judge will give him at the last day, 2 Tim. 4. 8.

If therefore we will believe S. Paul, and let those accounts which he gives of himself explain his own meaning, I think he cannot be that very person who is there spoken of. For they are persons altogether of a different stamp, and a *contrary* character : they are as opposite, as one *under the Law*, and one *without it* ; as a *servant of God*, and a *slave of sin* ; as a *spiritual*, and a *carnal man* ; as one whose *conscience approves*, and another whose *conscience condemns him* ; as a *child of God*, and a *child of darkness* ; as an *heir of Heaven*, and a *subject of Hell*. So that he cannot speak of himself in that *seventh Chapter*, and in the *other* places too ; because then he would appear inconsistent with himself, and be found false in his own story. And therefore as sure as S. Paul is true, he says all that is spoken there in an inoffensive disguise, not intending to give a *character of his own person*, but to *personate another man*.

Nay, I add further, that the *person* whom he represents in that *Chapter*, is not only *another* from himself, but also one of a quite *opposite* and *contrary* character. He is not only *no Apostle*, but even *no good Christian* or *regenerate man*. For such things are there said of him, as, if S. Paul and the other *Apostles* say true, are *inconsistent* with a *regenerate state*, and *destructive of Salvation*. As will plainly appear, by considering those things which are said

Of the person described there,

That with his flesh or fleshy members, he obeys the law of Sin, ver. 25. And this he is forced to do, and cannot help it. For the law of his members wars against the law of his mind, and brings him into captivity to the law of sin and death, v. 23. He is absolutely enslaved to it, as ever any servant was to his master, who was sold in

Of the regenerate else- where,

That as for their members, they yield them not to be instruments unto sin, but unto righteousness ; because now since their regenerations into true Christians, Sin is not to reign in their mortal bodies, that they should obey it in the lusts thereof, Rom. 6. 12, 13. In becoming Christians they are dead, and crucified with Christ, that the body of sin might

the market. For says he,
*I am carnal, and sold under
sin;* v. 14.

might, not be maintained to live and rule in them, but destroyed, that thenceforward they should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin, v. 6, 7. The Gospel of Christ, or the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath not enslaved, but freed them from the law of sin and death, Rom. 8. 2. So that sin now shall not have dominion over them, because they are not under the law, through the weakness wherof it tyrannized, but under Grace, Rom. 6. 14.

That sin works or accom-
plishes, and brings
on to * outward
act and perfection
in him, all manner of concu-
piscence, v. 8. For taking
occasion by the nakedness of
the tenth Commandment,
whereto no punishment was
expressly threatned, it de-
ceived him into the customary
commission of it by that wile,
and thereby slew him, v. 11.

* *Kathē.* That their body is dead
because of sin, Rom. 8. 10. And that they make no
provision for the flesh to fulfil
and accomplish the lusts
or concupiscence thereof,
Rom. 13. 14. Because if
they should, they would
cease to be Sons of God,
and heirs of happiness, and
be rendred obnoxious to
misery and death. For the
plain declaration of Christ's
Gospel concerning the
heirs of life and death is
this: If you live after the
flesh in accomplishing its
lusts, you shall die; and 'tis
only, if you through the spi-
rit, instead of acting and
compleating, do kill and
mortifie the deeds of the body,
that you shall live, Rom. 8.
13.

That the law be found to be unto death, in discerning himself to be fallen under the curse and condemnation of it, vers. 10. For the motions of sin, which were encouraged and emboldened by means of the fancied impunity of the law, wrought in his members, which are the seat of their Empire, so far as to bring forth damning sins, or fruit unto death, v. 5.

That in his flesh dwells no good thing, verse 18. For sin dwells and inhabits in him, vers. 17. and that so as to rule and govern, or have all the force of a law in his members, v. 23.

That he sins against his own conscience. For what he doth, that he allows not; but what in his own mind he hates and disapproves, that he doth, v. 15, 19.

That to do good, although he might wish, or approve it, be found not, v. 18.

That against them there is no condemning force of any law, Gal. 5. 23. For the law of the spirit of life hath not left them still enslaved, but made them free from the law of sin and death too, Rom. 8. 2. And being become the servants of God, they have their fruit, not to sin and death, but to holiness at present, and the end thereof at length, everlasting life, Rom. 6. 22.

That their bodies, or fleshly members are temples of the Holy Ghost, and sacred places wherein it inhabits; and that they glorifie God in their Bodies, as well as in their Spirits, seeing both are Gods, 1 Cor. 6. 19, 20.

That they hold faith and a good conscience, without which, of faith in dangerous times they would soon make shipwrack, 1 Tim. 1. 19. And that they are saved by the answer of a good conscience, which comforts and applauds, but cannot accuse them, 1 Pet. 3. 21.

That he only who doth good is of God, 3 John 11. and that there is no condemnation to them, who do and walk after the Spirit, Rom. 8. 1. And that without these new fruits, it is in vain to lay any claim to a new nature; because as our Saviour says, if men were the children of Abraham, they would

would do the works of Abraham, Joh. 8. 39.

That he stands in need to cry out, *O wretched man that I am, who will deliver me from this body of death, being as yet not rescued from it, but labouring under it,* v. 25.

That the body of sin is already destroyed in them, that henceforth they should not serve sin, which the other complains so much of, Rom. 6. 6. For they are delivered from the law, upon occasion of the weakness whereof sin brought forth in them fruits unto death, to serve now in newness of Spirit, Rom. 7. 5. So that what the weak ineffective law could not do for them, that the Grace of God through Jesus Christ our Lord hath done, in an effectual deliverance of them, v. 25.

So that if we will take the word of S. Paul, and of the rest of the Apostles in this matter; we must needs believe, I conceive, that regenerate Men, and heirs of Heaven, are not in any wise such persons as are described in that seventh Chapter to the Romans, there being no agreement or resemblance at all between them. Their tempers and behaviour are utterly inconsistent, and as far distant as Heaven and Hell. For one serves and fulfills the lusts of his flesh, the other crucifies and subdues them; one yields his members servants unto sin, the other unto righteousness; one is made a perfect captive, and sold under sin, the other is made free from it; one is forced to act against his conscience, the other always acts according to it; one complains of being oppressed by the body of death, the other rejoiceth in being deliver'd from it; one can perform and do no good, the other doth all good; one brings forth fruit unto death, the other to eternal life.

These with others that might be mention'd, are the lines of difference, and the contrary characters of the person represented in the seventh Chapter to the Romans, and the regenerate Man describ'd by S. Paul himself in all his

his other Epistles, and in the following and foregoing Chapters of this. By all which it appears, that they are Descriptions contradictory and incompatible, which cannot at the same time be affirmed of the same Man. And that to give such an account of a regenerate Man, as is there set down, would not in all appearance be the way to describe, but rather slanderously to libel and revile him.

If any therefore enquire now how I know that Saint Paul doth not speak of himself in that Chapter, nor of any other regenerate Person; but of an unregenerate Man, who is yet in the state of death and sin; he has his Answer full and undeniably already. I know he doth not mean so, because he cannot mean so, the things which he says not bearing to be so understood. For that meaning would make his speech, I conceive, to be no Apostolical Truth, but an open falsehood; it would make S. Paul inconsistent with himself, and to unsay at one time, what he had said most peremptorily at another. It would make him flatly to gain-say all that he has taught elsewhere, yea, even what he had affirm'd almost in the same breath, in the foregoing and the following Chapters. So that he cannot with Reason be understood of himself, or of any other regenerate Person, but must be allowed according to his usual custom in such odious topicks as this was, to speak all in a borrowed disguise, and in the person of a sinful and a lost Man.

For indeed, to be yet more particular, all that discourse in that seventh Chapter, is not meant either of S. Paul, or any other regenerate Christian; but of a strugling and contending, although yet unconquering and unregenerate Jew. For the Apostle is there describing the state, not of a perfect Debauchee, nor of a perfect Saint, but of a middle man. He is one, whose Conscience is awaken'd; for he delights in the Law of God after the inner man of his mind or reason, ver. 22. and when he doth evil, he doth not allow, but disapproves of it, ver. 15. but yet his practice is enslaved; for to perform what is good he finds not, ver. 18. what in his mind he hates, that he doth, ver. 15. the law in his members bringing him into captivity to the law of Sin, so that with his flesh, or in his words, I bodily actions, he obeys the Law of sin still, ver. 23, 25. am carnal, He strives something, indeed, but not enough, he is not far from the Kingdom of Heaven, but as yet he is

short of it. He is a sinner of the middle rate, such as I have described in the last Chapter: For he is not as yet, either quite hardened in sin, or perfect in goodness; he is offering to go off from sin, but still it lays hold of him, and keeps him under; he is in the rank of unwilling sinners, but he is a lost sinner still. He is something above the forlorn condition of meer Nature, and something below the more perfect institution of Christ; he is in a middle state between both, under the discipline and assistance of the Jewish Law, or the Religion of Moses.

And that this is the person there characterized, will appear, not only from the things themselves that are said of him, and which I have already noted, (*viz.*) his Conscience being awaken'd, but his practice still enslaved, which is the very state of middling sinners; but also from the whole order and design of that seventh Chapter.

For the busines, which the Apostle drives at in the sixth seventh and eighth Chapters, (to go no farther) of that Epistle, as any man who attentively peruses them may plainly see, is this, (*viz.*) to shew the Jews at Rome a double Change which they had come under by their becoming Christians. One was in their subjection, and the other in the consequent of that, their service and obedience.

One change he tells them, is in their subjection; for now they are not subject to, and under the Law of Moses, but under the Grace and Gospel of Christ, Chap. 6. vers.

14, 15.

And upon that change in their subjection, there is likewise another change in their service. For now they serve not sin as they did formerly, but they serve and obey God, Chap. 6. verse 15, 16, 17, 18; and Chap. 7. verse 4, 5, 6.

And because this seems to be a great reflection upon the Law of Moses, as if it encouraged them in their sins, and helped to make them sinners; this latter part, (*viz.*) their being wrought into change of service by this changing their Master and Religion, he explains more fully.

For to take off all reproach from the Law, under which he had affirmed they served sin; he shews, that the reason why they sinned under it, was not the sinfulness of

of the Law it self, for it is holy, and commands holiness, Chap. 7. ver. 12. but the power of their own sinful lusts, which were too strong to be corrected and restrained by those aids which it offer'd to restrain them, ver. 11, 13, ----23.

In the management, and evident proof whereof, he shews two things :

One is the goodness and innocence of the Law, because, so far as they were influenced by it, they were for that which is good. For their Mind and Conscience, wherein the Law was seated, did approve of it, and their heart desir'd it, chap. 7. vers. 15, 16, 18, 22.

The other is the weakness and inability, of that Grace, which was offered in the Law to work mens reformation, and to make this change in their service and obedience. For notwithstanding it, they served and obeyed Sin still, Chap. 7. ver. 15, 19, 21, 23, 25.

Wherein yet to be more particular, he shews further, that those good effects, which the Law was able to work in them, were only in their mind and conscience, Chap. 7. ver. 15, 18, 22, 23. But that still the Law in the Members prov'd all the while too strong for it, and kept possession of their life and practice, ver. 15, 17, 18, 21, 23, 25.

But then, as for that change in their service, which the Law of Moses had not strength enough to work in them ; he shews that the Gospel and Grace of Christ has wrought it effectually. For now, since they become subject to him, they had thrown off the service of Sin, which the Law could not enable them to get quit of, and had begun to serve and obey him, Chap. 7. ver. 25. and Chap. 8. ver. 1, 2, 3, 4, &c.

This is the Argument which the Apostle pursues, and the way wherein he manages it, as every man will perceive, who will be at the pains to peruse those three Chapters, as I have pointed them out to him. So that as for all the ineffective striving and sinning with regret, which is so often mentioned in the seventh Chapter ; it belongs not to the Apostle himself, nor to any other regenerate Christian, but only to a middling Sinner among the Jews, who is changed something by Moses's Law, but not enough : And who is in the way to become a Child of Grace, although for the present he be a Son of Death and Hell.

This, I say, will appear to be the Person, whom St. Paul sets forth in that so much mistaken Chapter, to any man who shall fairly consider those three Chapters, observing that help for the understanding of them, which I have already offered.

But because this is a matter of highest importance, and I would not seem to shun any pains which may in probability make for the satisfaction of any, though but one single man, concerning this necessity of an active obedience; I will here set down, what I verily take to be the sense of those three Chapters, (or so much at least of the sixth and eighth as makes for the understanding of the seventh) in this ensuing Paraphrase. Which I hope will not be altogether unuseful for common Readers, because they will thereby see, what, as I take it, is the Apostle's meaning, in full and at length here, when as they read it more contracted and involved in their Bibles.

And to take our rise from thence, that being sufficient for our present purpose, at the fourteenth Verse of the sixth Chapter, thus the Apostle discourses.

Chap. 6. Hereafter now, you are not in subjection under the Law of Moses, but under the Grace and Gospel of Christ.

Verse 15. But what then? Shall we serve sin, because we are not under the Law, though it cannot conquer it; but under Grace, which pardons it? God forbid that ever any of us, who are come now under the Gospel which proffers pardon for sins past, should think of refusing it all service for the time to come; and continue still to serve and obey sin, as much or more, than we did under the weak aids of the Law before it came. That we should continue to serve by continuing to obey it, I say, For

16. Know you not this, That to whom you yield your selves servants to obey, his servants you are to whom you obey? So that there you will be judged to pay your service where you pay your obedience, whether that be in the performance of sin, unto the purchase of death; or of obedience, unto the obtaining of Righteousness.

17. But whatever some licentious Renegado Christians may think, of obeying, and so serving sin, after they have put themselves under subjection to Christ, who proffers

proffers to pardon it for the time past, only that he may Chap. 6. thereby encourage them to leave it for the future : Yet God be thanked, that you for your parts have quite other Apprehensions. For although indeed *you were formerly*, in your time of Judaism, and Subjection to the Law of Moses the servants of sin ; yet now, since your coming into Subjection under Christ, ye have, together with your Subjection, changed your Service also, and have obeyed from the heart that New Gospel-Form of Doctrine, whereunto, or into the Hands whereof, ye were delivered, when you were exempted from all Subjection to the Law.

Being then, by this Change of Subjection from the Verse 18. Law, under which Sin had Power, to Christ's Gospel, which enables you to destroy it, made free from the Service of sin ; ye became, as the Subjects of Christ, so likewise the Servants of Righteousness. And for this Change of your Service, together with the Change of your Subjection, there is all the Reason in the World.

Whereof I will speak after the most moderate expectations, and equitable manner of men, because of the infirmities of your flesh, whereby I know you are disabled from making such high Returns as the Reason of the thing calls for. For this is the least, the mildest Man would require in this Case, and yet it is all that God exacts of you ; as ye have formerly, when you were subject to the Law, under which Sin took so great Advantage, yielding your members Servants to uncleanness, and to iniquity, unto the bringing forth still of more iniquity ; even so in the same manner now, since you are become subject unto Christ, give the same Fruits there of your Subjection, and yield your members servants to righteousness, unto the increase of greater holiness.

This, as I say, is no more than you did upon your 20. Subjection to the other. For when you were the servants of sin, and under Subjection to his Law, ye were free from all that Service of Righteousness, which God expects of you now upon your Subjection to a better Law.

And as this Change of your Service, together 21. with the Change of your Subjection, is most highly reasonable ; so let me tell you withal, it is most beneficial. For when ye were Subject to the Law, and thereby Servants unto Sin ; what fruit had you then, either in En-

joyment or Expectation, besides Death and Disgrace, in those things and Services, whereof you are most justly now ashamed? And not only so, for besides that one effect of Shame, there is moreover another end of those things, and that is death too.

22. But now, on the other side, being, by means of your Subjection unto Christ, made free from the Law and Authority of sin, and become, as it is meet for Subjects, servants unto God; you have your fruit at present unto holiness, and the end thereof at last everlasting life.

Chap. 6. 23 Verse. This difference there is, I say again, between the Fruits of your former Subjection and Service, and those at present. For the wages of sin, to its Subjects and Servants, is death, but the gift of God to his, is eternal life.

And this Service of God, which gets you right to eternal Life, I must still tell you, is owing to your being freed from Subjection to the Law, under which you served Sin, and to your becoming subject unto Christ.

Chap. 7. 1. For in the first Place, as for your being freed from Subjection to the Law, and being now no longer under it; that is very plain. For, know you not, my Brethren (for I speak to them that know the Law, or the Nature and Quality of those Laws which give one Person Interest and power over another) how that the Law, when considered as a Person that hath such Power, hath dominion over a man who is under it as long as he liveth indeed, or as it liveth in force to bind him, but no longer?

2. A Man's Subjection to a Law, is just like that of a Woman to her Husband; where, as we all know, the Subjection ceaseth, and all the Laws pertaining to it, when her Husband dies whom she was subject to. For the woman which hath an Husband, is bound indeed by the Law of that Subjection to her Husband, as long as he liveth; but if the Husband be dead, she is then no longer subject, but loosed from the Law of Wedlock made in favour of her Husband, as she is from that Subjection wherein it was founded.

3. So then if while her Husband liveth, during whose Life all the Laws of Wedlock belonging to that Subjection are in force, she be married to another man; she shall be truly called an Adulteress: But on the other Side, if her Husband be dead, that Subjection, and all the Laws which could oblige her in it, are dead with him; and

*she is free from the Obligation of that Law, which forb'd Chap. 7.
her to marry another upon pain of being accounted an
Adulteress; so that she is no Adulteress now, that Law
being dead which made her so, though she be married to
another Man.*

And this is just your Case; the Law of Moses, which held you in subjection formerly, being dead and abolished now by the Death and Doctrine of Christ; or you being dead to it, which comes to the same thing. *Wherefore my Brethren, ye also, (as the Woman is to the dead Man the Duties of this Relation living or expiring at the same time on both sides equally) are become dead to the Law, which was your former Husband (unto which therefore now you are no longer subject) by the body and Sufferings of Christ crucified, who has abrogated and (c) abolished Moses's Law under which Sin reigned; which abolition of the Law he wrought for this end, that ye, by this death of it, being freed from all subjection to it, might now be married, and thereby become subject to another, even to himself, who is raised from the dead to a state of (d) absolute Authority and Dominion over us; to whom, I must tell you, we are espoused for this purpose, that upon becoming his Subjects we should be freed from our former sinful service; and agreeable to our present subjection, perform service, or bring forth fruit unto God.*

And this alteration of our subjection from the Law to himself, was necessary, as I said, for this altering of our service from sin to righteousness. Which is manifest, from comparing what we were formerly, with what we are at present. *For when formerly we were in subjection to the Flesh, or Law of Moses under which the Flesh had so great advantage, we generally felt, as they do now who are still under it, that the motions of sin, which were occasioned and strengthened by the weakness and inability of the Law, which could not restrain them, did work such service and obedience to them in our members or bodily powers, as to bring forth fruit unto death.*

But now, upon our becoming subject unto Christ, we are delivered from the subjection of the Law, whose weaknes gave sin so great advantage over us, that Law, I say, being now dead and abolished, wherein, whilst we so served sin, we were held in subjection; which de-

Verse 4.

(c) Ephes. 2. 15. Col. 2. 14, 16, 17.

(d) Matt. 28. 18.

Chap. 7. liverance is vouchsafed us, as I said, for this end, *that being made, not the Law's, but Christ's Subjects now, we should, answerably to that serve in newness of Spirit, or in such sort as the new Spirit and Grace of his Religion enables us, and not as we served formerly under our subjection of the Law, in the coldness of the letter, or in those weak and ineffective degrees whereto the helpless Letter of the old Law could assist us.*

Verse 7. But upon what I say, of this change of Service from Sin to God (which we have all felt upon our becoming Christians) being an effect of this Change of Subjection from the Law to Christ; some of you 'tis like, may think, that the Law which I affirm we sinned under, is aspersed and reproached by me, and thus object:

(e) τέτιγεντες - *What (e) say we then? Is the Law under which you say we sinned so much, and from which being now delivered, we have ceased to serve Sin, the Cause of Sin to them who live under it? Now to this I must answer, God forbid that any Man should either say, or think so. No, we served Sin under the Law, but yet the Law was no Cause of Sin. And both these and all they who live under it feel in themselves, and must acknowledge. To avoid Offence, suppose that I my self were this sinning Subject of the Law; 'tis very true, as I have said, that I do serve sin under it; but is the Law the cause of it? By no means. Nay, so far is the Law from causing or encouraging Sin in me, that on the contrary, it points it out to me, and forbids it. I had not known what things are sin, but by the Help of the Law which shews it; for I had not known lust, or concupiscence for Instance, which is only in the Heart, and not in the outward Action, to be a Sin, except the Law of the tenth Commandment had said expressly, Thou shalt not covet.*

8. But for all the Law both shews and prohibits Sin, and so can contribute nothing to produce, but rather to destroy it: Yet I must truly tell you still, That, whereas Sin has other causes more than enow, which are sufficient to produce it; the Law is so weak and imperfect, as not to be able to hinder it. For in this Instance of Concupiscence especially, whereto in the Law there is no express punishment threatned, the sinful Inclinations of our Flesh, which are cause enough of all Sin,

Sin, grow bold, and hearing of no express Threatning Chap. 7. from it, will not be restrained by it. And by this means the Sin of Concupiscence taking occasion from the Impunity of the Commandment, instead of being restrained by it, took liberty and presumed upon it; and so without all Fear, wrought and accomplished, or brought on to (e) compleat Action and Practice, *in me all manner (e) Kælærg- of Concupiscence.* And seeing the Law only forbid, *yaæta.* but could not restrain it, it helped on in the End rather to make, and let me see my self to be a Sinner, than to deliver me from Sin; *for without the promulgated Law,* Sin was almost dead being both little in it self, and less upon the Conscience. For the less Knowledge there is of the Law, the less is there of Sin in transgressing it, and also the less Sense of it. And therefore, as I say, as for this Instance of Concupiscence, which I had not known to be a Sin unless the Law had told me so; without the Law I had neither offended so highly in it, nor had so great a Sense of my offence.

And this was found by Experience in the Men of our Nation. For any one of them, who was alive at the promulgation of the Law upon Mount Sinai, might say: *I was alive to my thinking, and as to great degrees of that Guilt which I contracted afterwards, without the Law once, or before such Time as it was there proclaimed to us:* for till then I knew not Lust to be a Sin, and so by reason of my Ignorance, neither sinn'd so much in it, nor was so sensible of it as now I am; *but when the Commandment came,* and was plainly made known to me by Moses; *then Sin,* I say, which was only shewn and forbid, but could not be restrained by it, *revived,* and begun to have the fulness of Guilt and Terror in it, *and I,* thenceforward, being warn'd against it, and not being able to keep back from it, became liable to that Death which is the Wages of it, and died by it.

And thus the Law or Commandment, which was not only holy, and innocent in it self, but moreover intended by God for my good, and ordained to life, which it promised could I have obeyed it; I notwithstanding found to be unto death to me, because that became my due when I sinned against it.

Not as if the Law can be said to be the Author of ^{11.} Death to me, more than it is of Sin in me: For it was aim'd

Chap. 7. aim'd to destroy sin, which it shews and forbids ; and to procure life, which it offers and promises. But the true cause of this effect so contrary to its intention, (*viz.*) its producing Sin and Death, when as it was ordained to Holiness and Life, is its being, as I said before, weak, and unable by all its aids to conquer fully, and restrain that Sin, which brings Death upon us, for it cannot subdue, but only shew and forbid it. And therefore our habitual Lusts finding themselves too strong for it, burst through it, and, in spite of all its restraint, make us commit the one, and so become liable to the other. *For* in very deed it is not the Law, which is the cause of Death to me, but *Sin* it self, which *taking occasion or Advantage by the literal and fancied impunity of the tenth Commandment, deceived me*, through a false hope into the commission of it ; and by it made me in reality liable to that Death, which is truly the Wages of it, or in a Word, *slew me.*

Verse 12. *Wherfore notwithstanding we sinned, yea, and died also during our Subjection under the Law ; yet for all that, neither can our Sin, nor our Death be charged upon the Law it self ; because, instead of Contributing to them, it tends to destroy them, by expressly forbidding the one, and offering to deliver us from the other.* And therefore as for this Difficulty that was made at the seventh Verse, against my saying that we served Sin under the Law, (*viz.*) its following thence that the Law was the cause of our Sin and Death ; this we see is quite taken off, and doth not follow at all. For although we sinned, yea, and died too under the Law ; yet was not the Law the cause of these, but the strength of our own Lusts. But *the Law is holy still, and so no cause of Sin ; and the Commandment forbidding Sin, and promising Life to the Obedient, is not only holy and just, but over and above that good too, and so no Cause of Death and Suffering.*

13. But upon this you will say, *How was it then, that that which is so good in it self, as you say the Law is, should be made the cause of the greatest evil, even of Death unto me ? Could it prove so to me, if it were not so in it self ? And to this I answer with Abhorrence, God forbid that I should say the Law is Death. No, this Death, as I have told you, is not the effect of the Law, for it was ordained*

ordained to procure Life for me. But it was Sin, I say Chap. 7. again, that was too strong for the Law, which could only forbid, but was not able by all its aids to restrain it ; this Sin it was, that it might appear Sin indeed, which went on working transgression unto death in me, by advantage taken over that Law which is good, although not strong enough to over-power the settled habits of evil. And by this conquest of Sin over the good Law, which was set up as a bar against it, and should have destroy'd it, it appears to be most mischievous. For this comes of it, that Sin, by proving too hard for the Commandment, might by such prevailing over all that is set against it, be extreamly heightned and aggravated, and become exceeding sinful.

And that the Law should thus be worshipped by Sin, is 14 Verse. no wonder. For we know, that although the Law, which commands, is spiritual, to shew and suggest better things ; yet I, who am to obey, in that state of sensuality and sin, wherein the Law finds me, and out of which it is too weak to rescue me, am carnal, so as to serve sin notwithstanding it. Which I am to such a degree, as if I were sold under sin, and my actions were as much at its command, as the actions of a Slave bought with money are at the command of his Master. So that although the Law shews me that which is good, and commands me to perform it ; yet cannot I obey it, in regard I am under another's power, under the beck of sin.

And in very deed, to speak yet more particularly to 15. this business, in the Person I am representing, under the state of Sin and Sensuality, from which the Law alone is too weak to rescue them, the good Law can, and doth produce good effects in the mind and conscience, which is the Throne wherein it is seated ; but still the Law of sin, which is seated in the members or executive powers, prevails over it, and engrosseth all our actions : So that the utmost that it can ordinarily do with us, is to make us in our mind to disapprove sin ; but when it hath done that, it cannot hinder us in our lives from practising it. And of this the complaints of those Persons are a sufficient proof. For who is there among them, for the most part, that is not ready to confess and cry out thus, that which, through the prevailing power of my lusts, I do in my practice ; that, through the power of the Law.

Chap. 7. I allow not in my mind and conscience ; for what, being excited by the Law, I would do ; that, being hindred by sin, do I not ; but what, from the Law's prohibiting, in my mind I hate and disapprove ; that, from my own lusts forcing and over-powering me, in my actions still do I.

Verse 16. And this by the way, as it is an evident argument of the weakness and inability of the Law to restrain sin ; is also a clear testimony to the holiness and goodness of the Law it self, which shews plainly that it is no favourer, or author of Sin, as was objected, vers. 7. Because if even then when I do sin, I do not approve of it, but in doing so, I do what I would not ; I thereby consent in my own conscience unto the Law, and acknowledge, by my approving what it commands, that it is good. Yea, I shew moreover, that all that, which it produces and effects in me, is good also. For even when I do sin, sinning thus against my Conscience, the sin cannot in any wise be charged upon my conscience where the Law reigns, so as that the Law in my mind may be stiled the cause of sin, as it is vers. 7. but only upon the power of my habitual sin and fleshly lusts that reign in my members, which are so strong, as that the law of my mind cannot restrain them.

17. And now then (in this state of sinning thus with regret, and against my conscience) even when I do sin, it is no more I, (or my mind and conscience that is governed by the Law, and which may be called my self) that do it, seeing it disapproves it ; but it is sin that dwells in me, and reigns in my members.

18. It must not be charged upon the Law in my mind, I say, but upon this inhabiting Sin which rules in my Members. For I know, and confess freely that in that other part of me, that is to say, in my flesh and members (which for all the Law rules in my mind, doth yet keep possession of my practice) dwells no good thing. Nay, on the contrary, there dwells so much evil, as proves too strong for the good Law, restraining all its effects to the approbation of my mind, but not suffering it to influence my practice. Which they, as I said, who are in this state, find by sad experience. For ordinarily they feel and must confess this, that to will, upon the account of the Law, is present with me, but then how to per-

perform that which is good, after I have will'd it, that I Chap. 7. find not.

For after the Law has done all that it can upon me, Verse 19. this is still true, that *the good, that, being instructed by the Law, I would do*; that, being hindred by the prevalence of my lust, *I do not*; but as for *the evil, which, because of the prohibition of the Law, I would not do*; that being over-master'd by my lusts, *I do*.

But now all this while, as I said, if what my lusts 20. make me practise, through the Law in my mind I do not approve; but in doing it, *I do that which I would not*; then 'tis clear, that my sinning cannot be charged upon the Law, as it is vers. 7. because it hinders it as far as it can. It cannot, I say, be attributed to that, for *it is no longer I, or my mind and conscience, that do it*; but to the power of habitual Sin which the good Law cannot conquer, to that *sin which dwells and rules in me*, i. e. in my bodily members.

And therefore to sum up all in this state, I find another 21. Law in my members, opposite to the Law of God in my mind which strives against it, and prevails over it, and makes me practise contrary to what my mind approves. So that when, being inclined by God's Law, *I would do good*; then, being over-ruled by the law of sin, *I cannot*, but *evil is laid before me and present with me*.

God's Law, I say, I serve with the mind. For I de- 22. light in the Law of God after the inner man of my mind and conscience.

But all this while I only approve of it, but no more. 23. For all the effect which it has upon me, is only to create a liking of it in my mind. But as for my practise and outward performance, it is under another's power. For I see another opposite Law (viz.) that of Lust and Sin, which is seated in my bodily members, not only warring against the Law of God in my mind, but conquering also and prevailing over it, bringing me into captivity, that absolute sort of subjection and slavery, to practise the Law of Sin, which is seated in my members.

And since I am so far enslaved to the Law of Lust and 24. Sin, when the Law of God underrakes me, that even that Law it self, which God has appointed for my remedy, is not able to rescue and deliver me: I have too great reason to cry out, O! wretched man that I am,

Chap. 7. who shall deliver me, since this Law given me by Moses is not able to do it, from the slavery and misery of this body of death?

Verse 25. This indeed was such Sinners condition under the Law, as shews at once the Law's holiness and goodness, and withal its inability and weakness; because notwithstanding it offer'd some Grace, yet was not that enough, but that during our subjection under it, we commonly serv'd sin still. But now as for that slavish service of sin, which such a bare Jew, who has no other help against it but Moses's Law, complains of, and longs to be delivered from; that, as I told you at first, we Christians, through the surpassing Grace of Christ's Gospel, are deliyered from, as he may be by turning Christian. So that to such a complaining Jew as I have here personated, I Paul an Apostle of Jesus Christ can readily make answer. Alter your subjection, and you shall alter your service too; for in becoming subject unto Christ instead of the Law, you shall become servants of God instead of serving sin. I thank God there is a way now in Christ for such

*In exempl. deliverance, or, as it is read by some * Copies, the Clarom. tis Grace of God which comes through Jesus Christ our Lord not εὐχα- shall deliver you, although the Law cou'd not which eισώ τῷ came by Moses. But without this Grace, I must still Θεῷ, but tell you, that the Law it self will not generally have χάρις τῷ any such effect upon you; seeing, as I said, it will δαι, which only awaken your Conscience, but not reform your Practice. So then, to shut up this Discourse, this you must also fol- still conclude upon, that whilst you continue subject to low'd by the Law, you will serve sin in your practise, however Latin Ver- you may disapprove it in your Minds. For I my self, sion. or the same I in that state under the Law, who with the † autōs mind, as has been often observed, serve, in approving ηγώ. the Law of God; do yet with the flesh, so long as it has nothing else but the Law to restrain it, serve, in practising the Law of Sin.

Chap. 8. But to return to what I said, vers. 5, 6. of the last
I Verse. Chapter, from whence we have hitherto diverted to
answer this Objection: I say, having by this passage from
subjection to the Law, to subjection unto Christ upon
the Law's being abolished, changed our service together
with our subjection, and become servants now, not
unto sin, but unto Christ. All we Christians are safe
from

from that Death, which the Law of the members brought forth fruit to, (Chap. 7. Vers. 5.) and have right to that Eternal Life, which as I said, is the gift of God to all his servants, (Chap. 6. Verse 22, 23.) So that what reason soever such a poor Jew under the Law, who serves and obeys Sin, may have to cry out of the body of Death: Yet we Christians, who began to serve God upon our becoming subject unto Christ, may comfort our selves to see that we are delivered from it. And therefore whatever there be to such a striving, but yet unconquering Jew, there is now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus's Religion, because they are such who have changed their service together with their subjection, and walk not now after the Flesh, as they did formerly whilst the Law held them in subjection, but after the Spirit.

This change of service, I say, is wrought in all true Christians by the Law of Christ, although it could not generally be wrought in such regenerate Jews by the bare Law of Moses. For the Law and power of the Spirit of life, which is given to us in Christ Jesus, and is expressly promised in his * Religion, though it were not in the Law of Moses; that enabling Spirit, I say, hath made me Christian free from the so often mentioned Law of Sin, and from the punishment of it, Death.

For what the Law of Moses could not do towards our deliverance from the service of sin, in that it was too weak thro' the over-powering wickedness of the Law of Lust in the Flesh; even that hath God done in sending his own Son Jesus Christ in the likeness of sinful Flesh, and in making him [†]a Sacrifice for Sin, that in his death he might found his own Religion, whereby he hath condemned and destroyed, what the Law of Moses was overcome by, viz. [†]_{αιωνίας.} the Law of sin seated in the Flesh.

So that by the help of Christ's Law perfecting what the Law of Moses wanted, the righteousness which was shewn to us and required of us in the Book of the Law of Moses, might be performed and fulfilled in us Christians, although it was not in such bare struggling Jews, because we are such, who being Christ's Subjects, must be his Servants likewise, and in our works and practice walk not after the lusts of the Flesh, but after the motions of the Spirit.

Thus

Thus have I given a Paraphrase, unto this *involved*, and to much *mistaken* Chapter. Wherein I have *la gely*, and as I hope *truly* represented the Apostle's *meaning*, his *design* and *manner* of arguing in this place. In all which, we see he intends not at all to give a Character of *himself*, or of any other *regenerate* Man, but only of a *middling* Sinner, who sins against his Conscience, and transgresses with Reluctance. Which Transgressor of a middle rank, he particularly represents under the person of an *awaked*, but as yet *unregenerate* Jew; who was one on whom the Law of *Moses* had wrought some change, but could not work enough; being able only to *awaken his Conscience*, but not to *reform his Practice*.

So that all that is there said in that seventh Chapter, of *willing* and not *performing*, &c. only sets off the *weakness* and *imperfection* of the *Law of Moses*, as to the making awaken'd Sinners *compleatly obedient*; and the *perfection*, as to this particu'lar of the law of Christ.

The *Law of Moses* was unable to work a general reformation in such Persons, by reason of several defects, two whereof I shall particularly mention, which in the Religion of Christ are fully supplied; and they are the *great motive* to all *obedience*, *eternal life*, and the *great encouragement* of all *endeavour*, *the promise of the Spirit*.

Eternal life, are words never heard of in all *Moses's Law*. Indeed the good people under it, had all some rude thoughts and *confused expectations* of it; but the *Law* it self did no where *clearly*, and *expressly propose* it. Whereof this may serve for a *probable proof*, because a *whole Sect* among them, the *Sadducees* I mean, did flatly deny it; and this for an *undeniable argument*, because those

* Such as Deut. 14. 1, 2. *Ye are the Children of the Lord our God, ye shall not cut your selves for the dead.* Which say they, were rather to be done for that reason of their being God's Chi'dren and a King's Son, were it not for the blessed immortality of the departed Soul, which this reason suggests to them. Such also are Deut. 32. 39, 47. Deut. 4. 4, &c. All which must be brought about to speak it by Rabbinical Art and unwonted fetch of consequence. See *Witnesses to Christ*. par. 2. chap. 13.

very * places of the *Law*, which are brought to *confirm* it by those Jewish Doctors who are most for it, are in all appearance so remote from it. Nay, even our Saviour himself, when he goes to prove it against the *Sadducees* out* of the Books of *Moses*, can find no other Testimonies for it, than such as are fetched about to speak it by art,

and brought to it by consequence, Luke 20. 37, 38.

So that well might Saint Paul say, in triumph over all other Religions in the World, That *Life and immortality were brought to light by the Gospel*, 2 Tim. 1. 10. And in the comparison of that *Covenant* which came by *Moses*, with that *other* which came by *Christ*; to affirm, that the *Covenant* which came by *Christ*, was the bringing in of a better hope, Heb. 7. 19. and a better *Covenant*, for this reason, because it was established upon better promises; Heb. 8. 6.

And then as for the promise of the *Spirit* to enable men to do what was required of them; of that *Moses* made no mention. By his *Law*, as S. Paul says, was the knowledge of sin, Rom. 3. 20. It shewed men what they should do, and denounced a * Curse upon them if * Gal. 3. they failed to do it: but it stopt there, and went not on 10. to promise any inward Grace and Help, that might enable them to be as good as it required them. No, the promise of that was reserved to another dispensation, and to be the hope of a better *Covenant*; it was not to come by *Moses*, but by *Christ*; nor to be an express Article of the *Law*, but of the *Gospel*. *Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the Law*, saith the Apostle, that now being under the *Gospel*, we might receive the promise of the *Spirit*, which comes not by the *Law of Moses* but through the *Faith of Christ*, Gal. 3. 13, 14. The *Law* by its prohibition, made several actions to be sinful, it shewed us what was sin, and it threatned the curse to it; but that was all that it did, towards the extirpation of it; for, as for any inward strength and ability to overcome it, it offered none, but left us there to our own selves. And because he was too strong for us, and had got possession of our Bodies and executive Powers, insomuch that we were quite enslaved to it, and as it were sold under it: therefore the *Law*, by making more things sinful through its prohibition, and not strengthening us against sin through spiritual assistance, instead of lessening the Empire of sin, proved in the end to encrease it. For our lusts not being restrained by it, and more of them becoming sinful by being prohibited; when the *Law entred*, as S. Paul says, the offence did more abound, Rom. 5. 20. and the *Law* became, not the bane and overthrow of sin, but by making its services more numerous, it was rather, as the

same Apostle says, *the strength of it*, 1 Cor. 15. 15. And forasmuch as the Law did only thus outwardly shew and reveal sin to our eyes, but brought along with it nothing of inward Grace and Assistance to help us against it; therefore is it call'd a *Letter without us*, opposite to the Grace of the Gospel, which is an *enlivening Spirit* within. And since it did nothing more but outwardly shew and threaten sin, but did not inwardly assist and rescue us from it; it served only to condemn us for what we did, from the doing whereof it brought no inward Grace to hinder us; and so proved the *ministration of Death and Condemnation*, not of *Life and Pardon*. All which is plainly affirmed of it, in the third Chapter of the second Epistle to the *Corinthians*. God, says S. Paul, *bath made us Apostles, ministers of the New Testament*, * or *Covenant*, not of the external Letter only, as *Moses* and the Ministers of the Law were; but of the internal *Spirit* also. *For the Letter or old Law shews sin, and curses Men upon the breach of that which they cannot keep, and thereby kills them: but the Spirit or new Law enables them to do what it commands, and thereby giveth right to live*, which is the mercy that it promises. That was the *ministration of condemnation*; for it shewed Men the curse, which it did not enable them to shun: This is the *ministration of justification and righteousness*, which it both promises, and enables them to attain to, ver. 6, 7, 8, 9.

'Tis very true indeed, that several of the Jews themselves under the *Law of Moses*, had really such assistances of God's *Spirit*, as enabled them to do, as well as to know what was required of them. For *David* in all his life and behaviour was a *man after God's own heart*, 1 Sam. 13. 13. *Zacharias* and *Elizabeth*, as to their walking in all the Commandments of the Lord, were blameless, Luke 1. 9. S. Paul had lived to that day in all good Conscience towards God and towards men, Acts 23. 1. and 24. 16. And the Case was the same in all times with a number of other honest and godly Jews.

But then this assistance which they enjoyed, was no Article of their *Law*; although God afforded it, yet had their Law no where promised it, nor was he bound to it by the *Mosaical Covenant*. For in very truth, all this inward *Spirit* which was vouchsafed to them, was reached

reached out, not by vertue of the *Covenant of the Law*, but of the *Covenant of Grace*. For the *Covenant of Grace* was not first made with the World when Christ came into it, but was established long before with *Adam*, Gen. 3. 15. and after that confirmed again with *Abraham*, and all his *Seed* after him, Gen. 12. 3. Gal. 3. 8, 17. So that under it, as well as under *Moses*, all the *Jews* lived; and by the *gracious* terms and assisting *Spirit* of it, all the righteous people, who have been since the beginning of the World, were reformed and justified. It being, as S. Paul says, *by Faith*, which is the *righteousness* of the second *Covenant*, that the *Elders*, who lived before the *Law*, obtained a good report, Heb. 11. 2. and that the *Jews* who lived under it, were delivered and justified from all things, from which they could * not be justified by any vertue of the *Law of Moses*, Acts 13. 39. And therefore that which the Apostle affirms of the defective-^{12.} nels of the *Mosaick Law*, viz, its having no promise of the spirit to enable men to do what it commanded, is true still. For the *Law* did not promise it, although several, both before, and under the *Law*, enjoyed it; but they who had the benefit of it, received it, not from the *Covenant of the Law*, but from the *Covenant of Grace* and the *Gospel*, which has been more or less on foot through all times, ever since the World began.

And in this *Covenant*, since Christ has given us the last Edition and Perfection of it, both these great defects of the *Mosaick Law*, which rendred it so unable to work this entire reformation and obedience, are fully supplied. For in every Passage of Christ's *Gospel*, what is so legible, as the promise of eternal life? The joys of *Heaven* are as much insisted on by Christ, as the delights of *Canaan* were by *Moses*. And then as for the other promise, viz. that of the *Spirit*; it is now as plainly revealed, as words can make it. For we need not to guess at it by *signs*, or to presume it from *Probabilities*, or to believe it upon *Syllogism* and *Consequence*: But Christ has spoke out, so as to be understood by every capacity, ----God will give the holy *Spirit* to them that ask him. Luke 11. 13.

Now because the *Law of Moses* laboured under these two great defects, which are happily supplied by the *Gospel* of Christ, by reason whereof it was very una-

ble to effect that reformation of the World which was necessary ; therefore doth the Apostle, in several places, speak very meanly of it, as of a weak and *ineffective Instrument*. He affirms plainly, and proves also, That it neither *could*, nor *did* make Men thoroughly good ; and therefore God, who had made some obscure Revelations thereof before, was forced in the fulness of time clearly to make known, and, in Christ's death, to establish a better. If there had been a Law given by Moses, which could have given life, then, saith he, verily righteousness should not have needed to be sought by another Covenant, but *have been by the Law*. But this we see it could not, for the Scripture hath concluded all those, wholived under it, to be still under the dominion of sin, that so, since the Law of Moses could not do it, *the promise of eternal life, of the Spirit, and of other things which we have by the faith of Jesus Christ, might be given to work and effect it to those that believe*, Gal. 3. 21, 22.

Something indeed the Law did towards it, for it armed their *consciences* against sin, so that they could not take their full swing, and transgress without all fear and remorse. And this was some restraint, and kept them from being so ill by far as otherwise they would have been, although it was not able to make them so good as they should be. And to lay this hank upon sin, and to check it in some measure, till such time as the Gospel should be more clearly revealed to subdue it perfectly was that very end for which the Law was at first given, and whereto so long as it was in force, it served. Wherefore, saith he, *serveth the Law of Moses ? It was added to the rude draught of the Gospel-Covenant made with Abraham because of the transgressions of men, which grew very high, that it might in some degree restrain them, till Jesus Christ the seed of Abraham should come, to whom, as to the head and in behalf of his Church, the promise of such Grace as would restrain it fully, was made. And to fit it the more for imprinting an awe upon peoples Consciences, whereby it might lay this restraint upon Sin, it was ordained at the first giving of it, by terrible fire and thunderings, made by the Angels, which were so dreadful, that the People desired of God that those formidable Angels might be no more employed in delivering it to them, but that it might be put*

into the hands of another Mediator, (viz.) Moses, who was a Man like unto themselves, Gal. 3. 19.

But although this Restraint upon Sin were something, yet was it far from sufficient; so that still it is true of the Law of Moses, that notwithstanding it could begin, yet it could finish and make nothing * perfect; but that *Gal. 4.9. it was the bringing in of a better hope than was warranted by the Law, which should do that, Heb. 7. 19. And as for this Imperfection and Faultinets, which the Apostle imputes to the first Covenant or Law of Moses in these, and other Places; it is nothing more, as he observes, than God himself has charged upon it, when he speaks of establishing a better instead of it. For if the first Covenant by Moses had been faultless, and void of Imperfection, then should no place have been sought for the Introduction of the second, which it is plain there was. For finding fault with them for their Breach of the first Covenant, he saith (in Jer. 31. 31.) the days come when I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel, such as shall make me to be for ever unto them a God; and enable them to be unto me an obedient People, Heb. 8. 7, 8, 9, 10.

Now this Inability of the Law of Moses to work a compleat Conquest over Sin, and a thorow Reformation, which the Apostle affirms so clearly in these other places, he sets out more largely and particularly in that seventh Chapter to the Romans. For from the Beginning of this Discourse, which I have taken at the 14th Verse of the 6th Chapter, to the end of it at the 5th Verse of the 8th; this Weakness and Inability of the Law, is that still which is every where endeavoured to be made out, and which returns upon us as the Conclusion and Inference from every Argument. Sin must not have dominion over you, saith he, because you are not under the Law, where is the place of its reigning, but under the Grace of Christ, at the 14th Verse of the 6th Chapter. And in the 7th it is taken notice of at every turn, When you were in the flesh (or under the Law, which, from its consisting so much of Carnal Ordinances, and giving the flesh so much advantage, is called flesh, Galat. 3. 3.) the motions of sin, which were encouraged by the Weakness of the Law, brought forth fruit unto death; but now being delivered from the weak Law, you serve in newness

of spirit, not as you did then, in the oldness of the letter, v. 5, 6. Sin taking occasion or advantage over the weak Commandment, wrought in me all manner of concupiscence, vers. 8. When the weak Commandment came, sin revived, and I died, vers. 9. Sin taking occasion, or Advantage by the Commandment, slew me, verse 11. by which prevailing over the Commandment, it appears to be exceeding sinful, verse 13. And at the end of the Discourse at the eighth Chapter, we are told again of the Law of Moses being weak through the conquering Power of the flesh, which made it necessary for God to send his own Son with a better Law, which was strong enough to rescue us out of the Dominion of it, verse 3, 4.

So that upon the whole matter it plainly appears, that all that is said in that seventh Chapter, of willing, but not doing, of sinning against conscience; and transgressing with regret; doth not at all set forth the saveable state of a true Christian under the Gospel of Christ, but only the state of a middling Sinner, of a lost Jew, who only struggles but cannot conquer, being yet under the Weakness and Imperfection of the Mosaick Law.

Nay I add further, so far is any Man, who continues to work and act his Sin, from having any real Grounds of hope, and encouragement from this place in so doing; that in very Deed, if he rightly consider it, it will possess him with the quite contrary. It holds out to him a Sentence of Death, and shews him plainly the absolute Necessity, not only of a willing, but also of a working Obedience. For the Man who disobeys thus unwillingly, and sins with regret, is so far from being in a state of Life and Salvation notwithstanding his Sins, that he is here expressly said, to be undone and slain by them. The motions of sin under the Law, bring forth fruit unto death, verle 5. when sin revived by the coming of the Commandment, I died, verse 9. The Commandment which was ordained unto life, I on the contrary, found to be unto death, verse 10. Sin taking occasion and Advantage by the Commandment, slew me, verse 11. Sin wrought death in me by that Law, which is good, verse 13. O! wretched man that I am, by reason of this subjection unto Sin, who shall deliver me from this body of Sin and Death? verse 24.

But on the other side, if we would belong to Christ, and appear such Servants as he will own and reward at last; we are taught in this very Place, that we must not be worsted by sin, but overcome it; that we must not work evil, but righteousness; that we must not walk after those sinful Lusts which are seated in the flesh, but after the Law of God which is enthroned in the Spirit. Sin shall not have dominion over you, if you are under Grace, Chapter 6. 14. Now yield your members servants unto righteousness, verse 19. you are become subject, and as it were married to Christ, that you should bring forth fruit to God, Chap. 7. verse 4. Now being delivered from the Law, we must serve, not Sin, as we did under it, but God in newness of Spirit, verse 6. The Grace of God through Jesus Christ, hath delivered me from this body of Death, verse 24, 25. The Law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, when I became truly and acceptably Christian, hath made me free from the Law of Sin and Death, Chap. 8. verse 2. So that the righteousness of the Law, which it was not able to work in me, is now, by means of the Gospel, wrought and fulfilled in me; for since I came under it, I am one who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit, verse 4.

So that all the while we see, this is a Truth most sure and steadfast, which S. Paul is so far from opposing in this seventh Chapter to the Romans, that in reality he avers and confirms it, (viz.) that if we do commit sin and work iniquity, it will not excuse us to say that we did it unwillingly. The regret in sinning may be allowed, as was shewn in the last Chapter, to lessen our crime, and thereby to abate our punishment; but that is all which it can do, for it cannot quite exempt us from it.

And thus at last we see, that this fourth Ground, of shifting off the necessity of this service with our actions, (viz.) our hope of being saved at the last day, although we have not obeyed in our works, but have wrought disobedience, because when we did so, it was with reluctance and unwillingness, is no less delusive than all the former are. It will fail any Man who trusts to it, and if he will not see it before, make him know the falseness of it, when it is too late to rectifie and amend it.

As for all those Foundations thereof, whereupon Men build their Hopes of a happy Sentence, without

ever obeying with their strength or bodily powers, viz.) the Conceit of being saved for Orthodox Opinions, for ineffectual desires, for never transgressing but through a strong temptation, or with an unwilling mind: They are all false Grounds, Snares of Death, and Inlets to Damnation.

But as ever we expect that our Obedience should avail us unto Pardon and Life, we must obey with our Strength or bodily Powers, as well as with our Wills, our Passions, and our Understandings. If we would have God at the last Day to approve our Service, and to reward and justify our Obedience, this, and nothing less than this, must be done towards it. We must not only desire, but do; it is not enough to will and approve, but we must work and practise what is commanded us. We must not barely think right in our Minds, or desire with our Affections, or chuse with our Wills; but, as the Perfection and Crown of all, we must put to our Strength and executive Powers, and work the Will of God in our Lives and Actions. Without this, if we have Life and Opportunity, all other things will signifie nothing. For it is he who doth good, saith S. John, who will be looked upon to be of God, 3 John 11. Little Children, saith the same Apostle, let no man deceive ye, for it is only he who * doth righteousness, who in God's Judgment is righteous, 1 John 3. 7. It is this Service of our Strength or bodily Powers, in our outward Works and Operations, which makes up our Duty, and secures our Reward: Blessed are they that do his Commandments, for they only have right to the great Reward, the Tree of Life, Rev. 22. 14.

But on the other side, if we do evil, and work iniquity, no service of our other Faculties can stand us in any stead, but in God's account we shall be esteemed wicked Wretches, Children of Wrath, and Heirs of Destruction. For the Words of our Saviour Christ himself, who is to judge of it, are vehement and plain. Verily, verily, I say unto you, whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin, John 8. 34. He who commits sin is of the Devil, for whosoever doth not righteousness is not of God, but a Child of the Devil, 1 John 3. 8, 10. And as this working Wickedness, howsoever we are against it in our Thoughts and Desires, makes us, in God's Account, Sons of Sin and Disobedience; so will it be sure to render us withal

* 1 John
2. 17, 29.

withal Children of Wrath and Destruction. If you live after the flesh, saith S. Paul, you shall die, Rom. 8. 13. And whatever Men think in their Minds, or desire in their Hearts, or profess in their Words to the contrary; if for all that they have sinned impenitently in their Actions, Christ has told them plainly that he will pronounce, when he comes to sit as their Judge,---Depart from me all ye that work iniquity, Mat. 7. 23.

As for this fourth Faculty therefore, our Strength or bodily Powers, in outward Works and Operations; it is one necessary Ingredient of an entire Obedience. The Service of our Works is indispensably required to our Pardon and Happiness, as well as the Service of our Minds, our Wills, and our Affections; so that as ever we hope to live, our obedient Thoughts and Desires, must end in an obedient Practice.

And thus at last we see, what those Powers or Faculties are, whose Concurrence in God's Service is necessary to make up an entire Obedience. We must obey all the particular Laws which are recounted in the former Book, with our whole Man, both with our Minds, and Souls, and Hearts, and Strength: All these several Powers must unite in God's Service, before it will be upright and compleat, such as at present his Law requires, and such as at the last Day he will accept of.

C H A P. V.

Of the Second sort of Integrity, an Integrity of Times and Seasons.

BUT besides the Integrity of our Powers and Faculties, or the Integrity of the Subject, whereof I have discoursed hitherto; there is a second sort of Integrity, which is plainly necessary to make our Obedience available to our Salvation at the last Day; and that is an Integrity of Seasons and Opportunities, or our obeying the fore-mentioned Laws, not now, and then, but at all Times.

We must not think to please God by an Obedience that comes, and goes by *fits*; or by serving him only at such times, as we are in *humour*, or have no *Temptation* to the contrary. But our Service of him must be *constant* and *uniform*, we must obey him at *all* times, and wilfully transgress in *none*. For although all other things have their proper Season, yet Sin has not; it is *always* forbidden, and *always* threatened; so that whensoever we commit it it puts us under the Curse, and makes us liable to Death and Hell.

Some indeed there are who parcel out their Time, and divide it betwixt God and their Sins. They observe a *constant Course of Transgressing and Repenting of Sin and Sorrow*. For they are always won when they are tempted, and they are always sorrowful when they have none. They are all holy Purpose, and good Resolution before they are tryed; but when the Temptation comes, they can make but a poor Resistance; for all their good Thoughts quickly vanish, and they are taken. They are never constant, nor all of a piece, either in pious purposing, or in well doing; but still keep on in an uninterrupted Vicissitude and Succession of Works of Obedience and of Sin.

Others again there are, who act more agreeably to themselves, and, whilst they are for God, are more *constant* in their Obedience; who yet fall off at *last*, and sin against him for *altogether*. For either they grow faint and weary, by the *tediousness* and *length* of their Journey; or they are turned out of the way, by some great *Difficulties*; or drawn aside, by the *importunate Allurements* of some Temptations: And when once, by any of these Ways, they are put beside their Duty, they turn their Backs *thenceforward* upon God, and never more obey him. They are seduced by *ill Company*, or drawn away by *Interest*, or frightened by *Persecution*; and from that Time their Care slackens, and their Lusts encrease, and grow too hard for Grace and the Gospel. And thus, what from Inducements from *within*, and what from Occasions from *without*, they are quite cut off from the Service of God and Religion, and give themselves up to serve their Lusts for altogether, and to an uninterrupted Obedience of Sin.

But now, as for such a broken service and obedience as this, God will by no means accept of it, nor shall any man be ever the better by it. For when Christ comes to Judgment, he will pass Sentence upon men according to what they are *then*, and not according to what they have been formerly. *If the righteous man turn away from his righteousness, saith Ezekiel, and commit iniquity, and do according to all that the wicked man doth, shall he live? No, by no means.* For all his righteousness that he hath done formerly shall not be mentioned, but in his trespasses that he hath since trespassed, and in his sin that he hath sinned; in them shall he die, Ezek. 18. 24. It is only if you continue in my Word, saith our Saviour, that you are my Disciples indeed, John 8. 31. You must persevere in obedience, if you expect to have the reward of it. For he only who endures to the end shall be saved, Mat. 10. 22, and none but they who by PATIENT CONTINUANCE in well doing seek for Glory and Immortality, shall inherit eternal life, Rom. 2. 6, 7. Perseverance is the indispensable condition of bliss; Be thou faithful unto death, and then, saith Christ, I will give thee a Crown of life, Rev. 2. 10.

But as for all those who fall off from a good course, and turn Apostates from obedience; their case is desperate, and their condition extremely damnable. For they grow wicked to the highest degree, and their state is almost irrecoverable. They have, by their continued rebellion and provocations, in spight of all the suggestions of God's Grace, and the checks of their own Conscience, not only grieved, but even quenched the Spirit of God. So that God, for the most part, leaves them to themselves, and seeks no further to reduce them. For if men are idle, and will not use it; and much more if they scornfully cast it from them, and reject it; Christ has told us plainly, that the Grace which any one hath, shall be taken from him, Matth. 25. 29. And when once God and his good Spirit, have deserted them, they are under nothing but an unbridled lust, and run on without all restraint, into an exorbitant pitch of wickedness.

And this any man may easily observe in the world: For who is usually so evil, as the backsliding Sinner? Who is ordinarily so irrecoverable, as the Apostate Saint? They

They are quite lost to all goodness, and sin beyond all bounds and past all retrieve. No Creatures in the World were ever so much out of all capacity to be restored to Heaven, as those Angels that fell from it; and no men on Earth, are so hardly reclaimed from a wicked to a holy life, as they who once knew what it was, and yet utterly renounced it. For God, for the most part lets them alone to enjoy their own choice, and to go on in their own way; and the *good Spirit*, which has been almost quenched by them, contends no more with them, nor acts any more upon them. They have trampled already upon all spiritual aids, and benumb'd and silenced their own Consciences, and quite hardened themselves in their wickedness; so that now they have nothing to hinder them, but to advance to work all manner of sin with greediness and wantonness, and thereby fall under the severest curse, that can be met with in Hell and Damnation.

And as for this progress of all Renegado Saints and revolting Sinners, both in sin, and also in suffering; the Scripture is express and plain, *When the unclean Spirit, which is once gone out of a man, returns into him again,* says our Saviour, *he taketh unto himself seven other Spirits, which are more wicked than he himself is, and they enter in, and dwell there: and the last state of that man is made worse in all respects by this means, than the first.* Mat. 12. 43, 44, 45. The man becomes a greater Sinner, and a greater Sufferer, than otherwise he ever would have been. *For if after men have one escaped the pollution of the World, through the knowledge of Christ's Gospel, they are again entangled therein, and overcome by it; then is the latter end worse with them than the beginning.* For it had really been by much the better for them, not to have known the way of righteousness at all, than, after they had known and walked in it, to put such a slur upon it, and to revolt and turn from the holy Commandment, which was delivered unto them, and for some time embraced by them, 2 Pet. 2. 20, 21.

As for an obedience then which goes but half way, and breaks off before it has got to the end; so far is it from availing us unto pardon and life, that in very deed it renders our present case more desperate, and our future punishment more insupportable.

But

But that obedience, which God will accept, and in which alone we may safely place our confidence ; must be, as of our *whole man*, so of our *whole time* likewise. We must persevere in it through all Seasons, and take care both to live and die in it: For our reward will be dispensed out to us, according to the nature of our Service at the time of Payment, and *he only*, as our Saviour says, *that endureth to the end shall be saved*, Matt. 10. 22.

C H A P. I.

Of the third sort of Integrity, viz. that of the Object ; or of Obedience to all the particular Laws and parts of Duty.

BUT to render our service perfectly *intire* and *compleatly upright* it is not enough that there be an *integrity of the Subject*, by our obeying with all our powers ; or an *integrity of Time*, by our obeying in all Seasons ; of which two I have discoursed hitherto : but it is further necessary, that there be an *integrity of the Object* also ; or that what we do thus obey, with our *whole man*, and our *whole time*, be nothing less than *all the particular Laws of Duty and instances of Obedience* ; nothing under the *whole will of God*.

We must not (a) pick and chuse in the doing of our Duty, for if we do not obey *all*, we obey not (b) right (a) *Neq* ; in any. Because *all* the Laws of God are bound upon *est justa causatio cur* us by the same power, and enjoined by the same Autho- *præferan-* rity ; so that if we fulfil any *one* upon this account, of *tur aliqua, his having required it*, the same reason holds for our ful- *ubi facien-* filling *all* the rest. *da sunt omnia. Sal.*

de Prov. I. 3. p. 80. Ed. Oxon. (b) *Si pro arbitrio suo Servi Dominis obtemperant, ne in iis quidem in quibus obtemperaverint, obsequuntur. Quando enim Servus, ex Domini iussis ea facit tantummodo, qua vult facere ; jam non Dominicam implet voluntatem, sed suam, Id. p. 79.*

This indeed is very hardly believed, because it is so hard to practise. For almost every man has some sin or

or other, which he can as well die as part with : It has got his heart, and is become the Master of his affections ; and since he loves it so dearly, he hopes that God will bear with it too. He will part with any thing else for God's sake, and not stick at any other service, nor repine at any other imposition ; all that he craves, is only to be tolerated in his Darling Lust, and to be allowed to serve him, without *cutting off* what is as useful as his *right hand*, or *pulling out* what is as dear to him as his own *right-eye*, to please him.

And when men are thus desirous of reconciling the service of God with the service of their lusts ; when they are resolved to hope and yet resolved to sin, they have no other way, but to perswade themselves that the keeping of *some* Precepts shall atone for the transgression of *others*, and to bear up themselves with the delusive hopes and false confidences of a *partial*, and a *half obedience*.

Now this partiality of obedience, is in so many kinds, as men have sins that are endeared to them, which they will not leave for God's sake, but join with him. For every beloved sin, can make an Interest and Party ; and if it reign in us so far, as to make us fulfil it, and to disobey in it, our obedience in other things is all that we have to shew besides, and therefore it must be our excuse for it.

And this being an error of such eternal moment, and a Rock whereupon all the Souls, which miscarry under any appearances of piety, are split ; I will be particular in recounting and evacuating those colours and *pretences*, wherewith men usually deceive their own Souls, and think that they justifie and defend it.

Now as for those false grounds and pretentions, whereby men seek to shelter themselves under the practice of such bosom sins, as they overlook, because they have no mind to leave them, hoping to be secured, whilst they continue in them, because of their obedience in other parts of Duty, which is a *partial obedience* : Those pretensions, I say, which are most pleadable in this matter, are these that follow, viz. because their indulgence of themselves in those instances wherein they disobey, is either upon *one*, or *more* of these accounts.

1. For the preservation of their Religion, and of themselves, in times of danger and persecution.
2. For the supply of their necessities, by sinful arts, compliances, and services, in times of want and indigence.

3. For the satisfaction of their Flesh, in sins of temper and complexion, age, or way of life.

1. The first pretence whereby men justify to their own thoughts the indulgent transgression of several Laws, whilst they obey in others; is because those transgressions, wherein they allow themselves, are necessary for the preservation of their Religion, and of themselves, in those times of danger and persecution, wherein Gods Providence has placed them.

Religion is in danger, and like to be undermined by the close and subtle arts, or overborn by the more open and powerful violence of strong and witty Enemies. And this is God's Cause, and Christ our Lord and Saviour's interest; so that whatever is done here, we think is in service of our Maker. If we fight, we say it is his battles; if we spitefully persecute and devour, it is his enemies; if we rob and spoil, it is to weaken his adversaries; if we lye and dissemble, it is to defeat the designs of such as he will call Rebels; if we transgres in all the instances, and use all the lawless liberties of war, it is because we are engaged in his quarrel. The Cause which we contend for, and have to manage, is sacred; and that we believe will justify all means, and hallow any services whatsoever. So that our heat and fierceness, wrath and bitterness, envy and malice, revenge and cruelty, endless strife and ungovernable variance, spoils and robberies, seditions and murthers, wars and tumults; in a word, all the transports of passion and peevishness, anger and ill nature, rigour and revenge, are all sacred under this Cover: and pass for holy zeal, and pious vehemence, and religious concern for God; when as in reality, they are a most impious throwing off, and bursting through all the Tyes of Religion, and Bonds of Duty towards men.

All these enormous effects, and horrible instances of an indulged disobedience, are at this Day the consequents of this pretention.

For some on one hand, who call us *Hereticks*, and *enemies to Christ and holy Church*, think no means *sinful*, whereby they can *weaken and divide; seduce, surprize, or any way destroy us*. For they esteem it *lawful to disseminate under all shapes, to gain a Proselyte, or to disaffect a Party to our Communion and Government, and act a part and play the Hypocrite in all Disguises, and under cover of all Trades, the better to insinuate themselves among all sorts of men*. They will *affirm falsehood, even of their own Church, when it serves their turn; and deny any Doctrines, Precepts or Parts of it, when they are a scandal to the Persons whom they would practise upon, and make against them*. They make no conscience of *lyes and perjuries in conversation, when thereby they can promote the Churches interest*. For they have found out ways, to *deceive without lying, and to lye without sin, and to forswear without perjury, and to perjure themselves without danger, by their pious frauds, and religious arts of equivocations, mental reservations, dispensations, pardons and indulgences*. They can be *treacherous and faithless without breach of faith, if it were made to Hereticks; they assassinate and murther Magistrates, embitter and embroil Subjects against their Governours, and against one another; they conspire the death of Kings, the confusion and fall of Kingdoms, the ruine of all that dare oppose them, yea, even of all that differ from them*. And all this they do for *Christ's sake, in a zealous concern for God and Religion, and for the utter extirpation of all heretic and schism*. For it is this pretence, which bears them out through all, and makes them believe that they are *serving God, whilst after this extravagant rate they are overturning his whole Gospel*.

And others again even of our *own selves*, who justly abhor these *damnable instances of disobedience, upon the pretence of preserving or propagating Religion, in some furious and fiery spirited sort of Papists* (for God forbid that we should think them all to be of this temper) do yet run into the same extravagance, which upon so great reason they condemn in them.

For if we look into our *zeal for the common Religion of Protestants*; we shall find that we transgress many, and those most material and weighty Laws of it, whilst

whilst we express our affection and concern to defend and preserve it.

For doth not this pretence of preserving our Holy Protestant Religion, carry us beyond all the bounds of peaceableness and good subjection? Our great fears about its defence make us daily to distrust our lawful Governours; to think, and speak irreverently, and reproachfuly of their persons; to undervalue all their counsels, to misconstrue all their actions and proceedings; and with much undutiful credulity, and unchristian rashness, to believe, and spread abroad concerning them most odious suspicions, and invidious reports: They make us pragmatical and busie-bodies, to go out of our own sphere, and to usurp upon the Magistrates, in projecting means and expediences, prejudging Criminals, and irreverent censuring, reproaching, yea, and oft-times slandering of our Governours, if they, either in Court or Council, at the Board or on the Bench, determine contrary to our anticipations. They make us to disturb the quiet, and to unsettle the peace of our fellow subjects, in filling their minds with endless jealousies about their Princes care, and their own safety, and in possessing them with discontents, and undutiful suspicions, words and actions, to the great weakening of Government, and disturbance of the publick peace.

Yea, I add further, these same fears for our endangered Religion, transport us into the transgression of sundry weighty Laws, which oblige us towards our very enemies, who have contrived to destroy us. For they have made us most partially backwards to believe any thing that is good, and forward to catch at every thing that is spoken ill against them. They have made many of us fierce and implacable, malicious and revengeful; and have caused us to thirst after their blood, and to be in pain when they escape, and to measure our Religion and the soundness of our piety, by a reproachful, spiteful, and implacable usage and behaviour towards them. All which are tempers and practices, most contrary to those Laws, of forgiving injuries, of loving enemies, of praying for our persecutors, of returning good to all that have evilly entreated us, of meekness and patience, mercy and placableness towards the worst of men, yea, even the worst of enemies, which are so much the soul and spirit of that Religion, which we pretend to be so zealously concerned for.

And if we look into our Zeal for our several parties, how many other Laws shall we find to be daily transgressed, I will not say for the preservation, but even, where that is sufficiently secured, for the higher advancement and increase of them? For what rude and unmanly, envious and ill-natured reflections, are daily cast upon those persons, especially Ministers, and men of Note and Eminence, who differ from us? How forward are many among us, to undervalue and disparage, to condemn and affront them; to heap reproach and infamy upon them, thereby to render their persons ridiculous, and their pains useless? For are not several of us perpetually censoring and speaking evil of them, undervaluing all their real virtues, putting hard and uncandid interpretations upon all their actions, prying diligently and maliciously into all their defects, and aggravating all their faults or follies, raising continually, and spreading to their dispragement, uncharitable and envious, yea, oft-times false and slanderous reports? We envy and hate, reproach and censure, revile and slander, bite and devour one another: And all this fierceness and uncharitableness we use, for that meek, that charitable, gentle, quiet thing, Religion. For in its service we take our selves to be engaged, and so long we fansie that we have a liberty of saying or doing any thing.

Thus full of Sin and Disobedience, is this sanctified pretence. It is the cover for every offence, and the common shelter for all transgressions: for we boggle not at any Sin, so long as it tends to preserve us in the prosperous profession, of our endangered, or oppressed Religion.

But if men would consider calmly, and have patience to look beyond the surface and bare outsides of things, they would soon discern the vanity of this pretence, and how far it will be from excusing any such sinful and disobedient practices, as they seek to justify and warrant by it.

For as for true and substantial Religion, for protection whereof they would be thought to venture upon all these transgressions, it stands in no need of their help to preserve it in persecuting times, although they should use innocent and just means, not such as are sinful and disobedient. It would live then without their care, and whether they went

went about by any politick means to preserve it, or no. For Religion is not lost, when Religious men are persecuted; it doth not suffer, when they do who profess it, seeing it is not one jot impaired when men are buffeted and imprison'd, nay, bleed and die for it.

Indeed, as for the freedom of the outward means of Religion, (*viz.*) the publickness of preaching, the community of prayers, the unrestrained use of Sacraments, and the like; they are much straitned by persecutions, and we must expect to feel, either a great want, or at least a great difficulty in them, when Times are troublesome. A persecuting Government can in great measure deprive us of them, when, after our utmost use of all such means as are no ways undutiful or against any Law of Christ, we are not able longer to preserve them.

But as for the substantial part and main body of Religion it self, which consists in sound faith, and upright obedience, and which those outward means are appointed to beget in us; no state of Times need make them wanting. For they are within our selves, and depend altogether upon God's Grace and our own Free Wills; so that all the Powers of Earth and Hell, are never able to rob us of them. Could the violence of persecution have oppressed our Religion, it had been stifled in the birth. For it entred in a persecuting age, and yet it was not overborn by the pressure of its sufferings, but bravely overcame them. It begun, grew up, and conquer'd all the World, in the very heat of affliction and opposition. The more it was burdened, the more still it spread; and the more men sought to straiten it, the further was it enlarged; the common observation then being this, that the (*c*) unparalleled sufferings of its (*c*) Nec professors, were the true prolific cause of the vast increase of quicquam tamen, proficit exqui-

sitione quæque crudelitas vestra illecebra est magis Sectæ. Plures efficiuntur quoties metimur à vobis, semen est sanguis Christianorum. Tertul. Apol. c. 50.

And, indeed, what should hinder Religion from thriving in evil times? For the same Religious Duties, which are practised with more ease in a prosperous, are exercised also, but with greater honour, in an afflicted state of things. To believe, and do well; to be pious and pure, chaste and sober, just and charitable, meek and

gentle, quiet and peaceable, with all other instances of a substantial and acceptable Religion, are indifferent and undetermined to any turns of Providence. They may be shewn under fines and imprisonments, axes and halters; as well, and much more honourably, than in times of ease and softness.

Nay, some of its most eminent parts and noble instances, are not capable of being exercised at other times. For the duties of patience, and taking up the cross, of forgiving injuries, and doing good to enemies, of praying for them that persecute us, and spitefully use us, which are the most exalted strains, and glorious heights of our Religion, are such, for which a peaceable and prosperous, a favourable and flourishing age affords no famous opportunities. For we must be in a state of suffering evil, and labouring under a load of persecution, before we can sufficiently evidence, how readily, how magnanimously, how meekly, how charitably, and Christian-like we can undergo it.

So that as for Religion and Sufferings, they are at no such distance, but that they may very easily be made to meet; they bear no such mutual opposition, but that they may very well consist together; nay, I add farther, but that they may honour and ennable, and in many instances, enlarge and improve each other. And therefore Religion needs not to be preserved from sufferings, since it cannot only live in them, but is also much extended, heightned, and advanced by them.

But where Religion wants our help, and calls for our assistance, yet is it not possible for us to please God, or to secure it, by sinful means, but only by such, as are either virtuous, or at least innocent.

It is not possible for us, I say, to please God by sinful means, although we intend them for his own service. For what is there in God, that should be served by our sins? Is his love for any thing greater, than his hatred is for sin, so as the gratefulnes of that, should make this, which is otherwise most offensive, to be an acceptable service? Is any thing that we can offer to him so pleasing, as our obedience? Is he more delighted, when we follow our own counsel, than when we follow his; when we do our own, than when we do his pleasure; For all those Laws of the Gospel, and instances of obedience,

which

which under this pretension we transgress, are ways of God's own appointment ; they are a service of his own chusing, and fitted in all things according to his liking ; a Rule that he has thought most absolute to direct our actions, and most fit for us to walk by. If then we would express our concern for God, our venerable esteem of his wisdom, our acquiescence in his choice, our submission to his ordering, our acknowledgment of his Authority, and our cheerful compliance with his pleasure ; let us do it by a religious observance of these Rules, which are of his own prescribing. Let us honour him in his own way, by doing our duty, and practising such things as he has made expressions of honour, by making them instances of obedience. For disobedience can serve no interest of God, nothing that we can do being a more effectual reproach to all his Attributes, than to disobey him.

Nor is the use of evil and unlawful means, in any wise a fitter expression of our care for Religion. For what is there in Religion, that can be honoured and advanced by disobedience ? Is there any thing in it so sacred, as the Divine Law ; and dare any man call that his care of them, when he lays waste, and plainly rejects them ? It is gross impudence, for any man to pretend Piety, in the breach of Duty ; and to cry up Religion, whilst he is acting irreligiously ; he prides himself in the empty name, when it is clear to all that he has lost the thing ; for as for Piety it self, and true Religion, by transgressing and trampling upon the Divine Laws, he doth not further and defend, but impiously and irreligiously destroy it.

It is not Religion then, whatever men may vainly pretend, which makes them run into the breach of Laws, and contempt of Duty, least they should suffer in the profession of it. For God and Religion owe them no thanks for such a course, because he is not honoured, nor it strengthened and preserved, but ruined and destroyed by it.

But the true and real cause of such disobedience, whereof God and Religion are only the colour and false pretence, is plainly a great want of Religion, and of the love of God, and too great a love of the world, and of their own selves. Men are hurried away, by an unmortified love

of pleasures, honours, and temporal interests ; and they have not Religion enough, to restrain and over-rule them. For these it is, and not Religion, which sufferings and persecuting times take from them : And an ungovernable desire to preserve these, which makes them so violent, as that, at such times, no Laws of Religion can hold them. When men set at nought and disparage Governours, disobey Laws, disturb the Publick Peace, injure their fellow-subjects, and commit several other sinful acts and irreligious violations of the Laws of Christ, that they may keep off Persecution for the profession of the Christian Faith : They shew plainly, that they will follow Christ only in a thriving, but not in a suffering Religion. They will serve him no longer, than he sets them uppermost, and above their Brethren. For rather than suffer any loss, and fall into any dangers for their adherence to him, they will leave him and his Laws to look to themselves, and flatly disobey him. But when they do so, it is shameless hypocrisy to pretend, that all their transgressions and disobedience are still upon the Principle, and from the Power of Religion ; since it is not Religion, but a resolution to be uppermost ; not duty, but ambition, covetousness, sensuality, revenge or a nest of some other unmortified and reigning vices of like nature, which make them under pretence of a conscientious care for religious profession, to destroy all religious practice.

This one would think, is plain and evident to any man, who can have the patience to consider it ; that True Religion can never be the cause of sin, or make men irreligious and disobedient. That must not for shame be called mens Religion, but their Lust, which makes them wicked, and carries them on to transgress God's Laws, that are the chief and Sovereign part of his Religion, which, who so keeps, is a religious, as whosoever breaks them, is an ungodly and irreligious Man.

This, indeed, is clear Doctrine, and obvious to any common, if it be withal a free and considerate understanding. And it were scarce possible that any Men should think otherwise, had they not, either by accident, haste, or ill design, taken up an odd notion of Religion, altogether different from that which the Scriptures give, and which all considerately religious Men have of it.

For by Religion they mean only their adherence to the Doctrines and Opinions, but not to the Laws and Precepts of the Gospel. And when they talk of defending and maintaining of Religion, they intend not a defence of Laws, but of Notions; not a maintainance of the practice of Christian Precepts, but only of the profession of Christian Doctrines. They are of the Religion which Christ Doctrinally reveals, but not of that which he Authoritatively commands; and will know and believe what he pleases, but do what they please themselves. They are only for a Religion of Orthodox Tenets, but not of Upright Practice; and if thereby they can preserve Men safe in thinking, and professing well; they fancies that God will not be offended with their use of any means, though never so wicked and disobedient.

But this is a most gross mistake, and a most dangerous Notion of Religion, which is quite another thing than what this conceit doth represent it to be. For,

First, The prime part and matter of Religion, is the practick part, (viz.) the Laws and Precepts, the Promises and Threatnings of the Gospel. And agreeably thereto, the * prime busines of all Religious Men, is an obedient * *Nostra* practice and performance of them, or a vertuous discharge *autem* of Duty and a Holy Life. This is that Religion whereby *populo* all of us must stand or fall, and that great condition, *quid horum* which as I have shewn, we must for ever live or die by. *poteſt ob-* When Christ comes to Judgment, says S. Paul, *jici, cuius* he will render to every Man according to his deeds, Rom. 2. 6. And *omnis Re-* in that prospect of the last Judgment, which S. John tells *ligio eſt* us God vouchsafed him, *sine ſcеле-* Men were judged every one ac- *re, & ſine* cording to their works, Rev. 20. 13. This Religion of O- *macula vi-* bedience and a good Life, is that which the Gospel is full *vere?* of, wherein every Chapter, nay, almost every verse of it *Last. de-* instructs us, and some way or other directs, exhorts, en- *just. l. 5.* courages and excites to. And therefore, as ever we would *c. 9.* pass for Religious Men in the Scripture Notion, we must be careful to live in all Piety towards God, by complying readily with all his Laws, depending upon his Providence, and resigning our selves up to his pleasure, in all purity and soberness, being free from all lust and intemperance, all sinful pleasures, and covetous practices; in all justice and charitableness, doing right, and keeping peace, and shewing mercy and kindness towards all Men. This, says S. James,

will pass for pure and undefiled Religion before God and the Father at the last day, if in such instances as these, we have expressed, not our Opinions, but our Obedience, by visiting the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and by keeping our selves unspotted from all filthiness and Disobedience of the world. But if any man pretends to be religious, who is destitute of this Obedience, that Man's Religion is vain, Jam. 1. 26, 27.

Secondly, Another great part and object of Religion, is the *Doctrines* of the *Gospel*. And agreeably, another act or instance of *Religious Service*, is *Faith*, or *Orthodox Belief*. And this is intended by God himself, as a means to produce the former; Faith being the great instrument in working out our Obedience. For this is that Victory, says St. John, which makes us conquerors, and overcometh the World, even our Faith, 1 John 5. 4. An obedient practice, is the Great thing that a righteous faith aims at; it is its end and perfection, that which consummates and compleats it. It being, as St. James assures us, by works which faith (d) co-operates and concurs to, that faith is made perfect, Jam. 2. 22. And this all the points of our Christian Faith are most admirably fitted to effect in us. For in that epitome and compendious account of them, whereinto 'tis like they were contracted by the Apostles, however by *Apostolical Men*, and which is usually called the *Apostles Creed*, there is not any one purely speculative Article, or point of idle notion, and mere belief: But every one is influential upon our practice, and helps on our obedience; as any man, of competent skill and abilities, may discern by running over the particulars.

These two then, (*viz.*) *Knowledge* and *Practice*, or *Faith* and *Obedience*, take in the Compass, and integrate the nature of our *Religion*. Obedience is the chief thing, and first in God's design; and Faith or Knowledge is the great means which God has prescribed us whereby to compass and effect it. So that *Religion* in that sense, wherein the *Scriptures* use, and God at the last day, will reward it, is the same as *obedience to the Gospel* proceeding from a belief of it, or in St. Paul's phrase, an *Obedient Faith*, or a *Faith which worketh by Love*, Gal. 5. 6.

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And now let any man, who considers this, bethink himself, and tell me, whether the *transgression* of God's *Laws* can ever be called *Religion* in the *Scripture-sense*; or whether it be possible for men to evidence themselves to be *Religious*, by their *disobedience*. For the making us obedient to God's *Laws*, is the great design, and *ruling* part of all true and acceptable Religion; and the belief and profession of God's *Truth*, is an exercise and instance of it, that avails us only so far, as it concurs to, and effects this Religion of Obedience. So that Religion is not preserved, but lost by breach of Duty; it is never strengthened, by *disobedient* and *sinful* means, but is always waited and destroyed by them.

Let no man therefore ever dare to make Religion a cover for unlawful Lusts; or dream of protecting it from sufferings and persecutions this way. For if they are scandalized at the Cross, that is, if they fall off from *religious* and *obedient* walking into *irreligious transgressions*, to prevent those crosses which in persecuting times are annexed to a *religious practice* and *profession*; they are scandalized, or (e) offended in him. The Cross is to (e) Matt. them a (f) stumbling-block, and a rock of offence, it makes 11. 6. them trip, and turn out of their duty; because they (f) 1 Pet. will disown their Lord, and break all his Laws, rather 2. 8. Gal. than undergo it. And this is a most provoking sin, and 5. 11. subjects men to a most dreadful punishment. For as God will abundantly recompence any losses, which befall us through the exercise of an *obedient Religion*, and a pious conscience; so will he also inflict such torments, as infinitely surpass all those light and present advantages, which we may at any time promise our selves from our *politick disobedience*. For whosoever, by *sinful means*, will seek, in perilous and persecuting times, (such as those were) to save his life in this world, he shall certainly lose it for ever in the next world: But whosoever shall lay down his life for Christ's sake (in taking up that ctois which is laid upon a Christian profession, and a Christian practice) that same man shall save and encrease it eternally, Luke 9. 23, 24. So that no dangers in obedience, can ever render it secure for any man to disobey. But that which God indispensably exacts of us in perilous cases is this. Fear not them which kill the body, but, after that is done, have nothing more

more to fright you with, being utterly *unable to kill*, or so much as touch the Soul; but fear him, who exacts Obedience of you even at such times, as your bodies are like to perish for it; for he, after he hath killed the body, which is all that they can do, is able eternally to destroy both Body and Soul in Hell, Matt. 10. 28.

No dangers then can make Obedience cease to be our Duty; nor any sufferings make it cease to be our Interest: So that neither Religion, nor Prudence, will ever allow of sinful means; but every Religious, yea, every Wise Man, must take up the Cross, and patiently bear any sufferings that come upon him for Religion, rather than use any breach of Duty, or unlawful ways, either to prevent, or remove it.

And this the Saints of God and Religious Men always did. For no dangers or hazards, no pains or sufferings in Obedience, could never draw them to seek for shelter by disobeying. David was tryed with hazards and persecutions of all sorts, but neither sense of present, nor fears of future evils, could ever chase him from his Duty, or make him seek relief from iniquity and sin. He could not be forced upon it by the most apparent dangers, even of the most affecting loss, the loss of life it self. The wicked, saith he, have laid a Snare for me, yet I erred not from thy Precepts. My Soul is continually in my hand, ready to be snatched out of it, yet do I not forget thy Law, Psal. 119. 109, 110. They had almost consumed me upon Earth, but I forsook not thy Commandments, ver. 87. and many now still are my persecutors and enemies, yet do I not decline from thy Testimonies, ver. 157.

The Holy Apostles of our Saviour conflicted with more difficulties and distress, persecutions, and sufferings for the Religion and Obedience of their Lord, than any Men, I think, ever did, or it may be ever will do. I think, says S. Paul, that God hath set forth us Apostles last, as it were Men appointed to the bloodiest, which is usually the last scene of all, even to death it self. For we are exposed to slaughter, as Men were in the tragical sports of that time, upon a publick Theatre, being made a spectacle unto the World, and to Angels, and to Men. From the first entrance in our Office even to this present hour, we both hunger, and thirst, and are naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place, being made

as the very filth of the world, and the off-scouring of all things, from the first, to this day, 1 Cor. 4. 9, 11, 13.

If any straits could authorize an evil action, or if any pressures could justifie a disobedient escape, sure these would. But they knew too well the nature of their Religion, ever to dream of a liberty to sin that they might avoid persecution, and they were too resolutely addicted to it, ever to attempt it. For neither the extremity of their sufferings, nor the desperateness of their danger, could ever make them transgress their Duty, or go beyond the Laws of their Religion, to lessen or prevent them. But they obeyed bravely and entirely, even in the highest strains, even in the most ungrateful instances, even in those matters wherein, if any where, the malice and violence of the enemies, would provoke, or rather force them to disobey. For in the midst of all their pressures, says St. Paul, *being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer it; being defamed, we do nothing worse than entreat and pray for our defamers,* 1 Cor. 4. 12, 13. *In patience, in afflictions, in necessities, in distresses, in stripes, in imprisonments, in popular tumults, in manual labours, in all these things, and in the throng and distraction of all our sorrows, we approve our selves as the true, obedient Servants, and faithful Ministers of God;* shewing that, not by any selfish, disobedient, politick shifts, but by pureness of conversation, *by long-suffering, by kindness, even to our very enemies;* in a word, *by the most excellent of all gifts, and the epitome of all Duty, Charity or love unfeigned,* 2 Cor. 6. 3, 4, 5.

Religion then can never give protection to any Disobedience, nor our concern and zeal for God, be pleaded with any shew of modesty or reason, in vindication of our Transgressions of any of his Laws or Precepts. For Religion needs no defence from times of suffering; it can live in them, it is improved by them, nay, some of its most glorious parts and eminent instances are never shewn in any lustre, but when we fall under them. And where it ought to be defended, the breach of Laws is in no wise a fit instrument for its advancement and protection. For God cannot be honoured, nor Religion advanced by Disobedience. Obedience is so essential and super-eminent a part of its Nature, and so preferable to any idle profession or ineffective belief; that to transgress Christian Laws, for the

the maintenance of an undisturbed liberty in professing Christian opinions, were not to strengthen and preserve Religion, but dangerously to wound, if not wholly to destroy it. This disobedience to Christian Laws, that we may avoid suffering for the profession of Christian Doctrines, is such, as the very temper of the Gospel, which is made up in great part of passive Precepts and a suffering Religion, plainly contradicts ; such as its Laws and Precepts strictly forbid ; such as Christ our Lord and Judge will certainly and most severely punish, and such as the most persecuted religious men, could never be provoked or forced into, either by the greatness of their fears, or by the violence of their pains, although the most exquisite that could be invented, by the most searching wits, and keenest malice in the world.

So that whosoever men sin to avoid suffering, and disobey the Laws of Religion to preserve the profession of it from persecution ; it is not Religion, but their Lusts ; not their love of God, but their love of their own selves which makes them disobedient. Religion will upon no accounts justifie their transgressions, but utterly condemn them : And unless their repentance prevents it, God at the last Day will endlessly punish, and avenge for them.

But as for Religion, in that narrow sense wherein some understand it, i. e. the use of religious Ordinances, and the profession and belief of religious Opinions ; if Men would shew their care and concern to preserve the free liberty and unpersecuted use of that, so as both God and all good Men should honour and commend them ; let them shew it in a pious and discreet management. Which they will justly be thought to do, if they keep within their own sphere, and use even there no sinful and disobedient means, and are zealous in the first place for the practice and preservation of religious Laws, and next to that for religious Ordinances and Opinions.

1. In shewing their care to preserve the free liberty and unpersecuted use of religious Ordinances and Professions, they must act within their own sphere. We private Christians must not prescribe methods of preserving it to publick Magistrates, or censure their proceedings, and speak irreverently of their persons and administrations, when they determine otherwise than we had thought fitting.

fitting. We must not, without consent and approbation of Authority, combine in Bodies, and associate in solemn Leagues, Bonds, and Covenants, to be aiding and assisting to each other, with our Persons, Arms, and Purses, to protect it against all Opposers. For these are such things, as are no part of our business; but God has hedged them in, and entrusted them in other hands. He has delegated that power to Kings and Governours, to take care of the common good, and to judge of publick expedients. He has put the sword into the Magistrate's hands, and has authorized him, and him only, to have power of life and death, and to decree and establish peace and war. And if any Man, without his order, shall take the Sword, and use it against his Brother; he may read his Sentence, which is writ in plain words already, *They that take the sword, as every Man doth when Authority doth not allow, or reach it out to him, shall perish by the sword,* Matt. 26. 51.

These means then, and any other which God has appropriated to the care, and entrusted in the hands of other Men, can be no lawful expressions of our care, but an unlawful intruding into another's office; a sinful use (g) Ἐμ-
of what is put out of ours, and committed to another's χειρὶ τὴν τὰς management. Our exercise and use of them, is a proud δεῖ οὐδενα-
usurpation, an unpeaceable encroachment, a busie meddling in θεωρίᾳ, καὶ other Men's Offices and Affairs, against the plain Precept, τοῖς Χριστοῖς studying to be quiet, and to do our own business, 1 Thess. 4. 11.

But the endeavours which we are to use, and the means whereby we must try to secure to our selves, an unpersecuted freedom in religious Ordinances and Professions, must be such, as are within the sphere of private Men. We must be upright and exemplary in the practice of it our selves, and press a like exemplariness in the practice of it upon others. By our humble, modest, peaceable and submissive carriage, we must convince such as are in power, that it deserves protection; and by our affectionate, fervent, and importunate (g) prayers to God, we must endeavour to have it put into their hearts to protect and preserve it. We must plead its Cause, and represent that truth and goodness which may recommend it; and try to wipe off the aspersions, and rectifie the mistakes of such, as plead against it, or think

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think hardly of it. These, and such like means, are the laudable service in this Case, and the proper business of private Christians. And whilst their care is contained within this compass, and they act thus within their own sphere, it is excellent and praise-worthy; they seek to preserve Religion, and their seeking to do it in this way, is itself very pious and religious.

2. In shewing their care to preserve the free and unpersecuted profession of Religion, they must exercise such only of those actions within their own sphere, as are lawful and innocent, but by no means endeavour to maintain it by such, as are sinful and disobedient. They must not defend it by lies and forgeries, by wrath and bitterness, by fierceness and revenge, by slandering and reviling of their Opposers. They must so defend Religion, as not to disobey it; because that is not defending, but betraying it. A free profession is no further desirable, than it tends to an upright practice. So that to disobey for it, is to lose all that wherefore we endeavour for it. Truth must never be bought with the loss of innocence; nor must we ever commit any one sinful action, to promote a freedom of orthodox and true profession.

3. In evidencing their care in preserving the free and unpersecuted profession of Religion, after having taken care of such points of Faith, as are supposed in all Worship of God by Jesus Christ, and Christian Practice, they must be zealous in the first place for the practice and preservation of religious Laws, and next to that for religious Ordinances, and Opinions. S. Paul directs us to the great Object and end of all religious zeal, when he tells us, that Christ came into the world to purchase to himself a peculiar people, zealous of good WORKS, Tit. 2. 14. Nothing in the World is a more warrantable matter of a Man's zeal, than God's Laws, and Men's Obedience. For the Laws of Christ's Gospel, are that part which he looks mainly at, and which he has made the measure of life or death, the Rule of our eternal absolution or condemnation. And as he accounts of them, so should we too. And having first secured that Belief in God and Jesus Christ; without which we should neither worship nor serve them; our zeal for these Gospel Laws must be more warm, and our care more watchful, than for any other thing. This I will, says St. Paul to Titus, that thou affirm constantly,

That

That they which have believed in God may be CAREFUL to maintain GOOD WORKS; these things are good, and profitable unto Men. Tit. 3. 8. So that the practice of religious Laws must be the great point, wherein we are to be zealous and careful in the first place.

Next to which, we must take care of those *opinions*, which have a great influence upon, and are the great productive instruments of all obedient practice; such as are all opinions, which are either motives or inducements, helps or encouragements to Obedience. In which sort of opinions, our Religion abounds, there being, as I said, no *idle Article* in the Christian Creed, but such *Doctrines* and *Declarations*, concerning *God*, and *Christ*, and our *selves*, and the *other world*, as are either *absolutely necessary*, or *very helpful to a holy life*. All which, according to their several proportions in promoting Piety and Obedience to God's Laws, we are to be *zealously concerned* for in the next place, as we are for that pious Obedience, which is wrought by them, in the first.

But when we have shewn our good affection to substantial Piety and Religion, by a just zeal for Obedience, and plainly practical Opinions, then may it be very fit for us to shew our zeal, for other true *Doctrines* and *Professions* likewise. For it is a great honour to God, and an ornament to Religion, that we have it pure and sincere, free from all things that are liable to just exception, and from all mixture of error and falsehood. And it is also a great happiness to Men, to have orthodox apprehensions in Religion, and to embrace nothing for Gospel truths, but what God has thereby declared to them. But it is a further happiness still, and such whereof Men are the most sensible, to be free from the imperious imposition and tyranny of error; so as neither to be forced upon the impossible belief of that, which in our own Minds we clearly see is false, and therefore cannot believe; nor upon the feigned and hypocritical profession of believing a thing, when really we do not believe it; one of which two is Men's unhappiness, when their professed Religion falls under persecution. Now both these, are severe and rigorous impositions. For the first is utterly impossible to any, so long as it continues a free and impartial head; as the latter is to any, whilst it remains an honest and obedient heart. So that all Men have very great reason, so far as they

can by all innocent and honest ways, to be zealous against them, and to use all the lawful care and caution that possibly they can, to avoid so powerful a motive, as a sharp persecution is, to tempt them to a thing so unreasonable, as is the first, and so wicked and sinful, as is the latter.

So long then, as Men will moderate their zeal for the unpersecuted use of religious Ordinances, and profession of religious Opinions with this discretion, let them be zealous and concerned for it in God's Name. For it is their Duty so to be; and God will reward, and all good Men will commend them for it. If they take care, that their zeal transport them not beyond their own sphere, that it carry them not against their Duty, and that (seeing the necessary points of Faith already fixed) it be concerned in the first place for Laws and practical Opinions; they may allow it after that, to spend it self upon other Points, which have more of speculative truth, but less of practice. This zeal now is excellent, 'tis truly pious, 'tis religious.

But if they have a zeal without Obedience; if for preventing of persecution in the professing of true opinions, they run upon sinful means and undutiful Transgressions; their zeal is ungodly, and all their pretended care of Religion is plainly irreligious. For Religion is not beholding to them, but their own lusts; it condemns their disobedient actions, and unless their timely Repentance prevent it, God will most severely punish them. So that as for this first pretence for a partial Obedience, viz. our allowing ourselves in the Transgression of some Laws, whilst we obey in others, because those Transgressions wherein we indulge ourselves are necessary to keep off persecution for the sake of Religion; it is a vain, deceitful ground, and will certainly fail any Man, who relies upon it.

C H A P. VII.

Of the two remaining pretences for a partial Obedience.

*A*nother pretence, whereby men justify to their own thoughts the allowed transgressions of several Laws whilst they obey in others, is the serving of their necessities; because those instances of disobedience, wherein they indulge themselves, are only such sinful arts, compliances and services, as are necessary to relieve their want and indigence.

They are in great straits, and deep poverty; and since God has not provided conveniences, nor it may be necessities for them; they think that they may be allowed to be their own Guardians, and to use any means within their own compass, whereby they can make provision for their own selves. For they are born with the same appetites and indigences as other men, and some way or other they must satisfy and supply them. And this they cannot do, at least in any comfortable degree, if in all things they must religiously obey, and keep themselves intirely innocent. They must lye and over-reach, cheat and cozen, if not pilfer and steal to get maintenance. And they must also use wicked arts, and sinful compliances, to get favour. For not having of their own, wherewith to relieve the wants, to comfort the weaknesses and to appease the Cravings of their natures, they must be beholden and cannot help it, to the good will and kind charity of others. And other men are proud and humorous, acted by self-will and vicious interests; and will therefore reach out no help to them, unless they please them, and do any or all such things, as they would have them do. They must lye and dissemble, fawn and flatter, drink and swear, bear them company in their sins, and serve their vicious interests, and boggle at no sort of sinful arts, and disobedient compliances; or else they are not for their turn, nor must expect to feel any effects of their kindness.

This is the hard fate, and the great temptation, of a poor and indigent condition. And if in this hard case, they have recourse to the fraud and over-reaching cunning of their own wits, or purchase kindness and relief at the cost of their *Vertue* and *Obedience*; they hope that God will excuse it. Their necessity they think will bear them out, so long as all their transgressions are only to provide for themselves, and for the competent satisfaction of their own appetites, where his Providence has left them unprovided.

This is the wicked arguing, and disobedient practice of men of a soft and delicate Religion. They will obey God in any thing, where they must not disoblige their Appetites; but no further than they will suffer them. They are Servants of their own *Bellies* in the first place, and God shall have just so much, but no more, than they can spare. For they will live easily, and want for nothing in *this World*, as well as be for ever happy in the *next*: And if God will allow them both these, then they are for him; but not otherwise: For they will not endure to serve a man of sorrows, to follow Christ in wants, to be subjects to that Sovereign who has no temporal rewards, wherewith even in *this life* to recompence their service. They will serve God just so long, as he will suffer them to serve themselves and their own Appetites; but if his service doth not provide them all convenient supplies, or crosses the satisfaction of these, they beg of him that he would excuse them. In other things they will serve him, if that will content him; but here charity must begin at home, and if they disobey, he must give them a dispensation.

But God will not endure to be thus undervalued, and served in the second place. He can in no wise bear, to have the world, and our fleshly appetites set above him; to see them served, and himself slighted; because by this means we do not honour, but debate; not serve, but renounce him. For he can be no faithful servant of God who loves any thing better than his Master; nor is he truly united unto Christ, who can be drawn to disobey him by any temptation. If we love any thing in the World then, though never so dear to us, better than him, we are utterly unworthy of him, and must never hope to be the better by him. For he that loveth father

or mother, son, or daughter, more than me, saith he, is not worthy of me, Matt. 10. 37. Nay, he that hateth not these, and all things else, when they stand in competition with my service ; that hateth not, I say, not barely his worldly goods, and rich neighbours, but even his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also; he cannot be my disciple, Luke 14. 26.

If any cravings of our own flesh then cannot be satisfied without obedience, we must not seek to pleasure, but subdue ; nor endeavour to fulfil, but to deny them. And if any wants or losses are brought so close to us, that we cannot avoid them without breach of duty ; they are the burden of the Cross imposed upon us, and, unless we would cast off all relation to Christ, we must not shun them. For whosoever doth not bear his Cross, says our Saviour, when God's Providence lays it upon his shoulders, and come after me, even then when he must suffer under it ; he cannot be my disciple, Luke 14. 27.

This God peremptorily and indispensibly exacts of us ; and there is all the reason in the World why he should. For he will infinitely recompence in the next World, either the want, or loss of all those things, which, for his sake, we are content to be without in this. Heaven and eternal life, will be an abundant, and incomparably surpassing compensation ; all the wants and sufferings of this present time, being, as S. Paul says, utterly unworthy to be compared with that Glory, which shall then be revealed in us, Rom. 8. 18.

Let no man therefore disobey God's Laws for the love of the World, for the supplying of his wants, and the satisfaction of his appetites ; and yet for all that persuade himself, that God will own him, and connive at his disobedience. For in doing so, he plainly renounces God, and sets the World above him ; he makes his Duty truckle to his Interest ; he flings obedience, and submits to a temptation. He does the work of sin, for the interest which tempts to it ; and that will certainly bring upon him that death, which God has established for the wages of it.

Thirdly, A third pretence, whereby men justify to their own Souls, the indulged transgression of several Laws, whilst they obey in others ; is, because those trans-

gressions wherein they allow themselves are only such, as are sins of temper and complexion, age, or way of life.

Sometimes mens place and way of life, is a continual temptation to some particular sin; and if they may but have leave to indulge that, they will abandon every other. The Courtier takes himself obliged by the fashion of his place, to *lyes* and *dissimulation*, *ostentation* and *vanity*, to *sinful compliances*, and *faithless engagements*, to promise all, but to perform nothing. The Merchant in pursuit of his gain, serves the end of his trade, by *fraud* and *dishonesty*: He accounts it a piece of his *Art*, to *over-reach*, to *defraud customs*, to *vend false wares*, and set *exacting prices*. The Lawyer thinks it a part of his *profession*, to *encourage strife*, and *foment differences*; and the *malice* and *revenge*, the *wrath* and *bitterness*, the *slanders* and *evil-speakings*, the *strife* and *contentions*, which are other mens sins, are his *livelyhood*. These sins, being ever before them, are always a snare to them, for they are continually importuned by them, and it must be a toilsome pain, and an uninterrupted watchfulness, which can preserve them, from being either won, or wearied into the commission of them. And since obedience in these instances, is a thing which they can so very hardly spare, they hope that God in mercy will not exact it; but will graciously accept them upon their service in other particulars, although here they continue to disobey him.

Other sins men are invited and importunately tempted to, by their *age* and *condition*, their *particular temper*, and *complexion*. *Lust* and *rashness* are the vices of *Youth*, as *craft* and *covetousness* are of the *gray Hairs*. Some sins are rooted in mens very *natures*; for some are naturally inclined to be *passionate* and *hasty*, some to be *peevish*, and others to be *malicious* and *revengeful*. The *temper* of their *bodies*, hurries on some to *lust* and *intemperance*, some to *turbulency* and *fierceness*, and others to *slavish fears* and *sinful compliances*. Nay, a *sharp* and *long affliction* will sometimes embitter even a *good nature*, and make it *habitually sowre* and *fretful*, *peevish* and *morde*. So that mens very *natural temper*, their *age*, and *condition*, prove many times an uninterrupted sollicitation to *some sin or other*, and they always fall, by being always under the power of their temptation.

Now when Men find that some Sins have got thus near to them, and have taken such deep Root in their way of Life, nay, in their *very Nature*, since they will not be at the pains to reform and amend, they expect that God should be so gracious, as to dispense with them. As for all the Instances of this kind, he must abate them, seeing they will not perform them; and his pardoning Goodness must supply all the Defects of their Sloath. For God and they must still be agreed, and therefore because they cannot well abandon some of their Darling Lusts, and Bosom Sins for his sake, the Compliance must fall on his Side, and he must desert and cancel all those severe, and grating Laws to serve and pleasure them. And him they will do any thing else for, which doth not contradict their beloved Sin, and never displease him, but when they cannot otherwise fulfil and pleasure it.

Thus, for instance, the Covetous Man will obey in keeping back from Drunkenness and Whoredom, from Ambition and Profuseness, and all other Sins which are expensive: But as for those other Duties, of suffering Loss our selves, rather than Defrauding and Over-reaching others, of a contented Mind, and contempt of the World, of Alms and Beneficence, and all the chargeable Expressions of an active Love, and an operative Charity: Here he stands upon his Points, and chuses to dispute rather than to perform; to article rather than to obey.

The peevish and angry Man, will readily keep the Commands of Justice, especially in all its great Instances, and of Temperance; he will neither spoil his Neighbours Goods, nor wrong his Bed, nor pamper and defile his own Body; and will do anything, which either ministers to his reigning Lust, or which doth not contradict and make against it. But then as for the Commands of meekness and patience, of long-suffering and forgiveness, of speaking well, and doing good to enemies, of passing over provocations and peaceableness, and all other Instances of pardoning and forgetting injuries; in these God must excuse him, for his dear Lust opposes them, and he can not, he will not serve him in the practice of them.

Some, who are of a tractable and submissive, of a soft and governable temper, will observe readily all those Duties, which their constitution has made easie, and which their natural Genius inclines them to. They will be

constant performers of all the cheap, because agreeable Duties of Submission to Governours, and Obedience to publick Constitutions, of uniformity in Worship, of honour and observance of the Laws and Establishments, and of all things belonging to the Churches Unity and outward Peace. But as for the severities of an inward and hearty Religion, in mortification and self-denial, in paring off all sinful Lusts, and exorbitant Desires, in Patience, and taking up the Cross, and in all other hard Instances of Duty and a holy Life: Here they withdraw their Service, because they must contradict their Natures, and go against their ease; and set themselves, not to obey these Laws, but to evacuate or evade them.

Whereas others, who are of a Temper more severe, but withal of a querulous and restless, a busie, and ungovernable Spirit, will keep off from Atheism and Prophaneness, from Idolatry and Witchcraft, and other heinous Impieties; from Drunkenness and Revellings; from Fornication and Adultery; from Oppression, and Fraud, and other alike gross and notorious Instances of Injustice and Immorality. For all these, their strict Temper can easily avoid; they have no great Temptation to them, and are therefore able without much Pains to abstain from them. But then as for those other Sins, which agree with the bent and Inclination of their busie and ungovernable Humour; they will still indulge themselves in the practice of them, for all they are of an equal Guilt, although indeed of a more spiritual and refined Nature. For they will strive to weary Laws, to vilifie and contemn, to undervalue and disparage Governours; they will permit themselves, to be overswayed, by Spite and Malice, by Wrath and Bitterness, by Envy and Emulation, by Strife and Sidings; to be drawn aside into Censoriousness, and evil-speakings, into the raising and spreading of uncharitable, and envious, yea, false, and slanderous Reports; they will be forward to magnifie themselves, to publish their own Praise, and to boast of their own Actions and Attainments; but withal to detract and lessen, to shame and disparage others.

Thus will even these Men, who make the fairest appearance, of abominating all impious and ungodly, all immoral and debauched Actions, halt still in their Obedience, and think to please God, not by a perfect and entire, but a partial and a maimed Service. For their Con-

version goes but half way ; not from Sin to Righteousness, but from some sorts of Sin to some others. All the Alteration, that their Religion has wrought in them, is not a forsaking of Sin, but an exchange of it, a Turn from what is more easily left, to a more liberal Practice of that which they find it hard to part with ; a Remove from grosser, and more scandalously fleshly Sins, to other more spiritual and refined, but still as deadly and damnable Transgressions.

And thus, by all these Instances it appears, that when Men have got some Sins which are close and pleasing, such as their Temper and Complexion, their Age, or Condition, or way of Life, has endear'd to them so far, as that even for God's sake they will not part with them ; their Recourse is pretently to some more cheap and easie Instances of Obedience, that they may atone for them. And the same might be shewn in all other Instances of a partial, and a maimed Service. In all things, they will obey God no further, than their beloved Sins will suffer them ; but as they yield to the Law in other things, so must the Law yield to them in these : For neither God nor their Sin shall rule alone, but the Service shall be shared between them, and both shall enjoy a divided Empire.

But this is a most damnably delusive, and a desperately false Pretence. For whatsoever fond Conceits, Men who love, and are resolved not to let go their Sins, may please themselves withal ; yet God, when he comes to judge us, will accept of nothing less than an entire Obedience. All his Laws are established under the Pains of Death, and at that Day he will exact all that he has required, whatever our Concern be in it. For he comes not then, as a corrupted party, to judge for us, to make his own Laws bend and bow to serve our Interests, and to cancel and disanul all such among them, as make against us. But, he comes, as an upright and even Judge, to execute all his Laws, but not to destroy any of them : He comes to inflict what his Gospel threatens, and his Sentence will then be what it says, not what we can bear. So that if we have wilfully disobeyed, and have not repented, whether in one Instance or in many ; we must undergo the Punishment of our Disobedience. For God is a Friend to no Vice, neither one nor other, but he always forbids, and he will most severely punish every one.

And as for all these Pretences, whether that of our *Age*, or our *way of Life*, or of our very *natural Temper* and *Inclination* it self; there will be no *shelter* or *excuse* in any of them, to bear us out in *any*.

There is no Protection to any Sin, from our *Age*; for no young Man may pursue *lusts* because they are *youthful*, but is bound to *fly* and avoid them, as those things which war against, and would destroy his *Soul*, 2 Tim. 2. 22. God's Laws make no *distinction*, of young or old, but the *same Duties* are the Rule for both their *Practi-cess*; and the *same Rewards* or *Punishments* will be re-turned indifferently to them both, upon their *Obedience* or *Transgressions*.

There is no justifiable Plea for any Sin, from our *way of Life*; for a constant (a) *Practice* or *Trade* of *Sin*, as S. John says, can be no Man's Employment, but his who is born of the Devil, and must inherit under him, 1 John 3. 8. But the *way of Life*, whereunto God calls us, is a *way of Piety* and *Obedience*. He has given us his own *Laws*, for the *way* which we are to walk in; and in that alone it is that we can escape *Death*, and obtain *Salvation*.

Nay, so far is any thing in the World from sheltering us under the Service of any one Sin, that even that, which may have the highest Pretence to it of all things else whatsoever, viz. our very *natural Temper* and *Inclina-tion*, is no *excuse* to us, if it makes us continue in any Disobedience. If any thing in the World could be a just Defence for the practice of any Sin, surely this must. For our Nature is not of our chusing; and therefore its effects ought least of all to be charged on us seeing they least of all proceed from us, but are in great degrees determined to our Hands, before we have any Power, either to *will*, or to *refuse* them. But such is the *purity* and *strictness* of Christ's *Gospel*, that it indis-pensibly requires us to conquer Sin, not only where it makes no *opposition*, but even where it has the *greatest Strength*, and the *highest Force* of all. For if our very Nature draw us on to *disobey*, it *enjoyns* us under all our *Hopes of Heaven*, not to *submit* to it but to (b) *strive* against it so long, till we *vanquish* and *subdue* it. For if we would be judged to be Christ's *Disciples* at the last Day, we must *deny our selves*, Matth. 16, 24. As we hope to *live*, we must not perform and fulfil, but kill and

(a) ὁ πατ.
σὺν αὐτα-
γίᾳ.

(b) Psal.

18.22,23.

and (c) mortifie those deeds, whereto we are hurried on by (c) Col. the temper of our Bodies, Rom. 8. 13. If a lust so dear 3. 5. to thee, as thy right eye offend thee, or (d) cause thee to offend thee, pluck it out, says our Saviour, and cast it from thee: or if one so useful to thee, as thy right hand, cut it off likewise, and cast it from thee: and that for no less reason than this, Because it is more profitable for thee, that one of thy members should in this manner perish, than that thy whole body should be cast for ever into Hell fire, Mat 5. 29, 30.

Thus vain and helpless are all these excuses and pretensions, under which men endeavour to shelter themselves in the indulged transgression of some Laws, whilst they obey in others. For whether their pretence be, the saving of their Religion from times of persecution, or the serving of their necessities in times of want, or the satisfying of their own rational temper and inclination; we see that none of them can justifie their indulged allowance of any one sin, nor serve any other turn, than to delude them to their own destruction.

But whosoever would obey to his own salvation, must obey in every instance, and continue wilfully to transgress in none. He must never hope to please God, by performing nothing but what he lists himself. No, every particular Law of God, as we saw above, is bound upon us by all our hopes of Heaven, and under the pains of Hell; so that we cannot transgress in any, and yet be safe; but that obedience which can secure us, is nothing less than performing in every instance.

For this third sort of Integrity, viz. that of the Object, or performing all and every of those Laws which God has given us, both is, and always was, indispensibly required to life and pardon since the world began.

Thee have I seen righteous before me, said God to Noah, because Noah did according to ALL that the Lord commanded him, Gen. 7. 1, 5. And in the repetition of the ten commandments, Deut. 5. O that they would fear me, says God to the Jews, and keep (e) all my commandments, always, that it might be well with them for ever, 23. 21, 22. ver. 29. It is nothing less than our obeying in all, which God declares that he will accept; and upon nothing less than their performing all, that good men have hoped to be accepted. Then shall I not be ashamed, saith the

(f) Psal. the Psalmist, when I have respect unto (f) all thy Commandments, Psal. 119. 6, 7. And those Persons to whom the & Psal. 18. Lord doth good, and shews Kindness, are only the upright 22, 23, 24. in Heart. But as for them, who, although they are right as to the main, do yet turn aside in some things to their crooked ways, he will lead them forth with the Workers of iniquity, Psal. 125. 4, 5.

And as this Integrity in doing the whole will of God, was required of Noah before the Law, and of the Jews under it; so is it likewise exacted every whit as strictly of us Christians, under the Gospel. For the Obedience of that Covenant, whereunto Christ Commissions his Apostles to baptize Converts, is nothing below an intire Obedience. Go, says he, and baptize all Nations, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, Matth. 28. 19, 20. And this is no more, than what he himself had preached before, in his own Sermon upon the Mount. For of the Moral Law and the Prophets, (which he came to confirm and establish) and also of his own Law, (which he came then to publish and proclaim) he affirms plainly, that the Observance of it in every particular, is necessary to the Attainment of God's Favour and eternal Life. He that breaks the very least of these Commandments, shall be called least (or shall be least, or none at all, which is the Sense of the Hebrew Phrase) in the kingdom of Heaven, Matt. 5. 17, 18, 19.

And agreeably to this Pattern, and this Commission, the Apostles themselves, when they came afterwards to discharge their Office, did most strictly require it, and most severely threaten all those in whom it was wanting. Let us cleanse our selves, says S. Paul, from all filthiness of Flesh and Spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of the Lord, as we hope to attain those good things which he has promised, 2 Cor. 7. 1. There is no Remedy, but we must either do this or die. For the wrath of God is revealed from Heaven, against, not only some, but all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, Rom. 1. 18. The Curse takes place, upon the Transgression in any instance. For the threatening is not barely to some one or to some few Laws; but to the whole Code which comprehends them all: So that if we transgress any one the Covenant is broken, and the Penalty takes place. For whosoever shall keep the whole Law besides, saith S. James, and yet offend in one Point,

that

that subjects him to all the evil, and he is guilty of, or obnoxious to that punishment, which is appointed for the wages of one and *all*, Jam 2. 10.

As for this *integrity* of the object therefore, or mens obedience to the *whole will* of God; we see that in all times and ages, it was necessary unto life, and indispensibly required to salvation. For neither the Sons of the Patriarchs, nor the Subjects of Moses, nor the Servants of Christ; no professors of any true Religion in the World, were ever accepted upon any service less than *intire*, or upon any obedience that was *maimed* and *defective*. But so much as he thought fit to enjoin, God always exacted of men that they should perform; so that if they did not obey in *all*, they should certainly be condemned as if they had done *nothing*.

So that as for this *third sort of integrity*, viz. our obedience to the *whole will* of God, or to all the *particular Laws* fore-mentioned, which is the *integrity of the Object*; it, as well as both the former, is plainly necessary to our acceptance, and to render our *obedience available to our salvation*.

And thus at *last* it appears, what that *integrity* is, which will render our obedience to all the *particular Laws* of God above recounted acceptable in God's sight. For it is nothing less, than an obedience of the *whole man*, to the *whole Law*, and that not for some *short space*, but for our *whole time*, and to the *end of our lives*. He who thus *intirely obeys*, cannot, as was before observed, be other than *sincere*; and he who obeys *sincerely* and *uprightly*, has all that God requires of him, enough to support his hopes, and to secure his happiness. *Sincerity* and *Uprightness*, is neither more, nor less than is exacted of us; without them we shall surely die, but through them we cannot miss of being happy eternally.

C H A P. VIII.

Of obeying with all the heart, and all the soul, &c.

NO W as for this *intire* obedience of the *whole man*, at all times, to the *whole will* of God, whereof I have hitherto discoursed in the foregoing Chapters; it is that *very* obedience with all the heart, and with all the soul, and with all the mind, and with all the strength, which is so expressly called for in the words of the Commandment, Luke 10. 27. Deut. 11. 13.

It is not to be expected, that *all our heart*, and *all our mind*, and *all our soul*, and *all our strength* should be so *wholly* devoted to God, as that we should never either *will*, or *think*, or *desire*, or *do* any other thing, than what he has commanded us. No, that is a Dream of utter *absurdities* and *impossibilities*. For God has not only *allowed* us, but he has made it plainly *necessary* for us to employ our *thoughts*, and *desires*, and *endeavours*, upon several other things besides *himself* and his holy *Commandments*. Because we cannot live without *meat* and other *necessaries*, and these we cannot get without *seeking*, nor *seek* without *desiring*, nor *desire* without *thinking* on them. All the *innocent enjoyments* of *nature*, and all the *necessaries* of *life*, all the *laudable advantages* of *converse*, and all the *lawful benefits* of *trade* and *employment*, require our *minds*, and *hearts*, and *souls*, and *strength*, as well as God and our *Duty*; all our *Powers* not only may be exercised about them, but they needs *must*. For God himself has so ordained it, it being a *necessity* of his own making; so that we must employ our *endeavours* about them, and we cannot do otherwise. And therefore when the Commandment calls for *all our hearts*, and *all our strength*, &c. it is utterly *absurd* and *unreasonable* to understand it of such an *all*, as excludes the exercise of these faculties upon any thing besides; but it *may*, and *must* be understood so, as to leave room for exercising them upon other things likewise,

But all that is included in the *latitude* of that expression, with *all thy heart*, &c. is set out, agreeably to the

the use of the Phrase at other times, in these three Particulars.

1. It notes the *sincerity* and *undissembledness* of our faculties; so as the Phrase, *with all the heart*, signifies the same as in *simplicity* and *honesty*, without guile or a *double heart*. For a dissembling hypocritical man, has *one heart* in *shew*, and *another in reality*. His heart is not *one entire thing*, but *double and divided*. He appears to *will* what indeed he doth *not will*, and to *desire* what in truth he doth *not desire*; so that his whole heart doth not go together, that which he *outwardly professes* being *one*, but that which he *inwardly intends another*. And this *simplicity* and *sincere honesty* of intention, is expressed in the course of our common speech by this Phrase *all the heart*, nothing being more usual in our daily converse, than to give assurances of our *sincerity* in any thing which we do, by saying, it is with *all our heart*. And as *sincerity* is expressed by *all the heart*, so on the contrary, is *dissimulation* and *hypocrisie* set out by a *double heart*. And thus the men of *War*, who were *faithful to David*, and *undissembled* in their service of him, are said *not to have been of a double heart*, Psal. 12. 2. which sense the word *double* has, not only when it is applyed to this particular faculty, *viz.* our *wills* and *hearts*, but also when it is attributed to any other. And thus we read of a *double*, that is, of a *dissembling tongue*, 1 Tim. 3. 8.

2. This Phrase, *all the heart*, &c. implies the *fervency* and *concernedness* of our faculties. And thus the Latines use the word *whole*, when they express their being *very busie*, or *industriously intent upon a thing*, by saying they are * *whole upon it*.

And as this Phrase, *all the heart*, &c. in respect of our *faculties* themselves, denotes these *two things*, *viz.* *sincerity*, and *fervency*; so likewise in respect of their *object*, or that *will of God* which they are to be employed about, doth it imply.

3. *Integrity*, so that this *fervency* and *sincerity* be shewn in obeying, not only *some*, but *all the Commandments*; not *part*, but the *whole will of God*. For our *heart*, and *soul*, and *strength*, must be *all or whole for God*; that is, they must be for all that God is for, and they must be *constant and uniform*, not *various and divided therein*, being

* *Totus in*

ing some times and in some things for him, and at other times and in other things *against* him. They must be for *all* things which he commands, and for *nothing* that he forbids ; for we must neither *think*, nor *desire*, nor do any thing against him. And in this sense, the word *all* or *whole*, is oppoled to *divided* ; and expresses thus much, that our faculties do not stand for some commands, and *against* others ; that they do not *divide* and *parcel*, *pick* and *chuse* with God's *Laws* ; but that they set themselves at all times to obey wholly and universally, observing *all* and every *one*.

Now these *three*, (viz.) the *sincerity* and *fervency* of our *faculties*, and the *integrity* of our *obedience*, which are conveniently expressed by the word *all* or *whole*, are all indispensibly required of us ; as appears plainly from what has been above discoursed upon this subject. So that they are *all* implied in the latitude of this Commandment, *Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy mind, &c.*

But besides them I think nothing else is. For if we should extend that precept further, and make it include all that the largest compass of those words would comprehend ; we should give it a *sense*, which is, as I said, *absurd*, and utterly *impossible*.

And to clear this a little more, wherewith so many good souls are oft-times perplexed, we may further observe, that those very men, who *will'd*, and *thought*, and *desired*, and *acted* other things, as well as God's *Laws* ; are yet in the Scriptures expressly recorded to have *performed* all that is meant in this Commandment, because they served God in the *particulars* which I have mention'd,

- (b) Numb. (viz.) *sincerely, fervently and entirely*. For (b) *Caleb* and
 14. 24. *Joshua* are said to have *followed the Lord wholly*, Numb.
 Deut. 1. 32. 12. *David kept my Commandments*, saith God, and
 36. *follow'd me with all his heart*, 1 Kings 14. 8. *Jesiah did*
what was right in the sight of the Lord, 2 Kings 22. 2.
 Now these persons were men, not only of as great necessities as others, but also of far higher place, and greater business in the world. For their station required them to be much employed about it, and to spend frequent thoughts, and many desires, and great pains upon it. So that their whole heart, and mind, and soul, and strength, could not be employed in God's service any otherwise, than

than as they loved and served him *intirely*, and above all things; and neither will'd, nor acted any thing besides, when it stood in competition with him. The *sincerity*, *fervency* and *integrity* of their service, was all which they had to shew in answer to this Commandment; and upon the account thereof God did accept them, and has left it on record to all the world that they have fulfilled it.

As for the last of these, (*viz.*) *Integrity*, it indeed includes in it all the *rest*. For it is the greatest warranty and effect of *fervency*, and the best evidence of the *sincerity* of our service. Because this, as I said † before, is † Book 3. the great measure of acceptance in our thoughts and affe- Chap. 2. tions, (*viz.*) that they carry us on to acceptable works and actions. And this is the great * Rule whereby to judge of * Book 3. a sincere service, (*viz.*) that men be universal and entire Chap. 1. in their obedience. So that if once we perform all that God requires of us; there is no further question to be made, but that we perform it honestly, and with that *fervency* and *concernedness*, which is sufficient to our acceptance.

And this *integrity* of obedience including both the other, is that very thing, which is meant by the service with *all the heart*, and with *all the soul*, which is exacted of us in the Commandment. Whereof we have still a further argument, because in almost all the places, where any man is said to fulfil *this*, we find that annexed as its explication: Which is a plain interpretation of the Scripture to it self, that *to obey with all our powers* is nothing else in its sense, but to be *uniform, undivided, and intire* in our obedience.

David, says God, *followed me with all his heart*; which appears in this, because he followed me so as to fulfil all my will, and to act nothing against it, but *to do that only which is right in mine eyes*, 1 Kings 14.8. *Caleb and Joshua followed the Lord wholly*; which was seen, in that their obedience was entire to him, and they did not transgress in those particular Laws of Duty, by the breach whereof others provoked him, Numb. 32.10, 11, 12. And of *Zacharias and Elizabeth*, S. Luke says, that they were *blameless*, because they *walked*, not in some, but in *all the Commandments and Ordinances of the Lord*, Luke 1. 6. But on the other side, as for all such as were partial

partial in their obedience to God, and kept some instances of duty, but transgressed others according as they themselves listed ; they are said, *not to be whole in their hearts and other faculties towards him*. *Zebu*, says the Text, *took no heed to walk in the Law of the God of Israel with all his heart*, for of this there is a clear proof, in that his heart run after some sins as well as some duties, he departed not from the sins of *Zeroboam*, although he did from others, 2 Kings 19. 31. If you return unto the Lord with all your heart, says *Samuel*, then put away that particular sin which you still adhere to, your strange Gods, and serve him only, 1 Sam. 7. 3. And that this is true in every man's case, as well as it was in theirs, the Psalmist plainly assures us, when he lays it down for an universal Maxim, that they seek the Lord with their whole heart, who do no iniquity, Psal. 119. 2, 3.

And thus upon all these accounts it appears, that to serve the Lord with all our heart, and with all our soul, and with all our mind, and with all our strength, according to the tenour of the Commandments ; is neither more nor less, than to serve him universally and entirely. For it can bear no other sense, because upon no greater or better service than this, God himself has declared, that men have served him with all their heart, according to the Commandment ; and more cannot be required, when this fulfills it. It can mean no more, because those further Rigours which some would strain it to imply against their own Peace, are impossible in the present condition of humane nature, and therefore are no fit matter of a Law, nor subject to a Commandment. And lastly, it doth mean no more, because the Scriptures themselves, where they set it down, are wont to annex this interpretation, and to give this explication of it.

And thus at last we have seen, what degrees and manner of obedience to all the Laws recounted in the former Book, is necessary to our acceptance. For we must obey sincerely and entirely, if ever we expect to reap the rewards of obedience. We must set our selves seriously, (tho' with the infinite ties of frail Creatures which God will abate for, as I shall shew hereafter) to keep every particular Law of God, and that through our whole lives : we must think on them in our minds, and pursue them with our affections, and chuse them with our wills so far, till

we perform them with our strength, in outward and bodily operation. This uprightness of obedience, which is a certain evidence of its sincerity, is all that God's Law requires of us; and it will infallibly save us at the last day, although less than it nothing will.

As for that condition of life and pardon then, which the Gospel indispensably exacts of us, we now see plainly what it is. For it is nothing else but our obedience to all the forementioned laws of God, in sincerity and uprightness. It is by this, that all the world must stand or fall at the last day; according to their performance or neglect whereof, they shall then be judged, either to live, or die eternally.

This indeed, though it be a very great, will seem a very uncouth and severe truth, in that degeneracy of manners, and loose lives of our times. But if it do, that is wholly our own fault, and can be no prejudice at all to the declarations of Christ's Gospel. For our Lord has proclaimed it to us plainly enough, and if our own wicked hearts make us shut our Eyes, and willing to over-look it; for that we must blame our selves, but can never hope thereby to evacuate his sentence. This in very deed is the Gospel that he has published, and these are the terms of mercy which he has procured for us: So that if we live up to them, we shall be saved by him, but if we fail to perform these gracious demands, we can promise ourselves no benefit at all at last by his death, nor have any ground of hope from his Gospel. All that can be said is, that he offered us Grace and Pardon upon most fair and easie terms, but that we would not accept them. But we preferred the pleasure of our sins before all the glory of his rewards, and chose to hazard all those evils which he threatned, rather than to be at the pains to perform that condition, which he peremptorily enjoyned.

But although, by our wicked lives, we in these days cast off the light Yoke of Christ as over-burdensome, and make the Covenant of Grace it self to become a rigorous condition; yet once the case was otherwise, and the world was more Christian. For they who professed Christ's Religion then, performed all that he commanded, and practised all that, which as we have seen, his Gospel doth enjoyn. And to go no further for an evidence of this, we will take those accounts of the obedience of Christians in the first times, which the Apostles themselves give us.

You, says the Apostle to the *Colossians*, that were sometimes, in your Gentile State, alienated from God, and enemies in your minds, by means of your wicked works; yet now, since you became Christians, hath he reconciled in his death, to present you holy and unblameable, and unproveable, according to the terms of the Gospel, in his sight, Col. 1. 21, 22.

And to the same purpose he speaks of the *Ephesians* yet more fully. You, saith he, hath God quickned by the preaching of the Gospel, who, before you heard of that, were dead in trespasses and sins wherein in times past of Gentilism, ye walked, as well as others, according to the wicked course of this world, according to the instigation of the Prince of the powers in the air, who is the spirit that both afore time and even now worketh in the children of disobedience. Among whom also we all, as I say, had our conversation in times past, living just as they did, in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling and performing the desires of our flesh, and were thereby the Children of wrath as well as others. But God, even when we were thus dead in sins, hath, upon our embracing of Christ's Religion, quickened us together with Christ, by that same spirit whereby he raised up him, Ephes. 2. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5.

But the character which he gives of the *Corinthians*, is more particular and compleat still. No unrighteous, saith he, of one sort or other, shall enter into the kingdom of Heaven. For neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor revilers, nor drun-kards, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such, indeed, as these were some of you once, (viz. in your Gentilism) but since you were Christned I bear you record, that you are washed from those impurities, that you are sanctified from those wickednesses, and that you are justified from the condemning force of all these Commandments in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the help of the enlivening and converting spirit of our God, 1 Cor. 6. 9, 10, 11.

These places are very full and particular for the power of Christianity, and the perfect and entire obedience of Christians, in those days. And yet there is one testimony more of this Apostle, which I must not omit, because it is so very comprehensive; and that is the account which he gives

gives us of the Reformation, which the Gospel wrought among the Romans. For before it was preached among them, they were strangely debauched, and unaccountably wicked; as we may be fully informed, were there no other register of their vices, from the prodigious Catalogue of their sins, which S. Paul himself has given us, Rom. 1. For they worshipped and served the Creature more than the Creator. Their very women were so unnatural in their lusts, as to change their natural use, into that which is against nature. And the men, leaving the natural use of the women, burned in their lusts towards one another, men with men working that which is unseemly. They were filled with all unrighteousness, fornication, wickedness, covetousness, maliciousness; being full of envy, murder, debate, deceit, malignity; whisperers, back-biters, haters of God, despiteful, proud, boasters, inventors of evil things, disobedient to parents, without understanding, covenant-breakers, without natural affection, implacable, unmerciful. Thus had they degenerated from all sense of common honesty and honour, and fallen into the vilest sink of vices. But when once Christianity took place among them, it quickly turned them from a most impious and monstrously unclean, into a most religious and holy People: For so S. Paul himself bears witness to them. You were, says he, in your time of Heathenism, the servants, nay, the rankest slaves of sin, but God be thanked that ye have now, since you became Christians, obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was by us Apostles delivered to you. For being made free from that strange inventory of sins, ye became the servants of righteousness, Rom. 6.

17, 18.

And what S. Paul tells us of these particular Churches under his care S. Peter will also inform us, was true of all the Churches in Pontus and Asia, with whom he was concerned, and to whom he directed his first Epistle, The time past of our life may suffice us, saith he, to have wrought the will of the Gentiles; when we walked with them in lasciviousness, lusts, excess of wine, revellings, banquetings, and abominable idolatries. Yea, indeed, this doth suffice us. For since we became Christians, we have left off to accompany them in these vices, for which they are estranged to us, and revile us. For they think it strange, that we run not with them to the same excess of riot as we used

formerly, speaking evil of us for abstaining from them,
1 Pet. 4. 3. 4

Thus honest was the service, and thus entire was the obedience of Christians, in the Apostles days. And when they had finished their course, and were called out of this world, Christ's Gospel had still the same effects, and his subjects continued to pay him the same service.

(b) As for the Religion and

(b) Dei autem præcepta, quartum valeant in Laws of Christ, says Lactan-
animis hominum, quotidiana experientia de-
monstrant. Da mihi virum qui sit iracundus, tius, what excellent effects they
maledic Peace, & frœnatus : pucissimis Dei ver- have upon the minds and lives
bis tam placidum quam orem redam. Da cu- of men, is plain from every
pidum, avarum, tenacem ; jam tibi eum libe- days experience. For, give me
ralem dabo, & pecuniam suam plenis mani- a man that is fierce, hasty, and
bus largientem. Da timidum doloris ac mor- ungovernable ; and with this
tis ; jam cruces, & ignes, & Phalaridis Law I will make him as tract-
taurum contemnet. Da libidinosum, adulte- able and gentle as a Lamb.
rum ganeonem ; jam sobrium, castum, conti- Give me one who is covetous,
nentem videbis. Da crueleum & sanguinis greedy and tenacious ; this
appetentem ; jam in veram clementiam fu- Religion shall quickly make
ror ille mutabitur. Da injustum insipiertem, him liberal and generous. It
peccatorem continuo & aequus, & pudens, & innocens erit. Uno enim lavacro malicia will make the cowardly and ti-
omnis abolebitur ; pauca Dei præcepta sic to- merous, to become bold and ven-
tum hominem immutant, & exposito vetere, turous ; the lustful and intem-
novum reddit, ut non cognoscas eundem esse. perate, to turn chaste and so-
Lastan. de Fals. Scap. l. 3. c. 26. ber ; the cruel and revengeful
to grow merciful and placable.

(c) Non a- In one word, it works a perfect change and alteration, making the liunde nos- wicked and injurious, to become forthwith most innocent and cibiles, quam de holy men. For all manner of sin is renounced at their entrance, emenda- all filthy habits are wash'd off at the Font, and never again tione vitio. resumed. They are so wholly altered in their life and temper rum pristi by embracing of our Faith, that you will scarce know them to norum, Tertul. ad be the same men. Thus were the Christians in those days,

Scap. c. 2. the holiest sort of men, and the most noble patterns of Ver-

(d) Non men, as Tertullian says, in nothing so much as this, That magna lo- they had left off all their former vices. For they lived

quimus, sed what they taught, and performed what others only could vivimus. discourse of ; their common Motto being this, (d) Al-

Cypr. de though we have not the skill to talk, yet we have the bono pati- Grace to live as well as any. Nay, their very enemies

entiæ. Ed. themselves, who would be sure to spare no pains nor

Rig. p. 222. skill

skill in fastening some *immorali*ties upon them, were yet forced at last to confess that they had no Fault but one ; and that was, that they were called *Christians*. For it is a known Story and Usage which Tertullian complains of, that the very Heathens themselves could not but cry out,

(e) Bonus

vir Caius

Sejus, sed

malus tan-

tum quod

Christianus

Tertul. A-

(e) Such or such a one is a very good Man, 'bating only this

That he is a Christian.

And when the World of Christians were thus entirely obedient, and compleatly virtuous ; it was no wonder that they could so bravely despise Death, and not only suffer, but even seek and (f) provoke Martyrdom. They durst die for the Gospel, because they were sure to (g) live by it. (f) Quid For they perform'd all that it required, and were thereby secure of all the Happiness which it promised : And when by this means death was become to them only a Passage to a most glorious and eternal Life ; it had nothing in it that could fright them. All Sorts, Sexes, and Ages, had lived their Religion so well, that they feared not to die for it ; but with the most undaunted Courage, and (h) assured Hope, they every where in great numbers sealed their Profession with their Blood, and gave Testimony to the Truth of their Faith with their own Lives.

pol. c. 3.

facies de

tantis mil-

libus homi-

num, tot

viris

ac feminis

omnis Sex-

ūs, omnis

Dignitatis,

offerenti-

bus se tibi?

Tertul. ad

Scap. c. 4. (g) ἐγρύς μαχαῖες, ἐγρύς δὲς, μεταξὺ δησίων, μεταξὺ δες. Ignat. Epist ad Smyrn. (h) οὐλευούντων εἰ πεποιθήσε-
μιστας αὐτῷ, is S. Clement's Character of good Men. 1 Ep. ad Cor. 1. 26.

And now, if we fall short of that Obedience that God requires, and which was performed by former Ages ; whose Fault is that, or who must in reason suffer for it ? For Christ's Gospel is the very same that it was sixteen hundred years ago, the Precepts are still unchanged, and the Penalty altogether unaltered. It always was, and always will be the same Rule of Faith, and the same Measure of Mercy or Damnation. And therefore if we lose what it promises, we may thank our selves for neglecting what it enjoyns. For the same terms of Life have stood fixt hitherto, and shall stand through all Ages ; the primitive Christians kept them, and were saved by them ; and if we break them, we shall certainly be condemned for them.

How small soever therefore that be, which in these loose times men perform ; yet an entire Obedience is that, which God indispensibly enjoyns. It is the peremptory Demand of his Gospel, and will at the last Day

be the inviolable Rule of his Judgment. It saved the ancient Christians, and less than it nothing will save us.

But this some will be ready to say, instead of a *gracious* and *merciful*, is a very *rigorous* and *severe* Condition. It binds us to more than is in our Power, and threatens us for what we cannot help, and is a Task too heavy for any *meer man*, and proportioned only to the strength of an *Angel*. For to obey all God's *Laws*, and that *at all times*, who is sufficient? God's *Laws* themselves are not Rules so general, as to admit of no exception. For we are commanded, for instance, to live in *peace*; but yet sometimes we *may*, and *must* be engaged in *striving* and *contention*. And as it is in *this*, so it is in other parts of Duty; the Commandment holds not in every Case, but some are excepted. And who now is of an Understanding so discerning and sagacious, as to see in all things where he is fast and where he is loose, and never to mistake that for his Liberty, which is indeed his Duty? To be infallible in Judgment, and to think right in all things, is the property of a God, not of a Man; and if through this weakness of Understanding, where-to all Mankind are subject, we are ignorant at any Time and do not see, or *erroneous* and mistake our Duty; how is it possible that we should in *all Instances*, and *at all times*, *perform* and *fulfil* it?

But even where we do know God's Law, yet neither there can we always observe it. For since we have many other things to do besides our Duty, and Opportunities for Action call frequently upon the sudden; we are oft-times drawn to act before we have time to think, and so, although we know what we should do in the *general*, yet in this *particular* Case we have not leisure to attend to it. We are surprized into Action e're we are aware, and perform before we can consider; and therefore, as the Chance happens, many times do ill, because we have not time to look about us, and to see what is well doing.

But if an Opportunity for some sin, happen, when we are at leisure to consider of it, and to avoid it; yet many times, although for the *present* it doth not, afterwards it shall win upon us. For all Temptations do not come upon us suddenly, and pass away as suddenly again;

again ; but some stay long with us, and persist to obtrude themselves upon us. And although we can consider for a while, and watch well, and resist long ; yet such is the Imperfection of our very Faculties, that they cannot be held long at a Stretch, but they will at last grow weary. They will be tired out by continuing so strict a Guard, and begin at last to remit of their Care, and to slacken their Diligence ; and when they unbend, the Temptation increases, and our Lusts take Advantage ; so that albeit we were not surprized at first, yet we shall at last, and be tired and wearied into a Transgression.

And since all these, with others, are Infirmities not only incident to, but inseparable from our Natures, and such as we cannot throw off till we shake off our Bodies, and all Converse with the tempting World : How can it be thus exacted of us, who cannot always stand upright, that we should never fall but obey God intirely, in *all things*, and at *all times* ?

But to give a clear answer to these Difficulties, which are here with great Truth objected ; having shewn, that *Obedience is the Condition which is indispensibly required of us*, and what those particular *Laws* are which we are to obey, and what degrees and measures of *Obedience* is required to them : I shall now proceed to enquire into that which I promised in the next place, viz. *What are the Mitigations and Allowances of this Condition of Happiness, and what those Defects are which it bears and dispenses with* ; of which in the next Book.

BOOK IV.

Shewing what Defects are consistent with a Regenerate State, and dispensed with in the Gospel.

C H A P. I.

Shewing in general that some sins are consistent with a State of Grace.

THAT Measure of Life or Death which Christ has indispensably fixed for all his Servants, is not a perfect entire, and absolutely unerring Obedience. No, it makes *Allowances* for the *unconquerable Frailities*, and *unavoidable Infirmities* of our Natures. It considers that we are but Men, and exacts no more of us than a humane Service. That Integrity, which, as we have seen, it requires of us, is an entire Obedience only of our free Works, and *deliberate chosen Actions*. For then we are *perfect* and *entire* in God's account, when we have done all that was in our Power, and have no wilful Stain upon us; when we have no other Blemish, than what the unwill'd weaknels of our Nature, and the very Frame and Circumstances of our Constitution have made necessary. And therefore every Transgression whatsoever, whether with our Wills, or without and beside them, doth not presently blot us out of the Book of Life, and put us out of a state of Grace and Salvation. No, some defects there are, which do not overthrow, but consist with it.

To give a clear account of this, I will shew these *two things*.

1. In the general, that *some Slips and Transgressions are consistent with a state of Salvation, and dispensed with by*

by the *Gospel Covenant*; so that although a man die before he has amended them, and is reformed from them, yet he shall not at the Day of Judgment be condemned for them.

2. More particularly what, and of what nature, those consistent Slips and Transgressions are.

1. I say in the general, that some Slips and Transgressions are consistent with a State of Salvation, and are not eternally threatened, but graciously tolerated and dispensed with by the *Covenant of the Gospel*. And therefore if a Man die in them before he has perfectly amended them, he shall not be condemned for them.

Now as for this, the absolute *Necessity of Humane Nature* makes it evident. For such a State of unerring Obedience and impeccability, cannot here be performed by any Man, whether *Heathen*, *Jew*, or *Christian*; and therefore it cannot be required of him. No Man of any Religion whatsoever, can do it; and so God cannot, he will not exact it.

For of this all Men may be fully satisfied, from that Assurance of *God's Goodness*, which is common to all Religions in the World, that he never commands Impossibilities, or enjoins Men to do that which is not to be done. He doth not require a Beast, to be as perfect as a Man; or lay that Load upon a Man, which is fit only for the Strength of an Angel. For to do thus, were to act the part of a severe Task-Master; and a cruel Imperator; but by no means to use the Authority, of a loving and a gracious Lord. It were indeed to reap where he has not sown, and to call for that which he has never given; and to command and order, reward or punish, not to promote Obedience, but only to shew Power; not according to men's Deserts, but only according to his own Will. For if he should bind impossibilities upon us by a Law, and establish it with Penalties, he could not be thought to prescribe a Rule of Action, since no man can act after it; nor to fix a measure of Judgment, since it being in no Man's Choice to break or to perform, no man can justly be judged by it; but only to seek a palpable Pretence of unjust Force and arbitrary Cruelty. Because it is all one to torment and punish a Man without any Law, as to punish him for the Breach of that, which it was never possible

sible for him to perform. For there can be no Fault, where there is no ability ; and a Tree is as much in fault for not walking when it is bidden, or a Stone for not discoursing ; as a Man is for not doing that, which it is above his Power to do. So that whatsoever a man in such case is punished for, will fall at length upon God himself ; because whatsoever he suffers, it is not for that he *would* nor, but that he *could* not help it ; which in very deed is to suffer Punishment, for being no better, or abler, than God was pleased to make him.

(a) *Quis peccat in eo quod nullo modo caveiri potest?* Whatsoever therefore no Man can (a) avoid, no Man shall ever be punished for. Because God cannot be offended with Infirmities of his own making, nor angry at his own Workmanship, since that were in reality and reason to be angry at himself.

Aug. de lib. Arbit. l. c. 18.

And thus much, I say, all the world may be convinced of in this Matter, from that common Assurance, which all Men either have, or may have, of God's Justice and Natural Goodness.

But then as for us Christians, we are assured that God cannot injoy Impossibilities, or make that an indispensable Condition of his Covenant, which the best of us all is not able to come up to ; because such Dealings would not only contradict the Goodness and Justice of his Nature, which is enough to make an honest Jew or Heathen, to abhor the Thoughts of it, but would moreover thwart and destroy all the Ends of the Gospel, and the Declarations of Grace. For if the Covenant of the Gospel, or of Grace it self, should exact that which no Christian can perform, and damn them for what they cannot help ; it were no Covenant of Grace and Mercy, nor any favour at all to Men, seeing it would leave them just where it found them, and not put them into one jot the better Case than they were in before it came. Christ could never have called himself *the way*, if no

(b) John 14. 6.

(c) Luke 2. 10.

(d) V. 14.

Man could walk in it ; or *the life*, if none were ever able to live by him. The Angels had never sung (c) joy to all people at his Birth, if that Joy had been set so far above us, that the tallest of us all could not reach up to it ; nor have proclaimed upon his coming into the World, (d) on earth peace, and good will towards men ; if yet after all that he has done and suffered for us, we are still left in such a case, that what none of us all can help

he p shall put God and Us into a state of ill-will and enmity. How could he have been called a *Jesuſ*, or a (e) Saviour; if he proffered salvation upon such strict terms, as no man could ever hope to be saved by? Or (e) Mat. 1. 21. (f) Grace and Truth have been truly affirmed to come by (f) John him, and the preaching of his Religion be called a *Gospel* 1. 17. or (g) Glad-tidings; if the conditions of it were so very (g) *way-* hard, as that no man could perform them? To make *yelov.* such Offers of Grace, as none were able to accept of, had not been to relieve our necessities, but to deride them; and that which in the Apostle's judgment is a most gross absurdity, would have been in reality a most certain truth; (viz.) that all their preaching was vain, and our faith is vain also, 1 Cor. 15. 14, 17.

Nay, I add further, so far are all the Laws of Christ from being an impossible task; that to us Christians, who are strengthened by those assistances which Christ affords, and his *Gospel* promises, they are neither grievous nor extream difficult, but a burden fair and easie to be born. His Commandments, saith St. John, are not grievous, 1 Joh. 5. 3. And our Lord himself, who best knew the measures both of our Natures, and of his own Grace, declares expressly, that his Yoke of Precepts is easie, or (b) *Xensis-* gracious and favourable, and his burthen light: Upon which inducement, he exhorts all men with the greater willingness to take it upon them, and submit to it Mat. 11. 30.

This then all Religions in the world, and we Christians above any, either are, or may be undoubtedly assured of, that no man is indispensibly bound to do, what no man can do; and that those things cannot be enjoin'd, which can never be perform'd.

But now, to live wholly without sin, in an impeccable and unerring obedience; to go on exactly straight in God's way without the least wandring, and to tread always firm in the paths of righteousness without ever slipping: to walk so uprightly as never to fall, neither by security or rashness, inadvertency or weakness, surprize or weariness, is more than humane nature can do, and is a Task, not for a Man, but an Angel.

And that some slips and transgressions of this nature, are such, as no man of what Religion soever, whether Gentile, Jew, or Christian, can avoid; is plain, because no meer man ever yet did avoid them,

It was an undeniable Argument of Atticus in St. Jerome,

(i) Da exemplum qui absque peccato fuerit in perpetuum, aut confitere imbecilitatem tuam. Jerom. lib. 1. Dial. adv. Pel. paulo ab initio.

(i) Give an instance of some man that did it; or else confess that no meer man yet ever could do it. For since there is both an utter necessity, and a severe Commandment requiring it; it cannot be but that some of all mankind, when

they had so much reason, and so infinite inducement, should have endeavoured to the utmost, and have done it, if the doing of it had been within the power of humane nature. So that if it be a failing inseparable from the practice of every man, we must conclude it to be unconquerable by the humane nature also.

But now as for this inability of performing in every instance, and transgressing at no time, it has been the complaint of all Persons, in all Religions, throughout all ages of the world.

For as for the bravest men among the Heathens, we have Seneca, their greatest Moralist, confessing freely.

(k) Peccamus omnes alii gravia, alii leviora, alii ex destinatio, alii forte impulsi, aut aliena nequitia ablati: alii in bonis consilii parum fortiter stetimus, & innocentiam invititi, ac renitentes perdimus. Nec delinquimus tantum, sed usque ad extremum & vi de- liquemus. Etiam si quis tam bene purgavit animum, ut nibil eum turbare amplius pos- sit, ac fallere; ad innocentiam tamen pec- cando pervenit. Sen. de clem. lib. 1. cap. 6.

(k) We have all sinned more or less, says he even of his own Country Laws. For some have sinned in great matters, some in little, some out of choice and design, some through constraint, or through the ill example and seduction of others. Some have been too easily driven from good purposes, and sinned, tho' it were against their wills. Nay, we have not only transgressed thus far, but, what augments our misery, we shall continue still to transgress so long as we have breath in our bodies. Yea if there be any man who hath so well cleansed his soul, as that no temptation can win

(l) Hoc primum nobis suademus, neminem nostrum esse sine culpa. Quis iste est qui se profitetur omnibus legibus innocentem? Ecce ut hoc ita sit, quam angusta innocentia est ad legem bonum esse? quam multa pietas, humanitas, liberalitas, fides, justitia exigunt? Id. que omnia extra publicas tabulas sunt. Id. de ira, lib. 2. cap. 27.

upon him; yet has he run through a long train of sins before he attained to that pitch of innocence. (l) Let us persuade ourselves of this in the first place, says he again, that we are all sinners. For what man is he that dare say he has broken none even of his Country Laws? But granting that he had kept all them,

them, yet how scanty and defective an innocence is that, to have done only all that good which they oblige to? For how many things are required, and not performed, by the Divine Law of Piety, of Humanity, of Liberality, of Justice, of Fidelity? Of all which whether we keep or break them, the Laws of our Nation take no notice.

And as for the Jews, we find David the man after God's heart crying out, *Who can understand his errors? Cleanse thou me from my secret faults,* Psal. 19. 12. And Solomon, who was the wisest and most knowing man that ever was upon the earth, lays it down for an Aphorism of universal observation, that *there is not a just man upon earth so perfect as always to do good and never sin,* Eccl. 7. 2c.

Nay even the Disciples of Christ themselves, who had the noblest encouragements, and the greatest assistances for a most compleat and entire obedience, of any men whatsoever; could never yet attain to such a state, as to obey universally without ever slipping. The Holy Fathers in the African Councils felt this by themselves, and were so deeply sensible of it from their own experience, and from what they heard and presumed of others; that they condemned it as a proud error, for any man to think or speak otherwise. (m) To say that our Nature is as perfect as ever Adam's was, (m) *Et quoniam tales nascantur nunc quoque qualis* and that any man now may *ille fuit nostri Generis pater ante reatum:* live, if he will all his life *Posse hominem sine peccato decurrere vitam longum* without sin, and has *Si velit, ut potuit nullo delinquere primus* the same free liberty that *Libertate sua: nempe haec damnata fateris* Adam had in Paradise never to do amiss; is an error to do amiss; is an error that stands condemned by the holy Councils. *Conciliis — Prosper lib. de Ingrat. contra Pelag. cap. 9.*

And what these good men thus ingenuously confessed, all others have constantly complained of; there being none among them, who was ever able to live up so exactly to the Precepts of the Gospel, as not to do against them in any instance. No, that was the sole Prerogative of the man Christ Jesus, who in that respect had no other man to whom he could be likened. For he was made like unto us in all other things, save only in sin, which we all had more or less, but he wanted, Heb. 2. 17. and chap. 7. 26.

And since this state of unerring obedience, is such as in this life no man can because no mere man ever yet did attain unto; we may be sure, that God doth not indifferently

pensibly require it. But some infirmities the Gospel must of necessity dispense with, because according to the present circumstances of humane Nature, we cannot help all ; some must be pardoned, since all cannot be escaped.

But besides all that hath been already said, to shew the consistence of some failings with a state of salvation, because of the unavoidable weakness of humane Nature, which cannot perfectly get quit of them : We may add this further, which will evidence it beyond all exception, that the best *Saints* of God, and the unquestionable heirs of happiness, have always lived subject to them. Those very men, who are most certainly gone to Heaven, went thither with some of these slips and infirmities about them. They could not plead an unerring obedience ; but yet, notwithstanding all their errors, they had a right to all the Promises of the Gospel. They died happily, altho' they could not live wholly without offence. So that some sins do not in any wise destroy a *Saint*, or subvert the hopes and happiness of a good Man, but can and do consist with them.

And in the proof of this, the Scriptures are many, and plain. Holy *Job*, who maintained his own Integrity to be such, as God would accept and approve of, more stoutly, it may be, than any man ever did ; confesses notwithstanding a number of sins, for which although God of his abundant Grace and Mercy would not, yet if he would, he might contend with him. *How shall man*, says he, *be just with God ? If he will contend with him, he cannot answer him so much as one of a thousand.* If I *justifie my self in the unerringness of my obedience, my own mouth shall condemn me ; if I say before him that I am perfect and have sinned in nothing, it should also, by such confessions as he would extort from me, prove me perverse,* Job 9. 2, 3, 20. And *David*, a man after God's own heart, acknowledges freely that he is guilty not only of several sins which he remembers, but also of many more which he doth not know of : *Who can understand his errors ? cleanse thou me from my secret faults* Psal. 19. 12. Nay, even *Paul the Apostle*, who at that time was a most undoubted Heir of Heaven, doth yet own freely, that as yet he had not attained to perfection, but only endeavoured after it, Phil. 3. 12, 13. But although he were not so perfect, as to obey without all error, and

to offend in no instance ; yet had he as much perfection as the Gospel exacts, and such as the best men on earth attain to. For at the fifteenth Verse, he calls upon *as many as be perfect* in such measure as the Gospel accepts of, *to be thus minded* as he was, *and forgetting those things whereto they had already attain'd*, which were now behind ; *to press on towards that higher perfection still wanting*, which was yet before them, as he told them he himself did, vers. 13.

And since men of this full growth and high pitch in goodness, could never yet get free of these unavoidable infirmities ; it cannot be expected, that others who are endowed with a more imperfect Grace and a lower Virtue, shou'd ever live entirely above them. No, alas ! God himself declares plainly by the mouth of his inspired Servants, that no man yet ever did attain so far. *There is no man*, saith Solomon, *that sins not*, 1 Kings. 8. 46. And *Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am wholly pure from my sin ?* Prov. 20. 9. No man certainly, not the most nobly good and eminently virtuous themselves. For *there is not a just man upon earth, that doth good, and sin-neth not*, Eccles. 7. 20. The blessed Saints who are now in Heaven, could never get perfectly free from sin, 'till they got thither. For it is only in Heaven, the new Jerusalem, where the Spirits of just men are made perfect, Heb. 12. 23. But so long as we continue here on earth, let us aspire after that pitch of Righteousness never so much, yet such is the inseparable infirmity of our nature, we shall still fall short of it. Be favourable in censuring one anothers faults, says St. James, because every man will need that favour from others towards his own faults more or less ; *for in many things we offend all*, Jam. 3. 1, 2. Whatever some may falsely pretend, yet in reality no man lives entirely innocent. For *if we say that we have no sin we deceive our selves, and the truth is not in us*, 1 John 1. 8. We are never able to shew this height of obedience, nor doth Christ's Gospel exact it of us. For even there we are taught in our daily prayers to confess our * daily trespasses ; and yet notwithstanding that, we are allow'd, nay, commanded in the same breath to call God our Father still, Mat. 6. 9, 12.

se extollendo plus pereat ; instruitur & docetur peccare se quotidie, dum quotidie pro peccatis jubetur erare. Cyp. de Orat. Dom. in hanc petitionem, p. 195.

As

* Ne quis
sibi quasi
innocens
placeat,
cum inno-
cens ne-
mo sit, &

As for some slips and transgressions therefore, we see plainly in the General, that they are consistent with a state of salvation, and are not eternally threatened, but dispensed with by the Covenant of the Gospel. For the infirmity of our Nature is such, that we never can; and God's goodness is so great, that he never will require us, to be entirely free from them. The very best men, and those very Saints who are now in Bliss, have lived subject to them, and fallen under them: but yet they made no blot in their character, nor robbed them of God's favour, and that life and pardon which is promised in the Gospel. And that we may be certain is consistent, which as we plainly see, not only needs must, but indeed always has consisted, with a state of mercy and Regeneration. For the terms of the Gospel are the same to all times; and what they beat with in one, they do likewise in another. God is no respecter of Persons, nor can ever render different judgment to them, who have done the same things. So that as for some sins, we are fully assured from the foregoing considerations, that they are not eternally threatened, but dispensed with by the Covenant of the Gospel; and that so long as we are free from others, if we die in them, without amending them, we shall not at the last day be condemned for them.

But to clear up this business more fully, I shall proceed now to what I undertook in the second place; namely, to shew more particularly what, and of what Nature, those allowed slips and transgressions are; whereof I shall discourse in the ensuing Chapters.

C H A P. II.

Of the Nature of these consistent Slips more particularly.

IF any man should ask, which of all Christ's Laws those are, which he may keep or break at his own pleasure, and yet go unpunished? I must tell him, none at all. For there are no failings and transgressions in a man's

man's life allowed of for this reason, because disobedience is warranted to some Laws, although it be not to others. No, in our whole Religion, there is no one Law, that is left so naked. For God has not given any Commandments with that indifference to them, as if he cared not what became of them, or were unconcern'd whether men kept or broke them ; but he has established them all under the same penalty, so that *he who breaks any one, is guilty*, as *S. James* says, and obnoxious to the punishment of *all*, Jam. 2. 10. It is not therefore the transgression of some Laws which shall be born with, but not of others ; for that which gets an allowance for the breach of one, would procure a favourable sentence for the like violation of any of the rest.

That then, which makes the difference of *punishable* and *unpunishable* in mens failings, is not to be sought for in *Christ's Laws*, seeing the punishment of every one of them is the same ; but in their *own actions*. For some sins shall be born with, not for that they are against a Law, whereto no penalty is annexed, there being none such in all Christ's Gospel ; but for that they are such imperfect actions, as the punishing Law, which they are against, will not take hold of. Every Law of Christ threatens death, but these allowed offences are not of the number of those actions, which are threatened by it.

For we must take notice, that those works of ours, whereon Christ's Laws lay restraint, and whereto they, as all other just Laws in the World, threaten punishment, are our *voluntary* and *chosen* actions. They bind us up in all those performances, which are placed in our own free power, and come from the choice of our own will ; and they denounce woes to us if in them we go beyond those bounds which they have set us. So that in all our free and chosen actions, we must take care to do what the Law requires, and to keep back from what it forbids ; and we are sure to suffer if we neglect it. For it is among these actions of choice, where the Law reigns, on which it lays Commands, and whereto it threatens punishment. If we chuse and do what is commanded, then through the Grace of the Gospel, have we a right to the promised reward ; and if we chuse to do what is forbidden, then are we guilty and obnoxious

to the punishment denounced. But as for other actions which flow not from our own choice, of which sort are all our pardonable and allow'd infirmities, they fall not under the strict force of the Law, either in the guidance of its *Command*, or in the sting of its *Punishment*; so that at the last day, it will not be judged to have been either broken, or kept by them.

That I may fully clear up this, whereupon so much of that which I shall say under this Head depends, I will shew concerning it these two things.

1. That all things whatsoever, which are either good or evil in us, and a fit matter of reward or punishment, are made such by a Law.

2. That all our actions are not governed by God's Laws, so as to be strictly and directly, either enjoyed or prohibited, punished or rewarded by them; but only those among them, which are voluntary and chosen.

I say, All things whatsoever which are either good or evil, rewardable or punishable in us, are made so by some Law. For good and evil, virtue and vice, obedience and sin, which are only so many different Names for the same thing, have all relation to a *Commandment*. Virtue and obedience is the performance, as vice and sin is the transgression of it. Where there is no law, saith the Apostle, there is no transgression, Rom. 4. 15. And no man sins, as saith another Apostle, but he that transgresseth the Law; for sin is the transgression of the Law, 1 Joh 3. 4. And as Law is the meature of sin and duty, so it is likewise of reward and punishment. For God never afflicts and torments the Children of men, out of the inclination of his Nature, but only out of the necessity of Government. He is the Ruler of the World, and the Lord of Men; and therefore he must maintain his own Laws and punish the evil Doers. But no man is ever punished without an offence, and he must do evil before he suffer it. He undergoes nothing but that which is his own choice; for he chose rather to incur the penalty, than to perform the Commandment. He feels no more than the Law denounced; for God the Judge executes nothing but what the Law threatens; he punishes according to it, but not without it. And the Law doth always make a penalty due to an Offender, before he either can, or doth exact it.

Thus are all things, which are either good or evil, rewardable or punishable in us, made such by a Law. But then,

2. As for our actions, all of them are not govern'd by God's Law, so as to be strictly, either enjoyed or prohibited, punished or rewarded by them; but only those among them, which are voluntary and chosen. And this being a Point, whereof I shall make so much use in all that follows, I will spend the more time in clearing of it up, as I hope, beyond all question, by shewing the truth of it.

1. From the clear reason of the thing it self.
2. From the plain declarations of the Scripture concerning it.

1. I say, That only our voluntary and chosen actions are under the restraint of Laws, and either enjoyed or prohibited, punished or rewarded by them, is plain from the great and convincing reason of the thing it self. For let us consider,

First, The very nature of a Law, and we shall find, that in all those actions, whereon it is imposed, it supposes them who exert them, to have a power of choice, and a free liberty of making them, either a piece of service to it, or a transgression of it. For all Law is a Bond or a Tye, which lays restraint upon us, and induces Obligation. So that in all those actions, whereupon the restraint is laid, we are necessarily supposed to be free before it comes. For it is an utter absurdity to go to bind any thing by a Law, which is before necessitated by its very Nature. Who would ever be so vain and foolish, as to give a Law to a Stone, that it should not speak? Or to a Tree, that it should not walk? Or to the Fire, that it should not chill and freeze him? There can be no place for, nor need of an Obligation, where there is no choice ana liberty. For it is only where things have a power to act on both sides, that there is room for a Law, to oblige and tye them up to act on one. And for this reason it is, that among all that variety of Creatures which inhabit in this lower World, men alone are capable of Laws, because no Creature besides, is endowed with freedom of will and liberty of choice, which is to be bound up and restrained by them.

Nay, even in men themselves, those actions and tempers, which are not subject to their own choice, nor under the power of their own wills, are no fit matter of

a Law, nor fall under the force of a Commandment. For who can ever be so unreasonable and void of all sense, as to command a man, that he should not be born rich or poor, base or noble; that he should not be sick and weak, hungry and thirsty, sleepy or weary? No, since none of these Instances is in his own choice, or under the free disposal of his own will, in none of them is he capable of an Obligation.

Seeing then, that it is of the nature of every Law, to be given as a Bond and Obligation to us in such Actions, to which otherwise our will is free, and able either to chuse or refuse them; it is plain, the Laws are intended for a restraint upon us, only in our voluntary and chosen Actions. For there are none else wherein we are free, and therefore none besides wherein they should intend to bind us.

Secondly, That only our voluntary and chosen actions are under the restraint and punishment of Laws, is plain from that way, which all the *Laws have of obliging men*. The Law is no *Law* to us, but where it obligeth; and all its *Obligation*, is only upon our *chosen actions*. For it can no otherwise oblige us to any *act*, than by obliging us to will and chuse it.

For our wills are the disposers of our actions, seeing we work at our own choice, and do what we will and like our selves; and to oblige and engage our actions, a Law must oblige and engage our wills first. But now, as for all the obligation which any thing can possibly lay upon our wills, it is not by way of *necessitating, compulsive force*, but only of *moving and exciting Arguments*. Because from the very constitution of our nature, our will cannot be forced by any Bond, but only moved of it self to chuse that, which it is intended to be bound to; so that in its nature, it is capable of being obliged to nothing which is unchosen. For the will of man is not a subject capable of natural force, or bodily violence; a man may as soon hope to grasp a shadow, or to lay violent hands upon an Angel, as to engage it that way. No it is no Body, nor bodily Faculty; so that it is not subject to any *physical force*, to be bound hand and foot by a Law, as a Thief is by a Chain; but the only possible way whereby to work upon it, is to win it by *Arguments*. It must determine its

its own Choice, since other things cannot determine it ; and therefore such things must be suggested and proposed to it, as can persuade, but nothing that can force and compel it.

For this indeed is all the Hold, that any Law can have upon the Will of Man ; *it naturally wills and chuses what is good, and hates and refuses what is evil.* And this gives a Law some Power over it, in binding it to chuse what the Law-giver has a mind it should, if he first make it *desirable*. He may win it in its own way, viz. *If he makes Obedience to become its Interest*, and shew it plainly, that it can be no gainer by Disobedience, but that it is by far the better for it to *chuse* what he enjoys, than to *refuse* it. For the Will's own proper Motion, and natural way of Working, carries it on to desire and chuse that which appears to be good, and to fly and refuse that which is known to be evil. And therefore when the things proposed in the Law, have a most desirable good annexed to the Performance, and a most hateful Evil joyned with the Transgression of them ; this is an Engagement and tye upon it indeed to chuse the Duty for the goodness-sake, and to avoid the Sin for the evil that accompanies it. It binds it so far, as its own Desires and Inclinations, Hopes and Fears can bind it ; and lays Obedience in the way to that, which it loves and seeks ; so that if it would come at that, there is no other Means, but this must be the way to it.

And this is the way, whereby all Laws oblige us. For they are backed with such Rewards and Punishments, as make it every Man's Advantage to do what they enjoin him. The evil of Disobedience is always greater, yea, in case of the Divine Laws, infinitely greater, than the evil of obeying ; so that if the Wills of Men chuse in their own way, and will be wrought upon by their own Motive, they must determine themselves to that whereto the Laws would bind them. And this securing of that which is commanded, by making it far worse for any Man to break than to fulfil it, is absolutely necessary, and naturally inseparable from all Laws. For a frightful Penalty, is either expressly mentioned, or if not, it is always implied. If the Punishment is set down, then they who transgress must suffer what the Law threatens ; but if it be not,

they must undergo what the Legislator pleases. So that Punishment can never be pulled away from Law, but if there be a Command given, which makes no Penalty due, nor creates a Right of inflicting any ; it has only the Name of a Law or Commandment, but that is all, for it contradicts its Nature. A Request or Entreaty it may be, a Counsel or Advice ; but a Law or Command it never is.

And seeing all Obligation to Action, is only an Obligation upon our Wills, to make them chuse to act, rather than to omit what the Law intends to oblige them to ; 'tis plain, that where there is no room for Will and Choice, there is none likewise for Law and Obligation. For we cannot will and chuse those Actions, which are unchosen : And therefore we cannot be moved or obliged by any Law, to will or chuse them.

And thus it appears, both from the Nature of Law, and from the Force of Obligation, both which are antecedently necessary to make up the Nature of Sin or Obedience, that all the Restraint which is laid, and all the Punishments which are inflicted by Laws, are only upon our voluntary and chosen Actions.

And this will yet further appear, if we consider some other things, which are consequent to Sin or Obedience, and ensue upon the Working or Commission of them ; as are,

Thirdly, Rewards and Punishments, Commendation and Reproof. Every Lawgiver commends and rewards those who keep his Laws, and punishes and reproves all such as break and transgress them. But now all this can have place only upon their * voluntary Actions, which were at their own Choice, and in their own Liberty either to have exerted, or omitted. For no Actions can be imputed to a Man, either for him or against him, further than they depended on him. Because there is no thanks at all due to him, for doing that which he could not avoid ; nor any Charge at all capable to be brought against him, for failing to do what we could not do. Who would ever be so absurd, as to reprove and bē̄v, ἀλλὰ punish a Man, for being low of Stature, or weak of Body, τῆτο γειό-

* εἰδὲ γάρ οὐ δέξιος εἰμισθίς οὐ ἐπινέας αὐθεωπός οὐ αφ' ξενούς οὐ λόγους οὐ τὸ σώμα- τος γειός μενος. οὐδὲ εἰ ταχίς οὐτέχη, οὐδαίς κολδονες ἐτύγχανεν, οὐ αφ' ξενούς τοιετον οὐν, οὐλακήν συνάμενος εἴναι ἔτεει παρ' οὐ ἐγεγένει. Just. Mart. Apol. 2. p. 81.

for being born of mean Persons, or to a small Fortune? These and all other things of like Nature, which a Man could never help, may be his Misfortunes, but not his Fault; and whatsoever he suffers upon the account of them, may be, and often is, his Calamity, but by no means his Punishment. If he is blamed for them, when it never was in his Power to hinder them, the Imputation laid on him rests not there, but falls all upon that Cause, whose free Pleasure it was so to order him. Agreeably whereunto the Wise Man tells us, That whosoever mocketh the Poor, reproacheth not him, who cannot help his Poverty, but his Maker, whose Pleasure it was to dispose of him in that Condition, Prov. 17. 5. And as he can bear no just Blame, so neither can he undergo any just Punishment for the same. Barbarous Cruelty indeed he may fall under, which would have taken place without a Law, as well as with it; but legal and just Penalties, he never can.

And seeing no Action is punishable but what is chosen, it is plain, that the Laws of God impose restraint, and threaten Punishment, only to our voluntary Actions.

Which will still further appear, from another effect of every sinful and punishable Action; namely this,

Fourthly, That it is such, for which our own Consciences will blame and condemn us, and which we shall lament in Repentance and Remorse. One great part, even of Hell-Torments, is this Remorse and Worm of Conscience. For there is no Action, for which we shall be punished there, but, when it is too late, we shall endlessly repent of it. Their Worm there, as our Saviour saith, dying not, Mark 9. 44. But now it is an utter Absurdity, and downright Madness, for any Man to be angry at himself for that, which he could never help, and to repent that ever he committed that, which it was not in his Power to hinder. For doth it ever repent any Man that he is not tall of Stature, that he was not born as strong as Sampson, or made immortal as an Angel? Was any Man ever touched with Remorse, because he breaths, and sleeps, and thirsts, and hungers? No Man ever is, or ever can with Reason be angry at himself, but when he sees that he has been wanting to himself; when he has done that, which it was in his own Choice to have

done otherwise. For all Remorse is for a willing Offence: A Man chuses it when he commits it, and therefore, when afterwards he sees his Error, he condemns himself for it.

And since a Man's own Conscience condemns him for all those things, for which God's Law will punish him, and no Man can condemn himself for doing any thing but what he chose to do; Neither his own Conscience can condemn, nor the Law punish him, for any but his voluntary and chosen Actions.

And thus upon all these Reasons we see, That it is only our voluntary and chosen Actions, whereupon God's Laws lay restraint, and wherefore, at the last Day, he will inflict Punishment; so that no Sin is damning which is not chosen. This is a very clear and well-grounded Truth. For the Nature of Law which makes good and evil, of Obligation which enforceth it, of Rewards and Punishments from God, of Acquiescence and Remorse from our own Conscience, which ensue upon it; all these evidently evince and prove it. For not any one of them is concerned about any Actions, but those which proceed from Choice, nor have to do with any Works but what are wilful. So that every Action, whereto there is Law and Obligation, Exhortation and Admonition, Reward or Punishment, Commendation or Reproof, Acquiescence or Remorse, as there are for all those which the Laws of God will Sentence; every such Action, I say, is an effect of our own Will, or a voluntary chosen Action.

Thus it is clear from the Reason of the thing it self, that all our Actions are not governed by God's Laws, so as to be strictly either enjoyed or prohibited, punished or rewarded by them; but only those among them, which are voluntary and chosen.

And this will appear yet further,

2. From the plain Declarations of the Scripture concerning it.

(a) 1 Sam. 16. 7. That whereby God (a) looks upon his Laws to be either broken or kept, is the (b) choice and consent of the heart. (b) Non est cui recte imputetur peccatum, nisi volenti, Aug. de lib. Arbit. l. 3. c. 17. Εἰ μὴ οὐαρέτες ἀλευθῆτε προς τὸ φεύγειν τὰ σῖχα. Καὶ αἱρεῖσθαι τὰ καλὰ δύναμεν ἔχετο αὐθεωπεῖον γένος, αὐτίκιν εἴς την δύναμιν δύνατος ωρταφομένων. Justin. Mart. Apol. 2. p. 80. upon

upon us, for out of the Heart, as our Saviour assures us, all those things must proceed, which God will judge to defile a Man, Matth. 15. 18, 19, 20. (b)

The Lusts of our Flesh, must gain the Consent of our Wills, before they become deadly Sins, and consummate Transgressions. Lust, says St. James, when (having won over the Liking and Approval of our Wills, and a half Consent to its impure embraces) it has conceived, bringeth forth the Embryo or rude Draught (answerable to Conception, which is but a half Production) of Sin: And this Embryo, of sin, when (by being brought on to a full Choice and Consent, or, what is more, to Action and Practice) it is finished, bringeth forth its genuine Off-spring Death, Jam. 1. 15. The consent of our Hearts then must compleat our Sin, and our own * Wills must of necessity concur to work our Ruin. For we must wilfully reject and cast off the Law which would keep us in, and go beyond it when we behold it, before our Transgression will have got up to the pitch of a damnable Pollution, or a mortal

Crime. Nay, I add further, till we are come thus far, as wilfully to reject the Law, and knowingly to transgress it; we shall not be interpreted to commit that, which the Gospel calls † Sin, and which it strictly forbids and severely threatens under that Name. For if ^{τὰν} ^{αὐτοῦ} we will take S. John's Word, this is his Explication of ^{τια} ^{εἰκέτης} it. Sin, says he, is the *transgression*, as we render it, ^{οὐ} ^{αἴστητης} but more fully, and more agreeably to the Original ^{χία δὲ ε-} it should be, the † renouncing or casting off the Law, ^{κέσις} ^{χακία} ^{· ἐ-}
1 John 3. 4.

^{μαρτια} ^{εἰμίν} ^{εἰκέτης}. Clem. Alexand. Strom. 2. p. 284. edit. Lug. † He calls it not παρεγνοπία, which is the proper Word to denote a going beside the Law, or a Transgression of it; but αὐτοπία, which imports a being without Law, or a renouncing of it. As αὐτόμοι καὶ αὐτοπότεκτοι are the lawless and disobedient, 1 Tim. 1. 9.

(b) Accordingly *wilful Sins*, S. Paul appropriately calls Sins pertaining to the Conscience. For of the Mosaick Sacrifices, which were appointed only for Sins of Ignorance that made an external Uncleanness, but not for wilful Sins; tho' they Sanctifie, saith he, to the purifying of the Flesh, yet they can make none perfect, as pertaining to the Conscience, i. e. as to wilful Sins. For wilful Sins, which burden the Conscience, had no Provision of any Sacrifices by his Law, Heb. 9. 9, 13.

* ὃν ἀντεξέσον τὸ τοσούτῳ
ἀγγέλων γενόται καὶ τῷ ἀνθρώ-
πῳ τὴν αἴρετην ἐποίησεν ὁ θεός,
δικαιῶς τοῦτο ὃν ὁν πλημ-
μελήσον, τὴν τιμωρίαν εἰ-
διωντά πυρὶ κομισοντας. Just.
Martyr, Apol. 1.

And thus we see, that from plain Scripture, as well as from clear Reason, it manifestly appears, that all our Actions are not governed, nor will hereafter be judged by God's Laws; but such only among them, as are voluntary and chosen.

And therefore although there be no Law of Christ which gives Men Leave to sin without Fear of Punishment; yet some Actions there may be against many, or most of Christ's Laws, which shall not be judged to be punishable Transgressions of them; as are all our involuntary and unchosen Actions. And of this sort, are all those consistent Slips, which, as I shewed before, not only are, but needs must be born with, and allowed by the Covenant of the Gospel. For it is our involuntary Failings, which are our unavoidable ones, because we have no Power to avoid where we have no Liberty to will and chuse; and since they are such as we cannot help, they are such likewise as God pities, and such as the Gospel doth not punish, but graciously pardon and dispense with.

C H A P. III.

Of the Nature and Danger of voluntary Sins.

Having thus clearly shewn in the General, that all the Dispensation, and Allowance for our consistent Slips under the Gospel, comes not from the nakedness and want of Penalty in any of Christ's Laws, but only from the Imperfection and Involuntariness of our own Actions; I will descend now to consider particularly, what those consistent Slips and Transgressions are.

In the Management whereof, I shall shew these two things:

First, That our voluntary and chosen Sins and Transgressions of any of Christ's Laws, are not consistent with a State of Grace and Salvation, but are deadly and damnable.

Secondly,

Secondly, That our involuntary and chosen slips are consistent, and such as Christ's Gospel doth not eternally threaten, but graciously bear and dispense with.

First, I say, No voluntary sin, or chosen transgression of any of Christ's Laws, is consistent with a state of Grace and Salvation, but is deadly and damning.

To make this out, it will be very requisite to shew,

1. What sinful actions are voluntary and chosen: And,

2. That none of them is consistent with a state of Grace, but deadly and damning.

1. What Sins and Transgressions are voluntary and chosen.

Then we commit a wilful chosen sin, when we see and consider of the sinfulness of any action which we are tempted to, and after that chuse to act and perform it. Every chosen sin, is a sin against Knowledge; for the Will is a blind faculty, and can chuse nothing till our Mind proposeth it. All choice, is an act of * Reason and Understanding, a † preferring one thing before another; and we must view and consider both, before we can prefer either.

* Τὸν
ἔκροιν
ἔχειν μό-
νον προτί-
θεῖν κα-

λεῖται, ὁ προβελευόμενος ποιῶντος οὐ ταῦτα λόγων διανοῖσε.
And on Rhod. Paraph. in Eth. Arist. lib. 3. cap. 4. † Τὸ προτίθε-
θεῖν συμαίνει τὸ πρὸ ἐπέργων αἰρετόν. Ibid.

That which suggests the sinfulness of any action to us, and sets the evil of it before us when we are about to chuse it, is our Conscience. For God has placed this Monitor of every Man's Duty in every Man's Breast, instructing it fully and plainly about good and ill, by the voice of Nature and of the Gospel, to tell him upon every occasion what he requires from him. And till such time as men have debauched their Understandings into a gross mistake of their Duty, so as to call Evil Good, and Good Evil; and God in his just anger has given them up to a state of hardness and a reprobate Mind, or a mind void of judgment; their own Consciences will keep them in mind of God's Laws, especially the great Laws of natural Obligation, which no man of Reason can pretend ignorance of, and generally of others too if they have not been culpably negligent to inform themselves about the same, and not suffer them to transgress without reproof. So that every wilful sin, is a sin against a man's own mind or conscience.

Nay

Nay further, so long as mens hearts are soft, and their consciences are tender, and before such time as they are wholly enslaved to their appetites, and quite hardened in sin ; their consciences, especially in some great and frightful instances, will not only suggest and represent their Duty, but argue also and debate against their lusts for the practice and performance of it. And then men are not won at the first offer, nor consent to fulfil the sin upon the first assault of the temptation ; but are drawn in after a long deliberation and debate, and dispute the matter with themselves before they submit to it. For when mens consciences do not nakedly suggest, but moreover plead the cause, and urge the observance of their Duty ; there are arguments on both sides to render the choice at first somewhat doubtful. The Law of God promises an infinite reward to the action of obedience, and threatens an endless punishment if we disobey ; both which are future, and to be expected in the next World. And the temptation inducing us to sin, presents us with a fair shew of sensitive pleasure, profit or honour if we practise, and threatens us with all the contrary evils if we neglect it : both which it sets before us as things present, to be felt and enjoy'd by us even now whilst we are here in this World. Now these are great motives on both sides, each of them bidding fair for our consent. Our minds or consciences suggest the first, and our fleshly appetites and carnal reason represent the latter ; and for a good while these two Advocates sollicit the cause on both sides, and distract and divide our wills between them. So that when at last the temptation doth overcome, and the Law of Lust in the members prevails over the Law of God in the mind ; yet is that after a strife and a war, after a tedious toyl and much contention. And these wilful sins, because we underwent a great conflict in our own minds about them, and past through a long deliberation, in an alternate succession of desires and aversations, hopes and fears, imperfect choices and refusals, 'ere the consent of our Wills was gain'd over to the commission of them, are call'd deliberate sins.

Every wilful chosen sin then, is a sin against knowledge and against conscience, when our own heart rebukes and checks us at the time of sinning, telling us that God hath

bath forbidden that which we are about to do, notwithstanding which we presume to do it. And if it happen to be in an instance that is greatly criminal, and frightful unto *Conscience*, which therefore puts us upon *demurs*, and creates *dispute* and *arguing*; then is it not only a known, but a *deliberate sin also*.

Nay, where we have *time*, and there is a sufficient space to consider in between the opportunity and the action; if we know that the action is sinful, and are not in ignorance about it, by having either never heard of it, or quite forgot it; we sin wilfully, whether our conscience checks us for it, and we consider of it or no. For wheresoever we can consider, we can chuse, there being motives on both sides sufficient to determine our choice on either. And as for all those Sins which we know, whensoever we have *time*, we can think and consider of them. For all thought is free, and if we have leisure, we may employ it according to our own liking. We cannot think 'tis true of many things at once, but we can consider of any one, and employ our minds upon it *when*, and *how long* we please. So that in all such leisurely transgressions, if we acted inconsiderately, our inconsideration was our own fault, and entred only because we suffered it, and had a mind to it.

In all such actions therefore as we know are sinful, every transgression with *time* and *leisure* is voluntary and chosen. For either we saw and considered it before we ventured on it, or we might have seen it if we would. Our thoughts indeed are our own, so that even at such times as we have leisure to consider, we may still if we please, transgress without all consideration. But if we do, that is not our mishap, but our fault, and we must answer for it. For where God has given us both *Power* and *Time*, wherein to see and consider; he most justly expects, and will certainly exact at our hands an account of what is done, as of a known and considerate action. So that not only our considerate and *deliberate* transgressions, but such others likewise as are *unconsidered*, shall be judged *wilful sins*, if they are acted *leisurely*, and are in such instances as we know are *sinful*.

These sins of *time* and *leisure* in known instances of *ill*, and of *deliberation*, are our voluntary *wilful sins*. And as for them, they are all of a heinous guilt, and a crying nature. Every commission of them, is a *despising of God's Law*. For when we sin wilfully, both our duty and our sin being set before us, and both being compared and thought of by us, whilst we see, or if we please may see and consider both, we *despise* and *reject* obedience to the Law, and willingly and advisedly prefer the obedience of our sin before it. Upon which account, our sinning wilfully, is called a *despising of the Law*, Heb. 10. 28. And for as much as such *despising of the Law* (which is nothing less than the will of Almighty God, which is most extreamly offended by it, and can most severely punish it) is an act of the greatest *boldness* and *presumption*: therefore as our wilful and chosen sins, stiled, in another word, *presumptuous sins*, Psal. 19. 13. And since such presuming with open eyes to despise God's Law, is a *profest rejecting* of his *Law* and *Authority*, an *open casting off* his *yoke*, and *rebelling against* his *Sovereignty*; doing willingly and advisedly what he *forbids*, and setting up our own *will* in opposition to his, which is the highest instance of *pride* and *insolence*, and *opposing God*: therefore are our wilful sins said to be acted, through *rebellious pride*, and with a

* *high hand*, Numb. 15. 30, 31.

* εν χειρι
υπερη-
νιας.

But now as for these sins, which, being thus consider'd and deliberate, are voluntary and chosen; they are not all either *considered* or *deliberated of*, *willed* or *chosen* in the same way. For even among our wilful sins, we must observe this difference.

First, Some of them are *chosen expressly and directly*.

Secondly, others are *chosen only indirectly and by interpretation*.

1. Some sins are chosen expressly and directly. And such are all those sinful actions, whereto the consideration and thoughts of our minds are particularly directed, and which we eye and view before we chuse and act them.

They are such sins, which we see and attend to at the time of acting; or, which is more, whereat we pause and deliberate, doubt and demur, when we have a conflict and dispute in our own minds, whether we should commit, or keep off from them. And such direct choice and

and express violation ordinarily happens, when men sin with some tenderness, and sense of conscience. They cannot act against their conscience without a check; or they cannot chuse the sin as soon as it is offered, but they undergo a succession of fears and desires first. For the temptation sollicits them to work the sin, and their conscience, being awakened by Gods Law, would deter them from it; so that they have a particular and express consideration of both sides, before they act either. As for this way of sinning therefore, by express choice and direct violation, it is incident ordinarily, not to all sinners whatsoever, (unless it be in such heinous instances of sin whereat the Consciences of the worst men are apt to startle) but only to those of a middle rate, whose Consciences, being not quite hardened as yet, make them transgress with reluctance and remorse.

But besides these, there are,

2. Other sinful actions which are not chosen directly and expressly, but only indirectly and by interpretation.

By an indirect and interpretative choice, I mean an express choice of such a state of things, as makes some sinful actions after that to be no longer a matter of free choice, but almost necessary and unavoidable. For some things are in our power at first, either to do, or omit them; but by some free actions of our own, we can, if we will, put that power out of our own hands, so as that afterwards we cannot keep off from them, if we would.

Thus a servant, for instance, who is strong and healthy, can if he please, perform his Master's will, and do what he requires of him. But if he chuse, by intemperance or other wickedness, to maim his body, or impair his health, he has parted with his own ability, and his omission of his bounded service after that, is no longer a matter of choice, but of necessity. A wealthy man can easily, if he will, give every man his own, and honestly discharge those debts, wherein he may stand ingaged to other men: But if he chuse to waste his estate, by Vice or Profuseness, or otherwise, to throw away his riches; he is no longer able to do what he should, but detains the goods of other men thenceforward, not, because he will not, but for that he cannot help it.

Now these omissions of the lame sick servant, and this dishonesty of the impoverished man, in this necessitous state of things, whereinto they have thrown themselves, are no matter of particular and express choice, because, as the case stands, it is not in their power to refuse them. But yet they were chosen by them indirectly and in the general, when they chose to put themselves into this necessitous state, wherein, being once placed, they should not have the power thenceforward to avoid them. And tho' now they are necessary in themselves, yet that necessity being of their own chusing, they were, as the Schools speak, voluntary in their cause. And because that, which they sinfully do or omit now under this necessity of their own making, is interpreted to them, and charged upon them, by virtue of their former choice, as if now in every particular, they did expressly chuse it : therefore do I say it is chosen by Interpretation ; (i. e.) it is imputed to them, and may be exacted of them, as if they had chosen it expressly.

And as for those sinful Actions or Omissions, which are chosen only indirectly and implicitly (viz.) in the free choice of that cause, which made them afterwards to be all necessary ; they may very fairly be imputed to us, and interpreted to be our own. For in all reason, the natural and immediate effects of a man's own free and deliberate choice may be charged upon him, and if he chuses his necessity, it is fit that he should answer for it, and bear the punishment of those sins which he commits under it. What is a matter of any man's choice, may be an article of his accusation, and a matter of his punishment also.

As for such effects, indeed, as are to remote, that a man's understanding, in the honest and sincere use of it, cannot see them, although he do chuse the cause, yet neither God nor Men will look upon him to have chosen them. For there can be no choice where there is no knowledge, because a man must see a thing before he will and chuse it. But when effects lye near, and obvious to any ordinary capacity, if it do but use an honest diligence, as most mens necessity of finning doth to those free actions which produce it ; there it is only mens sloth and negligence if they do not discern it : And if they chuse blindfold, when they might see if they would open their eyes, it is all one in God's account as if they did see it : For it is against all reason in the world,

that

that the sinful neglects of men, should take away the rights of God. He has given them faculties, wherewith to see things before they chuse them, and he requires that they should use those faculties to see the same. And if they will not use them, that is their own fault ; but what he requires of them he will still exact, and punish them for what is done, as for a chosen action.

So that as for those sins, which men have chosen in their next and discernible Cause, although they are not free to chuse or refuse them in the Particulars themselves, they are a part of their account at the last Judgment. What is chosen indirectly and by interpretation, is looked on as their own ; and, if it be evil, will be imputed to them for their condemnation.

But now several of mens sins are of this last sort. For as we saw of some particular actions, that they are chosen in the Particulars directly and expressly : So are there likewise several others, which in the particulars cannot be refused, but were chosen in the general, in the free choice of that Cause which has made them all afterwards necessary, so that they are voluntary only indirectly and chosen by interpretation. For there is nothing so common in the World, as for men by their free choice of some sins, to bring themselves into a necessity of others : They freely will and chuse some, which necessarily cause and effect more.

Now as for those things, which may bring men into this necessity, sometimes one sin by Natural consequence draws on more ; as expensive vices and profusenes may necessitate men to leave their Debts unpaid, and the Families unprovided for. But chiefly they are such things as make them inconsiderate and hasty. For therefore ordinarily it is, that in the Particulars we cannot expressly chuse or refuse several sins, because we cannot stay particularly and expressly to consider of them. We have brought ourselves to such a pass, that they slip from us without reasoning and enquiring about them. For either our understanding is diverted, that it cannot ; or so well acquainted with them, that it need not look upon them to observe and consider them. And since we do not particularly consider of them when they come, we cannot expressly will and chuse them : But forasmuch as we chose the cause of this inconsideration, we are said to chuse them indirectly, and by interpretation.

And as for the wilful and chosen Causes of such inconsideration, I shall discourse of them under these two sorts, viz. as causing such inconsideration in sins, either,

1. Of commission, or doing what is forbidden.

2. Of omission, or neglecting to do what is commanded.

1. For those causes of inconsideration in our sins of commission, which make us venture on them without all doubt or disquisition, they are chiefly these :

First, Drunkenness.

Secondly, Some indulged Passion.

Thirdly, Habit or Custom of sinning.

For all these, when once we have consented to them, take away either wholly, or in great measure, all further freedom, and make us will and chuse what is evil indiscriminately, and without consideration.

First, As for Drunkenness; we find daily in those persons who are subject to it, that it so disorders and unsettles all the intellectual powers, that they have scarce any use of them at all. For their memory fails, and their judgment forsakes them. They have commonly no thoughts, for that present time, of good or evil, of expedient or inexpedient. Their reason is overwhelmed and laid quite asleep, and there is nothing ordinarily that is awake and active in them, but their bodily lusts and sensual passions, which then hurry them on to any thing that falls in their way without the least opposition. So that they are wholly governed by their appetites, and, for that time, unbridled passions, of lust, or cruelty, or envy, or revenge. They blab out that, which in their right wits they would conceal; and do what in a sober mood they would condemn. And so little is there of that reason and understanding in all their speeches and behaviour, which appears in them when the drunken fit is over, that any man may plainly see, how, for that present, it is removed from them. So that they act rashly and irrationally, more like brute Beasts than Men, committing rapes, or robberies, or bloodshed, or any other mad frolics and sinful extravagancies, without any deliberation or consideration at all. And

Secondly, As for an indulged passion, we daily find, that when it is permitted to grow high, it has the same effect in making a man act inconsiderately, as Wine it self has. For a man may be drunk and infatuated, with a violence

anger, an impetuous lust, an over-powering fear, as well as with Wine. It shall make him quite forget all Rules of Decency and Vertue, and attend no more to them at that time, than if he had never known them. Of anger it is affirmed to a Proverb, that it is a (f) short fit of madness. And the Case is the same in other passions, when they are suffered to go on to amazing and stupifying degrees. How many things are acted in the heat of lust, of fear, of anger, &c. which the men in their sober wits condemn so perfectly, that they would account themselves to be very much injured, if any man should say that they might be insnared into them, and fall under them? Of so great power are mens passions, in clouding, nay, for a time, quite overwhelming their reason and understanding. For such is the condition of the reasonable soul, that during its being here united to the body, it is subject to all its alterations, and liable, even in its most proper and spiritual operations of reason and knowledge, to be either improved, or hindred, or quite taken away, by those changes which befall it. In a sound and undistemper'd body, it is free and active; but if the bodily Spirits, which are those great instruments that it makes use of, are ruffled and disordered; if they are either confused and overcharged by strong drink or a strong passion, blended and displaced by a phrensie, blasted by an apoplexy, or otherwise mix'd and disordered, quenched or oppressed, by any other violent Disease: All use of reason and consideration is strangely hindred, if not for a while perfectly eclipsed. And this all men are so sensible of, that every one is apt to plead this in his own behalf, for those faults which he commits in the height of Passion; and others are as ready to admit of it. For their great excuse is, That their Passion made them almost mad, and spurr'd them on to act they knew not what, without all sober thought and consideration.

Thirdly, As for the habit or custom of chusing sinful actions, it brings our wills to such an acquaintance with them, and to such an unstudied forwardness in embracing of them, that when an opportunity is offered for them, we cannot refrain from them if we would, or stand to deliberate whether we should chuse them or no. For custom, as we daily see in all sorts of actions, begets such a promptness and easiness in performing thole things which

(f) Ira furor brevis est.

we are accustomed to, that we readily act them upon the next occasion, without staying to think and consider of them. *Use*, as was observed above, is a *second Nature*; and what we have been wont to do by long practice, we do as *easily*, as *quickly*, and as *indeliberately*, as we do those things which flow from the necessity of our very *Nature* it self. And as it is in all our other actions, so it is likewise in our works of sin and disobedience. By a long acquaintance with them and practice of them we learn at last to chuse them whensoever we meet with them, without all thought and examination. For all the little doubts and exceptions of our *minds* against them, all tormenting fears and checks of *Conscience*, have been so often silenced, that now they are heard no more to make any delay in our embracing of them. And our *wills* have been so accustomed to strike in with them, and to chuse the sinful action upon every return of the temptation, that now they do not need to pause, but act off-hand, and sin without enquiry. And our *bodily powers* are so naturally disposed to spring out into the commission of them upon occasion, that they hardly stay for a Command, but are as quick and hasty in the dispatch, as our *Wills* were in their indeliberate chusing of them. So that our willing of them after a long use, is not a matter of arguing and discourse, of weighing and considering; but a sudden, inconsidereate motion. It is rather turned into an act of *nature* than of *choice*, and has more in it of indeliberate necessity, than of considerate liberty. And as such, the Scripture is wont to represent it. For when sin is once grown into a *confirmed habit*, we are told, that it is not so truly an *inviting temptation*, as a *binding Law*, Rom. 7. 25. It doth not then so truly *persuade*, as *rule and command* us: For we are *led Captives* by it, ver. 23. and *sold under it*, ver. 14. We submit to it out of necessity, and not out of choice; because we do not chuse where we cannot refuse; and here, till the evil habit is altered, or begins to wear off, we must be under it, and cannot help it. For it is now become our very nature, and it is almost as much out of our power to alter it, as it is for a thing to cast off what is most natural to it. *Can the Ethiopian Blackamoor change his skin, or the Leopard his spots?* When they can do that, then, saith *Jeremy*, *may you also do good, who are accustomed to do evil*, Jer. 13. 23. If men

men are so pleased, they may chuse to sin themselves out of their liberty, 'till they can no longer chuse, whilst that evil state lasts, whether they shall sin any more or no. A compleat habit, and a perfect custom, whilst it reigns unbroken shall make them sin beyond all liberty, because they will sin without all deliberation; and then they are got up to that pitch whereof S. Peter speaks, *Of them who cannot cease from sin*, 2 Pet. 2. 14.

In sins of commission then, or doing those things which are forbidden, the cautes of indeliberateness and inconsideration, are most usually these three, viz. *A drunken fit*, *a high passion*, or *a confirmed habit of Sinning*.

And then,

2. As for the other Branch of sins, viz. those of omission, or neglecting to do what we are commanded; Besides these three already mentioned, which have their evil influence upon sins of that kind also, there is one great and particular Cause which takes away our liberty of choice in them, and that is a neglect of those means, which are necessary to the performance of the omitted Duty. For as it is in all our other actions, so is it also in those of obedience; they hang in a *Chain of dependance*, and are helped on or hindred by several others, which, further than they influence them, are not religious themselves, nor make up any part of obedience. There is a Religion of the means, as well as of the end; and some actions are helps and preparatives to a religious Duty, but otherwise they are no Duty in themselves. Thus the not staying to look upon a woman, or to gaze upon her beauty, is one means whereto our Saviour directs a man, that he may be preserved from coveting and lustng after her, Matth. 5. 28. So fasting is a furtherance to prayer and repentance, and several other instances of obedience. And the case is the same in several other things. For meekness, and patience, and contentedness, and forgiveness, and every other Virtue has some particular helps and furtherances, some things that promote it and dispose us for it, and others that obstruct and hinder it.

Now as there is this order in the things themselves, so must there be likewise in our endeavours after them. We must take them as they lie, and use the means that we may attain the Virtue. For meekness, humility, contentedness, and the like, are not so perfectly under the power

er of our wills, as that they can be exerted through their bare Decree and peremptory Commandment. But if we would attain them, besides this imperiousness of Command, we must further use all those means and helps, which fit and prepare us for them. In *habits of the mind* men are sufficiently convinced of this. For it is not every one that wills *prudence*, who is a *wise*; or that wills *learning*, who is presently a *learned man*: But he who would be so, besides his willing and desiring it, must *read*, and *study*, and *observe*, and *seek instruction*: He must use all those means which lie in the way to knowledge, and those instruments which prepare for it, and are necessary to introduce it, before he can attain unto it. And the Case is the same in all *virtuous* and *moral habits*, which are seated in the *will* likewise. For we must use those instruments, which facilitate and dispose us for the *Vertue*, before the *Vertue* will become our own; and we must put in practice all the means and preservatives against any *Vice*, before we can in reason hope to conquer and avoid it. If we would not be *proud* or *peevish*, we must abstain from all the *inlets* to *pride* and *peevishness*. And if we would be *meek* and *humble*, we must not neglect the helps and instruments promoting *meekness* and *humility*. For the helps and the *vertue* must both go together; so that if we neglect the one, we shall certainly miss of the other also. When once we have neglected the means of any *Vertue* therefore, we have parted with our power of obtaining it, which we cannot hope to do but by those means. We have thrown away our liberty, in losing of our opportunity; so that now our missing of it, is not so much a matter of choice, as of necessity. And in *sins of omission*, this is the great and special Cause, which puts them without our power; for we neglect the means of doing what we should, and after that, it is not so truly our free choice, as our necessity that we omit it.

These then are the causes of our want of choice in the particular instances of sins, whether of *commission* or of *omission*. We do not chuse that *evil* which we *commit*, for want of *considerateness* and *deliberation*, the freedom whereof is taken away from us, by *drunkenness*, *passionate-ness*, and a *habit* or *custom* of committing it. And we do not chuse the *omission* of some *Duty* which we neglect,

for want of power, whereof we have deprived our selves through the neglect of those means, which are necessary to the performance of it. So that both in doing what is forbidden, and in neglecting what is commanded, upon these Causes, we do what for that present we cannot help. For we do not chuse, because we cannot refuse it, and therefore it is not so much through choice, as through necessity, that we are involved in the Transgression.

But although these sins are thus undeliberated in themselves, and thus unchosen in their own Particulars ; yet shall we be punish'd for them as surely, as if we had expressly chosen them, because they were all chosen in their Causes. For we freely and deliberately chose that, which made them necessary ; and that is enough to make us answer for all those things, which we acted under that necessity.

For as for drunkenness, which is one of those Causes that deprives us of all liberty, by taking away all considerateness and deliberation ; 'tis plain, that it either is, or may be deliberately considered of and chosen. For drunkenness is a sin, which requires time in the very acting of it. It is not entred on in a moment, or dispatched before a Man can have time to bethink himself ; for he may pause and deliberate at every Glass, and is free all along to chuse or refuse the sin before the Wine inflames him. It has nothing in it of suddenness or surprize, and therefore nothing of indeliberation. Because where a Man has time, he may deliberate if he will ; and if he will not, that is his own fault, and he must answer for it, and is punishable in all reason as if he did.

'Tis true indeed, to a Man who has never tried, and is ignorant of the force of Wine, or of any other intoxicating Liquor, and of its sudden way of discomposing his Spirits and dethroning his Reason ; Drunkenness at the first time may be a sin of surprize, and an iadeliberate action : Because he suspects not that a free Draught, which he takes down now, should a while-hence work so great an alteration : He is unacquainted yet with the strength of it, and knows not that it will have such effects upon him. And so long as he doth not see, that intoxication is at the end of his present draught, or a likely fruit of it, he cannot be said to deliberate of, or considerately to chuse it. It happens to him besides his expectation,

^{† Vid.}
^{Theod.}
^{Quæst. in}
^{Gen. Quæst.}
56.

and is not an effect of choice, but of surprize. And thus it was with righteous Noah, at his first planting of a Vineyard, † Gen. 9. 20, 21. And this being unforeseen and indeliberate, what a man commits under it is the more excusable. But after a Man has felt by himself, or has learned from others, what the power of Wine, or any other intoxicating Drink is, it is generally afterwards his own fault, and his own choice if he be overcome by it. For either he doth, or may see the ill effects of it ; and if for all that he chuse to go on in it, it is at his own peril : Because if he chuses drunkennes, he shall be interpreted to chuse all those sinful effects whereto he may see, if he will, that Drunkenness expoies Men. So that as for this Causē of indeliberate sins, viz. Drunkennes ; it we see is in it self deliberated of, and freely chosen.

And as for the second cause of indeliberate sins, viz. *some indulged passions, which grow to such a height, as to drive us on furiously into the fulfilling of them without suffering us to deliberate about them* ; they also are a Cause of our own free choice and deliberation. For it is in our power at first, either to give way to a beginning passion, or to repress it. We can check it as we please whilst it is low, because then its strength is very weak, and our own consideration and command is the greatest. But if we slacken the Reins, and give it liberty ; then it knows no bounds, but proves too strong for us, and hurries us on whether we will or no. For in every step which the passion makes, it doth still the more disturb our Spirits, and thereby disable all the power of our reason and consideration. So that proportionably as it increases, our consideration, and, together with that, our choice and liberty is lessened and impaired. But at the first, whilst it is young and of small strength, it is in the power of our own Wills, either to indulge it, or to stop and repress it. And therefore if it get ground upon us, it is by our own liking, because either we expreſly chuse to stay upon it, and thereby to feed and foment it, or wilfully neglect to use that power which we have over it, in curbing and restraining it. And when once we have of our own choice permitted it to go too far, then is it got without our reach, and goes on further without asking our leave, whether we will or no.

And herein lies the great error of Men, viz. in that they freely and deliberately consent to the first beginnings of sin, and by their own voluntary yielding too far, they make all that follows to be plainly necessary. For the lustful man deliberately and wilfully permits his wanton fancy to sport it self with impure thoughts, and lascivious imaginations, till by degrees his passion gathers strength, and his lust grows so high, that all his powers of Reason and Religion are scattered and clouded, and rendred wholly unable to subdue it. The angry Man freely and deliberately hearkens to exasperating suggestions, and cherisheth discontents so long, till at last his passion is got beyond his reach, and flies out into all the unconsidered instances of rage and fury. And the case is the same in fear, in envy, in love, and hatred, and other passions. Men first consent to the first steps and beginnings of a sinful lust, and when they have deliberately yielded to it a little way, they begin by degrees to be forced and driven by it. For all progres in a vicious lust, is like a motion down-hill; Men may begin it where they please, but, if once they are entred they cannot stop where they please. All vice stands upon a (g) Precipice, and therefore although we may stay our selves at the first letting out, yet we cannot in the middle. But although, when once we have gone too far, it be not at our own choice whether or no we shall go further; yet was it in the free power of our own Wills not to have gone so far as we did. The entring so far into the passion, was an effect of our own will and free deliberation; and if this make that necessary which is done afterwards, that is a necessity of our own chusing. So that whatsoever our after-actions are, this cause of them is a matter of our own will, and freely chosen.

And then as for the third cause of indeliberate sins, (viz.) a custom and habit of sinning; that is plainly a matter of our own free chusing. For it is frequent acts that make a habit, and they are all free, and at our own disposal. Because the necessity arises from the habit, and doth not go before it; so that all those actions, which preceeded and were the causes of it, were free and undetermined. Wherefore as for that indeliberateness in sinning, which ariseth from an habit and custom of sin; it doth not in any wise lessen or excuse a sinful action.

(g) Omne in
precipi
vitum
stat. Juv.
Sat. I.

action. Nay, instead of that, it *aggravates* and *augments* it. For this is sin improved up to the height, and become not so much a matter of choice, as of nature. And to sin thus, is to sin as the Devils themselves do, from a natural Spring and Principle, without the help of thinking and disputing. Upon which accounts, as it is the most advanced state of sin, so must it be of suffering likewise ; this state of *reigning*, and *prevailing habits of sin*, being, as St. Paul calls it, *a body of death*, Rom. 7. 23, 24. All which aggravation, both of sin, and suffering, it has, because it is an aggregate and collected body of many wilful and presumptuous sins. For before Men come so far, they have deliberately chosen, and wilfully neglected to refrain from all those precedent actions, which have advanced the strength of Sin to that pitch, and have made it to be, not so much a *temptation*, or a *refusale motive*, as a *binding (h) Law*, and *necessitating nature*. So that although those sinful actions, which flow from us after that we are come to a habit of sin, are indeliberate and unchosen ; yet as for our evil habit it self, which is the cause of them, it was produced by a combination of wilful sins, and was in all the antecedent degrees a matter of choice and deliberation.

(h) Rom. 7. 23.

And lastly, as for the cause of our *involuntary omissions*, (viz.) our neglect of those means, which are necessary to our performance of those things which are commanded ; this is clearly our own fault, and comes to pass only because we chuse it and have a mind to it. For the reason why we neglect the means is, because we will not use them. We have time enough wherein to deliberate and consider of them, and thereby to chuse and practise them ; but we will not use it to that purpose. The means and helps to *chastity*, to *meekness*, to *contentedness*, and other virtues, are all before us, and we have power to put them in practice, if we think fitting. For it is just the same for that matter, with the endowments of our *wills*, as with those of our *minds* and *bodies*. We can see and consider of the means, of begetting *knowledge* and *learning in our minds* ; and of those receipts and rules, which are to promote the *health of our bodies* ; and upon such consideration, we not only *can*, but ordinarily *do make choice* of them, and put them in *practice*. And although it happen much otherwise with those wise directions, and helpful rules

rules that are given for the *attainment* of *virtue*, which are read ordinarily only to be *known*, but not to be *practised*; yet is it in the choice of our own Wills to make use of *them* if we please, as well as of the *other*. The neglect of *them* is a wilful neglect, for therefore we do not use *them*, because we chuse to omit *them*. So that although when once we neglect the means, it be not at our choice after that to attain the *virtue*, yet that neglect it self was. The omissions in themselves, it may be, are not chosen, because they cannot be refused: But that negligence, which is the cause of their being so, is plainly an effect of our own choice and deliberation.

Thus then it plainly appears that our sinful *commissions* upon *drunkenness*, *passionateness*, and *custom* of *sinning*; and our sinful *omissions* upon our *neglect* of the *means* and *instruments* of *Vertue*, all which are *indeliberate* and *unchosen* in *themselves*, were yet deliberately chosen in their *causes*. So that all our necessity in them, is a necessity of our own making, seeing it was at our own choice whether ever we should have come under it; although, when once we are subject to it, it be no longer at our liberty whether or no we shall be acted by it.

And since all these sins, which are thus *indeliberate* in *themselves*, were yet so freely chosen and deliberated in their *causes*, they are all imputable to us, and fit to be charged upon us. They were chosen *indirectly* and *interpretatively*, in the choice of that *cause*, which made them all afterwards to be *almost*, if not *wholly necessary*. For either we did deliberate, or, which is all one, we had time enough to have deliberated as we ought, before we chose our own necessity. So that these sinful actions, which are *unchosen* and *unconsider'd* in *themselves*, are yet imputable to us, and fit to be charged upon us as our own, because we chose them by an *indirect* and *interpretative volition*.

As therefore there are some sins, which are expressly will'd in the particulars by an express choice and deliberation; so likewise are there several others, which are expressly and deliberately willed only in their cause, but in their own particulars are not chosen otherwise, than indirectly and by interpretation.

And both these together, take up the compass of our *wilful* and *chosen* sins. For either we expressly think, and deliberately

deliberately consider of the sinful action when we commit it ; or we expressly, and very likely deliberately thought, or might have thought so if we pleased, upon that cause, when we chose it, which makes us now to sin without thinking and deliberation.

And by all this it appears now at length, how knowledge and consideration always, and deliberation often-times is implied in every wilful sin. For the sinful action is seen and considered, (or it is our fault if it be not, since we had both time and powers for such consideration) either in *it self*, or in its *cause*; and being as it is thus a matter of our consideration, it is likewise a matter of our choice, and a wilful action.

And thus having shewn what sinful actions are voluntary and chosen ; I proceed now to shew,

2. That none of them is consistent with a state of Grace, but deadly and damning.

As for our wilful sins, they are all, as we have seen, of a most heinous nature ; being indeed nothing less, than a contempt of God's Authority, a sinning presumptuously, and with a high hand.

(i) *Elatio*
contemnen-
tis inmini-
datis cul-
pam facit
non mini-
mam, &
convertit
in crimen
gravis re-
bbellionis
nævum sa-
tis levem
simplicis
transgresſi-
onis. *Ber-*
nard. de
Præcept &
Dispens.
c. 14. p.
op. 931.
(i) *Avo-*
nia not
magno-
fia.

and renouncing of his Sovereignty ; they are acted in a way of defiance, and are not the unavoidable slips of an honest and well-meaning Servant, but the high affronts of a contumacious Subject, or of an open (i) Rebel. So that no favourite or child of God can ever be guilty of them, or he must cease to continue such, if he be. Because they interrupt all favour and friendship, and put God and him into a state of hostility and defiance ; seeing they are nothing less, than a renouncing of his Authority, at least in that instance, and a casting off his Law. And this lawlessness, or rejecting of the Law, is that very word whereby S. John describes sin. For sin, says he, is the transgression, as we render it, but more fully it should be the (k) renouncing of the Law, 1 John 3. 4. In which sense of sin, for a wilful and rebellious one, he tells us, that whosoever abides in God, sins not, vers. 6. being indeed no longer a child of God if he do, but of the Devil, vers. 8.

They deprive us of all the benefits of Christ's Sacrifice so long as we continue in them, and of all the blessings purchased for us by his Death. This was their effect under the Law of Moses, and it is so much rather under the

the *Gospel of Christ*. For the sentence, which that Law pronounced upon all *presumptuous and wilful offenders*, was *death without mercy*. *The soul that doth ought presumptuously, the same, by his contemptuous sin, reproacheth the Lord, and that soul shall be cut off from among his people*, Numb. 15. 30. If ever it could be proved against him by that dispensation there was no hope for him. For he that *despised*, or *contemptuously* (*k*) trans-
gressed Moses's Law, died without mercy, saith the Apostle, being convicted upon the testimony of *two or three witnesses*, Heb. 10. 28. For even those very sins, for which under the Law God had appointed an atonement, were no longer to be atoned for, than they were committed *involuntarily and through ignorance*. In the fourth Chapter of *Leviticus* we are (*l*) told, that as for those sins, which are committed *against any of those Commandments, which concerned things not to be done*; if they were *acted* (*m*) *involuntarily and unwittingly*, they should be (*l*) Ver. 2. allowed the benefit of an expiation, and the sacrifices (*m*) *'Aves inver-*
for that purpose are there prescribed. But if they were *acted wilfully and advisedly*, then had they no right to the expiation there promised, nor would any sacrifices be accepted for them, but that punishment must unavoidably be undergone, which was threatened to them in the Law. For, to name no more, this we are plainly told of two instances; (*viz.*) the *contemptuous making of perfume, and eating of blood*, after both had been forbidden. Whosoever shall *contemptuously make any perfume like to that* (which was commanded to be made, vers. 35.) *to smell thereto; that soul shall not be expiated by sacrifice, but cut off from his People*, Exod. 30. 38. And *whatsoever man there be that eateth any manner of blood*, (*viz.*) *knowingly and wilfully, the ignorant and involuntary transgressions of this and the like prohibitions being atoneable*, (*Lev. 4.*) *I will even set my face against that soul, and will cut him off from among his people*, Levit. 17. 19.

Thus severe was the sentence, and thus unavoidable was the penalty of all wilful sins, under the Law of *Moses*. And by how much the ministration of *Christ* is nobler, than the ministration of *Moses* was; by so much shall the punishment of all wilful and contemptuous sins against the Law of *Christ*, be more severe, than it was

(k) in the
Syriack version, according to Tremen- lius's trans- flation, it is trans- gressus est, scil. asper- ments, which concerned things not to be done; if they were nanter.

Ver. 2.

70.

was for those against the Law of Moses. And this is the Apostle's own argument. *For if that word of the Law threatening death, which was spoken unto Moses on Mount Sinai by the mediation only of Angels, was stedfast, and every Transgression of it received the just recompence of that death which it threatened, such Persons dying without mercy: How shall we Christians hope to escape it, if we wilfully neglect and contemn those Laws, which are published to us by so great a means of Salvation as the Gospel is; which was at first spoken to us, not by Angels, but by the Lord Jesus Christ himself, who is far above all Angels, being indeed the Son of God himself, Heb. 2. 2, 3.* Surely, as the Apostle argues in another place, *if he who despised even Moses's Law, dyed without mercy for that contempt; we ought to think with ourselves, not of how much less, but of how much sorcer punishment he shall be judged worthy, who by wilful sinning and despising of his Laws, doth in a manner tread under foot, not Moses, but the Son of God himself, Heb. 10. 28, 29.* His punishment indeed shall be most dreadful, being nothing less than all those woes which are denounced in the Gospel. For the Law, with all its threats and penalties, is particularly made and designed, as St. Paul says, *for the lawless* (which is that very (n) word whereby St. John describes sin) *and the wilfully disobedient, who when they see the Law, will not be (o) subject to it, 1 Tim. 1. 9.*

As for our voluntary and chosen sins then, whether they are chosen directly, or only by interpretation, we see plainly that they are not consistent with a state of Grace and Salvation. For they subject us to all that death which the Law threatens, and deprive us of all that life and happiness which it proposes to us, which beside all the evidence which the Scripture gives us of it, is plainly demonstrable from the very reason of the thing it self. For certainly if Christ's Laws will condemn us for any actions whatsoever, it must be for those, which being voluntary, may justly be charged upon us, and looked upon to be our own. It must be our willing what sin enjoyns; which can make us Servants of it, and subject us to that death, which God has appointed for its wages: So that both from Reason and Scripture it evidently appears, that every wilful sin is certainly a deadly one, and puts the sinner out of a state of God's favour and salvation.

(n) "Avo-
uoi.
(o) Arvπι-
τακτοι.

'Tis true indeed, that every wilful sin doth not rob us of God's favour in such manner, as to *incapacitate us for regaining of it ever after*. But its effect is this, before such time as we have repented of it and amended it, we are under all the threatnings of the Law, and subject, if we die in that instant, to that death which is ordained for the wages of it. We are out of God's favour for the present, and the state of friendship betwixt him and us is interrupted; and 'till we *repent*, we shall not be restored again to it. As for the state of acceptance and salvation, it is *broken*, and *destroyed* for the present; for we are put under the punishing part of God's Government, and are made subject to his vengeance by being sinners against his Law. But as for the foundation of that acceptance, (viz.) that habit of virtue and obedience, which, in the wilful action, we sinned against; it is not quite destroyed, but only wounded and impaired in us. For habits are neither won nor lost by one action, but by many. It is frequency and repetition, that must either produce, or destroy them. If therefore a good Man is careless in some instance, and loses his innocence, and is vanquished into a wilful sin; yet is not the habitual inclination of his Soul towards that instance of Obedience, against which he offended, quite extinguished in him, but only somewhat weakened and abated. Thus, for instance, a sober Man, if he consent once to be drunk, doth not thereby wholly lose his sober inclination. But when the temptation is past, his habitual temper, which was foil'd and over-born, revives again, and he abhors his sin, and confirms his resolution, and so is ready at the next return of the temptation, to wash off the stain of his former offence, by an opposite instance of new Obedience. And the case is the same, in the wilful commissions of any other sin. For although any one wilful act be a damnable Transgression, and put the sinner into a damnable condition for the present; yet doth it not destroy, but only wound and weaken that habitual temper of virtue, which, if God spare him life, may enable him with ease to act otherwise for the time to come.

Although indeed some wilful sins have such a complication of evil in them, and are carried on against so many suggestions of the spirit, and checks of Conscience, and are brought to effect through so many thoughts, and so long contrivance,

contrivance, that they destroy, not only that *innocence* which is the condition of our state of *Grace*; but also that habitual temper and inclination, which is the principle and foundation of it too. They unravel all, and let us to begin again the work of Reformation a-new. Of which sort are wilful *Idolatry*, *Witchcraft*, *Perjury*, *Sacrilege*, *Murder*, *Adultery*, *Robbery*, *Oppression*, entring into the fields of the fatherless and widow, and such like. For these sins, do not only destroy a man's acceptance with God for the present; but moreover they lay waste his *Conscience*, and spoil all his virtuous temper, and inclination, whereby he should recover himself afterwards; whence they are

(p) *Peccata sauciantia, and vastantia.* call'd (p) wounding, and wasting sins. And this effect they have, because in the very acting of them there is usually so much time and deliberation, and a succession of so many desires and aversations, hopes and fears, chusings and refusals; that the sin has had a great many imperfect consents, before it comes to have that, which is last and prevailing. Our Wills, by a number of imperfect woudlings, are in a great part accustomed, and have almost wholly learned to unwill all that good, which they willed before; so that there is an imperfect habit contained in the very action. Besides what is most of all considerable, these being such sins as are made up of several combined together, before we can bring our selves to act them, our conscience of their guiltiness must be in great part extinguished, and the good spirit of God exceedingly grieved, if not wholly quenched. For *Adultery* implies *fornication*, and *injustice*; *Sacrilege* contains *theft*, and *impiety*; *Perjury* includes *lying*, and *prophaneness*; and so for all the rest. Now these being complicated sins, and crimes of an accumulated wickedness, men's Consciences are more than ordinarily afraid of them, and the good spirit of God is extraordinarily concerned to keep them from them. They suggest and represent the greatness of the sin, and the greatness of the danger. Which they do with such constancy and importunity, that before Men have silenced the one, and extreamly grieved, if not wholly quenched the other, they cannot overcome their own fears, and venture upon the commission of them. And here now is the danger, lest their own *Conscience* be laid asleep, and God's holy spirit leave them. For he will not always strive with Men, Gen. 6. 3. And from him that hath not, that is,

hath

hath not used that talent of Grace which was granted to him, as the wicked Servant had not done who had hid it, vers. 25. shall be taken even that, says our Saviour, which he hath, Mat. 25. 29. And when Men resist the motions of the Holy Ghost to such a degree as this, and after all the repeated suggestions, and obedient inclinations which he threw into their Souls, during all that time wherein the sin was under deliberation, resolve still to venture on it: No wonder if being thus grieved and rejected, he withdraw himself for some time at least, if not for altogether.

And of all this we have a clear instance in holy David, upon that wasting sin of his, in murdering Uriah, and adulterating his Wife. For upon that he felt both these losses which I have mentioned, (*viz.*) the laying waste of the virtuous temper of his own Spirits, and the deprivation of the good Spirit of God. For this sin being so long in acting (as it must needs be, since it required such a train of wicked Plots and Contrivances to the consummation of it) he must needs feel all the opposition that could be made from the checks of his own Conscience, and from the restraints of the Spirit of God. And when he had born down both for the satisfaction of his lust, and trampled them under foot for the consummation of his sin; then doth he begin to feel the want, and to be all in fear of losing the habitual rectitude of his own Spirit, (which, by so many contrary actions implied in that one great one, he had almost quite destroyed) and of suffering the desertion of God's Spirit, which by his continued provocations contained in it likewise, he had well nigh abandon'd. For to this purpose we find him complaining, and crying out in his Psalm of repentance for that great transgression, whereof, at the 14. verse, he makes express mention, Create, or new make in me a clean Heart, O God, says he, and renew a right spirit within me. And besides that, cast me not away neither from thy presence, nor take thy holy spirit from me, Psal. 51. 10, 11.

So that as for the effect of wilful sins, it is plainly this: All wilful sins whatsoever, destroy our state of acceptance with God, and put us into a state of enmity and death for the present. But as for those among them which lay waste the Conscience, they effect not that only, but moreover they destroy that virtuous habit, and grieve, nay, sometimes

times drive away that good Spirit, whereby we should restore our selves to it for the time to come.

And because this latter sort have this mischievous effect in making our return thus dubious and difficult, they are particularly taken notice of in the accounts of God. Thus, for instance, *David* had committed several deadly sins, for some whereof he had undergone severe punishment; as particularly for that proud presumptuous offence of his, in growing confident of an Arm of flesh, and numbering of the people, Sam. 24. 1, 10, 13, &c. But these made no notable decay, or devastation in the virtuous temper of his soul; for his own heart admonished of the evil which he had done, and for the most part he repented quickly, and rose again without delay, and so was presently restored to what he was before. But as for his sin in

(q) 2 Sam. the matter of *Uriah*, it was a (q) lasting work, and 11.4,5,27. took up a (r) longer deliberation and contrivance. It (r) vers. 6, made his Conscience hard and insensible; for his own heart 7,8,9,10, did not smite him into a change, nor enable him to repent 13,14,15. without a (s) monitor. So that his stay in this crying (s) Chap. sin was long, and his return both difficult and dangerous: 12. vers. 1, 5.

And therefore in that character, which is given of him by the *Holy Ghost*, when all the rest are buried in silence, this sin particularly is expressly specified. *David* did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord, and turned not from any thing that he commanded him all the days of his life, save only in the matter of *Uriah the Hittite*, 1 Kings. 15. 5.

Thus then, as for this first part of our enquiry, we see plainly of all our wilful sins, that they are not consistent with a state of Grace and Salvation, but that they are all deadly and damning for the present, if we die under them without repenting of them; and as for the future, that they do all of them wound and weaken, but some almost quite destroy; that habitual, inherent Grace, whereby we should recover our selves to the state of pardon for the time to come.

C H A P. IV.

Of the nature of involuntary sins, and of their consistence with a state of salvation.

THE second sort of sins, are such as are *involuntary* and *unchosen*; and these are consistent with a state of salvation, and such as Christ's Gospel doth not eternally threaten, but graciously bears, and in great mercy dispenseth with.

As for the *involuntariness* of men's actions, that which produces and effects it, is not any force from without upon our will it self. And the things in the material world, can never bind and compel the will of man, seeing it is no *physical, bodily thing*, like them, which any *bodily force* might act upon. Whatever they may force us to suffer, they can never force us to will and like a thing if we do not like it. And this is a privilege which the will of man has above all other things on the Earth, that nothing about it can * force or constrain it, but that still it wills and chuses as it self pleaseth.

As for the *actions* of men indeed, they are *mixt* things, because they flow from the *whole man*, both *Body* and *Soul*; and beginning in the mind or will within, are *consummate* in our outward and *bodily operation*. And as for the *last* of these, viz. our *bodily operation*, it may be forced, forasmuch as one body is liable to the force and compulsion of another. Thus, for instance, a *chast Matron's Body* may be *violently ravished*. A *peaceable man's hand*, may, by the overpowring strength of another man, be made the *forced instrument* of another's *murther*. The *bodily work* and *operation* can be forced, seeing other *Bodies* more powerful than it self can compel it. And in this sense the *Schools* understand the word *action*, viz. only for the *action of the Body*, when they make one kind of *involuntary actions* to be *involuntary* by (b) *violence or compulsion*; (b) *Invita-*
that being a thing whereto not the Will it self, but the *per vim: Body* only can be liable.

But now these forced *actions* of the *Body*, although in *Nature* they be looked upon as *actions*, yet in *morality* they are esteemed as *none at all*. That is, *Laws*, which

* *Voluntas non potest cogi. Axio-
ma Scho-
last.*

are the Rules of *good* and *evil*, and the measure of Mens *Manners*, take no notice of them, nor look upon themselves to be either broken or kept by them; because it is not the Body and *Carkass*, but the *whole Man*, consisting of Soul as well as Body, which Laws are given as a guide to. So that a *ravished Matron*, if only her Body suffered, and there was no concurrence of her own consent to it, is as *chast* and *unpolluted* in God's account, and in the censure of the Law, as is the *purest Virgin*. And therefore it was a great truth whereby *Collatinus* and *Brutus* went about to comfort the poor *deflowered Lucretia* in

(c) Men-
tem pecca-
re non cor-
pus, & un-
de consili-
um absue-
rit, culpam
ab esse

Lev. Dec.
1. ver. fin.

Livy; It is the Mind, say they, which sins, and not the Body; so that in those actions, wherein there is nothing of will and deliberation, there is likewise no fault or transgression. And this Case is expressly thus determined, *Deut. 22.* For in the Case of the *ravished Damsel*, whose will was no way consenting to it, but who did all that she could against it, it is expressly ordered, that to her there is nothing to be done by way of punishment, because in her there is no sin worthy of death; for like as when one Man is slain by another, even so is this case; she is not acting, but suffering in it, ver. 26.

As for him indeed, who chose thus to force us, 'tis true that the Law will interpret what is done by our Bodies as his action, because he freely chose so to compel us. Our bodily Members, which were forced by him, were his Instruments, and not our own; for he it was, and not we our selves, who ordered and directed them. We were the same in his hands, as a *Sword* is in the hand of a Man, *viz.* the Instrument only, but not the Agent. So that what was done by us is not our own, but his who was pleased so to make use of us. In him therefore the unlawful action, being willed and chosen, is really a sin and transgression. But in us, since it was not our own, it is looked upon as none. There is nothing charged upon our account for it, more than if it had never been done; because we did not act, but suffer; it had nothing of our own will, and therefore it can be no Article of our Condemnation.

So much of any action therefore as is forced, *viz.* the outward, bodily operation, in the estimate of good and evil, of vice, and virtue, is of no account to us, whatever it be to others; because it is not our own. For to make any action

action ours, it must proceed not from our *Bodies*, but from our *selves*, who have *Souls* as well as *Bodies*: it must come from the Will within, as well as from the Body without: And as for our *will it self*, 'tis plain that it can never be made to chuse involuntarily by force, since it is not subject to any forcible violence and compulsion.

But although those actions which we exert our *selves*, and wherein we are not meerly passive instruments, in the hands of others, cannot be made involuntary by any force from *without* upon the Will it self: Yet may they become so, from something else *within us*. For our Wills are not the *only internal Principle* of humane actions, but *several others* concur with them, whereby their choice it self is influenced. Our *Wills* indeed *chuse and command our Actions*; but then our *passions move*, and our *understandings direct and carry away* our very Wills themselves. So that they are let in a middle Station, being subject to be acted upon and hurried away by some; as well as they are impowered to command and govern others.

I. Mens Wills are subject to be violently acted by their *Passions*, which hurry them on to consent to those things, which are both *without*, and *against* their *habitual liking and inclination*. When any passion is grown too strong for them, although they are afraid to act that sin which it hales them to, yet can they not withstand it. For the *Law of sin in the Members* is of more force with them, and prevails more over them, than the *Law of God in the Mind*. So that although they have several exceptions against it, they are not for all that able to refuse it; but they are overcome by it, and yield at last to act it, though unwillingly, and to fulfil it, though with trouble and regret.

Now here is an unwillingness, 'tis true, and things are done, which otherwise would not be done, because the power of Mens *Lusts* and *Passions* is so strong that their *Wills* cannot restrain them. For all the interest, which the contrary motives of *Reason* and *Religion* can make against them, is not able to contend with them. They *can and do effect something* indeed, so as that the Will, when it doth consent to them, doth it not fully and freely, with perfect ease and pleasure; but *unwillingly*, with fear and reluctance. But yet that which they do is not

enough, for the other side prevails, and the will is not able to hold out, but yields at last to fulfil the lust, and to act the sin still.

But now although this be some sort of involuntariness, yet it is not that which will excuse our transgressions, and make all those sins, which we commit under it, to be esteemed consistent slips and pardonable infirmities.

(d) Book 3. Ch. 4. For this state of unwilling Sinners, as we heard (d) above, is no state of mercy, but a state of death. It is the state which S. Paul describes in the seventh Chapter of his Epistle to the Romans, viz. a state of captivity and slavery under sin, ver. 14, 23, and thereupon a state of misery and death, ver. 24. And the Grace which Christ's Gospel allows to it, is a Grace of deliverance; a Grace that shall help us out of it, and rescue us from it. In this state of weakness and infirmity Christ found us. For whilst we were yet without strength to help our selves, saith S. Paul, Christ died for us, Rom. 5. 6. But now, since he has died for us, he will not leave us in it, but rescue and deliver us out of it. For now he having dyed for us, we are likewise to reckon our selves to be dead indeed unto sin for him; that it should no longer master and prevail over us to reign in our mortal bodies so far, as that we should fulfill the lusts thereof, Rom. 6. 11, 12. And as for our bodily members, which are the Stage whereon our lusts and passions reign, we are to yield them up now, not any longer instruments of unrighteousness unto the service of sin, but instruments of righteousness unto the service of God, v. 13.

If therefore we are truly Christians, and such as Christ came to make us, upon our becoming which he has procured Grace and Pardon for us, we are not enslaved and led Captives by our passions, but have conquered and subdued them. This S. Paul affirms expressly; For they that are Christ's, says he, have crucified the flesh, with the (e) passions or affections and lusts, Gal. 5. 24.

But then besides our lusts and passions, which although they do make some, cannot yet effect a pardonable unwillingness; there still remains one caule more, which may produce it. For,

2. Men are subject to be carried on, to work what is both without and against their habitual liking and inclination, through ignorance. And this is the great source, and, for ought I know, intire cause of all our consistent slips and pardonable infirmities.

As for the will of Man, it is a blind faculty, it can chuse nothing till the understanding shews it. That is, we cannot desire, or will a thing, before we see it. So that if at any time we offend through ignorance, or inconsideration, and do amiss, either because we did not understand our Duty, or because we did not think of it ; unless our ignorance and inconsideration be themselves damnable, and charged upon us to our condemnation, nothing else will. For God will (f) impute nothing to us (f)—*Ergo* at the last Day, either to save, or to destroy us, but what *non est cui* proceeded from our own will and choice ; and therefore *recte imputetur peccatum nisi volanti.*

And this now is the case of all our slips and transgressions of the Law of God, which are consistent with a state of Grace and Salvation. We act them without understanding or considering of them, and so they are involuntary and unchosen. For in some of them we do not think or consider of what we do at all ; and in others, although we know the action, yet are we ignorant of the sinfulness of it ; so that even in the choice of that, this still remains unchosen.

For, Sin and Obedience, is not all acting of a thing, but an acting of it with certain ends and designs. If we would be thought to obey God's Law, we must do it because he requires it ; and if we be judged to have sinned against it, it will be for doing something, when we saw that he had forbidden it. For that service which God requires is not a heartless service, but a service of the will and choice. So that we must do what he enjoyns out of a will to serve him thereby, that is do it for his sake, and because we know his Law requires it, if we expect that he should take himself to be obeyed in it : And we must chuse to do what we (g) know is against his Law, for the sake of sin, before we need to fear, that he will punish us as Men that have sinned against him. Obedience then and Disobedience, besides the action, require likewise the eye and intention ; viz. the chusing of what we do, because his Law commands it, or the chusing it when we know that his Law has forbidden it. But if this knowledge of his Law be wanting, although we chuse the evil action, yet do we not chuse the sin, because we do not see that it is sinful. For we would not chuse it, if we

Aug. delib.

arbit. l. 3.

c. 17.

$\delta\lambda\omega\zeta\sigma\nu$

$\tau\alpha\iota\sigma\sigma\tau\epsilon$

$\mu\pi\kappa\tau\alpha$

$\omega\gamma\alpha\iota\sigma\sigma\tau\omega$

$\sigma\iota\iota\iota\sigma\tau\alpha\tau\alpha\tau\alpha$

$\delta\pi\theta\iota\sigma\tau\omega$

Clem. A-

lexand.

Strom. 2.

p. 284.

(g) *Non fa-*

cit aliquid

contra Le-

gem Legis

ignarus.—

Nullus po-

test ejus rei

pravarica-

tor effe

quam nef-

cit Salvian

de Gub.

Dei, l. 4.

p. 134, 138

Ed. Oxon.

knew that he had forbid it ; so that in our Hearts there is no contempt of him, or disobedience at all.

When therefore at any time we knowingly and deliberately, chuse an action, which we do not know to be sinful, except that ignorance be our own fault : whatever the action be as to *it self*, yet as to its relation to the Law, viz. its sinfulness and disobedience, it is not willed and chosen. For since we did not see its sinfulness, we could not chuse and consent to it. So that there is no rebellion in our Wills, whatsoever there may seem to be in our Action ; but they may notwithstanding it be still entirely subject unto God, and ready to obey him in every thing, wherein they see he has laid his Commands upon them.

As some of our consistent slips and transgressions therefore, are not thought of, or considered at all ; so others, although they are known and considered in themselves, are yet unknown under that relation of *sinful Actions* ; so that the Sin is all the while unseen, and therefore involuntary and unchosen.

Now as for these slips and transgressions, which are thus unknown, and thereby involuntary ; they are consistent with a state of Grace, and such as Christ's Gospel doth not eternally threaten, but in great mercy bear, and graciously dispense with.

To convince us of the truth whereof, besides all that has been † above discoursed upon this Argument, it is first considerable, that all these *involuntary failings* upon ignorance or want of knowledge, are unavoidable, and God, we know, will never damn any Man for doing that which could not be avoided. For no Man can chuse to shun that which he doth not see, but his Understanding must first discern and apprehend a thing, before his Will is in any Capacity to refuse it. And forasmuch as these slips are no matter of our sight and knowledge, they can be none of our refusal and avoidance.

Indeed, if a Man should pause and deliberate, watch and examine at all times ; albeit he might still be subject to one sort of *involuntary actions*, viz. that which arises from his ignorance of his Duty ; yet would he not be liable to the other, which results from this *inconsideration* of it. For where a Man has Time, and his Powers are awake, so that he is fit to look about him ; his thoughts are

† Chap. I.
2.

are his own, and he may fix them upon the consideration of what he pleases. And where he has the power to consider of any action, he has the power likewise to avoid it. And this is that which is pleaded in behalf of Men's ability to keep all God's Commands intirely, and to live wholly without sin, by Atticus in S. Hieron : (i) *Hoc & much we say, That a man may live without all sin if he nos dici-will, for such time and place as his mind is intent, and his mus, posse care is at stretch, and his bodily infirmities will suffer him hominem non peccare si velit, pro*

tempore, pro loco, pro imbecilitate corporea, quandiu intentus est animus quamdiu chorda nullo vitio laxatur in cithara. Hieron. Dial. adv. Pel. l. 3. p. 302. Ed. Erasm.

But as for this power of avoiding all involuntary sins which arise from inconsideration, it is no power at all. For herein we must know lies every Man's unavoidable weakness and infirmity, that whereas our Obedience is required at all times, this fitness is only in some certain time and place. For no Man is always in that good condition, to be wise and well disposed, watchful and standing upon his Guard. But he forgets when he should remember, and his faculties are asleep when they should be awake, and he is diverted by other business, and hindred by intervening accidents. So that sometimes, either he has not leisure to consider, or his faculties are not well disposed, and his thoughts free and at his own command, so as, when he has time, duly to consider in it.

And this evil state which thus unfits a Man for consideration, is not always in his own power, and at his own choice, whether he shall fall under it or no.

For as for the want of time, a Man in this World is placed in a crowd of business, and whilst his thoughts are hot in the pursuit of one, another many times waits for him. And because opportunities do not stay till we are at leisure, we must take them when we find them ; so that we act oftentimes without considering, since, if we should stay to think, we should stay beyond that time which we are to act in, if we do act at all. Besides, our powers of action, especially where there is any strong temptation of pleasure or profit to act for, are forward of themselves, and ready to spring out upon the first occasion. As soon as the temptation is offered

to our thoughts, our wills indeliberately approve it, and all our bodily and active powers, by an unconsidered emanation, start up to pursue and endeavour after it ; whence thinking and considering is necessary, not to raise, but to stop and restrain them. And then, if either our thoughts have been otherwise engaged, and so cannot readily withdraw themselves to consider of a new object ; or if our thinking powers themselves are dull and heavy, and thereby unfit to consider of it ; we presently and indeliberately go on to act the thing, without all pausing and due consideration.

For this other reason of inconsideration also, viz. the want of power, or indisposition of our thinking faculty it self, is not a thing wholly subject to our own will, to chuse whether, or when we shall fall under it. Because in this state of our Souls, during their being here united to our Bodies, they make use of our bodily powers in their use of reason, and in the very exercise of thought and consideration ; and therefore even in them, they are liable to be changed and altered, just as our Bodies are. For in a brisk and healthy Body, our thoughts are free, and quick, and easie ; but if our Bodies are dull and indisposed, our Minds are so too. A heaviness in our Heads, will make us heavy in our Apprehensions ; and a discomposure in our Spirits, whether through the strength of Wine, or of a violent Passion, will make us discomposed and incoherent in our thoughts also. And if there be an utter perverting, or blasting of our bodily powers, as is often seen in the bodily Diseases, of Epilepsies, Phrenses, Apoplexies, and the like ; there will be the same perversion, or utter extinction of our conceptions likewise. But now these indispositions of our Bodies, which thus unfit our very Souls for thought and due consideration, are not in our power to order, when, and where they shall seize upon us. For our Bodies are liable to be thus acted upon by any other Bodies of the World, whether we will or no. A heavy Air, or an indisposing accident, will work a change in our bodily temper without our leave ; and when once that is indisposed, we cannot hinder our thoughts themselves from being indisposed too.

And since it is not in our power at all times to chuse, whether or no we will pause and consider ; although we can

can avoid offending in those Cases wherein we can consider of it, yet is it manifest that we cannot avoid offence in all.

Indeed, if we take any particular Actions, and in our own thoughts separate it from any particular time, and from the Chain of other particular Actions amongst which it lies, we shall be apt to affirm, that it is such whereof we can think and consider. For take any action by it self, and being aware of it, we can let other things alone, and watch for it particularly ; and when we do so, we are sure to find one time or other when our understandings are disposed for a due deliberation, and fit and able to consider of it. But then we must take notice, that this supposed state of an action, as separate from the Croud of other actions, and determined to no time, is only imaginary and in speculation: For when we come to practise them, though in some we have time and power enough, yet in others we find that we have not. Because either they come in the throng of other Business, and then our Thoughts, being hotly employed upon other Things, cannot so easily be drawn from them upon the sudden to consider of them ; or, if they call upon us when we have time to consider in, yet it happens that our Faculties are heavy and indisposed, and so we exert them still without due consideration. When we think of any particular action by it self therefore, we take it out of the throng of Business wherein it is involved, and out of that time wherein we are indisposed ; and then we are bold to conclude, that we can consider of it. But when we come to practise it, we find that our former speculation supposed false, and that it comes mixt with a croud of other things, or in a time when we have troubled and discomposed Thoughts : So that how subject soever it was to our consideration, in that separate State wherein we imagined it ; yet have we no power to consider of it, in that throng of Business, or indisposition of Faculties, wherein we find it.

And this is verily the case of several of our slips and transgressions. For look upon any of the particulars by it self, and take it asunder from the rest ; and then we shall be confident, that we may bethink our selves and consider of it. But take it, as indeed it lies among the mixt Croud of other actions, or as offered

ferred to our indisposed understandings; and then we shall find, that it slips from us without all consideration.

And this, as I take it, is intended by a great man, when he tells us of sins of pardonable infirmity, that the liberty which they seem to have when we consider them in special and asunder, they indeed have not when we consider them in the general; viz. as involved in the crowd of other actions amongst whom they lie, and altogether. Upon which account of their having in them no choice and consideration, he questions whether they contain that, which can in strictness and propriety of speech be called Sin. And indeed if we understood the same by Sin, which S. John doth, when he gives the explication of Jure Belli, it, *I John 3. 4.* (viz. a (l) rejecting or contemning of the Law, (in which sense only a state of Grace is destroyed by it, and he who is born of God cannot commit it;) they have not. For Men cannot be said to reject and (m) despise a Law, when they do not see and consider of it.

stium praeceptorum, precepta Domini nescientes, &c. — Nemo ignota contemnit, &c. Salv. de Gub. Dei, l. 4. p. 154. & 148. Ed. Oxon.

The liberty then, which we have about those slips and transgressions which we do not know and consider of, is in effect no liberty at all. For we neither chuse the disobedient action it self, nor the cause of it. We do not chuse the sinful action it self, because we do not know or consider of it; Nor do we chuse the inconsideration, because it is not left to our liberty, whether in some of our actions we should be inconsiderate or no.

And since our slips and failings which are thus involuntary by ignorance, cannot be chosen or refused, 'tis plain that they cannot be avoided. And as for all those things which we cannot avoid, it is clear from what has been said above, that the Gospel doth not eternally threaten us, nor will God ever condemn us for them.

But that these slips and transgressions, which being thus unknown, are likewile unchosen, and so unavoidable, are not eternally punishable by the Gospel, but consistent with a state of Grace and Salvation, will further appear if we consider,

First, The Nature of God.

Secondly,

Secondly, The Nature and plain declarations of the Gospel.

i. I say, their consistency with a state of Grace, or God's favour, will plainly appear, if we consider the Nature of God.

God is the most gracious, loving and good natured Being in the whole World. For all the love and kindness that appears among us Men, proceeds from him, and makes us to resemble him, and to be like unto him. Nay, he is not only Loving, but even Love it self. For God, says S. John, is Love, and he who dwells in love dwells in God, and God in him, 1 Joh. 4. 16. And if we will take that character which he gives of himself, it is chiefly made of the various instances of Mercy and Goodness. The Lord, says he to Moses, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth; keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression and sin, Exod. 34. 6, 7. All his delight is in exercising Love, and shewing kindness. For he sweats to us as he lives, that he has no delight at all in the death of a sinner, but had rather that every wicked man should turn from his wickedness, and live, Ezech. 33. 11. He is by no means forward to espy faults, or malicious to misconstrue actions, or prone to admit of provocation, or implacably angry when he is once provoked, or cruelly vindictive when once he is angered. The Lord, saith the Psalmist, is merciful, and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in Mercy. He will not always chide when he has just reason for it, nor keepeth he his anger for ever, Psal. 103. 8, 9. He is not at all of the humour of severe Masters, who are prone to take offence; but, like a most tender Father, he is all benignity and goodness. For if any thing be pitiable, he pities it; if any thing is done amiss, he is slow to wrath, and easie to forgive it. Like as a Father pitith his own Children, even so the Lord pitith them that fear him, Psal. 103. 13. Nay, take this Love and Pity of a Parent, where it is at the highest pitch of all, (viz.) in Mothers towards their most helpless, and so most pitiable Infants; and yet this tenderness of God doth infinitely exceed it. Can a woman forget a sucking Child, that she should not have compassion on the Son of her Womb? Yea, they may forget, says God by his Prophet Isaiah, but I will not forget thee, Isa. 49. 15.

Thus

Thus Loving, Pitiful, and Benign a Nature, do the Scriptures represent God to be. And what they declare of him, all the World have experienced, and found by him. For every impenitent Sinner, is a lasting Monument of his long-suffering and forbearance ; and every prosperous event, and deliverance in the World, is an effect of his boundless love and kindness. He is infinitely good, beyond all desert, nay, in spite of all provocation. For he is loving even unto the unthankful and the evil, making his Sun to shine, and his Rain to fall, and all the other mercies of Life to descend, upon the unjust as well as upon the just ; upon them who contemn, as well as on them who obey him, as our Saviour observed, Matth. 5. 45. Luk. 6. 35. And this he is to such an astonishing degree, as to bestow upon them, not only the blessings of his substance, of his protection, and of his kind providence : But also, what is a wonder to conceive, for their sakes to part with his own well-beloved, and so much the more beloved, because his only begotten Son. For God, as saith the Apostle, hath recommended his Love to us, in that whilst we were sinners and enemies, Christ his Son came from him, and died for us, Rom. 5. 8.

Thus wondrously pitiful, obliging, and good-natured then is God, according to that account which both the Scripture and the Experience of the whole World give of him.

And now let any Man think with himself, how so surpassing kind, and infinitely gracious a nature as this, is like to be affected, with the ignorant, or inconsiderate slips and errors of his Servants ? Will he be utterly offended with them, so as quite to cast them off, and for ever to condemn them ? No certainly, but in great mercy he will pity and bear with them. For these slips, where we do not consider, or where we err and do not understand our Duty, are such instances of Disobedience, as imply nothing of contempt, or of a rebellious Heart; nor have any thing of our will in them. They are clearly involuntary, so that whatsoever the action may appear to be, the will it self is innocent. For the Disobedience cannot be chosen, since it is not understood ; which indeed, in the notion and interpretation of God's Law, makes it not to be that Sin and Disobedience which is threatened, but something else : for that, as S. John tells us, is a rejecting

rejecting or a renouncing of the Law ; whereas in these slips, where we do not see it, 'tis plain that we cannot renounce it.

And since they have nothing in them of a disobedient Will, or of a rebellious Heart ; can any Man think, that so gracious and pitiful a nature should be so highly provoked with them, as for ever to condemn his own *honest Servants*, and *otherwise obedient Children*, upon the account of them ? Whosoever thou art, who art inclined to think thus, let me advise thee to consider a little what *Love* is, and whether it can possibly be guilty of such hard usage. If thou hast any competent degrees of that Love and Pity in thine own Heart, which are so infinite in God, bethink thy self whether thou couldst do it, for that is the way, and thence take thy measures in judging whether or no God can. Doth any *gracious Master* use that severity, towards the oversights and indiscretions of his *honest Servant* ? Or, to rise yet higher, can any *tender Parent* shew that rigor, upon every error and inconsideration of his *heartily obedient Child* ? Is not *every good Man* prone to pass by such offences, as are committed unwillingly against him : and the more he has of goodness, is he not still more forward to pardon and bear with them ? There is no Nature upon Earth that is kind and pitiful, but will make allowances for those things, which proceed from want of understanding, and will pass over those miscarriages, which imply nothing of ill will or ill intention. Every good Man will overlook and connive at them, when they are committed by a perfect Stranger ; but then most of all, when they are incur'd by his own intimate and dear *Acquaintance* or *Relations*, by his own *Servant*, or his own *Child*. This, I say, every good and loving Man doth ; and the more he has of *Love* and *Goodness*, the prouer still he is to do it. For it is a natural and inseparable effect of *Love* or *Charity*, so that in what proportion it increases, in the same must this increase likewise. *Charity*, says S. Paul, *suffereth long, and is kind ; Charity is not easily provoked ; Charity thinketh no evil ; Charity beareth all things, and endureth all things, 1 Cor. 13. 4, 5. 7.* The more therefore that any Man has of *Charity*, the more will he be sure to shew of sufferance, of pity, of endurance of such slips and oversights, as are consistent with an *honest*, and *otherwise obedient heart*.

And

And now, since those *imperfect* measures and degrees of Love, which are found in the hearts of all good Men, are of force more than sufficient, to make them pity, and bear with these slips of honest ignorance and inconsideration: that *infinite height* of Love, which dwells in God Almighty, must needs make him bear with them much rather. For the most loving Man upon Earth, hath not the thousandth part of his affection; the more loving any Men are indeed, the more still they are *like* him; but when they are arrived to the highest pitch of what *humanity* can bear, it is not possible, that they should in any measure *equal* him. And since God's Love is infinitely more, his pity and forbearance towards such pitiable oversights, which is a most natural and necessary effect of it, cannot possibly be less than ours is. No, if no kind-hearted loving man would, it must needs be the greatest injury to an infinitely loving God, to suspect that ever he shoul'd be severe in punishing us for them.

If we ask God's Pardon then, for all our *ignorant*, and *inconsiderate* slips and failings; he is as ready to give, as we are to desire it. And this we are assured of, because it is no more, than we daily experience at the hands of every *loving* and *good natured* Man. For since God cannot be *equalled*, and much less *out done* by the very best of us in kindness; what the weak Love of a man doth every day effect, that certainly the infinite Love of God will effect more abundantly. And as for this way of arguing, it is no more than our Saviour himself uses in another case, when he shews that God will give good gifts unto his Children at their request, because all earthly Parents do it unto theirs daily; when as yet their Love, which makes them grant the good things asked so readily, is infinitely exceeded by the Love of God, Luk. 11. 13.

Thus from the consideration of God's Nature, it plainly appears, that those slips and transgressions, which are committed *involuntarily* and *unavoidably*, because *ignorantly* and *inconsiderately*, do not put us out of a state of Grace, but *consist* with it.

Which will appear yet further, if we consider,

Secondly, The Nature, and plain declarations of the Gospel.

As for the Nature of the Gospel, S. Paul affirms plainly, that it is of such a temper and genius, as tends to in-

generate

generate in the Professors of it, not a *Spirit of Fear and Slavery*, which they are possessed with who serve a rigorous and austere *Lord*; but a *Spirit of cheerfulness and free Confidence*, such as they enjoy, who serve a gracious and a loving *Father*. For he tells the *Jews at Rome*, that in *embracing of Christ's Gospel*, they had not received again the *Spirit of Bondage*, unto the possessing of their Hearts with Fears and Scruples; but the *Spirit of Adoption*, whereby they were emboldned, with the cheerfulness and confidence of Sons, to cry unto God, *Abba, Father*, Rom. 8. 15. But now if the Condition of the *Gospel* it self were so severe, as that, according to the *Tenour of it*, these unavoidable *Slips*, of Inconsideration and Ignorance, should set God and us at *Enmity*; no Christian Man could ever look upon God, as upon his tender *Father*, with this *Spirit of Filial Freedom*; but must needs fear and dread him, as his angry and avenging *Lord*. And the *Gospel* requiring more of us under the *Forfeiture of God's Favour*, than any *Man* among us is able to perform; it could not minister to ingenerate in us a *Spirit of cheerful Confidence* towards him; but quite contrary to that, to fill us with inextricable Doubts and Fears of him. As for these *Slips of Ignorance* then, which cannot be avoided, we may be assured, that according to the *Gospel*, they never can be punish'd; for the *New Covenant* must bear with them, because it cannot ingender in us this *Spirit of Adoption, and Filial Confidence*, without such *Forbearance*.

And then, as for the *Declarations of the Gospel*, in this Matter they are very clear also. For, besides those Places that are mentioned above, which shew clearly that *no involuntary Sins are damning*, and then certainly that our *Slips of Ignorance* are not, seeing they have the greatest Plea to involuntariness of any: I say, besides those, this Consistence of our unknown and unconsidered *Slips*, will be evident from other Places also.

And for this, to seek no further, St. James's Rule is full and plain. *To him that knoweth*, or, which comes to the same thing, if he will may know to do good, and doth it not, *to him it is Sin*, Jam. 4. 17. If then we have no other Sins to answer for, but only thele of Inconsideration and Ignorance, we are guilty of none, wherefore we shall be condemn'd, these unknown Sins not being of that number.

And indeed, St. James's Rule is verified by Scripture-Instances. For holy David fell through Inconsideration and Unadvisedness, in sundry things; as Particularly in an inconsiderate despairing of God's Mercy, Psal. 31. 22. and in an excessive sorrow for his Son Absalom, 2 Sam. 18. 33. and ch. 19. 4. But notwithstanding these, and all other his unadvised Slips, he was all the while, a *Man after God's own Heart*, a person upright and acceptably obedient still.

Zacharias and Elizabeth were surprised, no question, as well as other People are, into several Slips and inconsiderate Follies. For one we have mentioned, even in that short Account which the Scriptures have given us of them, and that is this; viz. that at the first hearing of the joyful Message of the Angel, he is *incredulous*, and is punished with Dumbness for his *unbelief*, Luke 1. 18. 20. But yet this, and his other involuntary Failings of like nature, come not into the account of his Sins and Disobedience when God speaks of him; for notwithstanding these their InfirmitieS, of both of them we are told, that they were *righteous*, and that before God, walking in all the Commandments of the Lord blameless, Luke 1. 6.

As for this sort of Slips and Transgressions therefore, (viz.) our Sins of Ignorance and Inconsideration; we see plainly that they never will be charged upon us to our condemnation. They do not destroy a Saint, or put us out of a State of Grace and Salvation, but consist with it. This must needs be true, for they must be pardoned, because they cannot be avoided. Besides, the Love and Pitifulness of God's Nature infers, and the very Temper and Genius of his Gospel supposes it; the Apostle plainly and fully declares it; and from God's own Mouth we are told of several of his dearest Saints who have experienced the Truth of it. By all which it appears, that so long as we are guilty of no other Slips but such as these, we are safe in God's Favour, and secure of his Promises; we shall be accepted by him, although we live and die in them.

And thus at length it appears, what Sins are truly and innocently involuntary; (viz.) those which are acted ignorantly and unwittingly: And that they do not unsaint a Man, or destroy his State of Grace and Salvation, but consist with it.

C H A P. V.

Of these involuntary and consistent Sins particularly ; and of the first Cause of Innocent Involuntariness, (viz.) Ignorance.

BUT in regard this *Confidence* of our ignorant and unconsidered Slips, is a matter of so great account, in the quieting and comforting of troubled and fearful Consciences ; I will yet proceed to enquire of it more distinctly ; and to shew what particular Ignorances those are, which will cause that innocent Involuntariness, which Christ's Gospel doth not punish, as has been already shewn, but graciously dispense with.

To him that knows to do good, saith St. James, and doth it not, to him tis Sin, Jam. 4. 17. And the reason why it is so is this, because that Sin, which a Man knows and sees, he wills and chuses ; but if he commit Sin, when he sees it not, it is not imputed to him for a Sin, because it is not chosen by him.

That we may clearly understand then, what Ignorance renders any Sin involuntary, and therefore unpunishable, it is very proper to enquire, what Knowledge is necessary unto Choice, and fit to make any Sin to be esteemed voluntary and chosen.

Now to our Choice of any Sin, there is a two-fold Knowledge necessary.

First, An habitual and general Knowledge, that the Action is sinful.

Secondly, An actual Use and Exercise of that Knowledge, in a particular Animadverence, and express thinking upon what we know ; which is Consideration.

Both these, are necessary to a chosen Sin ; for we must both know an Action to be a Sin, and also actually bethink our selves, and consider of its sinfulness, before we can be said to chuse the Sin, and wilfully to disobey in it.

1. Before we can be said to chuse the sinfulness of any Action, it is necessary that we know habitually and in the general, that the Action whensover it is committed, is sinful.

I call that an habitual and general Knowledge, when we are not to learn of any sinful Action, that there is a Law that forbids it, nor are in any Doubts or Darkness in our own thoughts, whether it be a Sin or no. But if it is proposed to our Minds, they are already resolved about it, and need not further to enquire of it ; they know and judge it to be a Sin when they are asked the Question, and that is their standing Opinion and fixt Perswasion. And this Knowledge, because it is no more of one particular Action than of another, I call General ; and because it is fixt and permanent, having grown into a lasting Impression and habitual Judgment of the Mind, I call an habitual Knowledge.

Now, that we may be said to chuse to sin and disobey in any particular Action, it is necessary that we have this general and habitual Knowledge of its sinfulness. For if we do not understand that, although we do chuse the Action, yet we cannot be esteemed to chuse the Sin, since our Will may be all the while innocent and obedient, and ready to refuse the Action, if it were made to see that it is sinful. We can have no choice of that, whereof we have no Apprehension ; for the Will, as it is truly said, is a blind Faculty, and can chuse nothing till it be represented, and proposed to it by the Understanding. So that if our Minds are in Darkness about any Action, and have no Knowledge of its being forbidden ; our Wills can have no share in chusing of the Sin, but since it was unknown, it must be also involuntary and unchosen.

But besides this general, and habitual Knowledge, of the sinfulness of any Action ; there is moreover necessarily required to our Choice of it,

2. An Actual Use and Exercise of that Knowledge, in a particular Animadvergence, and express thinking upon what we know, which is Consideration. For there is no Knowledge, that directs and influences our Choice, further than we actually attend to it, and consider of it ; but if at any time we did not think of it, it is all one as if we did not know it. Nothing is a Motive to our Will, further than it is heeded and attended to at the time of willing ; and unless we see and consider of it then, when we are to chuse upon it. For in this Case, the Civilians Maxim is very true, * That which doth not appear to be, is of no more account than if really it were not at all.

* Non apparentis,
Et non existentis,
eadem est
ratio.

That any Sin then may be said to be willed and chosen by us, it is necessary that it occur to our Thoughts, and be present to our Minds at the time of chusing of it. For if we transgress when we do not think of it, our Heart may be innocent all the while, and our Will incur no disobedience at all, since if we did but consider of the Sin, we would by no means embrace, but utterly refuse it. So that all that can be charged upon us in such Cases, is only the *Haste* and *Error* of our *Understandings*, but not any *Rebellion* in our *Wills*; for our Heart is good, altho' the outward Action appear to be evil.

Now since both a general Knowledge, and a particular Consideration, are necessary in every wilful and chosen Sin; the involuntariness of any Transgressions may arise from the want of either of them. So that those Sins are justly reputed to be involuntary and unchozen, which proceed,

1. From the want of the general Knowledge, as in all Sins of Ignorance.

2. From the want of particular Animadvergence, as in all Sins of Inconsideration.

1. The first Cause of an innocent and pardonable Involuntariness, is Ignorance of our Duty; when we venture to do what God forbids, because we do not know that he has forbidden it.

And this Ignorance may enter upon two accounts, either,

First, From our Ignorance, or Mistake of the Law it self, when we know not that God has made any such Law, as our present Action is a Transgression of: Or,

Secondly, From our Ignorance, or Mistake of the thing it self, which the Law enjoyns or forbids, when we know not that our present Action comes under that, which in the known Law is enjoyned, or forbidden.

Thus, for instance, a Man may sin by Backbiting, Censoriousness, &c. either because he knows not, that Backbiting and Censoriousnes are things prohibited; or because he know's not that what he doth is Centuring and Backbiting. And either way the Error may be confined to his Understanding, and the Transgression be nowhere else but in his Mind, but may not reach his Heart or Will at all. For he would neither utter the Backbiting nor Censorious Word, if he knew that it were against

God's Will ; but for this very Reason he ventures on them because he knows not that *Actions of that kind are forbidden*, or that *this is of that forbidden kind of Actions*.

First, The first sort of Ignorance, which can effect an innocent involuntariness, is our Ignorance of the general Law which makes a Duty, when we know not that God has given any such Commandment, as our present Action is a Transgression of.

All the Laws of Christ are not known by every Man, but some are ignorant of one or other of them. Nay there is no Man, how perfect soever his Knowledge of them be at present, but at some time he did not know them. He had a Time of Learning, before he attained to a compleat understanding of them. For our Knowledge of them, as of all things else, is gradual ; it goes on by Steps, and from the Notice of one proceeds to the notice of another. So that even the wise and learned themselves, do not at all times see all those things which Christ has required of them, but pass through a long time of Ignorance, before they arrive at that Pitch of compleat Knowledge.

But then there are others, who have neither Abilities nor Opportunities to know every particular Law of Christ in a longer Time, nor some, it may be in their whole lives. For how many Men are there in the World, whose Understanding is slow, and who come to apprehend things with great Difficulty ? And as their Faculties are narrow, so are their Opportunities very small. For although they are most heartily willing and desirous to see all that God has required of them, that they may keep and practise it ; yet their Education has been so poor, that they cannot read it ; the Place which God's Providence has allotted for them, is so destitute, that they are far from them who should instruct them in it ; their Condition in the World is so subject and dependent, that they have little Time and Leisure of their own wherein to seek Instruction ; and their Apprehensions are so slow, and their Memories so frail, that it is not much of it at a time, which they can retain, when they have got the freedom of it. They are Servants, or poor Men, and must be working for their Bodily Maintenance, when they should be in Search of Spiritual Doctrine.

Indeed, through the infinite Goodness and gracious Providence of God, it seldom happens, if at all, that they who have *honest Hearts*, which stand ready and prepared to obey his Laws, in *Christian Countries* live long without the means of Understanding them. For, although they themselves cannot read; yet, if they desire it, and seek after it, they cannot miss of *Christian People*, and of *Christian Guides*, who will be most ready and willing to instruct them. So that no Man amongst them, whose Heart is first desirous of it, can ever be supposed to want all Opportunities of coming to the Knowledge of his Duty.

But then we must consider, that *Knowledge of our Duty*, is a Word of a great *Latitude*, and has many *Parts* and *Degrees* in it. For our Duty takes up a great compass, no less than all the *particular Laws*, which are contained under the *general Precepts*, of *Piety, Sobriety, Justice, Charity, Peaceableness*. And although every Man's Opportunities will serve him to know *some*, and to understand the most *general* and *comprehensive*; yet will they not enable him to understand *all*. Our whole Duty, 'tis true, both towards *God* and *Men*, is comprehended in that *one Law of Love*, which as *St. Paul* says, is the *fulfilling of the Law*, Rom. 13. 10. So that if every Man had but the *Wit* and *Parts*, the *Time* and *Leisure* to make *Deductions*, and to run this general Law into as many *particular Instances* and *Expressions* as it would reach to, in the *Knowledge* of that *one Law*, which is soon learned, he might have it within his own Power when he would to understand all the rest, which are contained within the compass of those *two great Branches*, and *general Heads of Duty*. But alas! it is not every *common Head*, nor nor very *many* even of the *Wise* and *Learned*, who are so *quick* and *ready*, so *full* and *comprehensive*, in making *Inferences*. But they have need to be shewed the *Particulars*, and are not able of themselves to collect them, by a *tedious* and *comprehensive Train of Consequences*. So that even when they have learned their *Obligation*, to the most *Material* and *General Precepts* of the *Gospel*; yet may there be several *Particular ones* still remaining, which not only the *Poor* and *Ignorant*, but they also, who think themselves to be more *Wise* and *Learned*, do not see, and take themselves to be obliged by.

As for the crying Sins, of *Perjury, Adultery, Murther, Theft, Oppression, Lying, Slander*, and the like, which even *natural Conscience*, without the Assistance and Instruction of *Christ's Gospel*, would be afraid of; these, 'tis true, no Man, who is grown up to *Years of common Reason and Discretion*, can be ignorant of, and yet be innocent. But then besides these, there are many other Sins, which are not of so black a *Die*, or of so *mischievous a Nature*, which many of them who profess the *Gospel*, through the *littleness of their Abilities, their Leisure, or Opportunities*, do not understand to be sinful. Their *Consciences* are not afraid of them, nor check them, either before, or after they have committed them. For how many are there of the Professors of *Christ's Religion*, who never think of being called to an account for *Lasciviousness and Uncleanness, for Passionateness and Uncourteousness, for Backbiting and Censoriousness, for Disturbing the publick Peace, and speaking evil of Dignities, for not speaking well of an Enemy, or not praying for him, or for the like Breaches of several other particular Laws, of Christ's *Gospel**, whereby at the last Day we must all be judged? Alas! they know not of any such Laws, nor ever think of being tryed by them. In the *Gospel* 'tis very true, they are all recorded, and by *Christ's Ministers* at one time or other they are all proclaimed, and by *some exemplary good Men*, although God knows they are very few, in one Place or other they are duly *practised*; but yet for all this, a great many Christian Men are ignorant of some or other of them. For either they cannot read the *Scriptures* where they are mentioned, or they have not Opportunity to hear the Preacher when every one of them particularly is taught, or they are not in Sight and Observation of those Patterns of Piety by whom they are practised; so that still they do not understand them. Or, if at last they do come to know them, yet is it some time first, and they acted several times against them, before they saw that they were bound by them.

So that still we see there is room in the World for *Sins of Ignorance*, from Men's *not knowing of the Law* which they sin against. Several particular Laws, which lie more remote, and are not so plainly of *natural Obligation*, nor startled at by *natural Conscience*, are oftentimes, and by

by many persons transgressed, because they do not perceive themselves to be bound by them.

And as for this ignorance of one Branch or other of their Duty, it is some mens *unhappiness* rather than their *fault*; they do not so truly chuse it, as through an unchosen necessity fall under it. For it is necessary to *all* people, whether they will or no, for *some* time; and to *some*, for *all* their lives.

It is necessary, I say, to *all* people, whether they will or no, for *some* time. For by the very constitution of our Nature, which is before any thing of our own chusing, we are born ignorant: the mind of man being, as Aristotle compares it, like a *blank paper*, wherein is nothing written. No man ever since *Adam* came into the World in the free exercise of his understanding, and with his perfect wits about him. And when, after some time, we do *begin* to know, yet even then is all our knowledge *gradual*, and by little and little. For we first learn one thing, and then another, and so by several steps attain at last to a competent pitch of knowledge. When therefore any man doth begin to know God's Will, and to discern his Laws; yet is it not possible that he should understand them all at once: but some of them every man must needs be ignorant of, till he has had time to learn and know them all.

To *some* People, I say, it is necessary for their *whole* lives, to their dying Day they do not arrive to the understanding of some things, which God has required of them. And that because they wanted either *abilities* or *opportunities*, neither of which is of their own chusing. They are of a *slow understanding*, and have not those means of *instruction*, or that *time* and *leisure* to attend upon it, which others have. And that by reason of their *place* and *low condition* in the World, wherein it was God's pleasure, and not their own, to dispose of them.

But now this ignorance of some or other of Christ's Laws, being thus *involuntary*, it must likewise be *innocent*. For there is no damning sin and dilobedience, but in our own choice; so that as long as the heart is true to God, he will not be at enmity for any thing else which may seem to be against him,

And since our ignorance it self is innocent, the sinning upon it will never be rebellious and damning. For the disobedience is not any way chosen, neither in it self nor in its Cause ; we do not chuse the sin, because we do not see that the action is sinful, nor do we chuse not to see it, because we cannot help it. But where there is no choice, there will be no condemnation. So that the action which is done against the Law, shall not be punished by the Law, if we were thus innocently ignorant of the Law whereof it was a transgression.

And that it will not, is plain. For God never did, nor ever will condemn any man, for the transgression of a particular Law, before he has had all due means and necessary opportunities, such as may be sufficient to any honest and willing heart, to understand it. The Jewish Law obliged none, but those whom it was proclaimed to, who had the advantages of being instructed out of it. It is they only, says St. Paul, who have sinned in or under the Law, who shall be judged by the Law, Rom. 2. 12.

Rom. 5.13. The Law of Christ did not bind men, until they had sufficient means and opportunities of knowing it, and being convinced by it. If ye were blind, or wanted abilities, says our Saviour to the Pharisees, you should have no sin, Joh. 9. 41. And again, If I had not given them sufficient opportunities of knowing, come, and spoken unto them, they had not had sin; but now since I have, they have no cloak, or no * pretence or excuse for their sin. Nay, If I had not given them all due means of conviction, and done among them works which no other man had done, they had not had sin still, John 15. 22, 24.

These slips of honest Ignorance of our Duty, are no more punished under the Gospel of Christ, than they were under the Law of Moses. For Christ our High Priest, doth atone for them by virtue of his Sacrifice of himself; as well as the Aaronical Priest, in behalf of the ignorantly offending Jews, made an atonement for them by his sin-offering, Levit. 4. 2, 3, &c. This St. Paul tells us, in his comparison of Christ's Priesthood, with that of the line of Aaron. In his interceding to God, and offering Sacrifice for sins, he can have compassion on the ignorant, Heb. 5. 2.

Ignorance therefore of the general Law which makes any thing a Duty, so long as it is not wilful and affected by

* πρόφε-
αγία.

by us, through the merits of Christ's Sacrifice, and the Grace of his Gospel, renders those offences, which we commit under it, pardonable transgressions ; such as do not destroy a state of Grace, but consist with it.

And this is the very determination which St. Cyprian gives, in the Case of *transgressing our Lord's Institution*, in the participation of the *Lord's Supper*. For some *Churches* in those Days, were wont to make use of *Water* instead of *Wine* ; in which way of communicating, several of them had been educated and brought up, having received it *ignorantly* and in the *simplicity* of their hearts, as they had done other things of their Religion, from the *practice* and *tradition* of their *Forefathers*. Now, as for the *usage* it self, St. Cyprian declares plainly, that it is a *breach of Duty*, and a *custom* very *dangerous* and *sinful*. * It is, says he, *against our Lord's Command*, who plainly bid us do what he did ; (i. e.) *make use of Bread and Wine*, which were those things that he used. † The Blood of Christ is not offered, if there be no Wine in the Cup to represent it ; and how can we ever hope to drink Wine with him in his Father's Kingdom, if we drink it not at his Table here on Earth ? So that in the good Father's judgment, the *Duty* was *express*, the *Law binding*, and the *Transgression dangerous*. But yet,

as for those innocent and well-meaning Souls who had no opportunity to be told of it, but were bred up in a contrary way, under the authority of a tradition that opposed it, and therefore in the simplicity of their hearts were ignorant of it : * They, says he, even whilst they do trans-

ignoranter, vel simpliciter non hoc observavit ac tenuit, quod nos Dominus facere exemplo & magisterio suo docuit : potest simplicitati ejus de indulgentia Domini venia concedi ; nobis vero non voterit ignorari, qui nunc à Domino admoniti & instruēti sumus, ut calicem Dominicum vino mixtum, secundum quod Dominus obtulit, offeramus — agentes gratias, quod dum instruit de futuro quid facere debeamus, de præterito ignoravit quod simpliciter erravimus. Cypr. Ep. ad Cæcil. quæ est Ed. Rigal. 63.

* Invenimus non à nobis observari quod mandatum est, nisi eadem que Dominus fecit, nos quoque faciamus, & calicem pari ratione miscentes à Divino Magisterio non recedamus.

† Apparet sanguinem Christi non offerri, si deest vinum calici, nec Sacrificium Domini cum legitima Sanctificatione celebrari, nisi Oblatio & Sacrificium nostrum responderet Passioni. Quomodo olim de Creatura vitis novum vinum cum Christo in Regno Patris bibemus, si in Sacrificio Dei Patris & Christi vinum non offerimus, ne calicem Domini Dominica traditio ne miscemus ?

* Si quis de antecesis soribus nostris, vel

grefs, shall go unpunished. Their simplicity and ignorance shall excuse them, whilst our knowledge will certainly condemn us; they shall be pardoned, because they could not know it, but we shall be punished, because when we might have known and kept it, if we would, we neglected and despised it. In the mean time, herein is God's great mercy shown to us, and for this should we return most hearty thanks to him that even now, when he plainly instructs us in that, which under pain of his displeasure we are to do hereafter; he, at the same time, pardons us for all that, which through simplicity and honest ignorance, we have already done.

And as this innocent unwill'd ignorance of the Law it self, excuses all those transgressions, which we incur by reason of it; so doth

2. The second sort of ignorance, (*viz.*) the ignorance of the thing it self which the Law enjoys and forbids, when we know not, that our present action is included in it, or meant by it.

God's Laws, as all others, run in general terms, and never go to reckon up all particular actions which are with them or against them, but leave the judging and discerning of that to our own selves. He tells us, that *theft* and *revenge* are sinful; but leaves us to inform our selves, what actions are *thievish* and *revengeful*. He teaches us, that *Covetousness* is forbidden; but he puts us to see of the action before us that it be *covetous*; and the same he doth in every other Law. For that which he expressly mentions, is the general name of the action which he forbids; but as for the particular application, he leaves that to our own selves.

* τέτοδη
τὸν αἰτίον
τοῖς ἀν-
θρώποις

πάνταν τὴν
χακῶν, τὸ
ταῖς προ-
λήψεσι
ταῖς κοι-
ναῖς μη
δύνασθαι
φαρμολέγει
ταῖς ὅτι
μέρες. Ar-
rian. Com-
ment. in
Epist. lib.
3 cap. 26.

Now here is a wide place, for the ignorance, and errors of all sorts of men. For what Arian says of happiness and misery, is equally true of sin and duty: * in the application of the acknowledged notion, or law, to particular things, or actions, is the cause of all our evils; here the great scene of ignorance in morals, the field of doubting and dispute lies. The great controversies which men have, either in their own thoughts, or with God's Ministers, is not so much whether evil-speaking, back-biting, censoriousness, unpeaceableness, drunkenness, sensuality, or any such prohibited vice, be a sin. For as to that, the Law is express, the very word is mentioned in it, and he that reads or hears the Law, if he attend to what he reads

reads or hears, cannot but observe and understand it. But the great doubt is, whether this or that particular action, which they are about to commit, be indeed a censorious, an unpeaceable, a sensual, or a drunken action.

And the Reasons of this are several. For,

1. In some actions, although we know the general Law, yet we know not whether the particular action be comprehended under it; because what is forbidden in the Law, differs from what is innocent, not in kind, but only in degree. For a great part of our appetites and actions, are neither determined to good nor ill in their whole nature, but only as they are in certain measures. The use of meats and drinks within due bounds is harmless, but beyond that 'tis intemperance; the desire and search of money by innocent ways, in a moderate degree is lawful, but above that 'tis covetousness; the modest pursuit of honour and promotion is innocent, but when it exceeds, it is ambition; to have just thoughts of a mans self is allowable, but to be puffed up with over-high conceits is pride; and so it is in several other instances. A great many passions and actions, are not always sinful, but so far only as they are deficient or exceed. Which holding true of several virtues and vices, made Aristotle lay it down as a part of the nature of virtue in general, that it is something consisting in * mediocrity; and agreeably, that vice is something consisting in defectiveness or excess.

Now the actions which are prohibited by several Laws, not coming under the compass of the Laws in their whole natures, but only when they are arrived to certain measures and degrees; herein, after we have known the general Law, lies the difficulty and unresolvedness, whether or no the present action falls under it. For it is a very hard thing, and, it may be, impossible to any humane understanding, to fix the exact bounds and utmost limits of virtue and vice, to draw a line precisely between them, and tell to a tittle how many degrees are innocent, and the just place where the excess begins. Here the Wise and Learned themselves are at a loss, and much more the rude and ignorant; so that in Laws of this nature, they may many times mistake their sin for their liberty and allowance, and go beyond the innocent degree, when they do not know it.

2. In other actions, altho' we do not know the general Law, yet many times we are ignorant of the present actions being comprehended under it, because the Law is not absolute and unlimited, but admits of several exceptions, whereof we may mistake the present action to be one.

The great and general Laws of Christ, as of any other Legislator, have several cases, which are not included in the general name of the duty enjoined, or of the sin prohibited in the Law, but are exempt from it. What Duty is enjoined in more universal words, than that of *Peace*? But yet in several cases, we not only may, but out of Duty must nourish contention: For we are bid to contend earnestly for the Faith, which was once delivered to the Saints, Jude verse 3. We must be concerned for God and Religion, when others concern themselves against them. We are not tamely and unaffectedly to see God's Laws cancelled, or our Countries Peace disturbed; but must strive and contend, with as much wise zeal and active courage, and with infinitely more honour and peace of mind, to maintain and defend, than ill men do to oppose and destroy them. Again, what Law is delivered in fuller and plainer terms, than that of *forgiving injuries*? But yet there are several cases, wherein we may justly seek amends for them. For we may bring a malefactor to condign punishment, or an injurious man to restitution; and the like is observable of other Laws.

Now those actions which come under the general name of the sin prohibited, not being forbidden universally, but some being excepted; here again is room for ignorance and mistake about the particular action, after we have known the general Duty. For we may take that to be a case excepted, which is indeed a case prohibited; and venture upon an action as an exempted liberty, which in truth and reality is a forbidden sin.

3. In other actions, altho' we know the general Law, yet many times we are in ignorance about the particular action, because there are several actions which are not directly forbidden by any Law, but are always innocent and indifferent, unless when some Law takes hold of them indirectly. The action is usually allowed, except when it is

is committed in such a manner, as that the transgression of some Law accompanies it. There is no Law against it self, but only against some thing that is annexed to it. For God has not given a particular Law for every sort of actions, but has left us in several to governour selves by other motives and inducements, viz. of pleasure, honour or interest, and not by virtue of a Commandment. But altho' these unrestrained actions are no matter of a particular Law, which expreſſly names them, and directly binds us up to one ſide, either in chufing or refuſing the whole kind of them: yet in our uſe and exercise of them, they may at one time or other fall under the power of ſeveral. For, to illustrate this by an instance, There is no Law which directly and expreſſly, either enjoyns or forbids us to play at cards, or other paſtime; but yet ſeveral Laws commanding or forbidding other things, may be tranſgressed in our uſe of them. For even in a game at cards we may incur the ſin of Covetouſneſſ, by our immoderate deſire of money; the ſin of Injuſtice, by our endeavours to cheat and cozen; and the ſins of Paſſionatenesse, Impatieneſſe and Unpeaceablenesse, by our repining at our ill luck, our quarrelling and contending; and the like might be shewn in other caſes.

Now ſeeing ſeveral actions, which in themſelves are thus innocent, and under no Law; may yet at one time or other, by reaſon of ſome thing concomitant, and annexed to them, be indirectly a tranſgression of a Law: here is ſtill a further reaſon, why, when we know the general Law, we yet are ignorant of our preſent actions being forbidd by it. For the Law doth not look upon it directly, but takes a compaſſ before it comprehends it. They lie not in the ſame line, and ſo one may be partiſularly ſeen and conſidered of, and much more known and understood in the general, without ſeeing of the other...

4. In other actions, although we know the General Law which we ſin againſt, yet we do not believe, that our preſent action is included in it, or forbidd by it, becauſe another Law happens to claſſe with it in ſome iſtance, and ſeems to enjoyn and juſtifie what we do, althoſh that be tranſgressed by it. For it often happens in a Christian Life, that two Laws interfere, and command diſtinctly in the ſame iſtance. Our Duty is at variance

variance with it self, so that when we pursue obedience in one particular, another is disobeyed by us. How obvious is it for him, who would avoid the *passion* and *impatience* of discourse, to fall into a fault of the opposite extream, by *sullenness* and *unsociable moroseness*? What is more common, than for men to be over-censorious and *troublousmely rigid in conversation*, who aim at nothing but to be *severely virtuous*, and *piously austere*? It is an obvious error for any, whilst they intend a charitable feasting, to run into some *small intemperance*; for *inoffensiveness* and *kind compliance*, to justle out the due *severities* of *reproof*; for *severity* to exceed into *ungentleness*; for *affection* to degenerate into *fondness*; and, which is the great instance of error upon this score, for our *zeal for God*, to disturb the *peace*, and transgress the bounds of *charity* towards men.

I do not mean such *zeal*, as transgresses notorious and weighty *Laws*, for *disputable*, nay, even for *clear and evident Doctrines and Opinions*. A *zeal* that will stick at nothing, but bursts through all God's Commands to propagate an Article, and ventures upon *murders*, *tumults*, *lying*, *slander*, *wars*, *blood-shed*, and other instances of a most notorious and damning disobedience in practice, to promote an *Orthodox belief*. For these are such instances of offence, as no honest heart can over-look; but if a man has not *debauched his Conscience*, they must needs appear to be of a *frightful guilt*, and of a *damning nature*. Any *virtuous temper* must abhor, and every *good conscience* utterly condemn them. So that no man of an honest and obedient heart, can ever hope to serve God by them, or think any pretence whatsoever of force enough to justifie the practice of them.

But then there are other sins which are of a *smaller guilt*, or of a *more alterable nature*, such as either are not *greatly*, or not *always evil*; but only when they happen to have *ill effects*, or are in an *exorbitant degree*; and these an *eager zeal* doth many times drive men to, and they think all is *obedience*, even when they proceed so far in them as to *disobey*. Mens *zeal* for those *Opinions* which they account *Religious*, transports them daily into *estrangedness of mind* and *fierceness of behaviour*, into *passionate disputes*, and *disparaging reflections*, into *animosities* and *disquietness*, and a *great breach* of *mutual charity* and *love*.

And

And all these, though really they are Breaches of their Duty, are looked upon as *innocent*, nay, *praiseworthy*; they judge them to come from an honest Principle, and therefore doubt not but that they will end in an happy Reward. The Duty of pious Zeal is the Spring, although it contract much of human Passion in the Passage; and that they hope will be acceptable to God, which goes under cover of a Commandment, and comes to serve him.

And this was the Case, in that hot and sinful Contest, which happened betwixt those two great Lights of Virtue and Learning, Epiphanius and Chrysostome. For it was a *Zeal for publick Good*, and against such things as were likely, in their Opinion, to *corrupt the Faith, or disturb the Peace, or pervert the Practice of the Church*, which transported them into that warm Contention, that ended in an uncharitable Breach and passionate Imprecation; when * Epiphanius wrote to Chrysostome, That he hoped he would lose his See, and never die a Bishop; and Chrysostom replied to him, That he hoped he would come to an untimely End and never return safe into his own City.

* οὐ φέγγεται,
Δεφέροντος,
οὐ μέν ἐδί-
λωσεν Ιω-
άννην ἐλ-

πιζώ σὲ μὴ ἀποθανεῖν δησκοπού· οὐδὲ Ιωάννης αἰτεῖται, εἰδὲ ἐγὼ σὲ τῆς σῆς
δημόσιας πόλεως. Sozom. hist. eccl. lib. 8. c. 15. Another Instance of this we have in Tertullian, who through a Zeal for a severe virtue, which he thought was more strictly enjoyned among the Montanists than the Catholicks, was erroneously ensnared into the Montanists Separation, and into a sinful Neglect of the Catholick Communion. Concerning whose Opinions which led him into that criminal Breach, Rigaltius says thus, — *Hereses Tertulliani quæ dicuntur, e& vix aliud præcipiebant, quam martyria fortiora, Jejunia sicciora, Castimoniam sanctiorem, nuptias scilicet unas aut nullas. In quibus quicquid peccavit, id omne virtutis amore vehementiore peccasse videatur.* Rigalt. Observ. in lib. Tertull. ad Praxeum.

And a real Transgression of one Law, being thus, through the Clashing and Interfering of two Laws of Christ, in fair Appearance an Act of laudable and necessary Obedience to another: Here again is a further Reason, why, when we know the Law which we sin against, we yet think that our Action is not sinful, because we take it to be justified, nay, what is more, commanded by another.

5. In other Actions, although we know the General Law which is transgressed, yet we take our present Acti-

on not to be comprised under it, because of some Prejudices which exempt it. There is oft times a clashing and interfering of Laws and Opinions, as well as of one Law with another. For Men entertain several Perswasions, which are inconsistent with some Instances of Duty, and that make them look upon themselves in those cases not to be obliged by them. Their Opinion justifies one thing, when the Law commands another ; it contracts its force, and evacuates its Obligation ; and makes them venture confidently upon several Actions, whereby the Law is transgressed, by making them first to believe, that in those Actions they are not obliged by it.

And because this is so universal a Cause of Ignorance and Error, and so powerful in making Men both overlook God's plain Laws, and, even whilst they consider of them, evacuate and undermine them ; I think it very needful to be more full in its Explication, and shall therefore state it more largely in the next Chapter.

C H A P. VI.

Of Prejudice.

A Prejudice is a *false Principle*, or such a former *false Judgment*, whereby we afterwards examine and judge amiss in others. For all our rational Judgment of things is by Principle, when we determine of the Truth or Falshood of such, as are *suspicious* and *doubtful*, by their Agreeableness or Repugnance to such others, as we think are *true* and *certain*. So that those Opinions, which first take possession of our Minds, are the *Rules* and *Standards*, which all others, that seek to enter after, must be tryed by.

And if these Anticipations of Judgment are *true* and *solid*, or if they are taken up upon good Reason, and mature Examination ; they are right *Maxims of Knowledge*, and *Principles of Understanding*. But if they are *false* and *faulty*, and entertain'd upon weak Grounds, through Haste and Rashness ; they are *false Rules* and *Principles of Error*. And because they *binder us in our after-Judgments*, making

making us judge amiss of things, as they needs must do who judge according to a false Measure, they are called *Prejudices*.

And these are a most general Cause of the Errors and Ignorances of Men. For we are ignorant many times of our Duty, and mistake a sinful Action for a lawful Liberty, when no want of plainness in God's Revelations, or in the Nature of Virtues and Vices, nor any want of Opportunity to be told of them ; but some of these Hindrances of our own Minds, are the Causes of our Ignorance. Those very Duties, which are brought clear and open to our Understandings, are sometimes either *not at all*, or very *maimedly* and *imperfectly* understood, because our Minds are blocked up by a contrary Belief, which makes us not to attend to them, but either wholly to over-look them, or in great measure to evacuate and undermine them. For one Error begets another in *Practice*, as well as in *Speculation* ; so that if we have an erroneous Belief, which contradicts our Duty, it is but rational that we should erroneously evacuate or impair our Duty likewise.

To understand this, we are to take notice, that any Truths or Duties, which are proposed to our Understandings, have a very different Success when they are offered to a *free* and *empty*, from what they have when they are proposed to a *prejudiced* and *prepossessed* Mind. For with the *former*, any Duty is sufficiently qualified to beget a right Understanding and Beliefs, if it be *proposed to them plainly and in clear Words* ; but with the *latter* a plain Proposal of the Duty is not enough, but besides that, there is need withal of a *Confutation of the erroneous Prejudices which make against it*.

1. To a Mind that is *open* and *free*, not incensed by any repugnant Lust, nor misled by any contrary Opinion ; *nothing more is needful to make it understand and believe its Duty, than to have a Revelation of it from God in plain Words, and a clear and evident Proposal*. For such Men are ready and willing, not only to hear and believe what God says, but also to take his Meaning from the obvious and simple Sense of *his own Words*, and not from any Agreement with their own *bye-inclinations* and *prepossessions*. They are not biased by any Lust, or made a Party by any Opinions, which should make them lean to

one Sense, but are unconcerned on one Side or another : And therefore they have no Temptation to pervert God's Words and misinterpret them, and to make them speak, not what according to their usual and open Sense they should do, but what, to gratifie their private Lusts or Opinions, they wish they might do. So that he need do nothing more to give them a right Apprehension of his Will, than to utter it in such plain, and intelligible Words, as in their usual and obvious Sense are expressive of it.

A plain and clear Proposal then of any Duty, is sufficient to make these ingenuously honest, and free Minds to understand it ; and nothing is a greater Argument, that the Expressions wherein our Duty is revealed are ambiguous or obscure, and that the Proposal is incompetent ; than that these teachable Minds, which have nothing but the *in-evidence of the Revelation* to misguide them, do not rightly conceive and apprehend it.

But,

2. To a Mind that is prejudiced and prepossessed, and through a Love to some former Opinions and Anticipations of Judgment which are inconsistent with it, unwilling to understand and assent to any Duty ; a plain and evident Proposal of the Duty is not enough : but besides that, there is need moreover of silencing those Doubts, and of confuting those Opinions which make against it.

To such Minds, I say, a plain Expression and evident Proposal of God's Will, is not sufficient to make them believe and rightly apprehend it. For their Prejudice is a Bar against it, and makes them not to admit, but over-look the most natural open Sense even of plain and clear Expressions : Which they do, not because the Words do not obviously express it, but because their Prejudicate Opinion cannot consist with it. For their own Opinion they believe is true, and that in their own Sense, which, what it is, they know most certainly. And whilst they do think this a Truth, they cannot believe that to be a true Sense, although never so plain and obvious a Sense, of any other Words, which convinces it of Falshood. So that in this Case, of Clashing and Contradiction between a prejudicate Opinion and a new Proposal, so long as the Prejudice is adhered to, one of these two things must of necessity be chosen ; either for the sake of such

such contradiction to throw away the new Propofal, or to mitigate it by some Sense that is reconcilable to the prejudicate Belief. And if the Proposer were any way of a suspected Credit, and a Person liable to Error and Mistake; such interfering Proposals would be rejected without more ado, and not admit of any long Debate. But if the Person who brings them, be of unquestionable Credit, both for the untaintednes of his integrity which cannot deceive us, and also for the Perfection of his Knowledge whereby he is not subjected to be deceived himself; (as God is in all those Truths which his Word declares, and in all those Duties which his Law enjoyns us) then is there no way left, if we stick still to our prejudicate Opinion, but to seek out for some amicable and consistent Interpretation of his Words, whereby they may be made to comport with it.

And here the natural Defect of Words, and the universal Imperfection of all Speech befriends us. For scarce any Sentence is so plain and full for one Sente, but that through the witty Arts of some, and the irregular and improper Use of others, it may be shewn capable to speak another. And that other Sense we shall be sure to put upon it, although it be never so remote, and foreign from that true and obvious Interpretation, wherein God meant it. Nay if we cannot readily fix upon it any other than the plain Sense, which clashes with our own Opinion; and yet dare not suspect its Truth in that Sense, be it what it will wherein God intended it: yet so long as we are true to our prejudicate Principle, we must suspect that it hath another, which although we cannot hit upon at present, yet others, or, at another time, it may be we our selves may. This, I say, we must do; because so long as we think our own Opinion true, we cannot judge another to be true too so far as it contradicts it. So that, if for his sake who proposes it, we must esteem it to be true likewise, that cannot otherwise be, than by softning it into such a Sense, as our own Opinion, whereby we judge of it, can consist with; or by interpreting the interfering Truths or Duties, not by the plain and obvious Sense of those Words which express them, but by the consistence of our own prejudicate Belief, whereby we measure the Sense and Meaning of those Words.

A plain Expression then of any Law of God is not sufficient to make us rightly apprehend, nor a clear Proposal able of it self to make us understand it against a Prejudice, which opposes the plain and true Sense of it. Because our Prejudice, so long as we adhere to it, will make us reject and over-look the *plain* and *true* Meaning of the Law which opposes it, and take up with any other *false* or *maimed* Sense, although it be never so *remote*, *improper*, or *imperfect*, which agrees with it.

But that our Duty may be owned and understood in its true and full Meaning, 'tis necessary, not only that it be clearly proposed, but also that our *own Doubts be silenced*, and our *prejudicate Principle confuted*, which impairs and undermines it. The true and full Meaning of the Duty will not enter into our Minds, till the gainsaying Prejudice is thrown out of them. For in all our Judgments of Things, this is the natural and necessary Course, which God himself has set us; *viz. to put a Sense, or to pass a Sentence upon any thing that is proposed to us, according as we find it to clash, or agree with such received Opinions, and Standard-Perswasions of our own Minds, whereby we judge of it.* If they perswade or inferr it, we approve the thing proposed; but if they overthrow it, we disbelieve it. For it is against the Laws of all Reasoning, and the Rules of Argument and Discourse to *reject the plain and necessary Consequence of an allow'd Principle.* So that till we renounce the Prejudice, which manifestly destroys a Law, we must needs evacuate, or, in great part, impair the Law, which is opposed thereby. But to make the Law to be understood in its plain Meaning, and believed in its full extent, 'tis necessary that the Principle be rejected which thwarts or excludes it; and makes us expound the same not in that plain and full Sense which God's Words obviously express, but in such other as our Repugnant Prejudice will bear.

Our Prejudices then, or anticipated Opinions, which are looked upon as great Truths and Rules of Judgment, will in all likelihood make us ignorant of several Duties, or at least of several Parts of Duty, which are plainly enough revealed. They will make us to over-look, either some *whole* Laws, or a *great part* of the *compass and extent* of them, and to think several Actions

ons to be exempt from them, which are really bound up by them. Which, I say, we shall do, because we shall not judge of our Duty from those plain words of Scripture that express it to us, which is certainly the safest course whereby to have a full Sentence of it; but from our own fore-conceived Notions and Opinions, which oftentimes, and in several Instances and Degrees, if not altogether, evacuate and impair the plain Meaning of those Words.

To help our Apprehensions in this abstract Discourse, we will look a little into the Practice of Men; and that will shew us plainly how bad an Influence Prejudices have upon their Minds, in making them ignorant either of several Duties, or of the sinfulness of several Actions which are restrained by them. For we shall find great numbers of Men of all sorts, to have taken up several false Opinions, which are inconsistent with some Virtues, and which make those Laws that they are against to have no force at all, or very little, upon their Conscience, nor any effect upon their Practice. So that they misinterpret that to be no Duty, which God has made one, and transgress boldly and securely, without Fear or Remorse.

For some, out of a certain timorousness of mind, have entertained a wrong Belief, That nothing is lawful in God's Worship, but what either some authentick Example recorded in Scripture has approved, or some Command has made necessary. So that when any Law of their Governors comes to enjoyn any Circumstance or Ceremony in God's Service, which God and the Scriptures had left indifferent; although when once such Law has past, the plain and known Precepts of Obedience to Laws, and Submission to Governors, of Peace, and Unity among Fellow-Christians enjoyn it, they account the fulfilling of it to be no longer a matter of Obedience and Duty, but unlawful and a Sin. For their mistaken Notions of things being made lawful only by some Example or Law that warrants them, and not, on the contrary, being Lawful and at Liberty antecedent to all Laws and Precedents, because no Law forbids them, is the Rule whereby they measure the Obligation of all these Duties, and it plainly overthrows them. So that in a confident Belief thereof, they securely transgres the Laws and break the Unity and disturb the Peace of Men, thinking that they obey God in so doing.

Others have given way to a false Opinion, that Religion is so much every Man's Care, as that he may, not only serve it as he can in his own Station, but meddle also, and mix himself in the publick Maintenance and Protection thereof. They are not content in securing it to keep within their own Sphere, and to do what they are bound in Duty towards it as private Christians: That is, to pray to God earnestly and importunately, that he would preserve it; and to endeavour industriously in their own place after its Preservation and Increase, by their own lively and exemplary Practice of it, by a careful Instruction of other Men in the Reasons of it, by exhorting them to a close adherence to it, and by pressing upon them all the Motives of Heaven and another World, to perswade them to a conscientious taking up the Cross, when it shall please God to lay it in their way, and a patient and courageous Suffering for it. When God by his Providence brings a National Religion into Danger, these are the Duties whereto he calls every private Man, and it is his present Honour, and shall be his immortal Happiness, conscientiously to discharge the same. And would they content themselves with this, making it their Care exemplarily to practise it, and leaving Kings and Rulers, whose Office, and Title it is to be Defenders of the Faith, to protect it, all were well and laudable. But when once they have imbibed this Opinion, that they are to meddle not only as private Promoters, but also as publick Contrivers and Protectors of the Faith; they run beyond all these private Means, into a Censuring of the Administration of Affairs, and the Prudence of Governours, into endless Fears and Jealousies, Murmuring and Complaints, and other Instances of Pragmaticalness, Irreverence, and Contempt of higher Powers, and Disturbance of the publick Peace. All these their Principle justifies, and therefore in Assurance of it they boldly venture on them. So that although the Commands of studying to be quiet, and to do their own Business, against a pragmatical meddling in the Affairs, and disturbing the quiet of other Men, are expressed in Words most plain and easily intelligible; yet do they over-look them, and in all those Instances wherein their Prejudice leads them to transgress, quite evacuate all their plain Force and obvious Obligation,

Some for a long time neglect the dutiful use of one *Sacrament*, viz. *Baptism*, because they think that they have a pious reason against it ; and many other *humble* and *well-meaning minds* omit a dutiful *participation of the other*, viz. *the Lord's Supper*, as scarce ever thinking themselves to be sufficiently prepared for it. Their false opinion carries them into their sinful neglect, and makes them disobey those Laws which require the use of them, by making them first to think that they would offend God if they should observe them.

These breaches of Duty, and indulged acts of sin, *well-meaning* and *honestly obedient minds* are sometimes drawn into, through erroneous conceits and prejudicate Opinions. For some men of *honest hearts*, and of *humble modest tempers*, who are really ready to comply in every thing wherein their Consciences allow them ; are yet insnared into them, and disobey, only because they judge obedience to be unlawful. And that which makes them judge so, is not any lust or sin, which is harboured and unmortified in their hearts, which should be ministred to by such erroneous judgment. But the Opinion took possession of their Souls by the *education of their Parents*, or by the *authority and instruction of their spiritual guides* ; they imbibed it at first in the simplicity of their Souls, and since that have continually been used to it, and bred up in it. So that although they never serve that sin whereto it ministers in other instances, but always fear and conscientiously avoid it ; yet where this prejudicate Opinion warrants the same, they do.

These Prejudices, I say, are not altogether inconsistent with an honest and obedient heart, but are *sometimes* excusably entertained by *well meaning* and *religious men*, altho' many others do damnably disobey in them. But then there are many others, which are of a more *heinous nature* : which altho' some well-meaning men may *pardonably* admit at first, before they have seen the *damnable consequences and effects* of them, which at the same time they disclaim, yet very few can adhere to when they are set before them, or justify or act these consequences in pursuit of their Prejudices, without being in danger, if repentance intervene not, to be *damn'd* for them. Of which sort, among several others, I take these to be that follow,

Some are possessed with an odd belief, that Christ is a Temporal and Secular King in Sion, (i. e.) the Church on Earth, and that his Subjects are to fight for his Interests, and for the protection of his Religion, with the same worldly force and armed violence, that the subjects of other secular Princes use. And as for Earthly Kings, since they are but Deputies and Delegates of Christ the Supream King of all, that they are no further to be submitted to, than they act serviceably and subordinately under him ; but that they may, yea, ought to be persecuted as Enemies and Apostates from King Jesus, if in any thing they oppose and act against him.

Now when men have once imbibed this Principle, they run on furiously, as every man must who understands it, into all the mischiefs of Rebellion and Blood-shed. For in all Instances where this prejudice leads them to it, they utterly over-look, as things not belonging to them, all the plain Laws of Honour and Reverence, Submission and Obedience to Governours ; of Justice and Charitableness, Mercy and Peaceableness towards their Fellow Subjects : and burst out violently into contempt of Governours, and reproachful usage, and speaking evil of Dignities, into revenge and fiercenes, strife and bitterness, sedition and tumults, spoils and robberies, murders and bloodshed; and into all other licentious and extravagant effects, of a most unjust war, and horrible rebellion. In all which they think, that they only fight God's Battles, and spoil and slay his enemies, and, like good Subjects and Soldiers of the Lord of Hosts, with all their might maintain his Rights, and serve his Interest. For all this rebellion against earthly Kings, they esteem to be nothing else, but a proof of their Loyalty and just Allegiance to King Jesus the Sovereign Lord of all, who by these worldly means must Rule on Earth, altho' he dwells in Heaven.

Others to exalt the Temporal Monarchy and Grandeur of Christ's pretended Vicar here on Earth, have imbibed this Principle, that a good end will justify any action, and that all is lawful which is necessary and profitable for the advancement of the Churches Interest. And having once sucked in this venomous Opinion, in all those actions wherein it is any ways concerned, there is no Precept so plain which they cannot over-look, nor any

any obligation so sacred which they do not cancel. They stick not at the breach of all the most exalted, and sublime *Laws of Christ*. For instead of being meek and gentle, they are fierce and furious: instead of being slow to wrath, they are enemies without provocation; instead of forgiving injuries, they are violent to revenge them; instead of doing good to enemies, they are eager to destroy them; instead of taking up the *Cross*, and bearing it with patience themselves, they are utterly impatient till by any means they can force it upon others. Nay, they burst through the most notorious, and weighty *Laws of Humanity and Nature*, in dissimulation and equivocations, in lies and perjuries, in sowing strife, and all manner of unpeaceableness, in spoils and robberies, murders and assassinations, treasons and rebellions, which even natural conscience, where it has any force at all, must needs tremble and be amazed at. But yet all this time they think, that they are doing God's Work, whilst indeed they are subverting his whole Religion; for their poisonous Principle bears them out through all, and they are confident that what they do will be accepted for his service, because it is intended for the advancement of his *Church*.

Some again of the more extravagant *Anabaptists* entertain'd a wild Opinion, That all Dominion is founded in Grace, and that nothing but virtue and holiness can give any man a title to his possessions. And when once they had believed this, they acted but agreeably to their own Principle, in over-looking all the plain *Laws of Justice and Honesty* in all those instances where this Doctrine would warrant the contrary, and in exercising all sorts of fraud, cozenage, spoils and robberies, where they had power and opportunity to commit them. For their spoiling of their Neighbours, they esteemed to be like *Israels* spoiling of the *Egyptians*, (*viz.*) a taking away that which belonged not to them, seeing God had given it away from them.

It were endless to recount all the enormously wicked and disobedient Opinions, which ill men take up in favour of their beloved sins. For some over-look the plain Duties of temperance, mortification and self-denial, because thy are sensual and fleshly: and others give no heed to the manifest duty of paying tithes, because they are

are loth to part with their money. When Christ preached up a charitable use of the unrighteous Mammon, the Pharisees, who were covetous, would not believe and understand, but derided him, Luke 16. 14. And the same way it fares with other duties, when mens unmortified lusts, which are struck at by them, are opposed against them.

By these Instances, and many more which might be mention'd, it clearly appears, how destructive many mens Consciences, or prejudicate Opinions are, of several parts of Religion, and the Divine Laws. They do in great measure cancel the force of Duty, and make men transgress in several instances against known Laws, by making them first to believe, that in those cases, they do not oblige them.

But now to determine which of these prejudices is pardonable and consistent with a justified state, and which destroys and interrupts it, we must observe in them this difference.

First, That some of them get into mens minds or consciences, not through the influence of an evil and disobedient heart, but through weakness of understanding, or fallibility of the means of Knowledge ; and these are consistent with a State of Grace and Salvation.

2. That others get into mens consciences, through some damnable lusts and vices, and they are deadly and damning.

First, Some prejudices, which lead men into sin and disobedience, get into their consciences, not through the influence of an evil and disobedient heart, but through weakness of understanding, and fallibility of the means of knowledge ; and these do not destroy, but consist with a State of Grace and Salvation.

They get not into mens understandings, by means of an evil and disobedient heart. For it is not any love which they have for the damning sins, of pride, ambition, sensuality, covetousness, unpeaceableness, faction, or the like, which makes them willing to believe those Opinions true that are in favour of them. When they take up their prejudice, they do not see so far as these ill effects, nor discern how any of these sins is serv'd by it : and therefore they cannot be thought to admit it with this design to serve them in it. Nay further, what is the best

sign of all, that lust or disobedience, which the prejudice happens to minister to in some instance, is mortified and subdued in them ; and so cannot have any such influence upon them. For sometimes those very men, who, in such instances as their prejudice avows it, are irreverent and disrespectful, pragmatical and disobedient to their Governors, or the like ; in all other cases, wherein their Opinion is unconcerned, are most respectful, quiet, and obedient. Humility and modesty, peaceableness and quietness, submission and obedience, are both their temper and their practice. For they love and approve, and, in the ordinary course and constant tenour of their lives, conscientiously observe them ; and nothing under such prejudicate Opinion, as makes them believe them to be unlawful in some cases, could over-rule that love and obedience which they have for them, and prevail upon them so far as to act against them. So that with these men, it is not the disobedient temper of their hearts which makes their conscience err ; but the error and prejudice of their conscience, which makes their practice disobedient.

In such men therefore as are thus qualified, who do not see those sins which their prejudice ministers to when they admit it, and in all the other actions of their lives, (except where they are over-ruled by this prejudice) shew plainly that they have mortified and overcome it : 'tis clear, that the prejudice did not get into their consciences through the influence of an evil and disobedient heart.

But that which made way for it, was chiefly their natural weakness of understanding, or the fallibility of the means of knowledge. They are not of an understanding sufficient to examine things exactly, when they embrace their prejudice ; for their Reason then is dim and short-sighted, weak and unexperienced, unable throughly to search into the natures of things, and to judge of the various weight, and just force of reasons, to sift and ransack, separate and distinguish between solidity and show, truth and falsehood. But those Arguments whereupon they believe, and upon the credit whereof they take up Opinions, are education and converse, the instruction of spiritual guides, the short reasonings of their neighbours and acquaintance, or the authority of such books or

or persons, as they are ordered to *read*, and directed to submit to. These are the motives to their belief, and the arguments whereupon they are induced to think one Opinion right, and another wrong, and the best means which they have of discerning between truth and falsehood.

But now all these means are in no wise *certain*; they are an argument of belief indeed, and the best that such men have; but yet they are far from being *infallibly conclusive*. Sometimes they lead men right, but at other times they lead them wrong; for they are not at all determined one way, but in *several men*, and at *several times*, according as it happens, they minister both to truth and falsehood.

In matters that are primarily of belief and *speculation in Religion*, they lead an hundred men to error, where they lead one to Truth. For there are an hundred Religions in the World, whereof one alone is true; and every one has this to plead in its own behalf, that it is the Religion of the Place and Party where it is believed. The Professors of it are drawn to assent to it upon these Arguments, (*viz.*) because they have been *Bred up* to it by the care of their *Parents and Teachers*, and *confirmed* in it by long *Use and Converse*: It was *Education and Custom*, the authority of their *Spiritual Guides*, and the *common Persuasion* of their *Country*, which made them both at first to believe, and still to adhere to it. And every one in these points having these Arguments to plead for his own belief, against the belief of every other man who differs from him: since of all these different Beliefs one alone is true, these Arguments must be allow'd indeed to minister to Truth in that, but in all the rest to serve the Interest of Falsehood.

In matters of *Duty and Practice*, 'tis true there is infinitely more accord and good agreement. For most of the *laws of nature*, which make up by far the greatest part of every *Christians Duty*, are the *Catholick Religion* of all *sober Sects and Parties* in the World. So that these Arguments of *Custom and Education*, are tolerably good, and right Guides to mens *Consciences* in most cases how ill soever they are to their speculative *Opinions*; because although they carry them into a *wrong belief*, yet will

will they lead them in most instances into a righteous practice.

But altho' in these practical Notions and Opinions, they are commonly a right ; yet sometimes, and to several persons, they prove a wrong instrument. For even in matters of Duty and Practice, men are no more secure from error, than they are from disobedience ; nor more certain that they shall have no mistakes about them, than that they shall not go beyond them. They have, and, till they come to Heaven, ever will have erroneous Opinions as well as Practices ; so that these Motives, Education, and Custom, and Authority, will never be wanting in the World, to instill into weak and undiscerning Minds such Opinions, as will, in some instances and degrees, evacuate, and undermine some Duties.

And since there will never be wanting in the World such fallible Arguments and Means of knowing, nor such weak and unexperienced understandings, as must of necessity make use of them : 'Tis plain, that several disobedient Prejudices will in all times get into mens minds, not through the wickedness or disobedience of their Hearts, but through the natural weakness of their Minds, and the fallibility of the means of Knowledge.

And when any prejudices, which lead to disobedience, enter this way, they do not put us out of God's Favour, or destroy a state of Grace and Salvation ; but consist with it. For in our whole action of disobedience upon them, there is nothing that should provoke God's Wrath, and punitive displeasure against us. He will not be at enmity with us, either for acting according to our erroneous Conscience, or, if the error was thus innocent, for having an erroneous conscience for our rule of action.

He will not be offended at us, I say, for acting according to our erroneous conscience : for whether our conscience be true or false, it is the only Rule that we can act by. We cannot perform a Duty, unless we understand it ; nor obey Laws, before we have some knowledge of them : we must judge what is commanded before we can observe it, and whether we judge right or wrong, we have no way to obey, but by acting according to such judgment. Yea, if our Conscience does err, and inno-

innocently mistake our Duty, yet whilst we follow it in the simplicity of our hearts, we perform the life and soul of Obedience, even when we erroneously transgress it. For we do the mistaken action out of an obedient intention; we exert it for God's sake, in an acknowledgement of his Authority, and a resignation to his pleasure; and this is so truly the life and spirit of an acceptable obedience, that, in case of such erroneous belief, we should sinfully and damnable disobey should we neglect it. So that if the error of our conscience it self be inoffensive, God will not take offence at our well-meant, and obediently design'd performance of that, which our conscience erroneously tells us we are bound in duty to perform.

Nor will God be offended at us, for having such a scandal or rock of offence, as this prejudice and error of our conscience is, if the error it self is thus innocent. He will not take it ill, that we did not judge that to be our Duty, which the Principle we had to judge by told us was no Duty, or it may be a breach of Duty and a Sin. For this was truly to judge by Principles, and to have recourse in judgment to the best and likeliest notions which we could find in our own minds; which way of passing judgment is all that we have, and the very method which he himself has prescribed us. Neither will he be angry at us for admitting such false Opinions into our minds, as should afterwards misguide us, if it were not our sins and passions, but the ordinary way, and usual means of knowledge which got them entrance. For when the very same means of information and discourse, which carry us on to truth in other opinions, mislead us into error and mistake in these, we err in the honesty of our hearts, and in the use of means and ordinary endeavours; so that nothing remains for our error to be charged upon, but either a weakness of understanding, or an ill fortune: either that using fallible means, we were not so wise as to avoid being deceived by them; or that we had the ill hap to be guided by them in such an instance, when error lay at the end of them. And since these Causes of error, are only our weakness and unhappiness, but not our fault and disobedience; God will graciously bear with us, and will not be extream to punish us for

for them. Or if we happen to err in an Instance wherein he will exact Obedience, he will at least bear with us so long, till besides the *plain Declarations* of our Duty, and the *common means* of knowing it, we have had moreover such Accumulation of Proof and clearing of the Case, as will, if we are not wanting to our selves, answer all our Exceptions, and bear down all our Prejudices against it.

And of this we have a clear instance in the Error of the *Apostles*, about the discharge of that great Duty, of *preaching the Gospel to all Nations immediately after Christ's Ascension*. He had enjoyned this in a Command as plain, one would think, as Words can make it. *All Power is given unto me in Heaven, and in Earth; Go ye therefore, and teach, not the Jews only, to whom I sent you at first, but all Nations*, Matth. 28. 18, 19. *preaching Remission of Sins upon Repentance to all Nations, beginning at Jerusalem*, Luke 24. 47. But for all this Precept was so express, and this Declaration of their Duty was so plain and evident; yet was it not of it self sufficient to give them an Understanding of it. For those prepossessions, which they lay under, drew such a Veil before their Eyes, and linked their Minds so fast to a contrary Belief, that they took no notice of it, nor ever thought their contrary practice to be forbid by it. They thought still, that *Israel was God's peculiar People*, that *the Jews were the only seed of Abraham*, and that *the great Prophet Messiah, whom Moses told them God would one Day raise up among them, for eminence and extraordinariness of Divine Commission, like unto him, was to be theirs peculiarly to whom God had promised him*. Their Prejudices and Anticipations of Judgment, had been instilled into their young and tender Minds, by the early Care of their Parents, and fomented by the Instruction of their Teachers, and daily more and more confirmed in them, by Conversation, and an uninterrupted Custom of Persuasion. And being thus forcibly impressed upon them, they had so blocked up their obedient and well-meaning Minds, that when a plain Command required them to practise contrary to this Belief, they did not understand, but over-look it. Insomuch that Peter himself was not convinced of it, by the manifest injunction of a clear Law; but stood in need to have

his doubts solved, and his exceptions answered, and his former prejudices confuted and overborn, by such accumulation of proof and evidence, as God was pleased to give him in a most condescensive Dispute upon that Subject, by an after and repeated Revelation, *Acts 10.* and *11.* Chapters.

But now this ignorance of their Duty, which was so plainly delivered in the words of a clear Law, did not put them out of God's Favour, because it was occasioned only by such hindrances, as were consistent with an honest heart, or such, whereto not their *sins* and *passions*, but their *natural weakness of understanding*, and their *education and custom*, thole fallible means of knowledge, had betrayed them. For God still lovingly embraced them; he bore with their weaknesses, and helped their infirmities; he pitied their ignorance whilst they laboured under it; and because he saw it was fit and necessary that they should get quit of it, he graciously afforded them a further and more powerful evidence whereby to overcome it. And all this pardon and forbearance, I say, they found, because their prejudices were consistent with an honest heart, since they were begot in them not by any lusts or vices, but only by their weakness of understanding, and the fallibility of the means of knowledge.

But as some prejudices which lead to sin and disobedience, get into mens Consciences only through weakness of understanding; and fallibility of means, which are therefore consistent with a state of favour and salvation; so are there,

2. Several others, which got into their Consciences through the assistance of their lusts and vices; and these are deadly and damning.

Mens Lusts and Vices have a great influence upon their minds, and the chief hand many times, I wish I could not say most times, in molding of their evil judgments and opinions. And therefore we may know mens manners by their *perswasions about their Duty*, before ever we see their *practices*. For they who will live wickedly, will quickly bring their minds to think wickedly. Their lusts and vices will soon insinuate themselves into their judgments and apprehensions: they will dispose their Souls for such perswasions as are most serviceable to them; and win them with ease into a belief,

a belief, of evil things, by making them willing first, and eagerly desirous to believe them.

For our Belief of any Opinion, is produced in us by our diligent Search, and Consideration of all such Arguments, as can get credit to it; and by over looking or clearing such Difficulties, or industriously considering and improving all the Answers to such exceptions, as are made against it. As on the contrary, our disbelief of any Opinion, is effected by over-looking or weakening all those Reasons which are brought to prove it, by darkning it with Difficulties, perplexing it with Doubts, and raising such Exceptions as may shake or overthrow it. But now, as for the Employing of our Wit and Industry in either of these, it is plainly in our own Choice, and we deal indifferently and impartially between both, or espouse either part, as we stand affected. If then we are earnestly desirous and strongly inclined for one way; we can over-look, or set our selves to answer all that makes against it, and throw by Difficulties, clear up Doubts, invent Reasons to justify and prove it. So that the Will and Pleasure of our Hearts, will quickly draw after it the Judgment of our Understandings, and if once we are resolved upon a way, we shall soon find reasons to allow it.

When therefore our Lusts and Vices have got our Hearts, and give Laws to our Wills and Appetites, they will quickly bear Rule in our Understandings also. We shall quickly believe that any of their Gratifications are lawful, when once we are greatly desirous to have them so. Nothing being a more probable, and ordinary effect in the nature of things, as well as in the just judgment of God, of a disobedient and rebellious Heart, than a reprobate Mind, or a Mind * void of Judgment, Rom. i. 18, 21, 28.

* *ἀδόκητος γενέσθαι*

So long then as Men have wicked Hearts, it cannot be expected but that they will too commonly have debauched Consciences: For whilst they retain unmortified Lusts and Vices, they will fall too oft to justify them in their own Thoughts, by damnably sinful, and disobedient Opinions. They will take up Prejudices and a wrong Belief, not to direct and guide their wicked Practice, but to defend it. The Factious and Unpeaceable Man will easily perswade himself into that Belief,

lief, which disturbs Peace, and opposes Government. The covetous Soul will favour any Tenet, which promotes Gain, and advances Interest. The licentious Libertine will snatch at any Opinion, that gratifies the Flesh, and pleads the Cause of sensuality and softness. Men's Pride and Ambition, their Fierceness and Cruelty, their Malice and Revenge, their Contentiousness and Faction, their Sensuality and Covetousness, will make them over-look the Humble and lowly, the meek and gentle, the patient and merciful, the quiet and peaceable, the generous and self-denying Laws of Christ, and greedily imbibe such wicked Prejudices and erroneous Conceits, as evacuate and overthrow them.

To illustrate this Business, let us consider it in some instances.

That execrable Sect of Men the Gnosticks, who were so infamous for their impure and lawless Consciences, were not more notorious for their vile Opinions, than for their evil Lives. I will consider both, that it may from thence more clearly appear, how influential their Lusts were upon their Minds, in begetting suitable Persuasions.

As for their Lives, they were infamous for Covetousness, Cowardice, and Softness, in heaping up Wealth; and avoiding all loss of Goods and bodily Pains, though by means never so wicked and dishonourable: And for the greatest Luxury, and looseness in their Lusts and Unclean Pleasures.

They were notoriously infamous, for their Covetousness, and abominably timorous and irreligious Compliances. For they are described as Men, that have their hearts exercised with covetous Practices, 2 Pet. 2. 14; that do any thing because of Advantage, Jude 16; that forsake the Right Way of Worship and Religion, and go astray from it into the By-paths of * Idolatry and Prophaneness, when they are like to suffer by it, being thus far fitly compared to Balaam the Son of Bozor, that they, professing true Christianity, joyn in Idol-worship with the idolatrous Gentiles; as he, being a true Prophet, did in the idolatrous Worship of the King of Moab, Numb:

* *Idolothyta indifferenter manducant, nihil inquinari ab iis putantes;*

& in omnem Diem Festum Ethnicorum, pro voluntate in honore Idolorum factum, primi convenient, Iren. adv. Hareses, l. 1. c. 1.

22. 40, 41; and also in that they sort and combine with the Jewish and Gentile Persecutors of the Christians, as he did in cursing first, and afterwards in fighting against the Israelites in the Army of Midian, Numb. 31. 8. upon which accounts, his Way or Error they are said to follow, 2 Pet. 2. 15. Jud. 11. Their Character is to desert the publick Assemblies, by reason of the Heat of Persecution against all who dare frequent them, Heb. 10. 25. to deny the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, when they are in danger to suffer for their open owning of them, Jude 4.

They were also equally notorious, for abominable Luxury, and Lewdness in their Lusts and unclean Pleasures. For they are set out to us, as men that are sensual, Jud. 19; that account it a Pleasure to riot in the day time, 2 Pet. 2. 13; that defile the flesh, Jud. 8. that walk after the flesh in lusts of uncleanness, 2 Pet. 2. 10. in pernicious, or, as it is rendred from other Copies in the Margin of our Bibles, *† lascivious ways*, verse 2. that have eyes full of Adultery, verl. 14. and that are not content to riot in these abominable Filthinesses themselves, but use them as Baits to decoy, and draw in others; alluring through the lusts of the flesh, and through much wantonness, those who * really, or for a † little while had escaped from such an abominable life of error, *ἀλιγῶς*. verse 18.

Thus was their Life and Temper over-run with covetousness, base cowardice and sinful compliances; and with most filthy Lusts, and Uncleanesses. Both which St. Peter letting himself against, requires all Men, who would be thought to have that true and saving Knowledge, which is opposite to that false and Spurious one which they * pretended to, to give all diligence in adding to it these two Duties, which are directly contrary to their vile Lusts; viz. Virtue, or Courage and Constancy, which is opposite to their bale Arts of Tergiversation; and sinful Compliances; and Continence or Chastity, which is contrary to their unclean Practices. Give all Diligence to add to Virtue, or valorous Courage, Knowledge, and to Knowledge Temperance or † Continence, *τέκνεγος*. 2 Pet. 1. 5, 6.

Now these Men having such a Scene of Debauchery in their Lives, they quickly became as lewd and debauched

bauched in their Consciences. When once for all their professions of knowing God, they began, as St. Paul says, in works to deny him; they quickly made their Consciences, to be as filthy and polluted, as their Practices were. To these defiled Wretches, saith he, is nothing pure; their very mind and conscience is defiled; for they

* Quemadmodum au-
rum in cœ-
no depositum non a-
mittit de-
corem suum
sed suam
naturam
custodit,
cumcœnum
nil nocere
auro possit:
sicut semet
iplos dicunt
licet inqui-
busc nque
materiali-
bus operi-
bus sint, nil
noceri, ne-
que amit-
tare spiri-
tualem sub-
sus Christ, Jude 4.
stantiam.

have lost all sense of Purity and Duty, being unto every good work reprobate or void of Judgment, Tit. 1. 15, 16. They over-looked and disbelieved all the Christian Laws, of passive Valour, and patient Courage, of Generosity and Contentedness, of Mortification and Self-denial, Chastity and Temperance; and fell into those Lewd Opinions, for which they were so infamous in the Apostolick Age, and will be still, among all Men that are but competently sober, to the World's End. For they introduced into the World the scandalously vile and profili-gate Opinions, that † filthy lewdness and uncleanness, of persecution, and that our Jesus was he, are parts of Christian Liberty, and things lawful and allowable, in a knowing, in a spiritual, in a perfect Man. Turning by this means, as St. Jude says, the Grace of God and his Gospel, which under the highest Pains forbids and punishes them, into a Liberty and Allowance of these their Characteristick Vices, viz., Lasciviousness, with all manner of Filthiness, and denying, when they are in Danger, to suffer for him, the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ, Jude 4.

Quapropter & intemperate omnia quæ vetantur, hi, qui sunt ipsorum perfecti, operantur; de quibus Scriptura confirmant, quoniam qui faciunt ea, Regnum Dei non hereditabunt. Iren. l. i. c. i.. † Concerning Lascivious Pleasures being allowed to them, who are perfect and spiritual; and denied to others, who, as they were wont to speak, are animal, they taught thus: Quicunque in sæculo est & uxorem non amat, ut ei conjugatur, non est de veritate, & non transiet in veritatem. Qui autem de sæculo est mixtus mulieri, non transiet in veritatem, quoniam in concupiscentia est mixtus mulieri. Quapropter nobis quidem, quos Psychicos vocat, & de sæculo esse dicunt, necessariam continentiam & bonam operationem, uti per eam veniamus inniedietatis locum: sibi autem spiritualibus & perfectis vocatis, nullo modo. Iren. ib. ¶ Agrippa Castor says, that Basilius, one of the chief Heads, taught thus: Ἀδιαφορεῖν εἰδωλούτων ἀπογενομένος, καὶ ἐξουργεῖντος ἀπεργούσαί τοις πίσιν κατὰ τὰς τῷ διαγράψῃ ταρσοῖς; As he is cited by Eusebius Eccl. Hist. l. 4. c. 7. See also Epiphani. Heres. 24.

Another instance of their Behaviour, we have set down in relation to the Publick; viz. That they were of a proud and ungovernable, of a haughty and turbulent, a querellous and seditious Humour. Their Temper is to be presumptuous and self-willed, 2 Pet. 2. 10; which they evidence every where, by despising Dominion, and speaking evil of Dignities, Jude 8; and by murmuring and complaining, as men that are always discontented, and never pleased with any administration of affairs, ver. 16.

And agreeable to this ungovernableness of their lives and tempers, were the licentious principles and opinions of their minds. For they were the men, who promised their Followers liberty from all subjection, 2 Pet. 2. 19. and who despised all Masters and Governours, as being by the new Character of Christianity become their Brethren, and therefore, as they argued from that Title, now only equal to them, not superior, as they must be, who would pretend to rule and govern them, 1 Tim. 6. 1, 2. The abettors of which Doctrine, St. Paul assures Timothy do in reality know nothing, notwithstanding all the false Show of that swoln Title, * knowing *Γνωσκοι. men, which they so vainly arrogate to themselves, verse 4.

The wicked Sect of the Pharisees, who were the reproach of the Jewish, as these filthy Gnosticks were of the Christian Name, were of a life and temper proud and ambitious, covetous and rapacious; whose heart and inside, as well as their life and practice; was all rottenness and disobedience. For if we would have a character of them, our Saviour himself has given us one in the 23d. of St. Matthew's Gospel, which is most compleat and particular; wherein a combination of these several vices, are set to make up their description.

First, Vain-glory. All their works they did to be seen of men, vers. 5.

Secondly, Pride and Ambition. They loved the uppermost rooms at feasts, and the chief seats in the Synagogues, and greetings in the publick markets, and to be called of men Rabbi, Rabbi, that is to say Master, or Doctor, vers. 6, 7.

Thirdly, Covetousness, Fraud and Rapaciousness. For besides that St. Luke informs us of their being covetous,

Luk. 16. 14; we are told here, that they would most prophanely abuse the most sacred things for their covetous ends, and make long prayers only for a pretence, that thereby they might be enabled more easily, and without suspicion, to devour even Orphans and Widows houses, vers. 14. being indeed, whatsoever they might outwardly appear to be, full of extortion and excess within, vers. 25.

Fourthly, Hypocrisie. For they would dissemble even in their most solemn performances, and use Religion as a Cover to worldly designs. They made long prayers only for a pretence, vers. 14; what they made clean, was only the out-side, vers. 25; for that indeed they beautified, but still they were all stench and rottenness within, vers. 27.

In summ, they said, but did not; they bound heavy burdens on other mens shoulders, but would not touch them themselves with one of their fingers, vers. 3, 4. Yea, take them, even at the best, where they were Religious; and that they will be found to have been more in trifles, than in substantial Duties; for they strained at Gnats, at the same time that they swallow'd Camels, they paid tythe of cheap and inconsiderable things, such as mint, and annise, and cummin; but they omitted the weightier matters of the Law, as Judgment, Mercy and Faith, vers. 23, 24.

And since they were men of this character, thus unmortified in their lusts, and thus vicious and irreligious in their practice; what can in reason be expected, but that they should be full of debauchery and disobedience in their consciences and persuasions also? And so accordingly we find they were. For when Christ preached to them the Doctrine of Charity and Liberality, in opposition to their miserable worldly way; they, being covetous instead of believing, fell a mocking and deriding him, Luk. 16. 14. And as they treated Christ in this particular, so did they likewise all the rest of his Religion. For finding that it required such humility, sincerity, honesty, contentedness, and heavenly-mindedness; as were inconsistent with these unmortified lusts of theirs which I have mention'd; they would not own and embrace it, but for that reason especially, did reject and disbelieve it. Nay further, even in their own acknowledged

ledged way, they took up several disobedient prejudices, to serve their lusts ; and either wholly evacuated, or in great part impair'd several Laws by admitting such erroneous persuasions as undermined them. For to gratifie their haughty and stubborn, their pertish and revengeful humour, they entertain'd a conceit, that if they did but say it is Corban, or a gift by whatsoever thou mightest be profited by me; (*i. e.*) I bind my self by the Vow or Oath call'd Corban, never more to do any good to thee, which was a form of Oath in use among the Jews ; they should be freed from all obligation of the fifth Commandment, requiring honour, service, or relief to their Father or Mother, Matth. 15. 4, 5, 6. And many other things like to this, our Saviour tells us, they did, Mark 7. 13. But not to enquire further about particulars, we are plainly assured of them in the general, that they transgressed, rejected, and evacuated the Laws of God, through the erroneous persuasions and prejudicate belief of their traditions, Matth. 15. 3, 6. Mark 7. 9.

Thus natural and obvious it is for a wicked life to work a disobedient belief, and for Mens unmortified lusts and passions, which set themselves against God's Laws, to convey such prejudices into their consciences, as will evacuate and overthrow them. Their unbelief enters through the corruption of their heart, and is therefore called an evil heart of unbelief, Heb. 3. 12. and they are hardened into a want of all sense and conscience of their offences, through the deceitfulness of sin, verl. 13. And this effect is obvious, and ordinary ; for not only the nature of things, but even the just Judgment of God, concur to it: Nothing being more common, than for those men, who hold the truth, as St. Paul says, in unrighteousness of living, and even whilst they know God, do not glorifie him by their service and obedience, which are due to him, and are our way of glorifying him as God, nor are thankful in their hearts and actions ; to lose that knowledge, and to become vain in their imaginations, their foolish heart being darkned, by God's giving them over to a reprobate mind, or a mind void of all true judgement, to do those things which are not convenient, not knowing that they are so, Rom. 1. 18, 21, 28.

But now as for these prejudices, which get into our consciences and persuasions, not through any force of reason

son which compells, but through the witchcrafts of lusts and vices which enveagle, and make us willing and desirous to believe them; they will not excuse us, because they are themselves sinful, and deserve damnation. For they enter at an ill door, and win upon us through a reigning lust, or a damning sin; and therefore they are so far from excusing those transgressions which flow from them, that in themselves they are instances and effects of a deadly offence, and, if repentance intervene not, will prove desperate and damning.

St. Paul in breathing out threatenings against all Believers, and in persecuting of the Church, acted only according to the best of his own Judgment and Opinion. For he verily thought with himself, that he not only might, but ought to do several things contrary to the Name of Jesus of Nazareth, Acts 26. 9. But as this Opinion was his sin, so would his transgressions upon it have proved his condemnation, had not God shewn pity on him, in calling him to repentance and conversion, whereby alone it was that he obtained mercy and pardon. I was, says he, a persecutor, and injurious; but I obtained mercy by that Grace of God conferr'd upon me at my conversion, which was exceeding abundant, with these two fundamental Graces that are a most prolific spring of all the rest, (viz.) Faith, and Love, which is in Jesus Christ, 1 Tim. 1. 13, 14.

The Jews, who blasphemed and crucified our Saviour, did nothing against their own consciences: for their Opinion bore them out in all that practice, in regard they judged it to be no sinful murther, but a most necessary act of Justice upon a great Impostor, and a most laudable and legal execution. I wot Brethren, says St. Peter, that through ignorance ye did it, as did, not you only, but also your rulers, Acts 3. 14, 15, 17. For had they known it, lays St. Paul, they would not have crucified the Lord of Glory, 1 Cor. 2. 8. But forasmuch as this Ignorance was their own fault, and their prejudices were owing to their own vices, in regard that for this reason alone their minds would not receive a true Belief of Christ and his Laws, because they plainly contradicted their sinful lusts and practices, therefore should it by no means excuse them, but, if their repentance did not prevent it, it would most certainly in the end prove deadly and damning. For their crucifixion of him, he tells them, was by wicked hands.

hands, Acts 2. 23. and it was only upon their repentance and conversion, that their sins of blasphemy and murder should be blotted out, Acts 3. 19.

Again, the transgressions of the Pharisees were justified by their own Opinions; for they looked upon themselves, notwithstanding them, to be *holy men*, and favourites of Heaven. But proceeding, as we have seen they did, from unmortified lusts and a wicked life, they rendered them obnoxious to damnation; *How can you escape the damnation of hell?* Matt. 23. 33.

The sins of the Gnosticks, notwithstanding they were warranted by their disobedient Principle, were of a damnable nature. For their *heresies* and *disobedient Principles* themselves, being the effects of disobedient and wicked hearts, deserved damnation, and are called by St. Peter, in that Chapter where he recounts them, and with great zeal inveighs against them, *damnable heresies*, 2 Pet. 2. 1. They are *works of the Flesh*, or the products of unmortified lusts and carnal practices; and must therefore share in the same judgments with other fleshly works, among whom they are reckon'd. *The Works of the flesh*, says St. Paul, are *manifest, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness*; of the which I tell you, that they which do such things shall not inherit the Kingdom of God, Gal. 5, 19, 20, 21.

If we will transgress our Duty by disbelieving it first, and giving credit to such Opinions as destroy the obligation of it; our disbelief of our Duty will by no means excuse our sin, or rescue us from condemnation. For to disbelieve the *Laws* and *Threatnings* of Christ, is one of the worst parts of *unbelief*, and the most hateful and deadly instance of *infidelity*. And as for *Unbelievers*, says St. John, or those men who will not believe *Religion*, or the best part of it, *Laws* and *Duties*, but seek to evade its force after that God has plainly told them thereof; *they shall have their part in the Lake, which burns with fire and brimstone*, Rev. 21. 8. Men without understanding, who will not see their Duty, because they are * blinded by such lusts as fight a- * Rom. 1, gainst it, in the Judgment of God are † worthy of death, 21, 28. Rom. 1. 31, 32. The reason why their consciences ad- † Matt. 15. here to such Opinions as utterly destroy their Duty, is 14. only because their lusts and vices have made them hate it, and

and turn away from it : And as for every such prejudice against a Duty, as proceeds from our aversion to it, it is of a great guilt, and liable to a very severe punishment. For in this St. Paul is peremptory : *All they shall be damned who believe a lye, and believe not the truth, through the pleasure which they take in unrighteousness : They shall perish, because they receive not the LOVE of the Truth, that they may be saved by it,* 2 Thess. 2. 10. 11, 12.

When our disobedient prejudices therefore enter upon this score, and are begot in us through a wicked heart, and through some reigning lusts and vices which are served by them ; but not by weaknes of understanding, or such fallibility of means, as may betray even an honest heart into them : they are subject to a sad doom, and a severe censure ; they will by no means plead our excuse, but are an Article of our condemnation.

And as for some marks, whereby to judge whether our disobedient prejudices proceed from this deadly Principle, *our unmortified lusts and vices*, and thereupon are of this dangerous and damning nature, or no, we may observe thele Characters, and judge according to these Measures.

First, If that Lust or Sin whereto our prejudice is subservient, be strong and powerful, if it reign in us, and, in the ordinary course and custom of our lives, gives Laws to us, the corruption and disobedience of our heart, is plainly the cause of our disobedient conscience and corrupt perswasion. It is not only the error of our conscience, which makes us serve the sin ; for we serve it equally in other instances, where that is wholly unconcerned. The Sin is unmortified and imperious, it carries us on to transgress where it is further'd by the error of our consciences, and where it wants it. But it is the wickedness of our hearts, which makes us to be wicked in our judgments, and to espouse such Opinions as encourage and defend it. For when any lust is so strong in us, as to rule our practice, it will be like enough to lay a corrupt byass upon our wills, so that we shall be apt still to judge in favour of it, and be very partial in all thole Opinions wherein it has any interest. And therefore several disobedient prejudices will be taken up to

to serve a turn, and we shall work our selves up into a belief of them for the sins sake, which is justified and protected by them.

Is any man therefore of a temper and conversation, that is fierce and contentious, busie and restless, forward to give Laws, and impatient to submit to them : 'Tis no wonder if he takes up Opinions, that justifie contempt of Governours, that avow Alteration and Disturbance, and countenance Faction, Sedition, and a Civil War. For the ungovernableness of his Conscience is but agreeable to the ungovernableness of his Practice ; the Sin reign'd first in his heart and life, and was from thence with ease instill'd into his Opinion and Perswasion.

Is any man habitually inclined to Pride and Ambition, Wrath and Malice, Revenge and Cruelty ; is he greedy of Gain, and a Slave to sensual Delights and bodily Pleasures ? He is prepared, as occasion serves, for any of those Vile Opinions which overturn all Laws to promote Christ's Temporal Power on Earth, or to advance the secular greatness of his pretended Vicar and Holy Church ; and for any others of like nature. For the unmortified lusts are a Law to him in his life, before they come to govern in his Conscience ; he is first wicked and rebellious in his heart, and that makes him to admit of such wicked Opinions into his Understanding.

In these men then the case is plain ; it is clearly seen how they came by their disobedient prejudices, for their lives and conversation shew that abundantly. Disobedience reign'd first in their hearts, and thence got into their consciences and persuasions.

Secondly, If the disobedience and the prejudice lay so near, and were so close conjoyn'd, that a man could not but see one when he saw the other ; it is still imputable to his wicked lusts and vices. For he discerned how obedience was impair'd, and how the Sin was served by it, when he first gave credit to it ; and therefore he was plainly acted by a want of vertue and an evil heart. For if he had been touched with any love of vertue, he could not have allowed of that, which he knew would evacuate and undermine it ; but he would have shewn much more forwardness to reject the Opinion for the sake of the sin, than to embrace it upon any appearances of argument and reason. So that his prejudice enter'd, through

through an aversion to that instance of obedience which it undermined ; and it was his love to the wicked lust which was advanced thereby, that made way for it. He willingly and designedly served the sin, and he saw how much the Opinion contributed to it, and therefore he readily embraced it.

Nay further,

Thirdly, If the sinful consequences were not discerned when a man at first embraced it; yet if they are such as are of a plain unquestionable guilt, and greatly sinful, and when he is skewed afterwards how they follow from it, he still stands by it and adheres to it; however the prejudicate Opinion might enter at the first, yet it holds possession afterwards by a heart that is wicked and disobedient.

Some sins there are, whose guilt is not altogether so clear and indisputable, but that an innocent and honest, although a weak and erring mind, may sometimes question and over-look it. And thus many truly religious Souls do not think, that their refusing to observe the commands of men about the ceremonies of divine worship, is disobedience ; or that their busie intermeddling and over-acting in the cause of God and Religion, is pragmaticalness. For these sins, among several others, altho' they are plain an obvious to an unprejudiced and piercing understanding, which is able to discern the grounds and reasons of things, and fairly to consider of them : Yet to such minds as have fallen unhappily under some mistaken notions, and false prepossessions, they are not evident ; whence many men, who have honest and obedient hearts, do yet err and judge amiss concerning them. But then several other sins are so open and notorious, that no sober mind, and virtuous inclination, can ever have any doubts about them. Thus, for instance, no honest man, who is willing fairly and seriously to consider things, can ever question, I think, that killing without Commission from Authority, and due process of Law, is Murther ; that spoils without judicial course, are robbery ; that appearing in Arms against the supreme Sovereign Power, or men commissioned by him, is Rebellion, that intoxicating use of Wine, is Drunkenness ; and a promiscuous use of Women, Adultery or Fornication. These sins, and many others, are of so open and notorious a nature, that no man of an ordinary wit, if he has any competent degrees of honesty, can e-
ver

ver apprehend them to be other than damnably sinful. And if any man has any Opinions, which in any cases justifie some of these, if he continues to hold them still after he sees how these sins follow from them, which he must needs do when he practices the same, because the Opinions lead him on to them; 'tis plain that his Opinion holds possession of his Mind, because his heart is wicked: *simplicity* and *ignorance*, it may be, gave it entrance; but *sin* and *disobedience* enable it to persevere.

If the man indeed was only *simple* and *short-sighted*, *rash* and *forward* at the first, and either had not *understanding* or *patience* enough, to look on so far as the sinful consequences when he gave it entrance; his lusts and vices at that time could have no share in it, because he did not see how they could be served by it; and so far the simplicity of a well meaning mind, and the obedient temper of an honest heart and a good intention, may plead his excuse for his otherwise wicked and disobedient persuasion. But if afterwards he *persists* in it, when he sees all the *iniquity* and *disobedience* that flows from it, and goes on to cancel and transgress *notorious* and *weighty Laws* upon the assurance thereof: 'tis manifest then that his *heart is wicked*, and that he is influenced more by a *reigning sin*, than by a *cogent reason*. For if his heart were acted by a full resolution of obedience, and a love of Virtue, he would quickly renounce such Opinions, when once he saw such notorious and unquestionable Laws to be overturned by them. But since he will stick to his wicked Principle, even when it destroys obedience, and prefer a disputable opinion before a weighty and plain Duty; 'tis plain, that he is not honestly willing to obey, but industrious to seek a shift, and to evade all obligation to obedience.

As for this Enquiry then, viz. When our *disobedient prejudices* get into our consciences by the help of our own *unmortified lusts*, and *damning vices*? From these measures we may make our own Souls this Answer. If usually, and in the common course of our lives, we are guided by that lust or vice which our prejudice advances; if we saw the *disobedient effects* of it, when we first gave credit to it; or if we still adhere to it, after that we have been plainly shewed the *unquestionable*, and *notorious sins*, which are *avouched*

vouched by it : Our prejudice took place by virtue of our disobedience, and, without our timely repentance, it will condemn us. If it entred *innocently* and *honestly* through the *weakness of our understandings*, or the *fallibility of the means of knowledge*, it would be pardoned, and not imputed to us : But since it gains admittance by our love to damning lusts and disobedience, it is of a deadly guilt, and, unless repentance intervene, will prove our Destruction.

And thus at last we have seen, what ignorance is effected by our prejudices ; and what is to be judged of those transgressions, which are incurred under it. And the summ of all is this : That our prejudices make us either quite *over-look* several Laws, or, even whilst we know and consider of them, to venture upon several disobedient actions, which really come under them, not knowing that they do so. And if such prejudices entred, through the *fallibility of means of knowledge*, and *weakness of an honest understanding*, they are *pardonable and uncondemning* : but if they took place by means of *strong lusts*, and a *wicked heart*, they are *deadly sins*, and fit to be charged upon us, as all others are, without *repentance*, to our condemnation.

But seeing it is much *safer*, and infinitely more eligible, to have no disobedient prejudices at all, than to be put into all this danger about the pardon and forgiveness of them ; before I dismiss this Point, I will set down one *plain Rule* and *easie Method*, in matters of *Duty* and *Moment*, to prevent the same. For by this means, we may all of us attain in good measure to that, which St. Paul assures us was his utmost care and industrious exercise : viz. a *conscience void of offence*, or rather an * *inoffensive conscience*, which is no scandal or cause of sin to us, and which doth not stumble and cast us down into any Breach of Duty, either towards God, or towards men, Acts 24. 26.

And the *Rule*, which I would press upon all *simple* and *honest Minds* for that purpose, is this, *Begin with Duty and plain Laws, to make them the measure whereby to judge of controverted Notions and Opinions ; not with those Notions and Opinions, to make them the measure whereby to interpret plain Laws.*

* οὐνίδη
οὐ διπό-
εκπίλον.

For our Duty is made plain and open, and expressed so clearly, as that any Ordinary man may understand it. It is no matter of skill and parts, to know Christ's Commandments; but an honest and a teachable heart, is a better preparation to that, than refinedness of wit, and philosophick learning. For God, who gave us Laws, knew the measure of all capacities, and the compass of every understanding; and what he intended that all should practise, he wanted not skill to express so plainly, that every one might apprehend it. Laws are the Rule of the last Judgment, and our obedience or disobedience to them is a matter of life or death; and that in all reason and equity ought to be revealed clearly and sufficiently to every understanding, which every man must for ever live or die by. As for Laws and Duty then, they are plain and easie; they are expressed in such clear and intelligible words, as carry what God means by them in their usual and obvious acceptation. So that in judging of them, if we begin there, there is no great difficulty, seeing they are easily and obviously understood by any man, who brings along with him an obedient, and teachable mind, to the obvious understanding of them.

But as for abstract Notions and controverted Opinions, they generally admit of much doubting and dispute, and of great appearance of reason, and variety of argument, on one side, as well as on the other. And besides, all capacities are no fit Judges of them, but those only which have much quickness, and much experience; that can dispel the darkness, by clear evidence; and help the confusion, by a distinct representation of things; that can judge of reasons, and of exceptions, and of the various degrees in evidence, and the just weight of arguments. So that they are a matter, not for the determination of common heads, but for the learned and witty, for refined Parts and Philosophers. Yea, and even among them, by reason of their difficulty and doubtfulness, they admit of great disputes, and beget generally much variety of judgment and opinion; wherein if some think true, as it is very possible, nay often happens that neither do, the rest must of necessity be mistaken.

Controverted Opinions therefore and Notions, are more dark and difficult, less easie to be understood than plain Laws, and much more liable to be mistaken. So that Laws

and Duty are fit to be made a Principle, because we may easily understand them, and be well assured of them : But general and disputable Notions and Opinions, being more dark and liable to error and mistake, they are not so proper to be themselves a Rule to Laws, as to be measured and judged of by them.

And that they should be so is further reasonable, because in the very designs of God, *obedience* is primarily and chiefly intended to be ministered to by *Revealed Truths*; not *Revealed Truths* to be served, and furthered by *obedience*. For the revelation of *religious truth*, is given by the Author of our Religion himself, in order to *religious practice*. The very end and perfection of our *Faith* being to

- * Jam. 2. produce * *Good Works*, to make us † *overcome the World*,
- 22. to * *save our souls*, or to deliver us from our sins, which
- † 1 Joh. 5. are those evils that † Christ came to save us from. And
- 4.
- * 1 Pet. 1. since *obedience unto Laws* is the *end*, and *general and controverted truths* are only *means* whereby to compass it, 'tis
- 9.
- † Matt. 1. certain that no *truth* can ever oppose a *Duty*, or evacuate *obedience*, because God would defeat his own *end* in revealing it, should he at any time become the Author of it. So that this cannot be a *proper*, at least it is not a *safe* way of arguing; *this plain Law*, in such and such parts, and sorts of instances, contradicts a *truth*, and therefore it is no *Duty*: whereas we should proceed quite contrary, after this manner; *this or that Disputed opinion interferes*, and undermines *this or that plain Law*, so that it can never be a *true opinion*. For this arguing is fair and likely, and whilst it is most *secure*. It is sure to preserve *obedience*, because it admits of nothing that interferes with it. And it is also very likely to preserve *truth*; for it is most certain that no *Doctrine* can ever come from God, which encourages or justifies any wickedness: so that not only an *obedient heart*, but even a *free and impartial reason* must quit the *Principle*, if it appear to draw after it an *evil consequence*.
- 21.

To settle Principles and Rules of Judgment then, especially for *simple and unlearned minds*, the first enquiry ought to be, not what is *true or false* in disputed Points, but what is *good or evil*. For since the knowledge of this is more *plain and obvious*, *easy and accessible to all*, but to them most especially; 'tis evident, that as all others, so particularly they, if they would secure even *Truth* as well

as Duty, must begin with *Laws* as their *Principle*, and from thence make their *inference* to controverted *Doctrines* and *Opinions*. To avoid sinful errors and disobedient prejudices, they must use Laws and Duties, as the measure whereby to judge of such notions; not such notions and opinions as the standard, whereby to measure and interpret plain Laws.

C H A P. VII.

A sixth cause of ignorance of the present actions being comprehended under a known Law. And of the excusableness of our transgressions upon both these sorts of ignorance.

Thus upon all these accounts, which are mention'd in the two former Chapters, we see it will often happen, that although in the general we do know the *Law*, which forbids any sin, yet shall we still be ignorant of our present actions being comprehended under it. For the small, and barely gradual difference between Good and Evil, the limit-edness of most *Laws*, the indirect obligations which pass upon some indifferent actions, the clashing and interfering of some of Christ's *Laws*, sometimes with other of his commands, and sometimes with our own prejudices and preposseſſed Opinions, are all so many reasons, why, after we know the General *Laws* which forbid them, we shall still venture upon several particular actions, through ignorance of their being forbidden.

And yet besides all these, which are causes of such ignorance to the most knowing men, and to those who have great parts and learning: there will be moreover one great and general cause of it to the more rude and ignorant, and that is the difficult, and, to them, obscure nature of the sin it self, which in the *Laws* is expressly, and by name forbidden. For many of them who hear, it may be, of the *Law* against censoriousness, lasciviousness, uncleanness, carnality, sensuality, refusing of the *Cross*, and other things, do not

well understand what those words mean. Alas ! the greater number of Men in the world, have but very rude and imperfect notices of things ; they see them but confusedly, and by halves. And as it is in their knowledge of other things ; so is it in their understanding of Sin, and Duty likewise. For their sight and sense of them, is dark and defective ; and albeit they have some general and confused apprehensions of them, yet is not their knowledge so clear and distinct, as that they are thereby enabled to judge of every particular action, whether it falls under any of them, or no. And since they have but such half, and imperfect notions of several sins, it is no wonder, although they know the *General Law*, if they venture upon several actions which really come under it, not knowing that they do.

. And thus we see, that besides the *ignorance of the Law itself*, there is also another sort of ignorance, which will be a cause of sin to several men of all sorts, and that is *their ignorance of their present actions being comprehended under the letter of the Law, and meant by it.*

But now as for those transgressions, which men of an honest heart are guilty of, through this *Ignorance of their own actions being included in the Law*, when they do know the Law that includes it : *They do not put them out of a state of Grace, but consist with it.*

For this Ignorance is mens *unhappiness*, rather than their *fault* ; it is not an Ignorance of their own *chusing*, seeing their will and choice is against it. For they *desire* to be free from it, and *strive* to prevent it, and *endeavour*, according to those abilities and opportunities which God has afforded them, to get right and true apprehensions of all God's Will, that they may perform it all ; and of evil actions that they may avoid them. But it is the *difficulty and intricateness of things* which renders them ignorant, and that is not of their making. For the sins forbidden, are not easily distinguished from the liberty which is allow'd, or from the Duties which are commanded in some cases ; and therefore it is that they mistake them, and are ignorant of the sinfulness of their present action, when their knowledge of it should enable them, if they would, to avoid it.

And since it has so little of their *own will*, and the men, even when by reason of their ignorance they do transgress, are industriously desirous to know their Duty, and prepared

red to practise it, so far as they do understand it: It shall have nothing of God's anger. It is altogether a pardonable slip, and pitiable instance, and that is enough to recommend it to God's mercy. For he is never rigorous and severe in a case that is prepared for pity and pardon, so that he will not punish, but graciously forgive it.

And if it were otherwise, who could possibly be saved? For this ignorance of their present actions being comprehended in the words of the known Law, is such as the wisest men have been subject to; and they, among the rest, who were most eminently skill'd in all the Laws of God. St. Paul is not certain, but that some such ignorance adhered to himself. *I know or am * conscious of nothing by myself, * οὐδείς.*

faith he, but yet I am not hereby justified, because some such sins may have † escaped my knowledge, 1 Cor. 4. 4. *Why, says St. * Chrysostome, should the Apostle say that he is not thereby justified, although he is conscious of nothing by himself wherefore he should be condemned? Because it might so happen, that he had committed several acts of sin, which, at the time of acting, for all his knowledge of the Laws themselves, he did not know were sinful.* And this is no more than holy David, *the man after God's own heart,* thought he had reason to suspect himself for before him; who, says he,

can understand his Errors? cleanse thou me from my secret faults, Psal. 19. 12. The best men in all times, whether Jews or Christians, have been subject to miscarriages through this sort of ignorance; and God, who is never wanting to the necessities of his servants, has always provided a sufficient atonement and propitiation for them. For under the Law, if an honest Israelite happen'd to do any thing which was forbidden to be done by the Commandment of the Lord, and wist not that it was forbidden; Moses appointed the Priests to make an expiation for him, and several atonements for that purpose are set down, Levit. 4. And under the Gospel our Saviour Christ, by * whom Grace and Favour is said * Joh. 1. to be given much more largely than it was by the Law 17 of Moses, has provided us of a much more powerful,

† *Nil mihi conscientius, &c. quia legerat, delicta quis intelligat, &c. temperabat sententia ne forte per ignorantiam deliquisset.* Hieron. Dial. adv. Pelag. lib. 2. p. 284. Ed. Eratim.
+ *καὶ πιστότε εἰ μηδὲ εἴσαται οὐδείς αὐτοῖς δικαιωταί; ὅτε οὐδέποτε διμερῆς μήνας τῷα δικαιώματα, μή μὲν αὐτὸς εἰδέναι τὰ δικαιώματα Chrysost. Hom. 11. in 1 Epist. ad Cor. c. 4. vers. 4. Tom. 3. p. 307. Ed. Savil.*

and valuable propitiation. He himself, by virtue of his own sacrifice, atones for all such unknown offences; as well as the Jewish Priests did by their Sacrifices, which were prescribed in the Law of Moses. For in comparison of the two Priesthoods, as to that part of their Office which lay in making these atonements, St. Paul assures us, that like as the Jewish Priests had, so Christ can have compassion upon the ignorant, Heb. 5. 2.

As for those transgressions then, which are therefore involuntary and unchosen, because we do not know that the Law which they are against doth comprehend them; they shall not finally damn any man. So long as we have an honest heart, that is ready to perform what it knows, and unfeignedly desirous and industrious to know more, that it may perform it likewise; if in some things still we happen ignorantly to offend, such ignorant offences shall not prove our ruin. For our ignorance will excuse our sin, and make it consistent with God's Favour, and with all the hopes and happiness of heaven.

Nay, even where our heart is not so honest as it should be, and we are ignorant of the present actions being comprised under that sin which the Law forbids, through our own fault; yet even there our ignorance, although it cannot wholly excuse, doth still extenuate our sin, and proportionably abate our punishment. Perhaps it is our rashness, or inconsiderateness, or violent pursuit of some opinions and prejudice against others, which makes us judge wrong of some particular actions, and not to see that they are included in the prohibition of some known Law, when really they are. Nay so far may our mistake go, as not only to judge them to be no sinful breaches of these Laws, but moreover, to be virtuous performances of others. For our Saviour tells his Disciples, that the time was coming, when even they who killed them should think that thereby they did God good service, Joh. 16. 2. And St. Paul says plainly, that he verily thought with himself that he ought to do many things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth, Acts 26. 9. All which murders and persecutions they were ignorantly guilty of, not as if they did not know the General Laws against murder and persecution, but because they thought their present case and actions to be unconcern'd in them, and not forbid by them; nay, on the contrary, to be warranted and injoin'd by other Laws,

Laws requiring zeal for God, and judgment against false Prophets.

Now this Ignorance was such, as they might very well have prevented, had they been calm, and considerate, humble, and teachable, and would have hearkned honestly, and with an even mind, to that evidence which Christ gave of his being the Messiah, which was sufficient to convince any honest mind. And this patience, humility, and teachableness, were in their own Power to have exercised if they would ; so that they were ignorant in good measure through their own choice, and by a wilful neglect of those means, which would have brought them to a true belief, and a right understanding. And since their Ignorance was thus a matter of their own choice, it is their sin and they must answer for it.

But although, being, as I say, their own fault, it could not wholly excuse : yet was it fit to lessen and mitigate their crime, and to abate their punishment. Their account should be less by reason of their Ignorance, and the sinful actions, being committed with a Good meaning, and through a misguided understanding, were much more prepared for pardon, than otherwise they would have been. And this Christ himself has plainly taught us, when he uses it as an argument with his Father for the forgiveness of that sinful murder of the Jews, whereof they were guilty in his Crucifixion. Father, says he, forgive them, for they know not what they do ; their killing of me, they take to be no sinful murther of an innocent and anointed person, but a virtuous execution of a lying Prophet, Luk. 23. 34. And this likewise St. Paul experienced, I obtained Mercy, says he, for persecuting the Church of God, because I did it ignorantly, not thinking it to be a sinful persecution, but a pious service, 1 Tim. 1. 13.

Yea, if the culpable ignorance be either of the Law it self, or of our present actions being contained under it ; although God should not call us to repentance for what we ignorantly committed, and so to pardon ; yet even unpardoned we shall undergo a lighter punishment by reason of our ignorance, than we should have suffered had we sinned in knowledge. For in this Point the words of our Lord and Judge are express, He who knew not his Masters will, and did things worthy of stripes ; shall be beaten with few stripes, Luk. 12. 48.

This allowance the Gospel makes for our sinful actions, so long as we are ignorant, that the Laws, which they are against, do include and comprehend them; though that ignorance were in good measure *culpably wilful*, we should obtain a *milder punishment*; but if it were *involuntary and innocent*, we shall be fully acquitted and *excused*.

This allowance, I say, there is, whilst *our sin is ignorant*, and our Consciences do not see that the known Law is transgressed by our sinful action.

But if our Consciences should come to *know so much of the sinfulness of that action which we commit, as to scruple its lawfulness*: and to be *enlightned so far, as really to doubt of it*: Then is the case quite alter'd, and we cannot plead that we did it ignorantly, because we knew so much by it at least, as should have made us forbear it. For if indeed we *doubted of it*, we knew it was as likely to be a Sin, as to be an innocent Action, because that is properly Doubting, when we suspend our Assent, and cannot tell which way to determine, when we judge one to be as likely as the other, and do not positively and determinately believe the truth of either. And when this is our case concerning any Action, if we venture on it whilst the doubt remains, we shew plainly, that we will do more for sin, than we will for God, and that it has a greater interest with us than he has: Because even whilst we apprehend it as likely to be our sin, as to be our liberty; yet for the sins sake we chuse to venture on it, rather than for God's sake to abstain from it.

This Contempt of God there is in it, in the *Nature of the very thing it self*, although God had no ways expressed himself concerning it. But besides, he has given us an express Rule, *Abstain from all appearance of evil*, 1 Thess. 5. 22. And if there be any thing whose lawfulness our Consciences are *unresolved and unperswaded of*, St. Paul tells us that our commission of it is utterly unlawful whilst that *unresolvedness* remains. *Whatsoever, says he, is not of Faith, or proceeding from a belief and persuasion of its lawfulness, is sin.* So that if it be about the *eating of meats*, for Instance, *he that doubts is damn'd, both of God and of himself, if he eat, because he eateth not of Faith*, Rom. 14. 23.

If our minds therefore are so far enlightened concerning any sinful Action, as that we are come to doubt of it, we are no longer innocently, and excusably ignorant thereof. For we see enough by it, to make us chuse to abstain from it; and if for all this we presume still to venture on it, sin lies at the door, and we have it to answer for. We are no longer within the excuse of Ignorance, but we are guilty of a wilful sin, and are got within the bounds of Death and Damnation.

But if in any Action, we know nothing at all of the Law which forbids it; or, after we have known that, if we are still ignorant of its being contain'd under it; if we are not come to doubt, but are either in *Ignorance*, or *Error* concerning it; our Ignorance, if it be innocent, shall excuse our Fault, and according to the gracious Terms of Christ's Gospel, we shall not finally be condemned for it.

And this is true, not only of *simple Ignorance*, but likewise of the two particular *Modes of Ignorance*, viz.

First, *Forgetfulness*.

Secondly, *Error*.

1. Our sins of Ignorance will be born with, if we venture upon the sinful Action through *Ignorance of its sinfulness*, which we knew formerly, but have forgotten at the time of acting. For a slip of Forgetfulness, is no more than befel an *Apostle*, who was for all that a *blessed Saint*, and an *Heir of Life* still. St. Paul himself reviles the *High-Priest*, forgetting both his *Duty*, and that that man was he whom he spoke to. *I wist not, Brethren*, says he, *that he was the High-Priest*, for had I bethought my self, I should not have spoke so disrespectfully to him, it being thus written, *Thou shall not speak evil of the Ruler of thy People*, Acts 23. 5.

2. Our sins of Ignorance shall be dispensed with, if we are led to commit them through a *mistake of their innocence*, when indeed they are *sinful*, which is an acting of them through *error*. For no less a man than Peter was drawn into a sinful dissimulation, through an erroneous conceit that his giving no offence, but keeping in with the *Jews* (which was the thing that he aimed at by it) would justifie and bear him out therein. For which St. Paul tells us, when he came to *Antioch*, he with-

withstood him to the face, because he was to be blamed, Gal. 2. 11, 12, 13. But yet for all this, St. Peter was at that time a true Saint, and if it had pleased God then to call for him, he had been undoubtedly an Heir of salvation.

And to mention no more upon this Point, as they were constant atonements for the errors of the People under the Law, so is there provision made for them under the Gospel. For Christ who is our High Priest, as St Paul assures us, can have compassion on the ignorant and * erroneous, or them who are out of the way, Heb. 5. 2.

** πλευρας.*
Eccles.
So long therefore we see, as our ignorance of any kind, whether of the Law it self, or of our present actions being comprehended by it, is involuntary and innocent, so long shall we be born with, for all such slips as we incur under it. For God will never be severe upon us for weakness of understanding, or for want of parts, whilst there is nothing in us of a wicked heart: and therefore if our ignorance it self is innocent, our offences under it shall go unpunished.

But here we must observe, that all this allowance for our ignorance, is so far only as it is involuntary and faultless: but if we chuse to be ignorant, our ignorance it self is our sin, and will make all our following offences damnable. For we must answer for any thing of our own choice; and therefore if we chuse the ignorance, we shall be interpreted to chuse, and so put to answer for all those ill effects which it produces. Those sins which are voluntary in their cause, are interpreted to us, as we

† Chap. 3. have † seen, and put on our score; so that if we chuse the ignorance which brings them, we shall be adjudged to suffer for them.

Now as for the ignorance and error of many men, which is the cause of their sins and transgressions, it is plainly of their own chusing. They have a mind to be ignorant of their Duty, and that is the reason why they do not understand it. For either they shut their eyes, and will not see it; or they are idle and careless, and will not enquire after it; or they bend their wits, at the instigation of their lusts, to dispute against it, that after they have darkened and perplexed it in their own thoughts, they may mince or evacuate, mistake or disbelieve it. So that if at last they do not know it, it is because they do not desire the knowledge of it, or will be at no pains for it, or

or take pains against it, to supplant and disguise it. And these are they, who are not ignorant against their Wills, but, as St. Peter says, are willingly ignorant, 2 Pet. 3. 5. And of these, says our Saviour, *This is the Condemnation, that Light is come into the World, and Men love Darkness rather than Light, because their Deeds are evil*, Joh. 3. 19.

And as for such ignorance as this, it will by no means excuse us before God; but if we will be ignorant, God's will and pleasure is, that we shall suffer for our sinful ignorance, and for all those sins which we commit under it, which we might and should have seen and avoided. For all those Laws, which are ignorantly transgressed by us, threaten death; and the ignorance, being of our own chusing, takes nothing off; so that death and damnation rest upon us.

But that ignorance, which can be pleaded to excuse us before God, must be an ignorance that is involuntary; an ignorance, which in the constitution of our nature is imposed upon us, and is not chosen by us. And a right understanding of this difference in ignorance being of very great moment, I shall, before I dismiss this Point, observe when our ignorance is voluntary, and when it is involuntary.

First, I will shew when our ignorance is voluntary.

As for the knowledge of our Duty, like as of all other things, it doth not spring up in our souls as an *Herb* doth out of the ground, nor drop into us as the *rain* doth from a Cloud; but it must be sought for, and endeavoured after, and unless we use the means of acquiring it, we must be content to live without it.

The means of obtaining the knowledge of God's Laws, and of the innocence and sinfulness of our own actions, are the reading of his Word, the attendance upon his Ministers, the thinking or considering upon what we read or hear in our own minds, and praying to God to make all these means effectual for our information, and the like: and if ever we expect to know God's Will, we must put these in practice.

But now, whether we will make use of these, or no, is plainly in our own choice, and at our own pleasure. For if we will we may * exercise them; and if we will, we may as well neglect them. And when both these are before

* *Nulli homini ablatum est scire utiliter, querere quod inutiliter ignorat, & humiliter confitendum esse imbecilitatem, ut querenti & confitenti ille subveniat, qui nec errat dum subvenit, nec laberat.* Aug. de lib. arbit. l. 3. c. 19.

~~† Non tibi~~ us, if we refuse to make use of the means of understanding, and wilfully ~~† neglect~~ the methods of attaining to the knowledge of sin and duty, good and evil ; if we sit down without the knowledge of God's Law, it is because we would our selves, and our ignorance is a voluntary and a wilful ignorance.

~~querere~~ And this is the first way of our ignorance's becoming voluntary, viz. when it is so upon a voluntary neglect of those means which are necessary to attain knowledge. And this in the Schools is called a * supine, slothful, careless ~~† Ignorantia~~ ignorance. And if it be of such things as lay near in our way, and might have been known without much ~~† Ignorantia~~ pains, or much seeking ; it is called ~~† gross~~ or affected ignorance.

~~ta.~~ But besides this sort of wilful ignorance of our Duty, through a wilful neglect of those means which are necessary to the knowledge of it ; there is another which is higher and more enormous, and that is,

Secondly, When we do not only slight the means of knowing God's Law, but moreover use those of darkning or mistaking it,

For our knowledge of things is then made perfect and useful, when it is clear and distinct ; and our assent and belief of things is then gained, when their evidence is represented, and duly considered of. But now as for the employing of mens thoughts, in clearing or obscuring, in believing or disbelieving of the Laws of God ; it is perfectly in their own power, whether to use it on one side, or on the other. And commonly it is their pleasure to use it on the worse. For they will consider only of the difficulties and intricacies that attend, or that misemployed wit can raise about God's Law, which may darken and disturb, puzzle and perplex their thoughts about them ; and attend only to such exceptions as they can make against them, which may unsettle their minds, either about the meaning, or the truth of them : So that after all their reading and considering of them, they shall not truly understand them, but err and mistake them. As it happens to all those, who have disputed themselves out of the knowledge of their Duty, until, as *Isaiah* says, they call evil good, and good evil, put darkness for light, and light for darkness, *Isai.* 5. 20.

• And when Men are ignorant of their Duty, because they chose thus to endeavour it, and take pains for it ; this ignorance is voluntary, and wilful with a witness.

These two reasons of mens being ignorant of their Duty, viz. their neglect of such means as are necessary to the knowledge of it, or their use of the contrary means of darkening or discrediting it, are the causes of their wilful ignorance.

And that which makes them guilty of both these, is either the gross idleness, or the profligate wickedness of their hearts, which are wholly enslaved to some beloved lust or sin. They are wretchedly idle, and therefore they will not learn their Duty, because that is painful ; they are greatly wicked, and so care not for the knowledge of the Law, because that would disquiet them. Men love darkness, says our Saviour, better than light, because their works are evil ; they hate the light, and will not come to it, lest their deeds should be reproved by it, John 3. 19, 20. because they hate and fear the Law, they neglect the means of knowing it ; nay, they pick quarrels with it, and endeavour all they can to perplex or darken, to evacuate or disparage it.

So that our ignorance is then wilful, when we are therefore ignorant, because we neglect the means of knowledge, or industriously endeavour to be mistaken. And that because we are either too idle to learn, or too wicked to care for the knowledge of our Duty. The idleness and wickedness of our hearts, is the first spring ; and the neglect of means and industrious perverting of the truth, are the great productive instruments of our wilful ignorance. Which is therefore called voluntary and wilful, because the Principle and the Instruments, the motive and the means to it, are both under the power and choice of our own wills.

And these things making our ignorance wilful, viz. a wilful neglect of the means of knowledge, or a wilful perverting of those Laws which we are to know, we shall easily discern.

Secondly, What ignorance is unwilling and involuntary ; namely, that which implies a freedom from, and an absence of both these ; so that unto it there is required,

First, An honest heart.

Secondly, An honest industry.

First,

First, In all involuntary ignorance, it is necessary that we have an honest heart. We have St. Paul's word for it, that our receiving of the *love of the truth*, is necessary to a saving belief, and understanding of it. They who believed not the truth, but believed lies, fell into that miscarriage by this means, says he because they received not the *love of the truth*, that they might be saved, 2 Thess. 2. 10, 11, 12. And our Saviour has taught us, that an obedient heart, is the surest step to a right understanding. If any man will, or is willing to do God's Will, he shall know of the *Doctrine* which I preach, whether it be of God, John 7. 17. The heart or will must in the first place be obedient, and unfeignedly desirous to know God's Will; not that it may question and dispute, but practise and obey it. For a failure here, spoils all besides. Because the Heart and Will is the Principle of all our actions; and if it be against obeying any Law, it will also be against understanding it; and so will be sure to make us neglect, and omit more or less, the means of coming to the knowledge of it. To prevent therefore all wilful defects afterwards, care must be taken in the first place, that our hearts be honest, and truly desirous to be shewn our Duty, be it what it will. They must entertain no Lusts, which will prejudice them against God's Laws, and make them willing, either to over-look, or to pervert them. But they must come with an entire Obedience and Resignation, being ready and desirous to hearken to whatsoever God shall say, and resolv'd to practise it whensoever they shall understand it. Of their sincerity in which Resolution to practise it as soon as they shall come to know it, besides their own sense and feeling, they cannot have a greater Argument, than their being careful to be found in the practice of so much as they know already, without which it is not to be expected, that they should be perfecter in their practice by knowing more.

This *Honesty and Obedience of the Heart* then, is necessary in the first place to make our ignorance involuntary, because we should wilfully omit the means of knowledge, and become thereby wilfully ignorant, if we wanted it.

But then as an effect of this *Honesty of the heart*, to make our ignorance involuntary and innocent, there is yet further required,

Secondly,

Secondly, An honest Industry. For the knowledge of our Duty, as was observed, is not to be got without our own search, but we must enquire after it, and make use of the means of obtaining it, before we shall be possessed of it. We must read good Books, which will teach us God's Will, but especially the Bible ; we must be constant and careful to hear Sermons ; attend diligently to the instructions of our spiritual Guides, whom God has set over us for that very purpose. We must submit our selves to be Catechised by our Governours, taught by our Superiors, and admonished by our Equals ; begging always a Blessing from God to set home all their instructions upon our Souls. And after all, we must be careful, without prejudice or partiality, to think and meditate upon those things which we read or hear, that we may the better understand them, and that they may not suddenly slip from us, but we may remember and retain them.

All these are such means, as God has appointed for the attainment of spiritual knowledge, and laid in our way to a right understanding of his Will. And they are such, as he has placed in every Man's power, for any of us to use who are so minded. So that if we are ignorant of our Duty through the want of them, we are ignorant, because we were willing to be ignorant. But if ever we expect that our ignorance should be judged involuntary, we must industriously use all those means of knowledge, which are under the power of our own Wills, whereby we may prevent it.

And as for the measures of this industry, (*viz.*) what times is to be laid out upon it, and what pains are to be taken in it, that is so much, as in every one, according to their several abilities and opportunities, would be interpreted an effect of an honestly obedient heart, and of an unfeigned desire to know our duty, by an honest man. For God has not given all men, either the same abilities or opportunities for knowledge ; and since he has not, he doth not expect the same measures from them. He doth not reap where he has not sown, but that which he exacts, is, that *every man according to his opportunities, should use and improve that Talent, be it more or less, which was intrusted with him*, as we are taught in the Parable of the Talents, Mat. 25. And to name that once for all, we have this laid down by our Saviour as an universal Maxim of God's Government,

Government ; unto whomsoever much is given, of them shall much be required. Which is the very same equitable proceeding, that is daily in use among our selves. For to whom men have committed much, of him they will exact the more, Luke 12. 48.

If any man therefore is industrious after the knowledge of God's Will, according to the measure of those abilities and opportunities which God has given him ; he is industrious according to that measure, which God requires of him. All men have not the *same leisure* : For some are necessarily taken up by their place and way of life, in much business, some in less ; some have their time at their own disposal, some are subject to the ordering of others. And all have not the *same abilities and opportunities* : For some are able by study and reading to inform themselves, some have constant need of the help and instruction of others ; some have most wise and understanding teachers, and may have their assistance when they will, others have men of meaner parts and attainments, and opportunity of hearing them more seldom. But now of all these, whose leisure and opportunities are thus different, God doth not in any wise exact the same measure. No, one shall be excused, for what another shall be punished ; but if every man endeavours according to his opportunities, he has done his Duty, and God has accepted him.

And in the *proportioning* of this, where there is first an *honest heart*, God is not hard to please. For he knows, that besides their Duty, men have much other busines to mind, which his own constitution of Humane Nature has made necessary ; and he allows of it. The endeavours which he exacts of us, are not the endeavours of *Angels* ; but of *men*, who are soon wearied, and much distracted, having so many other things to employ us. But he accepts of such a measure of industry, in the use of all the means of knowledge, as would be interpreted for an effect of an hearty desire to know his *Laws*, by any *honest man*. For where there is first an *obedient heart*, God will not be equalled, and much less out-done by the best of men in pity and kindness. Which is the argument from which our Saviour himself concludes, that God will give the *holy spirit at our prayers*, because that *men themselves*, who are infinitely below him in goodness, *will give good gifts to them that ask them*, Luke 11. 13.

Let

Let us therefore take care in the first place, to secure our selves of an obedient heart, and to give such evidence of an honest industry, as any kind-hearted and honest man would accept of; and then we may have just reason to be confident, that although our endeavour is weak and imperfect, being much hindred and often interrupted, yet shall it still be esteemed sufficient. For Christ himself, who is to judge of its sufficiency, is no stranger to our weaknesses, but having felt them in himself, he is prone to pity and pardon them in us. He experimented the backwardness of our flesh, and the number of our distractions, and the tiredness of our powers, and the insinuations and strength of temptations. So that having such an High Priest to intercede for us at present, and to judge us at the last day, who is touched with a feeling of our infirmities, having been tempted himself in all points, even as we are: let us come boldly unto the throne of Grace, as the Apostle exhorts us, that we may obtain mercy for what we cannot master, as well as find grace in a seasonable time of need to conquer what he expects we should overcome, Heb. 4. 15, 16.

And this merciful connivance at our imperfections, and gracious acceptance of our weak endeavours, we may with greater reason and assurance hope for; because Christ our Judge will be most candid and benign, in putting the best sense, and in interpreting most to our advantage, all those our actions and endeavours, which shall then be brought before him. Whereof he has given us a clear instance in that most favourable construction which he made of the Charity, that was shewn unto his Brethren by those on his right-hand, Matt. 25. For although it was not expressed to him, but only to their fellow Christians for his sake; yet because their kindness reached him in the intention of their minds, and what they did to his servants for his sake, they would have done to himself much rather could they have met with an opportunity; he resented it as if it had been really shewn to his own Person. For when they say unto him Lord, when saw we thee an hungred, and fed thee; or naked, and cloathed thee, &c. he answers, inasmuch as ye have done it to one of the least of these my brethren, I take the affection for the performance, and interpret it as if you had done it unto me, vers. 40.

When therefore the sufficiency of our Endeavours after the Knowledge of our Duty, is come to be enquired into by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, we may be assured that it will have a favourable Tryal. It is to be censured by a *candid, equitable, and benign Judge*, who will interpret it to our Advantage, as much, nay, more than any *good-natured honest Man* would. So that if our Industry after the Knowledge of God's Will be in such a measure, as a candid and benign Man would judge to be a sufficient effect of an obedient Heart, and of an honest Purpose; Christ will judge it to be so too.

And where our Ignorance of any of Christ's Laws is joyned with an *honest Heart*, and remains after *such an industry*; we may take Comfort to our selves, and be confident that it is *involuntary and innocent*. If we are *desirous to know God's Laws*, and *read good Books*, *frequent Sermons*, *hearken to any good Instructions* which we meet with, and that according to our *Opportunities*, and in *such measure* as any *good Man* would interpret to be an honest Endeavour after the Knowledge of our Duty if it were to himself: If after all this, I say, in some Points we are still *Ignorant*, our Ignorance is *involuntary*, and shall not harm us; it is not chosen by us, and therefore it will never be charged upon us to condemn us.

And thus we have seen, what *Ignorances excuse our Slips and Transgressions*, which are committed under them; and when those *Ignorances* are themselves *involuntary and innocent*, so as that we may comfortably expect to be excused upon the account of them. And the Summ of all that has been hitherto discoursed upon this Subject, is this. That as for the *Laws themselves, all Men* must needs be ignorant of some of them for *some time*, and *some Men for all their Lives*, because they want either *Ability or Opportunity* to understand them. And as their present *Actions being comprehended under them*, that many Men of *all Sorts and Capacities*, after that they have known the *General Laws*, will still be ignorant of it likewise. For as for the *wise and learned*, the *small and meer gradual Difference between Good and Evil in some Instances*, the *allowed Exceptions from the generality of others*, the *indirect Force and Obligation of a third sort*, and the *frequent Clashing and Interfering*, whether of *Laws with Laws*, or of *Laws with their repugnant Prejudices*

judices and Opinions ; will be sure to make them very often over-look it. And as for the Rude and Ignorant, besides all these Causes of such Ignorance which are common to them with learned Men, the difficult and obscure nature of several Vices and Virtues themselves, which are plainly and expressly forbidden or enjoin'd, will be of Force sufficient to make the generality of them in many Instances not to understand it. And as for the Pardon and Excuse of our Ignorance and unknown Transgressions, from all, or any of these Causes ; that it is involuntary and innocent, so long as it is joined with an honest Heart, and remains after an honest Industry ; and begins then only to be our wilfull Sin, and an Article of our Condemnation, when our Lusts or Vices introduce it, and we have a mind to it, and take no Pains against it ; or, what is the Consummation and Height of all, industriously labour and endeavour after it.

And this may suffice to have spoken of the first Sort of want of Knowledge, which, as I said above, produces an uncondemning Involuntariness, (viz.) Ignorance, when we commit Sin, because we do not know the Sinfulness of our present action, or the Law which we sin against.

C H A P. VIII.

Of Sin consisting through the second Cause of an innocent Involuntariness, viz. Inconsideration.

Having in the foregoing Chapters discoursed largely of the first Cause of an innocent Involuntariness, viz. Ignorance of our Duty, or want of a general Knowledge, I proceed now to the second, viz. want of particular Animadverence and Consideration of what we know, which is Inconsiderateness. And this is the second way of rendering our Transgressions pardonably involuntary, which I propoaled above ; namely, when in any sinful Action we do not bethink our selves, and consider of its Sinfulness.

It is not all Knowledge of our Duty, that renders every particular Sin against it chosen and voluntary. For a Knowledge that is only general, and at such Time as the Thing occurs to our Thoughts, and we are asked the Question, will not make it so. But we must know and consider of that action in particular, that it is against the Duty. For all Choice pre-supposes Right and Knowledge of what is chosen. And if we do not so, that the particular Action is a Transgression of the Duty, it cannot be said that we chuse to transgress it thereby.

But now *this* is the Case in several of our Transgressions, *they slide from us without this actual Application of our minds to them*. For we do not think and consider of the Evil that is in them, when we commit them; and so their sinfulness being unseen, it is withal unchosen.

And these Slips stealing from us without our considering and thinking on them, or adverting in the Application of our Minds to them, are called by these several Names, which are all of the same signification, *viz.* Sins of Inadvertency, Incogitancy, and Inconsideration. Which because they are such, as, through the Weakness of our Natures, we are continually subject to, and liable daily to incur, are styled in another Word Sins of *daily incursion*.

Now as for this second Sort of Sins, our *inconsiderate Transgressions*, they may steal from us *involuntarily and innocently*, upon as many Grounds, as there may be innocent Causes of Inconsideration. And as for the unwill'd, and therefore innocent Causes of Inconsideration, I shall reduce them to these three.

1. *Suddenness and Surprize of Opportunity.*
2. *Weariness, and*
3. *Discomposure, and Disturbance of our thinking Powers, wherewith she should consider.*

1. The first Cause of Inconsideration in our Actions, whereupon we venture upon some Sin without thinking or considering of it, is the *Suddenness of the Opportunity, and the Surprise of Temptation.* † To make it involuntary, it must be sudden, saith S. Clement of Alexandria. The Opportunity for the Sin falls out unexpectedly, and it stays for us at such time, as our Minds

+ Τὸ μὲν
ἀκέραιον
αἰσχριστιον.
Alex. l. 1. c. 2.

are otherwise employed ; and so we act it without considering, because it lies ready and prepared for us just then, when we have no Leisure for Thinking and Consideration. And the first Beginnings of a *sinful Passion*, whether of *Anger*, of *Envy*, &c. and the *unadvised Slips* of the Tongue in *rash Censuring*, in *uncharitable Speaking*, in *indeliberate Backbiting*, and the like, generally enter this way. For they come upon us in the *Throng of Conversation*, and Opportunities are offered for them before we foresee them ; and so we spring out indeliberately to act and exert them.

And this inconsideration is such as we cannot avoid. For we have no freedom of *Acting* there, where we want a Freedom of *Thinking*, seeing we cannot chuse without Consideration. But as for these inconsiderate Slips, they steal from us before we can bethink our selves, and stay not for our Consideration, but run before it. For our operative Powers, when they are spurr'd on by any thing of an *inward desire*, or of a remaining *corrupt Inclination*, (and who, as long as he lives here, can be wholly freed from it ?) are ready of themselves to spring out into Action and Practice upon the first Offer of Temptation, and stand in need of Reason and Consideration, not to raise and excite, but to restrain and repress them. So that upon the Offer of a fit Occasion, we act many times amiss before we are aware ; and we cannot help it, because we cannot deliberate first and consider of it.

But as these Slips of Surprize, are such as we cannot avoid ; so are they such withal, as God will not exact a severe account of. He will not *punish* but *pity* us for them, and in great Mercy dispense with them.

For they are *necessarily incident to all Men* ; they have been incurr'd by his best Servants, but were never looked upon to be of that provoking Nature, as to put them out of his Favour, or to interrupt their state of Salvation and Acceptance.

Just *Noah*, through his Ignorance of the Strength of Wine, was *drunken* before he was aware, or could discern what effects the Fruits of his new *Vineyard* would have upon him, *Noah drank Wine*, says *Moses*, and was *drunken*, Gen. 9. 21. But this was perfect'y a Mixture of *Surprise* and *Ignorance* ; for he had lost his Sen-

ses before he thought thereof, or ever knew that the Wine which he drank would rob him of his use of Reason. For it was at his first Planting of a Vineyard, before he understood what Measure of it would cause Intoxication. *He began, says the Text, to be a Husbandman, and he planted a Vineyard, and he drank of the Wine of his new Vineyard, and was drunken, v. 20, 21.*

The great Apostle St. Paul, was guilty of a sudden Slip towards *Ananias the High Priest*, who, whilst his Mind was intent upon the Speech which he was making in his own Defence, commanded him to be smitten on the Face. Upon which unexpected occasion, he was surprised into a sudden Anger, and into an unadvised irreverence. *God shall smite thee, thou whited wall,* says he presently to him again, for *sittest thou to judge me according to the Law, and yet commandest me to be smitten contrary to the Law?* Acts 23. 1, 2, 3. But as soon as he had spoken the Words, he retracts them, and confesses his Speech was evil; but yet pleads that it was pardonable, as being altogether unconsidered through the suddenness of the Occasion. *I wist not, Brethren,* says he, *that he was the High Priest,* or I did not think of that; for if I had, I should not have spoke so disrespectfully to him, it being thus written, *Thou shalt not speak evil of the Ruler of thy people,* v. 4, 5.

2. Another innocent Cause of Inconsideration, whereby we venture upon several Actions without thinking of their Sinfulness, is the natural Weariness of our Faculties or Understandings. It is natural for our Minds to be tired out, by being held long and constantly to one thing. We find it is so with us, in all studies whatsoever: For let our Thoughts be employed upon what we will, they cannot be kept at stretch upon it for a long time together, but either we must draw them off and relieve them, or else they will flag and fail of themselves.

But now as for some Sins, they are a continued temptation. They do not soon come upon us, and go off as soon again; but they lie before us and stick to us, and for a long time are still alluring and solliciting us. And here, although our Minds can consider of them, and watch against them for some time; yet by reason of their long abode with us, they wax faint at last

and grow weary and forgetful: and then the temptation gets ground, and enters when we are not aware, and in some thing we prove unadvised, and yield to it, because we cannot hold out longer to consider of such things as should guard and preserve us from it.

Thus in *afflictions* and *sickness*, for instance, by the uneasiness of his flesh, and hardness of his condition, a man is tempted to *fret* and *murmur*, and to be *peevish* and *repining*. But for some considerable time he stands upon his guard, and his thoughts are in readiness; and so long he represses his passion, and keeps it under: so that although the sin be importunately offered, it is not embraced. And if the temptation would pass off, whilst he stands thus prepared to watch against it, all were well, and his *Vertue* would remain in safety. But on the contrary, it is *lasting* and *permanent*, it sticks to him, and incessantly importunes him, and so proves a continual snare to him. And now if his *mind* would endure to be held *always upon the stretch*, and in a continued watchfulness against the same, all were well, and he would keep back from it still. But alas! his faculties after a long toil, grow *weary*; and his Powers of thinking, being constantly employed, are *spent* and *disabled*, and then his watchfulness begins to impair, and his thoughts by degrees to unbend; and whilst he becomes less attent, and less careful to oppose the Temptation, it wins ground, and prevails upon him when he is not aware: so that although he could not at *first*, yet he is surprized at *last* into some *impatient thought*, or *peevish behaviour*. And the case is the same, in a continued provocation, to *Anger*, *Lusts*, or other sins.

Now this *weariness*, which renders us thus inconsiderate, is no matter of our own chusing. For it is the very frame of our Nature, and not the effect of our Will; so that we must submit to it, and cannot help it. For the *Soul*, in *thinking* and *understanding*, uses *bodily powers*, and they by exercise are *spent* and *wasted*, *weakened* and *enfeebled*: and therefore when by a fixt watchfulness and consideration of one thing, they have been kept long attent, they naturally grow weak and weary, and there is no avoiding it.

And since we cannot help it, God will never exact of us that we should; but when he comes to judge us

for those slips which were inconsiderate upon this account he will not punish us, but in great mercy pardon and bear with us.

And this we find that he has always done. For his best Servants have been wearied into slips of this nature, and yet they have not put them out of a state of Grace, nor made a breach in God's acceptance; but he has own'd and rewarded them as his faithful Servants still.

Job was a man patient to a *Proverb*, and one to whom by the testimony of God himself, there was none equal in the whole Earth; a perfect and an upright man, one who feared God, and eschewed evil, Job 1. 8. But yet this man of admirable Constancy and Patience, was wearied out of his watchfulness by a tedious Tryal of Afflictions, and in that time of his unadvisedness, uttered many things impatiently with his lips. For after he had watched sore by himself, and kept silence, continuing still his noble Patience when his Friends came to pity him, and stood amazed at his condition for seven days and seven nights together: at last being over-charged with grief, and wearied off from his guard against it, he burst out into a rash and foolish cursing of the day of his birth, and into many repining Questions, and fretful Answers, Job 2. 12, 13. and Chap. 3. But yet notwithstanding all these, and several other fretful expressions of a tired mind, God owns him for his dear Servant still, and honours him in the end with a most noble mark of a particular affection, by accepting of his Sacrifice, for his Friends, when he would not accept of it from themselves, Job 42. 8.

David, the man after God's own heart, when in great fear he flies from *Saul*, and after several escapes made from one place to another, could not either weary or avoid him; being tired out of all patience and composure, at last, begins sinfully to call in question the truth of God's promise. For although *Samuel* had (a) come from God to anoint him King, and had thereby in God's Name assured him of the Crown, yet, after a long confidence in God's Faithfulness, he begins at last, in the tiredness of his spirit, to doubt within himself whether God would be as good as his word, and to say in his heart, I shall now perish one day by the hand of *Saul*, 1 Sam. 27. 1. Which he did, as he himself gives the account

count of it, only because the weariness of his mind, through his continued and repeated dangers, had made him hasty and inconsiderate. I said in my haste, saith he, *I am cut off from before thine eyes*; referring in all likelihood to this very case, Psal. 31. 22.

Good Asaph by the continuance of those troubles which he bemoans, is wearied into a like offence. For altho' he guarded his spirit well at the beginning, and for some time; yet after he had laboured much, and reflected long upon that affliction, he breaks out at last in the discomposure of his soul, into these repining thoughts and distrustful Expostulations: *Will the Lord cast off for ever, and will he be favourable no more? Is his mercy clean gone for ever, and doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious, and hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?* Pial. 77. 7, 8, 9. But when once he had got liberty to recollect his thoughts, and to recover his former guard again; he doth not any longer give way to these distrustful surmises, but immediately suppresses and corrects them. *Then I said*, as he goes on, *this is mine own infirmity*, v. 10.

3. A third innocent Cause of inconsideration in our Actions, is the discomposure and disturbance of our thinking powers, which should consider of them.

Our Souls as I said, are united to our Bodies, and make use of their powers, in their most spiritual actions of Knowledge and Apprehension. And therefore upon any ruffling discomposure in our bodily Spirits, our thoughts are ruffled and discomposed likewise. They see nothing clearly at such times, nor have any distinct notices of things; but are clouded and confuted even as our bodily powers themselves are.

Now that which thus discomposes our bodily Spirits, so as that our Souls can see and consider of nothing through their disorder, is either strong Drink, or a strong Passion. For so much is all exercise of reason and consideration, disturbed and hindred by these, that of men in drink or in a high passion, it is usually said, that they are not themselves, and that they have not their wits about them.

But although either Wine, or any violent Passion, are sufficient Causes of disturbance in our spirit, and of discomposure in our thinking powers, which unfit us to consider

sider of what we do during such times as we are disturbed by them ; yet are not both of them *innocent*, and able to excuse those inconsiderate slips, which we commit by reason of them. For *drunkenness* is always our own fault, and if we sin unadvisedly through its discomposure, we shall certainly suffer punishment, because that is a discomposure of our own seeking.

As for our *passions* indeed, they are causes of an *ambiguous quality*. For sometimes they grow strong in us by our *own fault*. Either we feed them, or we indulge them ; we suggest such things to them, as will foment them ; or we permit them to grow unruly of themselves, without checking and repressing of them, as we might and should do, were we so minded. And when our passions are thus indulged, and the violence of them is of our own chusing ; they are themselves our *sin*, and so cannot plead our *excuse and vindication*.

But then at other times, they are *forced upon us by the power and suddenness of outward objects*, whether we will or no. For we hate them, and are afraid of them ; and if we were aware, we would stand upon our guard, and call in all the Aids of Reason and Religion against them to preserve us from being too much disturbed thereby. But God's Providence casts them upon us on the sudden, so that we do not see them before they come, nor can consider beforehand to prevent and avoid them. And when once they are come, by their very natural force in disturbing of our Spirits, they take away from us the power of consideration. So that they are *unconsidered in themselves, and unconsidered in their effects*, and therefore they are involuntary all the way. And when our passions are made violent this way, *viz.* by being raised in us, not by any thing of our own search or *indulgence*, but by the *timing of God's Providence, and by the suddenness and greatness of outward objects*, they are *pardonable in themselves, and will excuse our inconsiderate transgressions*. Those slips which we incur under them are prepared for Pardon, because we did not seek, nor could avoid them.

Thus then our innocent Discomposures, which unfit us for consideration, are those only, which are caused in us by strong passions not of our own indulging. The passion which begets them, must enter against our Wills, through

through the greatness and suddenness of outward objects ; it must be forced upon us suddenly and by surprize, and then we cannot refuse it, or the discomposure which ensues upon it, because we have no time beforehand wherein to consider how to prevent it.

Now it is not every passion, which the power of outward objects can force upon us on such a sudden. For *love, desire, and all those passions which have good for their object*, are more under our own Command, and spring up in us more gradually. They arrive not to such a discomposing pitch in a moment, but they require more time, and go on more leisurely ; and in all the intermedial steps, they are subject to our own power, so that we may arrest them, if we please, before they have got so far. And therefore all the inconsideration which they effect in us, is more or less wilful, and a matter of our own choice, because it proceeds from our own permission and indulgence.

But then, as for other passions, of *grief, anger, and fear especially, which have evil for their object* ; if the opportunity be sudden, and the object great enough, they may be raised in us to such a degree, as to amaze and confound us in a moment. A man may be in such a fright upon the sudden, as not to know what he doth, as we see by daily experience ; and the case is the same in the others likewise. And the reason of this difference, between these passions and the former, is this, because the suffering of evil, is far more repugnant to self-preservation and self-love, which are the fundamental principle of all our passions, than the absence of good is. For if we sit without that good, which would move our love and desire, we are still where we were : but if we fall under that evil, which excites our fear, we are made miserable, and much the worse : that is only a denial of a farther light ; but this is a real deprivation, and a step towards destruction. And since our self-love and self-preservation, are so much more nearly concerned in the suffering of evil, than in the absence of good ; our passions, which are only their several aspects and expressions, must needs be more quick and violent in that, than they are in this, and the discomposure upon them will be so likewise.

This difference there is, betwixt our *inconsiderateness* upon the *violent fears of evil*, and upon our *violent desires and pursuit of good*. Which is observed by our *Saviour*, in an instance where both were *criminal*; in which notwithstanding, the *discomposure* upon the *fears of evil*, being fit to plead the more excuse, made the *transgression* that ensued upon it to be a *lesser sin*. For both the *Jews* and *Pilate*, concurred in the *grievous sin* of *shedding innocent blood*, when they *crucified* and *murthered* him. In which wicked action that which moved them,

- (b) Matt. was (b) *envy* and *malice*; but that which prevailed with 27. 18. *him*, was his *fear of their calumnies*, and of the *anger of*
- (c) Joh. 18. *the Roman Emperor*. For in his *own heart*, he was minded 38. 39. to (c) *release him*, being *convinced of his innocence*, and
- (d) John 19. 8. (d) *afraid to have any hand in the Blood of one who called himself the Son of God*. But because he called himself a King, which his own (e) Mind could not but suggest to him, as the (f) *Rabble* did afterwards, was a Title 18. 33. 12, 13. whereof the *Emperor* would be extreamly jealous, therefore he gives him up to their Will, fearing lest, if he did not, he should be traduced as no Friend to that most jealous Prince *Tiberius Cesar*. And when *Christ* himself comes to pass Judgment, in comparison of *his offence and theirs*, *He who delivered me unto thee*, saith he, *hath the greater sin*, John 19. 11.

Those *discomposures* then of our *knowing Faculties*, which are *innocent*, and fit to excuse our *inconsiderate slips* which proceed from them, are such as spring from an *unwill'd sudden grief*, or *anger*, but especially from an *unwill'd sudden fear*.

To make it *unwill'd*, I say, and as I observed before from *Clemens of Aleaxandria*, it must be sudden; for if our *fear* it self, which is a *passion* that amazes more than all the rest, doth not presently effect any thing, but stays some considerable time, and reigns long before it produces any *sinful action*: Then it is a matter of our *own choice*, in regard it is a *fear of our own indulging*. We give it room and entertainment, we feed it, or give way to it; and that makes our *fear* to become our *sin*, which can never serve for our *vindication*.

For a true *Christian*, must be as bold as a *Lyon*, and fear nothing so much, as the *disobedience of his God*, and the *breach of his duty*. But as for other things, which

men use to be afraid of, whether they be losſ of *Fame*, of *Estate*, of *Friends*, of *Liberty*, or even of *Life* it ſelf; tho' he may justly fear and avoid them, when he can *innocently*; yet, if they are the *burden of the Cross* imposed upon the doing of his *Duty*, he must chearfully

(g) take it up, and not fear and fly from them, but over-
look and contemn them. For God will make us an abundant Recompence in the next World, for any thing which we part with for his ſake in this. And therefore he indispesiblly requires us, as in all reaſon he very well may, not to fear and shrink from the losſ of any thing, even of life it ſelf, when he calls for it; but in ſtedfaſt Faith of his Promiſes, and hope of his Rewards, most couragiouſly to undergo it. *Perſecutions and Dangers*, which are the great objects of our fears, are the chiefest tryals of our obedience, for which reaſon they are ſo often in Scripture called (h) Temptations; and therefore their buſineſſ, is to evidence how much we will part with for obedience, but by no means to excuse us when we disobey. But in relation to them, Christ's command is this: *Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul; but fear him, who can cast both body and soul into Hell*, Matt. 10. 28. And if we ſuffer our fears of them, to chase us away from the owning of his Religion, or from the performance of his Will; his Sentence againſt us is plain and peremptory: *Whοſoever is aʃhaʃmed of me and my words, and dare not own them, although it be in a Generation that is ſinful and adulterous, wherein he will be ſure to ſuffer for the profeſſion of them, of him ſhall the Son of man be aʃhaʃmed, when he cometh in the Glory of his Father, with his holy Angels*, Mark 8. 38.

As for all Fear then, which drives us from our Duty, it is our fault. And when we stand and paſue upon it, and have time to deliberate and arm our ſelves againſt it; if we fear ſtill, our fear is our wilful and deadly ſin, and doth not excuse, but deserve our condenmation. And ſuch was the fear of Peter, that made him deny his Lord, which cost him ſo many penitential tears to wash off the stain thereof, Matt. 26. 75. And, in an instance of a ſmaller crime, ſuch was the indulged fear of Abraham, when, to ſave his own life, he exposed his wife Sarah, and Pharaoh King of Egypt, to the danger of an adulterous mixture,

(g) Matt.

16. 24, 25.

and Chap.

10. v. 37.

(h) 2. Pet.

2. 11.

1 Cor. 10.

13.

Jam. 1. 2,

3.

* Τῷ μοτ-
χειρὶ τὸς
γυναικὸς
αἰσῆται
κοινωνίας
δικαιοῦ,
ἡ μὲν οὐ
τὴν ὑπῆ-
γειναται
τῷ μοιχῷ
εἰς τὸς
γυναικὸς
ὑβέν, ἵνα
ἢ δαρατον διαφύην. And that because ἐπω ἦ καταλιθίσα τῷ δανάτῃ
ἢ τυεγγύισ. ἐδίπω ἦν τὸ κέντερον αὐτῷ σοβεθίν. ἐπω γό φοεεγρ ἦν αὐτῷ
πεγσωπον. Chrysost. Homil. λε. in Gen. c. 12. v. 12. 13. p. 259, 260.
Tom. I. Ed. Savil.

But that Fear, or Grief, or Anger which makes an excusable and innocent discomposure, must be sudden and surprizing. It must seize on us suddenly, and disturb our thinking powers unawares, and carry us on to transgress before we can recover our selves from the discomposure. And when it doth so, it is forced upon us, and is not chosen by us; we are hurried into it without our own consent, and cast upon it whether we will or no. And since the inconsideration it self is thus involuntary, the slips upon it are excusable, and such as God will not severely punish, but has been always prone to pardon and dispense with.

David, the man after God's own heart, when he received the sad News of Absolom's being slain, was suddenly transported into a very impatient, and indecent height of sorrow, 2 Sam. 18. 33; and Chap. 19. v. 2. 4.

(k) Jer.
15. 2.

Samuel who was a Person so dear to God, that if he could be (k) intreated by any man, he tells us it would be by him or Moses, standing to intercede before him, did yet in an instance, that would have drawn him into the hazard of his life, dispute God's Command when he should have performed it, and question, where in duty it became him to obey. For when God bid him go and anoint King David, which service was sure to draw upon him the cruel and implacable hatred of Saul, through the sudden force of that frightful thought, instead of obeying,

he

he answers again, saying, How can I go? for if Saul hear of it, he will kill me, 1 Sam. 16. 1, 2. And a like instance we have of Moses's infirmity, when God was for sending him upon an Errand as hazardous, and much more difficult, viz. his deliverance of the poor oppressed Israelites from the cruel Bondage of the powerful Egyptians, Exod. Chap. 3, and 4.

And Paul and Barnabas, two great Apostles, and most eminently pious Servants of Jesus Christ, in the bitterness of dispute and * heat of quarrel, are so hasty and un-advised, as through the sudden resentment of that ^{* μεγ-} _{ξυνως.} test, to separate companies and part asunder, Acts 15. 37, 38, 39.

And since these slips of inconsideration, through a sudden Grief, Fear or Anger, were incident to the most perfect Saints, and the most assured Favourites and Heirs of Heaven; 'tis plain, that they are a fit matter of God's Mercy, and will be graciously born with and forgiven, but not severely punished by him.

As for our slips of inadvertence then, and inconsiderate transgressions, whether we are inconsiderate through pitiable surprize, or weariness, or discomposure of our thinking Faculties, they are such innocently involuntary sins, as shall not at the last Day be charged upon us; they do not unsaint a man, or destroy a state of Salvation, but consist with it.

But to prevent mens false confidences of pardon, and groundless hopes of being excused upon this Head; I think fit to subjoin these Cautions, about inconsiderate sins.

1. No known Sin or Transgression of a known Duty, is innocently inconsiderate, where we have time, and our understandings being undisturbed, are able to make use of it.

If we have Time to think, but our minds are troubled and distempered, which makes them unfit to think, and consider in it, as it happens in the cases of a great weariness, and a violent sudden passion mentioned above; there, 'tis true, we have no choice which God will punish, because we have not all that is necessary to consideration. But if we have ability and power, as well as time and leisure, our thoughts are at our own choice, and if we transgress inconsiderately, the fault is our own; for we might have helped it if we would, and if we will not, we must answer for it.

2. No known sin is innocently inconsiderate, which is of a *mischievous nature*, and greatly criminal. For if a man has not brought himself into a habit of *sin*, and under a great hardness of heart, (which is always his own fault, and subjects him to a most dreadful punishment) his own Soul must needs give back, and his *Conscience boggle* at every great offence; and where he doubts and demurrs, he cannot say he is rash and inconsiderate. No man therefore can be guilty of a known Act of *Idolatry, Blasphemy, Perjury, Sacrilege, Adultery, Murder, Sedition, Rebellion, Theft, Slander*, or any other of thole sins, which are so great a Terror even to *Natural Conscience*; and yet say he *wist it not*, and ventured on them when he did not think of it. For if his Conscience had any thing of that *tenderness*, which it should and would have, unless he has finned it into *numbness* and *stupefaction*, he could not commit any of these without *checks of mind*, nor ever come to be guilty of them without *fears and doubtings, disputes and conflicts* in his own Soul. He must consider them over and over, and view them on one side and on the other, before he can be able to master his own fears, and work himself into courage sufficient to venture on them.

As for *lesser sins* indeed, a mans Conscience has not so quick a sense, nor so great a dread of them; and therefore he may be surprized sometimes into the commission of them, before he considers of them. A good man, may speak a *rash word*, and be *carelessly angry*, or *triflingly peevish*, through *surprise* and *suddenness*; but he cannot contrive the death of his Neighbour, or *stab a man to the keart*, without *fear and consideration*. He may be insnared unawares, into a *wanton eye*, or a *lascivious thought*; but he cannot fall into an *act of fornication* and *adultery*, till he might look about him, and should bethink himself. He may rashly and unadvisedly be guilty of an *uncharitable censure*, of a *surly behaviour*, of a *discourteous, uncondescensive, uncandid action*; but he cannot utter a known *slander against his neighbour*, or entertain *malice, wrath, and implacable enmity* against him, without deliberation, unless it be his own fault that he will not deliberate and consider of them. He may run before he bethinks himself, into a *covetous wish*; but not into *fraud and circumvention*, into *theft and robbery*, into *perfidiousness*

ousness and Oppression : And the like is observable in other Instances. These *lesser Sins*, which are acted in more haste, and need less Deliberation, because Men's Consciences are less sensible and afraid of them, they may, and very often do commit inconsiderately and unadvisedly ; they are surprized into them, before they bethink themselves, and consider of them.

But then as for greater Sins, which either *employ Thoughts* and *Contrivance*, or *require Time* and *Leisure*, or for the heinousness of their Guilt, are *frightful unto Conscience* ; we can have no Excuse of Inconsideration, when we fall under them. Some, I say, *employ Thought* and *Contrivance*, as *Fraud* and *Circumvention* ; others *require Time*, and frequently a long Stay upon the very Commission of them, as *Rapes* and *Adulteries*, *Thefts* and *Robberies*, *Drunkenness* and *Revellings*, *Wrath*, *Anger*, and *Malice* ; and all of them are *frightful* and *terrifying*, to any *honest*, and *truly tender Conscience*. And when we think and contrive for them, or dwell long upon them, or are frightened with them, and put into Doubts and Disputes, Fears and Demurs about them ; it is gross Contradiction to say, that we did we wist not what, and committed them when we could not consider of them. So that as for any known Sin, which is of a *mischievous nature*, or *greatly criminal*, unless it be our own Fault, and we have made our Consciences hard and callous, we cannot venture on it without considering it, because we cannot act it without Checks and Fears of Conscience about it.

3. No known Sin is innocently and involuntarily inconsiderate, which we do not endeavour and strive against. To endeavour against all Sin, is in our own Power, and at our own Choice ; altho' it be not perfectly so, to overcome it, and get free from it. For our endeavours are our own, and are either put forth, or omitted, at our own Pleasure ; so that it is only because we would have it so, if they are wanting. And therefore if we are inconsiderate, because we refused, and wilfully neglected to prevent it ; our Inconsideration enters upon our own Choice, and is so far owing to our own Will. For we were willing to come under it, and would not strive against it ; and so far as it was willed by us, it may be charged upon us, and imputed to condemn us.

Let no man therefore indulge himself, in inconsiderateness of sinning, and take no Pains against it, but quietly submit to it, out of a fond conceit of being excused upon his Inconsideration. For if he makes no Opposition to his Inconsiderateness, but carelessly lays himself open to it, and idly waits for it ; he makes it cease to be wholly his Infirmitie, and to become more or less his Fault : Because it is so far an effect of his own Will, as it is of his wilful Negligence ; and as he wills it, he shall not be excused, but put to answer and account for it.

But if any Man expect to have his inconsiderate Slips excused, as involuntary and innocent, he must not indulge to them, or quietly wait for them, but seriously endeavour and strive against them. 'Tis true indeed, he cannot *resolve against* ever being overtaken with any, because he cannot *live free from all* ; and what a Man cannot perform, it is down-right Folly and gross absurdity, to resolve upon the Performance of. No Man in his Wits, resolves to be as *wise* as Solomon, to *support a Mill-stone* by his own Strength, or to *destroy a vast Army* by his *single Valour*. For since these things cannot be done by him, if he understands what he doth, he cannot resolve to do them. And therefore as for the being wholly freed from all Infirmitie, and never falling by Inconsideration ; 'tis absurd for any Man to resolve upon it, because no Man here can ever attain unto it. But altho' we cannot resolve against ever falling into inconsiderate Slips ; yet can we endeavour to get quit of them all, and strive against them. For *we may endeavour to do, what is not to be done* ; and do as much of it as we can, although we are not able to do it all. St. Paul himself *endeavoured*, and exhorts *all others who were perfect* to such acceptable degrees as he was, to endeavour with him, after a state of *absolute Perfection*, although none of them all would ever be able in this life to arrive thereto, *Phil. 3. 14, 15.* They could not resolve upon it indeed, because they could not compass it ; but they could and ought to endeavour after it, and to attain so far as they had Power, when they could not so far as they desired. And after that rate, must we strive against all inconsiderate Transgressions also. For although we shall never get wholly free from them; yet still must we take Pains against them ; but if they

they seize upon us through a neglect of our own Endeavours, they seize upon us through our own will; and then they are unfit to be judged involuntary.

4. No known Sin is *innocently* and *involuntarily inconsiderate*, except we are sorry after we have committed it, and beg God's Pardon for it. When thou art reproved for thy rash and unadvised Miscarriages, says the wise Son of Sirach, shew repentance; and so shalt thou escape the Guilt of wilful sin, Ecclus. 20. 3. Aristotle has long since observed, that Ignorance it self doth not render an Action *involuntary*, unless we are troubled at it afterwards, when we come to understand it. For (m) that act of Ignorance only (m) ἀκεί-
is involuntary, says he, which we afterwards with Grief οὐον δὲ τὸ
repent of. When we come to know that Evil, which we ὅπιλυπον,
ignorantly committed, we must have an indignation at καὶ εἰ μῆται-
it, and beg God's Forgiveness of it; and then both our μελεῖα.
Inconsideration, and Ignorance, may be judged Involun- Arist. Eth.
tary and Innocent; but without that, in Reason they ad Nicom.
cannot. For if our Wills are not displeased with our I. 3. c. 1.
Offence, when once we come to discern our selves guilty
of it, nor seek, by begging God's Pardon, as far as
may be to undo it; it is manifest that really they were
not against it. They did not chuse it, 'tis true, when it
was acted, because then they were not made to see and
reflect upon it; but afterwards they make it their own as
much as they can, by shewing how readily they are bent
and inclined for it. They are not at all sorry for it, nor
repent of it, but take a Pleasure and Delight therein; and
what can any Body judge from thence, but that they
avow it?

If therefore we would have it thought that our Ignorance and Inconsideration, were at any time against our Wills, we must evidence that, by shewing how much we are troubled and displeased therewith. Our Wills must express their Dislike of what is done, and utterly disclaim and renounce the same; or else it will be readily inferred, that they either had, or would have had a Hand in it.

After all these Marks, whereby to judge of an *innocently*, and *involuntarily inconsiderate Sin*; I presume I have no need to add, That it must be such as is *unobserved when we venture on it*. For if we see and observe it, it is not possible that it should be any longer *inconsiderate*. And therefore no Man may look upon his Sin,

and say, Is it not alittle one, and yet after that venture to commit it with a Confidence of being excused for it. For no known and wilful Sin is little in God's Account, whatsoever it be in ours, but every Offence with open Eyes, and with a convinced Conscience, is deadly and damning. The Man who presumed wilfully to carry a Burthen of Sticks upon the Sabbath Day, under the Law of Moses, was (n) struck dead as surely, as he would have been, for going to Plough, or trading at the Market. Although this seems to be a little Instance, yet was it no small Offence ; for be the matter that a Man disobeys in what it will, yet a contempt of God, and a wilful rejecting of his Law, can in no case be little. And therefore if at any Time we see and observe a Sin, we must by all means avoid it ; or else our willing Offence will certainly subject us to the Curse, and prove of a Size sufficient to condemn us.

And these are such Conditions, as are necessary to make our inconsiderate Slips, involuntary and innocent. And therefore, as ever we expect that the forementioned Inadvertencies should excuse us, we must take Care that they have all these Requisites. We must never be guilty of them, where we have Time and Understanding, nor in any great and mischievous Sin, nor without a serious endeavour against them before, and a sorrowful Repentance and Desire of Pardon for them, after we have committed them. All these must concur in us, before our Inconsiderateness excuse our Sin, and rescue us from Danger of Damnation.

And now I have gone through both the Particulars, of our involuntary, because unknown Sins, whether their Involuntariness proceeds from Ignorance, or Inconsideration ; neither of which shall be rigorously dealt with, or imputed to us for our Condemnation.

And thus at last we see, what in the beginning of this Book I proposed to enquire of ; viz. What are the Mitigations of that Integrity of Obedience, which is the Gospel-condition of Happiness, and What are those Defects, which it bears and dispenses with. And the Result of all is this : That the Integrity of Obedience, which the Gospel indispensably exacts of us, is an Integrity of our chosen Actions. And therefore if wittingly and wilfully we transgress any one Commandment, we are under the Curse which

the Gospel threatens; but if we transgress several unwittingly, and against our Wills, we are out of the Reach of it, and intire in God's Account still. We do not lose our Integrity, or break the Condition, by every Slip of unwill'd Ignorance, whether that whereof we are ignorant, be some Law that forbids any Sin, or our present Actions being forbid by it: Nor by every Slip of involuntary Inconsideration, whether our inconsiderateness proceed, from suddenness or surprize, from weariness, or from the discamposeure and disturbance of our thinking Faculties. For not any of these Failings will deprive us of that, which Christ's Gospel will construe to be a perfect and entire Obedience; they do not destroy a state of Grace and Salvation, but consist with it.

And all these Allowances, the Gospel makes to our sinful Actions; besides some others to our Thoughts and (o) Desires, which are Sin only in an imperfect Birth, and (o) See not yet arrived to the Guilt of a compleat Transgression, Book 5. as I shall have a fit occasion to shew, in answering of Chap. 4. those groundless Doubts and Scruples, that perplex good and honest, but weak Minds, which shall hereafter follow.

But the great Condition of the Gospel, being nothing less than an intire Obedience; and the generality of Men, being so maimed and defective in obeying: what shall become of them? For who is there but at one time or other has willingly transgressed some of those Laws which I have described? And therefore if the Curse take place upon every wilful offence, then woe be to all Mankind.

And so indeed it would, if Christ had not taken pity on us, and come into the World for this very Purpose, that he might succour and relieve us. But the very End of his coming amongst us, was to find out a Remedy for all these Evils. He came to rescue us from the Curse of the Law, and to procure for us new Terrors, and put us into a Capacity of Pardon. So that whatsoever his Laws threaten, or whatsoever we have committed; yet are we still secure from Suffering, if we make use of his Remedy, i. e. if we repent of it; as shall appear in the next Book.

BOOK V.

Of the Remedies, which restore Men
to a State of Salvation when they
are fallen from it, and of some
needless Scruples concerning it.

C H A P. I.

*Of Repentance, which restores us to God's Fa-
vour after Sins of all Sorts.*

HAVING hitherto insisted largely upon that *Integrity of Obedience*, which the Gospel indispensably requires of every Man to his Salvation; and upon those *Defects*, which either *destroy*, or *confist* with it: I proceed now to enquire, what Remedies it direct us to, for recovering a state of Grace and Favour, when at any time we happen to fall from it.

Among the Jews, according to the strictness of the Law of Moses, the Punishment took place upon the first wilful Breach; and therefore in those Laws which were established under Pain of Death, when it appeared by sufficient Evidence that any Man was guilty of the wilful Transgression of them, the Sentence was unavoidable, and the Man died without Mercy. *He that despised Moses's Law*, saith the Apostle, if it were in an Instance whereto the Law threatened Death, *dyed without mercy*, being convicted under the testimony of two or three *Witnesses*, Heb. 10. 28. A Man who had committed *Murder*, or *Adultery*, or any other Crime, whereof *Death* was the *established Penalty*, was to die without all Remedy; for no *Sacrifice* would be accepted for him, nor would the Law admit of any *Favour* or *Dispensation*: And therefore David, when he made his Penitent-

nitential Psalm, for murdering Uriah, and adulterating his Wife, expresses the Legal Unpardonableness of his Offence in these Words-----*thou desirest not Sacrifice, else would I give it; but thou delightest not in Burnt-offerings* for such Sins as I stand guilty of. No, my Crimes are of that Nature, for which any Man less than a King should die, and such as no Sacrifice will be accepted for, *Psal. 51. 16.*

This was the rigour of that *Political Law*, which God imposed upon the *Jews* by *Moses*; those Punishments that were threatened by it, which were *temporal* and of this World, were irreversible, when once they were incurred.

But when *Christ* came into the World, his business was to give Laws of a much more gracious nature, which would admit of a Salvo for every Sin, and offer Men a Remedy, which if they did but use, although they had transgressed, they should not suffer Punishment.

This gracious Covenant, whose Promises and Rewards are *future*, and to be enjoyn'd in the next World, was published more or less, ever since *Adam*. For by the Grace of this all the holy Patriarchs hoped for Pardon; and by it likewise, all the Good Men among the *Jews*, when they should be brought to God's Tribunal in the next World, hoped to be forgiven. But the promulgation of it under *Moses*, was *dark* and *obscure*, and lay hid in great measure, and almost buried under the Crowd of the *rigid* and *inexorable Laws* of the *Mosaick Covenant*.

But when *Christ* came into the World, his Errand was to abrogate all the Rigour of *Moses's Law*, and to preach an universal Pardon upon Repentance. And of this, he gave them a clear Instance in the case of the *Woman*, who was taken in the very *Act of Adultery*. *Moses*, say they, and that very truly (a) commanded us in his Law, (a) Lev. 20. 10. *that such should be stoned; but what sayest thou?* Joh. 8. 5. But his Sentence was, *Go and sin no more, and then will not I condemn thee*, v. 11; which was a fit Sentence for that Religion, whereby they should be justified from all those things, from which they could not be justified by the Law of *Moses*, *Acts 13. 39.*

Whatsoever it was therefore under the Rigour of the mere Law of *Moses*, under the Religion and Law of

Christ, our Case is not become quite desperate and irrecoverable upon the first Offence. It is not every wilful Sin, and much less our *Slips of Ignorance and Inconsideration*, which can for ever exclude us from the Favour of God, and incapacitate us for his Mercy. No, the Religion of Christ is not a Religion that seeks Advantages of us, and shuts us up clole Prisoners of Damnation, as soon as we are guilty of any thing which may deserve it: For Christ need never have come into the World for that end, since the Law had rendred us accursed and miserable enough already. But quite contrary, he came to be the Minister of Life and Pardon, to procure for us Remission of all our deadly and damning Sins, and to restore us out of a State of Enmity and Death, to a State of Mercy and Reconciliation. He came to find out a Remedy for all our Evils, and to prescribe us a way of recovering our selves when we had fallen by any Sin; so that although none of us all have lived free from it, yet in the event Sin shall not be our Ruin.

And that Remedy, which God has provided us for this purpose, is *Repentance*. He doth not abandon us upon the Commission of every Sin; but *he is heartily desirous that we should repent of it*, and when we do so, *he has obliged himself by his Truth and Faithfulness to forgive it*.

He is heartily desirous, I say, that whensoever we commit any Sin we shoud repent of it. If we dare take his own Word, he tells us, *as he lives*, that he doth not delight in the Death of any Sinner, but that the wicked turn from his way, and live: Turn you, turn you, as he goes on, from your evil ways; for why will you die, O house of Israel? Ezek. 33. 11. And this all the World experience by him, in his *long-suffering* and *forbearance* with them. For he doth not exact the Punishment, so soon as we have incurred it; but expects long to see if we will return and repent, that then he may with honour pardon and remit it; this being, as St. Paul assures us, the End of his *Forbearance* and *Long-suffering*, to lead us to *repentance*, Rom. 2. 4. And what St. Paul says, that we all experience. For during all that time wherein he bears with us, how restless and unwearied, earnest and affectionate, are his Endeavours for this Purpose? He admonishes us of our Faults, by his Word, and by his Ministers;

sters ; he invites us to return, by his Love, and by his Promises ; he moves us to bethink our selves, by his Spirit, and by his Providence ; and if we are stubborn, and not to be thus gently won by these methods of mildness, he seeks to reclaim us by a blessed and a most affectionate force and violence. For he corrects us with his Rod, and visits us in chastisement, and never ceases to try all means of reducing us to a sense of our sin and repentance for it, till we are become plainly incorrigible, and utterly rebellious, and so fit for nothing but to be swallowed up of ruin. And yet even then, his desire of reclaiming us is so strong, and his love so affectionate, that he scarce knows how to give us over. How shall I give thee up, saith he, O Ephraim ? How shall I deliver thee, O Israel ? Hos. 11. 8.

And when we do repent, I say, he has obliged himself by his Truth and Faithfulness, most graciously to forgive us.

This was the Doctrine of the Prophets. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts, and let him return unto the Lord, says Isaiah, for he will have mercy upon him, and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon, Isa. 55. 7. If the wicked man, says God by Ezekiel, will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions, which he hath formerly committed, shall not be mentioned unto him, but in his righteousness, that he hath done since, he shall live. For have I any pleasure at all that the wicked shall die, saith the Lord God ? and not that he should turn from his ways, and live ? Ezek. 18. 21, 22, 23.

This is the great Doctrine of the Gospel, which is a Covenant of remission of sins, upon Repentance. Repentance is its great Article and fundamental Truth, and is therefore called by St. Paul the Foundation of Repentance, Heb. 6. 1. For that which was taught to all the World, in all the degrees of Publication of the Gospel, was that now God called all men to repent, and that he would forgive them all their sins upon their true repentance.

St. John the Baptist, who was Christ's Herald and Fore-runner, at his entrance upon that work, begins with it. John, says St. Luke, in all the Country about

Jordan, came preaching the Baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, Luke 3. 3.

Our Lord and Saviour Christ himself, when he comes after to proclaim his own Gospel, goes on with it. Jesus began to preach, says St. Matthew, and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand, Matt. 4. 17.

And when he left the World, the Commission which he gives to his Apostles, is to proceed on still in the Promulgation of it to all the World, as he had done to the people of the Jews. For at the last time of his being with them, just before his Ascension into Heaven, when,

(b) Matt. 28. 19. as St. Matthew (b) tells us, he commissioned them to preach to all mankind; those instructions which he gave to them, St. Luke informs us were, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached to all Nations in his Name, beginning at Jerusalem, Luke 24. 47. This was the chief thing which they had in Commission, and the summa and substance of their Embassy. For that Ministry which was committed to them, was a Ministry of reconciling God and Men by this means, as St. Paul says, or a Ministry of Reconciliation, so that they were Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech men by them, and they as Christ's Deputies, who is the prime Mediator, did pray them in his stead to be reconciled to God, 2 Cor. 5. 19, 20.

And when the Apostles came to execute their Orders, the publishing of this was all their care and practice. For they all of them, went about preaching in all places, and to all persons, repentance for the remission of sins.

St. Peter in his first Sermon thus exhorts the people; Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins, Acts 2. 38. and so again Acts 3. Repent and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, v. 19. And the same he proclaims more generally in his second Epistle, assuring all Christians, that the Lord is not willing that any man should perish, but that all should come to repentance, which is sure to prevent it, 2 Pet. 3. 9.

St. Paul preaches to the Athenians, that now God had commanded all men every where to repent, Acts 17. 30.

And St. John assures us, that by virtue of that Gospel-Covenant, which was confirmed with us in Christ's Blood, if with repenting hearts we confess our sins, he is faithful to his word, and just to his promise, to forgive us our sins, and

and to cleanse us from the guilt and stain of all unrighteousness of one sort or other, *1 John 1. 9.*

I should recite almost the whole New Testament, if I were to repeat all that the Scriptures affirm in this point. But by what I have already offered, I take it to be clear beyond all doubt and scruple, that the *Gospel-Covenant* is a * *Covenant of remission of sins upon repentance.* God most earnestly desires that we should repent, and he is most truly and faithfully willing to forgive us all our former sins upon our true repentance. Nay I might add, he is not only willing, but extremely joyful and glad of the occasion. For it is his highest pleasure to go out and meet a returning Soul; and the joy of his heart, to embrace a reclaimed Penitent, as our Saviour has most clearly intimated to us in the most welcome reception of the returning Prodigal, *Luke 15. 11, 12, &c.* There is a general joy in the Heavenly Court, says our Saviour again, and in the presence of all the Angels of God, even over any one sinner that repented, *Luke 15. 10.* nay, there is more joy over one penitent, than there is over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance, v. 7.

Thus had God provided us of a means, which will most certainly restore us to his favour. He has not left us in our forlorn state, but has prescribed us this method of repentance to recover us out of it, and to be the great Instrument of our Pardon and Reconciliation.

And this remedy, is adequate to all our needs, and able to regain all that, which our sins at any time have made us lose. For it will repair the breach upon all sorts of offences, whether they be our known or unknown, our voluntary or involuntary sins. Of all which I shall now proceed to speak particularly.

This remedy of repentance, I say, God has fitted for all sorts of transgressions; whether they be,

1. Our known, or

2. Our unknown and secret sins.

1. Our unknown and secret sins have the benefit of this remedy, and that whereupon God will pardon them

* This is that Grace, which Christ's Blood procured for us — αἵμα αὐτῷ ὅτι διὰ τὸν οὐπέρεεγν σωτηλαν ἐγχάρασ, πάντι τῷ κόσμῳ μετανοοῖς χαίρει ὑπερέγκεν. Clem. Rom. 1. Ep. ad Cor. c. 7. And that which ensued upon his exaltation — Exalted to give repentance and remission of sins, *Acts 5. 31.*

them, is a general repentance, and a general Prayer for forgiveness.

As for several both of our voluntary and involuntary sins they are secret and concealed from us, and quite without our knowledge and remembrance. We are wholly ignorant and in the dark about them, and our Consciences have no more sense of them, than they have of those which we were never guilty of. For as for our involuntary sins, in some of them we are wholly ignorant, and never think them sinful; and in others we are inconsiderate, and do not many times observe that we sin in them. And as for our voluntary and wilful sins, though we know full well, and observe when we at first commit them; yet doth our knowledge of them, as of other things, slip out of our minds by degrees, and through length of time, and throng of other thoughts, at last we quite forget them.

And these sins being thus quite out of our thoughts, and wholly secret and unknown to us; we cannot particularly either beg pardon for them, or repent of them.

We cannot, I say, particularly beg pardon for them. For no man can become a Suiter in behalf of he knows not whom, nor recommend any thing to God's Mercy before he has discovered it himself. And since these particular sins are secret and unknown, they cannot be the matter of a particular prayer and recommendation.

Nor can we particularly repent of them. As for our wilful sins indeed, whether we remember them or have forgot them, the case is the same as to one prime part of a particular repentance, viz. our forsaking of them, and beginning to obey that particular known Law which he had wilfully sinned against. We must retract every voluntary sin by a voluntary obedience, and without this we can have no just hopes of pardon. For there is no promise of salvation to any man, but upon a particular obedience to all known Laws, so that when since he sees and understands a Duty, he must obey it particularly before he can expect to live by it. But now as for those Laws, which are transgressed by our wilful sins, they are all known, since we could not will and chuse to disobey them, unless we saw and knew our selves to be found by them. So that, whether we had sinned against them

for

formerly, or no ; whether we remember it, or have forgot it ; obedience to them is our present Duty, and a Duty too so necessary, that without it we cannot reasonably hope to be saved. If therefore we have sinned against any such known Law, we must amend it, and leave off wilfully to repeat the sin ; for our obedience to all them is necessary to our pardon, and whether we remember or have forgot that we transgressed them *formerly*, as to the present it is all one, for we must chuse to obey them now.

But as for other acts of a particular repentance, *viz.*: confession, sorrow, detestation, and the like ; there is no place for them about any of our *secret sins*, whether they be voluntary or involuntary : For no man can confess what he is ignorant of, nor grieve when he understands not why, nor hate and detest he knows not what ; so that he must particularly know his sins before he can be thus particular in his repentance of them.

A particular prayer and repentance then, have no place about our *unknown sins* ; they are not capable to be exercised about them, and therefore they cannot be exacted for the pardon of them.

But that *prayer and repentance* whereof they are *capable*, and whereupon God will graciously forgive them, is *indefinite and general*. These may very well be used about them. For we may all understand thus much by our selves, that we are all Sinners, and are guilty of much more than we know and can remember. Several sins slipt from us at first, without our knowledge and observation, and several others, which were at first observed, were afterwards forgotten. And when we know this general number, altho' we are not able to recover any particular instance, we may very well be sorry for it, and beg God to forgive it ; and so expiate them, as much as may be, by a *general prayer and repentance*.

And this remedy God has assigned for our *unknown sins*, and when we make use of it he will forgive them. Holy David was very sensible, that he laboured under many such *secret faults*, and by this means of a *general penitential prayer*, he endeavours to procure their *pardon*. Who, says he, can understand his errors ? Cleanse thou me from my *secret faults*, Ptal. 19. 12. And because such sins are daily slipping from us, that our remedy might

might be as near as our disease, our Lord has put into our daily prayers this general petition for our expiation, *Forgive us our trespasses*, Matt. 6. 12.

As for this sort then, our *unknown* and *secret* sins, a *general prayer* and *repentance* is their remedy. If we obey all known Laws, and particularly repent of all our known transgressions; our secret and unknown sins need not lie heavy on us. For if we are honestly ignorant of them, and use due pains and ingenuity about them; if we neither over-look them through sloth and negligence, nor mistake them through partiality and wilfulness; a general and penitential prayer shall serve their turn, and restore us unto mercy and reconciliation.

And then,

2. As for all our *known* sins, God has not been wanting to us in them neither, but has most graciously provided us of a remedy, and means of reconciliation for them, of what *nature* or *degree* soever they be. Whether,

1. Our *voluntary* and *wilful*; or, .

2. Our *involuntary* sins.

1. In the Gospel God has provided us of a remedy, to restore us again to his favour, when once we have lost it through our *voluntary*, and *wilful* sins; and that remedy is a *particular repentance* of them.

To the pardon of these, it is necessary that we *particularly amend* and *forsake* them. For they interrupt a state of love and good agreement, and set God and us at enmity and defiance. So long as they are continued in, they keep God and Men at a distance, they interpose betwixt us and his mercy, and hinder all the signs of his approbation, and all the expressions of his pardoning Grace from issuing out upon us. To restore us therefore to God's Grace and Acceptance, these voluntary sins must be taken out of the way; and by a voluntary amendment and reformation, we must undo all that was done amiss in our wilful transgression. And of these sins all those places are meant, that make *repentance*, which, as we saw above, includes in it *amendment*, the indispensable condition of life and pardon. As when *repentance* and *remission* of sins, is commanded to be preached to all Nations, Luke 24. 47. and men are bid to repent, that *their sins may be blotted out*, Acts 3. 19. or, as it is in the peremptory

emptory and severe words of our Saviour, to *repent or else they shall all perish*, Luke 13. 3.

And as this particular repentance and reformation is necessary to the pardon of our wilful sins, so is it most certainly available and sufficient for them. Although they are of a most heinous guilt, and provoking Nature ; yet is not their offence unpardonable, or their case desperate. For after a man has put himself out of a state of Grace and God's Favour by them, he is not quite cast off, nor need to despair of getting in again. He is not presently upon every such offence, banish'd the King's Court and Presence for ever : but upon his particular repentance and reformation, he will be allowed to recover his former station. For the preaching of the Prophets, of the Baptist, of our Saviour Christ, and of his Apostles, was to call all the *wilful and lost Sinners*, both of the *Jewish* and *Gentile* World, to this reconciliation ; Christ, as himself informs us, *coming to (d) save that which was lost*, and to (e) call (d) Matt. all Sinners of one sort or another to *repentance*. Mens 18. 11. very Baptism or entrance into Christianity, is a clean- (e) Matt. sing of them from the guilt of all former sins without ex- 9. 13. ception. Repent, and be baptized every one, says St. Pe- ter, for the remission of sins, Acts 2. 38. and be baptized, says Ananias unto Saul, and wash away all thy sins, Act. 22. 16.

Nay, after men are once baptized, and have all their former wilful sins washt off in that water of regeneration ; yet is not every wilful sin, which they are guilty of thence-forward irrecoverably damnable ; but they are still called to accept of mercy and forgiveness upon repentance, as before, and Offenders are under the Grace of repentance, as well as others. For that repentance, whereto we are called by Christ's Gospel, is not so much an act, as a state : which St. Paul intimates, when he talks of renewing men unto repentance, that is, unto the condition and standing Terms of it, Heb. 6. 4, 6. It is of God's Grace that there is any forgiveness, and, in order thereunto, any place for repentance at all ; and of the same Grace, we have received a promise of for-giveness upon repentance for all sins, and at all times whatsoever. If any man among us baptized Christians, sin, says St. John, his case is in no wise desperate, for we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ. the

the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins, as well as for the sins of the whole unchristened world, 1 John 2. 1, 2.

And therefore the way of dealing with wilfully offending Christians, is not to fix them in their Impenitence by despair of recovering themselves; but to call them by repentance to mercy and forgiveness. For (f) Rev. 2. 16. 21. *the Spirit of God himself writes to the back-sliding Church of Ephesus, to remember from whence they were fallen, and to repent and do their first works, Rev. 2. 5.* And St. Paul finds fault with the Christians at Corinth, for not repenting of their uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness which they had wilfully committed; threatening to bewail them, or to excommunicate them in sorrow and lamentation, according to the custom of those times, if they did it not, 2 Cor. 12. 21. Nay, in the case of the incestuous Criminal, who had committed such a fault, as was not so much as named, and much less done among the unbaptized Heathens themselves; he doth not consign him up to eternal Torments, but endeavours, by the rod of Discipline and Church-censures, to reduce him to repentance, that his spirit might be saved in the judgment-day of the Lord Jesus, 1 Cor. 5. 1, 5. And as for the other Members of the Church of Corinth, who were unconcerned and puffed up at such an enormous accident; he reproves them smartly, that by bringing them to a sense of their sin, he may work them into a reformation, v. 1, 2. Which good effects, when he understood that his reproof had wrought upon them, he rejoices mightily, and glories in it in his next Letter, *I rejoice, says he, that by my former Letter you were made sorry, seeing it was after a godly manner, and you sorrowed to repentance: For such godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, which is not to be repented of, 2 Cor. 7. 8, 9, 10.*

And as he practised thus with baptized wilful offenders himself, so doth he instruct Timothy, that he should do likewise. For he tells him, that the way whereby the man of God ought to deal with sinners, even those of the worst sort, who are not only subject, but enslaved to sin, is not peremptorily to damn, and seal them up fast unto destruction: but in great meekness to endeavour to reclaim them, that by recovering them

them to Repentance, he may restore them again to Life, and Pardon. The Man of God, says he, *must in meekness instruct even the Refractory and Contumacious, or those that oppose themselves against him, if God peradventure will give them Repentance, to the acknowledgment of the Truth, and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the Devil, who are taken captive by him at his will,* 2 Tim. 2. 25, 26.

And to name no more Instances of this Nature, but to sum up all in one, even those great and scandalous wilful Sinners, whose Offences make it fit and needful to expel them the Society of Christians, are not yet in their very Excommunication shut up irrecoverably under the Pains of Hell, but, quite contrary, 'tis intended by this very means to reduce them to *repentance*, and thereby to Pardon and Acceptance; Excommunication it self being, as S. Paul says, *for the destruction of the flesh, that the Spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus*, 1 Cor. 5. 5. And the Power of the Keys in remitting or retaining Sins, that is, in the Excommunicating or Absolving of Offenders, is intrusted with the Ministers of Christ's Church, for the *Edification* of the Excommunicated Sinners themselves, and not for their *Destruction*, 2 Cor. 10. 8. and chap. 13. 10.

And by all this we see, that the Grace of Christ's Gospel is a Grace of Repentance and Remission of Sins, all the way, both before Baptism, and also after it. In all Periods, from the Beginning to the End, it is an Instrument of Pardon and a Means of Peace; or a Word and Ministry, as S. Paul says, of Reconciliation, 2 Cor. 5. 19. If we break our *Baptismal Vows*, which are the Condition of the Covenant, once, and thereby forfeit all our Right to Happiness; it gives us Liberty to *repeat* them. For we have the Freedom, both in our *private* and our *publick Prayers*, to renew all our good Resolutions, and to make God new Promises, and to undertake for the Performance of that wherein we have wilfully failed, by new Engagements. Nay, it doth not only allow, that we *may* thus renew the *Covenant*; but it requires that we *should*: It has appointed an *Ordinance*, the *Eucharist* or *Lord's Supper* I mean, for this very purpose. For the Bread and Wine which we eat and drink there, our Saviour tells us is a *Federal Form*, and the *New Covenant*;

or, according to the manner of the *Eastern Nations*, who ratified their Covenant by eating and drinking together, the *re-entering or confirming of that Covenant, which was at first sealed and confirmed in his Blood.* This, says he, is the new Testament or * Covenant in my Blood, drink ye all of it, and so according to the known Rite, confirm this Covenant with God by it, Luke 22. 10. Mat. 22. 27. And this he has not only allowed but enjoined to all his Disciples —— Do this, says he, in remembrance of me. And that not only at one Time, as it is with Baptism, but at all Times during your whole Lives; for in this manner of a Federal Eating and Drinking of this Bread and Wine, you must shew forth the Lord's Death always, even till he come again the second Time, i. e. unto the World's End, 1 Cor. 11. 24, 25, 26.

Forgiveness of Sins then upon Repentance, is a Grace which is begun in Baptism, and which is ever after continued, being repeated in every Prayer, and sealed in every Sacrament, to the end of our Lives. So that no wilful Sin can damn us, if we repent of it; but the damned accursed Sinner, is only he who lives and dies *impenitent*. Inso-much as that very Sin, for which S. Paul says there is no Benefit from Christ's Death, nor any Help of Sacrifice under the Gospel; is therefore excluded from all Grace of Pardon, because it is from all possibility of Repentance. For therein it is, that the *irrecoverableness* of those lost Sinners consists — It is impossible, says he, to renew them to Repentance, Heb. 6. 6.

Thus then, we see, that Christ's Gospel has afforded us a Remedy even for our wilful Sins, whether they be committed before Baptism, or after it, at one Time or at another, at all without exception; so that although sometimes we do fall under them, yet we shall not be eternally condemned for them. Let us but repent particularly therefore and amend it, and whatever Sin we have wilfully been guilty of, our Work is done. For our Repentance shall set us straight, and our Reformation will make us innocent; and if we are careful to do so no more, our offence will be looked upon as if it never had been done at all.

But against this *pardonableness* of our wilful Sins, after our Belief of the Gospel, and Baptism into the Christian Faith;

Faith; some perhaps may be ready to object two Places from St. Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, wherein he may seem to teach us a more rigorous and severe Lesson.

In the 10th Chapter, he lays down this as a great Truth: If we sin wilfully after that we have received the Knowledge, or open Belief and (g) Acknowledgment of the Truth of Christ's Gospel, there remains no more Benefit to us from Christ's sacrifice for sins; but a certain fearful looking for of judgment, and fiery indignation, which shall consume the Adversaries, v. 26, 27.

And in the 6th Chapter, to the eternal Terror of all wilful Back-sliders, he speaks thus to the same purpose: It is impossible for those, who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly Gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted the good word of God; if after all this they shall fall away, to be again recovered, or for any of us to renew them to Repentance; seeing they crucifie to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame, v. 4, 5, 6.

But now, if our wilful Sins after Baptism, and Belief of the Gospel, be thus desperate, and utterly excluded from all Hopes of Cure and Benefit of Expiation by Christ's Sacrifice, as the Apostle in these Places seems to intimate; How can the Gospel be truly called a Ministration of Reconciliation, Grace, and Pardon, towards all sorts of wilful Sins?

To take off all this Difficulty, I will answer to the Places severally, that all those good Minds, which are wont to be perplexed by them, may be more perfectly relieved by a particular and distinct understanding of them.

First then, to begin with that, the Word's of St. Paul, in the 10th Chapter of his Epistle to the Hebrews, are these. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; Not forsaking the assembling of our selves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another to the open owning and frequenting of them; and this we ought to do so much the more, forasmuch as ye see the day of God's righteous Judgment approaching. For if we sin wilfully in this Backsliding from the publick Assemblies, and from the Profession of the Christian Faith, after that we have once receiv'd the Knowledge, or professed Belief and (h) Acknowledgment of the truth of it, there remains no more Benefit to us

verse 27. from Christ's Sacrifice for Sins, but a certain fearful looking for of that judgment, I say, which shall devour the Adversaries ? And this all you Hebrews have reason to expect from Christ, from what you very well know of the manner of proceeding in such Cases under Moses. For he that despised or rejected the whole, yea or even any one particular Instance of Moses's Law, whereto Death was threatned, dyed without Mercy, if the thing was proved against him under the Testimony of two or three witnesses. And then of how much sorcer Punishment, suppose ye, shall this wilful Sinner be thought worthy who hath, by such wilful rejecting of all Christ's Laws and Religion, tredden under Foot the Son of God, as if he were not raised up again from the Dead, but were yet in his Grave ; and hath accounted that Blood of his, which confirmed the New Covenant, and wherewith he was sanctified, an unholie thing, making it to have been justly shed, as the Blood of a Malefactor ; and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace and all its Evidence, by rejecting it as insufficient ? I have set down the Place at large, that the very Text it self may afford us an accumulated Proof of the ensuing Explication.

But now as for this Sin, which, being wilfully committed after the Belief and Acknowledgment of Christ's Gospel, is here said to have no help from Christ's Sacrifice, nor any benefit of his Propitiation , It is not the sinful Transgression of every Law of Christ, no nor of any one ; but a total Apostacie and Abrenunciation of them all.

This Sin, I say, which being wilfully committed after the Belief of Christ's Gospel, is here said to exclude us from all Benefit of Christ's Sacrifice, is not the Transgression of any of Christ's Laws whatsoever,nay nor of any one. For the Corinthians were guilty of the wilful Transgression of several Laws, and that too after they had embraced the Faith of Christ. They were guilty of an indulged Lasciviousness, Uncleanness, and Fornication, 2 Cor. 12. 21. Nay one of them was guilty of it in such an instance, as was not so much as named, and much less practised among the Gentiles themselves ; viz. in a most incestuous marrying of his Step-mother, or his Father's Wife, 1 Cor. 5. 1. And S. Peter, a great Apost'e, after three Years Converse with his Lord and Master, denies him three times, and that not suddenly e're

ere he could bethink himself, but after a due space of Time between one denial and another, Luke 22. 57, 58, 59. All which he did in the most aggravated manner, by accumulating Perjuries and Prophaneness, upon the Sin of disowning his Master; for when his bare Word would not be believed, he began to curse and to swear that he knew him not, Mar. 14. 71. All these were sins wilful in their Commission, and some of them most highly criminal in their Nature; but yet none of them was excluded from the benefit of Christ's Sacrifice, for they all enjoyed it. So that it is not any one Transgression of a particular Law after Men have embraced the Faith of Christ, which is the un-atoned Sin here mentioned.

But it is *an utter rejecting of all the Laws of Christ, and a total Apostasy from his whole Religion.* It is the renouncing of Christ's Authority, the disowning of his Gospel, and falling quite off from him, to Judaism, or Paganism, or something directly Antichristian, which is the Sin here intended, and whosoever doth this, not only when surprised by Fear, or wearied out and overpowered by extremity of Torture, as the Lopers, or they who fell in the Primitive Persecutions, to whom God often gave the Grace to repent, and whom the Catholick Church still received again upon their Repentance. But whoso doth it, wilfully after he has once acknowledged Christianity, and been convinced by it, from him there remains no more sacrifice for Sin, but a fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour him, and all other Antichristian adversaries.

That the Word which is here translated (*e*) Sin, signifies (*i*) ἀμαρτία sometimes not all Sin in general, but particularly this super-tarōvτων lative height and aggregation of all Sin, an utter Revolt ἀπόστασις from God's Service, and Apostasy from his whole Religion, appears plainly from 2 Pet. 2. where the Apostate Angels are called the Angels that (*k*) sinned. v. 4. (*k*) ἀπόστασις.

And that this particular way of Sinning, by an universal ἀπόστασις Apostasy, and falling quite off from the Profession of the Thous. Christian Faith, is that very Sin which is here intended, may appear to any, who will attend to those things which are spoken of it in this Place, and put them all together.

'Tis plain from the Apostle's Exhortation against it—
Let us hold fast, says he, the profession of our faith, and not revolt from it, v. 23.

From his further *Dissuasion from it* in the verse next but one, —not forsaking the Christian Assemblies, which is a great Step towards the disowning of Christ himself, as the manner of some is, v. 25.

From his Character of it in the Verses that follow, it being a Sin, which includes in it all these Instances of Aggravation.

By it we become utterly Antichristian, and Adversaries to Christ and his Religion; —the fiery Indignation that is kindled by this Sin, shall devour all them, who by reason of it are become Adversaries, ver. 27.

By it we deny Christ to be risen, and look upon the Son of God as yet in the Grave and under our Feet; we count his Blood, which was spilt for the Confirmation of the New Covenant, to have been the impure and unholy Blood of a Malefactor justly executed; we despise all the clear Proof and convictive Evidence of the Spirit of Grace, which we once thought a sufficient Argument for his Religion, and whereby we were moved to the Acknowledgment of that Truth of his, which now we contumeliously reject. Whosoever hath committed this Sin, saith the Apostle, I will shew you what he hath done; he hath trodden under Foot the Son of God, and hath counted the Blood of the Covenant wherewith he was sanctified, an unholy thing; and hath done despite unto the Spirit of Grace, ver. 29.

As for the Sin then which is here spoken of, it is plainly this; viz. a Sin that is contrary to the holding fast of our Christian Profession, that implies a forsaking of the Christian Assemblies, that makes us open Enemies and Adversaries to Christ and his Cause, seeing thereby we deny Christ to be risen, and affirm him to have been an Impostor, and his Blood to have been, like that of the Thieves which were crucified with him, unholy and impure as the Blood of a Malefactor, and set at nought all the miraculous Proofs, and despise all the convictive Evidence of the holy Ghost, that Spirit of Grace, which hath proved to us abundantly that that Religion of his, which we now renounce, is a most certain Truth of God. All these Marks are evidently attributed to that Sin which the Apostle here speaks of; and then what can any Man think it to be less, than an absolute Apostasie from the whole Religion, and an utter abnegation of all the Laps of Christ?

Now whosoever wilfully falls under this, I confess he is in a very deplorable and most desperate Case. Because for him, as saith the Apostle, there remains no more benefit from Christ's Propitiation or Sacrifice for Sin: He has affronted that so enormously, that God will never suffer him to be the better by it. And this to a Few ought to be no uncouth or surprizing Doctrine, seeing he who thus renounced Moses could have no Sacrifice to atone for him. For no propitiation was allowed for him who wilfully rejected any one particular Command of Moses, but least of all if he had apostatized from the whole Law. *He that despised even any one particular Threatning Death in Moses's Law, died without mercy under two or three Witnesses.* But now this Covenant and Law of Moses was sealed only in the Blood of Bulls and Goats; whereas this Covenant and Law of Christ, which these Men renounce that I am speaking of, was confirmed in his own Blood: Moses the Author of that Law, was but a Servant; whereas Christ, the Author of this, was a Son. If then the revolting from Moses was so unpardonable, that it inevitably incurred Death, and put a Man out of all Hopes of Propitiation and Benefit of Sacrifice; of how much sorer Punishment, as he most rationally argues, must all Apostates from Christ be accounted worthy, who by their falling away from his Religion, tread under Foot the Son of God himself, a Person infinitely above Moses; and count the Blood, not of Bulls and Goats, but of the Christ of God, wherewith this Covenant was sealed, to be an unholy thing? They are indeed irrevocably plunged in Death, and their apostatizing or drawing back from that Religion, which upon so good Evidence they had before acknowledged, is to their own Ruin and Destruction, ver. 38.

But although this total Apostacy and abrenunciation of Christianity it self, when 'tis wilfully Committed, be so remediless and desperate a Sin; yet is that nothing to the Breach of any particular Law, or to the wilful Transgressions of any baptized Man, so long as he still continues Christian. For all his Sins of one sort or other, have the Salvo of Repentance provided for them: And if he doth but once reform and amend them, he shall not be condemned for them.

And thus having shewed, that this Place in the tenth Chapter to the Hebrews, makes nothing against the pardonableness of any Christian Man's Sin upon Repentance, but only against the Forgiveness of those who have apostatized from Christ, and become unchristian; I proceed now,

2. To consider that other Place in the sixth Chapter of the same Epistle, where the Apostle's Words are these:

- Verse 1. Therefore leaving the Principles of the Doctrine of Christ, wherein we are wont to catechize even Children and Novices; let us go on unto Perfection, and to treat of such things as are fit for grown Men: not laying again, for such as are apostatized from it, the first Foundations of the Christian Doctrine, as are the Doctrine of repen-
2. tance from dead works, and of Faith towards God; of the Doctrine of Baptisms, and of laying on of Hands, and of the resurrection of the dead, and of eternal Judgment.
3. And this will we do if God permit, without returning, as I say, to prove again the Foundations of the Faith to them who are fallen from it; which indeed were a
4. very vain and fruitless Undertaking. For it is impossible, (l) ~~for~~ for those who were once enlightened or (l) baptized, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made Partakers of the Holy Ghost; and have tasted of the good word of God, and of the Powers of Christ's Kingdom, or the
6. World to come; if after this they shall wilfully fall away from this Faith, it is impossible for them, I say, to be recovered, or for us by any Endeavours of ours to renew them again unto the Grace and Covenant of repentance; because God is irreconcilably provoked by this Revolt, seeing thereby they crucifie to themselves the Son of God afresh; and put him once again to an open shame.

Here indeed the Case is as desperate as it was before; and 'tis no wonder why it should, because the Sin is the very same. For it is nothing less than an universal backsliding, and apostasie both in faith and manners, a renouncing of all the Religion and Laws of Christ, whereof all these severe things are spoken.

(m) ~~neg.~~ As for the Word (m) which is here put to note this falling away, it signifieth for the most part a fall which admits of a rise again, and is recoverable; but sometimes it denotes a fall that is desperate, and beyond all hopes of remedy. Thus the Apostle, speaking of the incredulous

Jews, to whom the Religion of Christ was a stumbling-block and a rock of offence, distinguishes betwixt these two, * stumbling, and falling ; making the latter to be * πτώσις much more dangerous than the former, and denying it of and them, when he affirms the other. Have they stumbled, says πτώσις. be, that they should † fall mortally and irrecoverably ? God † οὐ περmitto. Rom. 11. 11.

And thus it signifies in this place. For the falling away here spoken of, is nothing less than a revolting from all Christ's Laws and Doctrine, and an apostatizing from his whole Religion. Which appears from several things that are here laid of it, some whereof they are said to fall from, and others of them are said to be implied in their falling.

It appears, I say from some things, which they are said to apostatize or fall from.

They fall away from their Baptism which is expressed by the word *enlightned, the common name in the ancient Church to signifie the baptized ; from the remission ^{πατέσθαι} τες. See of Sins, the preaching of the Word, and the administration of the Sacraments, which are such privileges and 4. gifts of God, as are offered to persons baptized ; from the hopes of Heaven, and all the promises and good word of God ; from the gift of tongues, and other effects of the Holy Ghost, whereof, upon the imposition of the Apostles hands, they had been made Partakers ; and from the power of working miracles, that were so conspicuous under the appearance of Christ, those times of Messiah, which the Jews were wont to call the Age or world to come ; if those, says the Apostle, who were once baptized or enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost, and have tasted of the good word or promise of God, and the powers of the world to come ; if they shall fall away, or apostatize from all these, it is impossible to renew them, v. 4, 5, 6. This, as is evident, is the Apostasie which is here specified, which is nothing less, than a renouncing of the Baptismal Covenant, of the preaching of the Word, of the administration of the Sacraments, of all the Gospel-promises, nay of all those miraculous gifts and powers of the Holy Ghost, whereof in the first times they were ordinarily made partakers ; and what can any man take this to be, but an utter renouncing of the whole Gospel and Religion of Christ ?

And

And that it is so, is still further manifest from those things, which are said to be implied in their falling.

For hereby they are said, to condemn Christ as an Impostor, to justify his murderers, to say he was crucified justly, and that were he now alive, they should be ready to crucifie him over again, which is a publishing again to all the world his reproach, and a putting him anew to an open shame. By this falling away, saith the Apostle, they crucifie to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame, v. 6.

But now, thus to renounce our Baptism, and all our Christian Privileges, to Condemn Christ as a Cheat and Impostor, to justify his Murderers, and to defame his Religion; what is it less, than a renouncing of his Gospel, and a falling off to persecute the Christian Faith and Profession?

And as for the wilful doing of this indeed, the Apostle says expressly that it is desperate, and that it is impossible for him, by any endeavours or arguings which he can use, to renew again those who are guilty of it, to that Gospel Covenant which they thus abjure, and which is the only gracious means of repentance and reconciliation. And since it is to no purpose, says he, I will not attempt it, but go on in speaking to those who still retain the Faith, without concerning my self to prove again the foundation to those who have apostatized from it, ver.

1, 3.

These wilful Apostates therefore are in a most deplorable case, for they have sinned themselves out of all capacity of mercy, and transgressed beyond all recovery. For there is no pardon to any wilful sinner whatsoever, unless he repent; nor can there be any to Apostates, unless they can repent of their Apostacy, and be converted over to Christianity. But as for those Apostates, it is impossible for any man to renew them again unto repentance.

Their renewal, I say, is impossible. For as for all humane means, which any men, even the Apostles of our Lord themselves, could use for their recovery; they have defeated them already. They know all the evidence of Miracles, and the demonstrations of the Spirit; nay, they have not only seen them, but they themselves have been partakers of them, and impower'd to work them;

but

but yet after all, they have renounced that belief which all these perswade to, they are Armour of proof against all these demonstrations of the *Holy Ghost*, and *Infidels to Christ*, notwithstanding them. So that let an Apostle himself urge any thing to them in behalf of Christ's Religion, his Argument has been overcome before he offers it. He tells them nothing new, nor shews them any thing but what they have seen, nay, what they themselves were formerly impower'd to shew to others; but all that was not strong enough to keep them in the Faith, for when they saw it all, they turned *Infidels* and *Apostates* still.

As for any *humane means* then, they are not like to reclaim them, or to bring them anew to the acknowledgement of the *Gospel*, which is the only gracious Ministry of Repentance and Reconciliation. So that if ever they be restored again, it must be by a *Divine Power*; for nothing now can possibly prevail with them, but a *special Providence* and a *special Grace*.

But now here is the *desperateness of their state*, these will never be afforded them. For when men have wilfully sinned up to this height, and fallen off against so great means, and so clear conviction; God in the ordinary methods of his Grace, is resolved to concern himself no further with them, nor to trouble himself any more for their recovery. They have had all the care and cultivation of his Grace, which they are like to have; and now, like *barren ground* (which after all that has been laid out upon it, brings forth nothing but *thorns and bryers*, that are not only *useless*, but *prickling and offensive*) they are nigh unto cursing. And this is the very instance which the Apostle himself uses, and the reason which he gives of that *impossibility*, which he had affirmed to be in that undertaking. *It is impossible*, says he, for any man to renew them, because God will no longer help on his endeavours with his Grace, nor look any further after them. For with those men who are *Infidels* after all his care, he will deal just as he doth with ground whose fruit is evil and offensive after all his labour; and as for his dealing with that 'tis plainly this. *That Earth, indeed, which drinketh up the Rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it was dressed, receiveth more blessing still from God.* But that, which after it has been thus

thus water'd bears thorns and bryars, is rejected and nigh unto cursing, whose end is, not to be water'd any more, but burnt up, v. 7, 8.

As for these two places of the Apostle therefore in his Epistle to the Hebrews, we see indeed that they speak of *wilful sin, beyond pardon, and of transgressions which are irremissible*; but these sins are not the wilful transgressions of any *Christian man*, but a *wilful Apostasie from Christianity it self*. So that after all, it is true still, that every man, who owns the Religion, and professes the Faith of Christ, is provided of a remedy of all his wilful sins, whentsoever they are committed; for let him but particularly repent of them and amend them, and he never shall be condemned for them.

Nay, so fast is the tye, and so inseparable is the connexion under the Gospel of Christ, betwixt *Repentance and Remission*; that, as I observed, this irremissible sin of *wilful Apostasie it self*, is therefore alone declared *impossible to be forgiven*, because it is *impossible to bring men to repent of it*, Heb. 6. 6.

If a man doth but *repent*, then let his sin be *wilfully committed*, whether *before or after Baptism*, it matters not; for his *repentance* shall set him straight in both, and his offence shall be quite forgotten, as if it had never been.

Indeed, if a man goes on in a *constant trade of sin*, *silencing continually his own conscience*, and *grieving God's holy Spirit*, and *despising all the means and offers of his Grace*; he may sin himself *beyond his time of mercy*, and so his sins will prove irremissible, because he is gone too far ever to *repent of them*, which is their only remedy and means of pardon. For there is a *set period of Grace*, and a certain season and space of time, wherein God will still make the offers of his help, and of the guidance of his Spirit, to reclaim and reform men. But if after all, they slight all his offers, and reject his aid, and prove utterly incorrigible; he grows weary at last, and will trouble himself no more about them, but leave them wholly to themselves. And this God plainly intimates concerning incorrigible *Ephraim*, who was just then about to be abandoned, and to be given up to the unmasterable wickedness of his own Heart — — — *How shall I give thee up*, says he, *O Ephraim? how shall I de-*

I deliver thee, O Israel ! Hos. 11. 8. And our Saviour says the same over intractable Jerusalem. O ! if thou hadst but known, at least in this thy day, the things that belong unto thy peace with God ; but now it is too late, for they are hid from thine eyes, Luke 19. 42. And in this state, 'tis said, that Hearing they shall hear, and shall not understand ; and seeing they shall see, and shall not perceive, Acts 28. 26. That they are blinded, and their Eyes are darkned, that they may not see, For God hath given them a spirit of slumber, Rom. 11. 7, 8, 10. and delivered them up to a reprobate sense, Rom. 1. 28. That they cannot believe, because * to them it is not given, and because he hath blinded their Eyes, and hardned their Heart, * Mat. 13. 11. that they should not see with their Eyes, nor understand with their Heart, and be converted, and I should heal them, Joh. 12. 39, 40.

This I confess, is a state of sin, which is desperate and irrecoverable ; not for that repentance is no sure means of remission, but because when once men are come thus far, God deserts them, so that they never can repent of them.

But as for the time when any man is come up to this unpardonable pitch, that only God in Heaven knows. No man can say, I am beyond my time of repentance, because without a special Revelation no man can understand it. And therefore let a man have sinned never so long, yet cannot that discourage him from repenting, because if he set himself seriously about it, for ought he knows, God will pity him, and afford him his Grace and Spirit, which is never wanting to such as heartily desire it, to aid and strengthen him in his repentance. Nay indeed, if a man be come so far as to bethink himself, and to be apprehensive of his danger, and to be convinced of the destructiveness of his sinful courses ; there is no question to be made, but that he will. For the Tide is turned, and the change is begun already ; and that is a thing which needed God's Grace, as much as any thing that is yet remaining. For a career in wickedness, is like running down hill ; the great difficulty is to make the first Stop, but when once that is done, to return again is much more easie. And therefore if a man has received so much Grace, as makes him break off his evil courses for the present, and

and stand and deliberate with himself, whether or no he shall proceed therewith ; he need not doubt, if he will go onto endeavour as he has begun, but that he shall have more, till at last he is fully enabled to perfect and compleat it. He has an experimental evidence that his time of Grace is not past, he may be sure God's Grace is still with him, because it helps and works in him. For it is Grace that brings him on to what he is, and if he be but as willing to be aided by it, as it is ready to assist him, it will not fail to carry him on further. God's Grace will still grow upon him, as his own endeavours do ; so that if he make good use of this, he shall have more. For this is laid down by our Lord, as a certain Rule of divine Dispensations ; *To him that hath, that is, maketh a right use of that Grace which he hath, shall more be given even in abundance, Mat. 25. 29.*

Whatsoever irreconcilableness therefore there may be, and truly is in some states of sin, when men have gone on beyond their time of Grace ; yet he who has so much Grace, as to doubt and question, to fear and scruple, has great reason to think, that as for his part, he is not past Grace, but under it. For an *irrecoverable sinner*, is commonly one that is *hardned* ; he transgresses without sense, and goes on without fear ; he is infatuated with his lusts, and lull'd asleep in his sin, and scarce ever comes to himself till he awakes in Damnation. But if once he begins, especially in the time of health ; either through a *severe reproof*, or a *severe providence*, to *interrupt his sin for the present*, and to *apprehend the evil of it* ; and if from thence he goes on, to *good desires*, and *holy purposes of well-doing* : then he feels that Grace, which he is afraid he wants ; and that good Spirit works in him, which he suspects to have delerted him. He is not in this irrecoverable state, but is going on towards a good recovery.

Indeed, if his *Conscience is awakned in the height of horror, and extremity of despair*, so that he is obstinate against all good advice, and dead to Prayer and all holy endeavour, and continues to be so ; this is not an effect of Grace, and a step towards repentance : but a *terror of Judgment, and a fore-taste of Hell*. If it deads all industry, by excluding all hope ; if he complain of his estate, without praying and seeking to get out of it ; and despair, without

all amendment ; this fear of heart and terror of soul, 'tis true, doth not bring him nearer unto life and pardon, but by securing him faster in his sin, it shuts him up a closer Prisoner of Condemnation.

But if he be so apprehensive of his danger, as to run from it ; if he has so much hope, as will put him upon holy Prayers, and trying all means, and using his best endeavours ; if upon his apprehensions of his present evil state, he fears and desires, and resolves, and strives to get quit of it ; he is not deprived of a good Providence or of a gracious Spirit, but enjoys the benefit of them, and is conducted by them. He is in the way to Life, and under the recovering methods of Grace ; God's holy Spirit has not for ever abandoned him, but has begun again to work in him.

And thus at last it appears, that as for all the *wilful sins* of any *Christian man*, they are in no wise desperate and helpless ; but the Gospel has reached out a remedy for them, to all who are willing to make use of it. For let them but particularly repent of them, and amend them, and then they are safe from them. So long as they continue in the profession of the Christian Faith, and do not apostatize from it, there is no sin whatsoever which they wilfully commit, but is pardonable upon their repentance. If once they honestly undo the fault, and conscientiously forsake it, their work is done ; for their penitent reformation shall make them innocent, and whatever punishment the Law may threaten to any sins, when God comes to Judgment, he will not exact it of any man who has been thus reclaimed from them.

Do we find our selves guilty then of any unretracted wilful sins, and thereby subject to a dreadful sentence, according to those measures which have in great largeness been hitherto discoursed of ? Let us particularly repent of them, and begin to amend them, and then we are safe from it, and shall most certainly prevent it. Have any voluntary transgressions put us out of a state of favour, and made us obnoxious to the severities of Judgment ? Let us reform them, and do so no more, and repair the breach which ensued upon them, and we are surely pardoned. For the Gospel of Christ doth not in any wise intend to amaze and astonish us, or to affright us from amend-

amendment, by putting us into a despair of mercy. No, we must lay this down as a most unerring Rule, That that can never come from God, which tends to detain us in our sins, and to discourage our reformation. For the sum of all his designs and endeavours, both in the sending of his Son, and in the preaching of the Gospel, is to free and cleanse us from all sin, and to carry us on to reformation and repentance by the sure and stedfast hopes of pardon and acceptance.

Whosoever we have wittingly done evil therefore, let us take care to do so no more; and if it were offensive or injurious to our Brethren, to repair the hurt which our sin has done, and all is well. And if any Law of the Gospel threaten us, let us begin thus to fulfil it; and then we are safe from it. Let us set our selves to fulfil it, I say, for that only is a saving repentance, which, as we saw above, implies obedience, and ends in reformation. And if we repent in that manner of any sin, whatsoever it be, or whosoever it be committed, whether before Baptism, or after it, it matters not, we shall surely go unpunished, and shall not be eternally condemned for it.

C H A P. II.

Of Reconciliation, and Restitution upon those Sins, whereby we have offended, or injured our Brethren.

FROM what has been discoursed concerning the Remedy of wilful sins in the foregoing Chapter, it plainly appears that they are not hopeless, but that at what time soever any of them have been committed by a Christian man, whether before Baptism, or after it, they are still pardonable upon his particular repentance of them.

This Repentance, as has been shewn, implies amendment; so that we shall not be judged to have repented of them, till we have forsaken them, and are reformed from them. Amendment then is necessary to our repentance, and to the pardon of all voluntary offences whatsoever; and to the pardon of some, viz. those wherein God alone is concerned, it is not only necessary, but sufficient; but then to a right repentance, and to the pardon of others, which do not barely offend God, but are offensive also and injurious to our Brethren, there is more required. For altho' God will forgive his own share of any sin, viz. so far as it is an act of disobedience to him, and account us duly penitent upon our amendment and reformation; yet will he not judge so favourably, or so easily pass over the hurt which is thereby done to other men. And since in several sins, there is not only an offence to God, but withal an affront or injury to our Brethren: whatever God may do in some, 'tis plain that he will not pardon others, or look upon us to have sufficiently repented of them, upon a bare forsaking of the fault, without our seeking also to be reconciled to the offended persons, and making of due reparation.

And this being a thing, which occasions much doubt and scruple in many honest minds, I will here endeavour to give a plain state of the Duty of reconciliation upon offences, and of restitution upon injuries against our neighbour, that so we may have no needless fears upon this account, or know how to put an end to them when we have just occasion for them.

In sin there are three things considerable, according as it may concern, either God, or men, or both; viz. the offence against God; and the offence and injury which it may include against them.

First, as for the offence against God, as it is a breach of his Law, and a going cross to his pleasure; it is atoned by reformation and amendment. Till we are reclaimed indeed from our former sins, and are become God's dutiful Sons, and faithful Servants, for the present, and resolve to continue so for the future; it is not consistent with the honour of his goodness and holiness, with the authority of his Laws, and with the ends of his Government, to bear any complacential love, or shew any marks of favour and friendly affection towards us. But as soon as ever we

are conscientiously reformed from them, he will be reconciled to us. He will never punish us for any disobedience against his *Divine Majesty*, after we have forsaken it ; but whosoever we turn off from any evil way, so far as he himself was concerned in the dishonour of the offence, he will graciously pass it by, and as may plainly appear from what has hitherto been discoursed, return to have mercy upon us.

But then as for the offence, and also as for the injury, which our sins may at any time imply towards men ; he will not judge us savingly to have repented of them, nor pardon them upon amendment alone, unless, together with that we expiate the first by seeking to be reconciled to the Party, whom we have offended, and the latter by making amends for the damage done, and offering a due reparation.

These two means of pardon, for our Sins of affront, or injury against men, viz. our seeking to be reconciled, and making all due restitution, are no less natural fruits and necessary effects of repentance for them, than reformation and amendment is for them, and for all others.

For the most natural effect of a sincere and sufficient repentance, is to undo the fault, and set things in the same place where they were before. It implies a change of mind from sin, that now our hearts and thoughts are set against it : which change is helped on and produced in us, by our hatred of it, our grief and sorrow for it, and our being ashamed of it. And the natural effect of a change of mind, of hatred, shame, and grief, where they are in any just degrees and perfect measure, is to wish that the action which causes them had never been done, and as much as it is possible, to undo it again. So that if our repentance for any sin, is both true and perfect, if it implies an undissembled hatred, a deep shame, and a great and hearty grief and sorrow for it ; it will make us cancel and undo it, and take away, as far as can be, all the footsteps which it had left behind it.

And because there are more effects remaining after some sins, than after others ; the fruits of repentance are more for some, than they are for others. For in some, only God is concerned, as it happens in the sins of impiety, and in several instances of unsoborness, when there is no scandal to our Brethren joined with them : And the breach in these being only in God's Authority, and Honour, it is repaired

repaired by our beginning to own his Laws, and the stain is wiped off by amendment and new obedience. But in others, our Brethren are concerned too, as it falls out in all those sins, whereby we injure or affront men. And since there remains after these sins, not only a dishonour of God, but also a lasting hurt and offence to our Neighbour, the breach made by these, is not repaired barely by our beginning to obey God, unless we also seek to appease and satisfy men, by our penitential acknowledgments and restitution. And therefore if we are so far penitent, as to retract and undo our sins, without which we are not duly ashamed, or sorry for them, nor sufficiently changed, and reclaimed from them; we shall be ready, not only to repair the dishonour which they cast upon God, but the injury and offence which they gave to men too.

But in the account of these two instances of repentance, and means of pardon, to be more particular;

2. In sin we are to consider the offence and just displeasure which it gives to our Brethren, as it manifests our contempt of them, and our hostile inclination to insult over them, or to vex and disquiet them: And this is to be put away, by our seeking to be reconciled with penitential confessions.

In all sins against Justice or Righteousness towards all men in general, or towards any in those particular Relations wherein we may be concerned; there is not only an act of disobedience towards God, but also of affront or injury against our Brethren: And this, if they understand it, will beget an alienation of mind, and create hard thoughts and hostile inclinations. For when they have observed our contempt of them, or our ill will to them, from our mockery and contumelious usage, our whisperings and backbitings, our slanderings, false-witness, fraud, cozenage, or any other trespass against them, whether to their damage, or only to their disparagement, or both; they will have great reason to be afraid of us, and offended with us. They will think our society unsafe; and either fly our company, or be jealous of us, and stand upon their guard when at any time they are so unhappy as to be ingaged in it. So that upon these sins, against the Honour, Persons, and Estates of our Brethren, when once they come to understand how they are damaged by them, there is not only an act of disobedience

towards God, but also a plain breach of that friendship, good-will, and mutual confidence which ought to be among men.

And now to undo all these evils which ensue upon these sins, and to set things in the same state which they held before ; there must not only be an act of reformation and amendment to appease God, but also some outward indications of a change to the parties offended, and such penitential acknowledgments, as may repair the breach which they have made among men. We must let the persons grieved know, that now we are ashamed, and sorry for our fault, that our temper is changed, and our mind is alter'd ; so that they may safely venture to return again into favour with us, and never fear suffering the like indignities from us any more. And this now will reconcile mens minds, and reunite their hearts, and make them to become again kindly affectionate, secure, and confident, in the society and conversation of each other. And when this is done, and they have both by reformation and amendment made their peace with God, so far as his honour was concerned in it, and also by such penitential acknowledgments made their peace with men ; they have undone, as much as is possible, all that was done amiss, and such repentance shall suffice, and prepare them for God's pardon. And this is that, which our Saviour expressly requires of us, Matt. 5. If thou bring thy gift to the Altar, saith he, and there, before thou offerest it, remembrest that thy brother, hath taken just offence, and hath ought against thee, (whether upon account of thy causeless anger, in calling him Fool, and Racha, or using any other opprobrious language ; or of any other affront, or injury whatsoever ;) presume not to think of appeasing God before thou hast appeased him, but leave there thy gift before the Altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift for thy reconciliation unto God, v. 22, 23, 24.

But here we must observe, that as the necessity of superadding these penitential confessions to our amendment, arises only from the necessity of appeasing men, whom our sins had offended : So whensoever our trespasses against them have given them no offence, there is no need of these acknowledgments for a reconciliation. And therefore in all

all our sins against them, whereby we have either injured or disparaged them, which they know not of, there is no need of it at all. For if they understand not that we have wronged or abused them, they cannot be angry at us for so doing ; and so there being no breach made by our offence, there is no place for a reconciliation.

Yea, I add further, if they are come to understand our offence, and have accordingly resented it, there is not always still a necessity of having them actually reconciled, but then only when it can be had, and we have an opportunity of doing it.

There is then only a necessity of having them reconciled, when it can be had. For some men are unalterable in their resentments, and never lay them down ; they are eternal in their hatred, and will not forgive an injury to their lives end. And with these, God doth not require that we should actually be reconciled, neither will he be angry at us, when at last we miss of it. He has not made impossibilities the means of pardon, nor will he make the unconquerable obstinacy of one mans sin, to be an article of anothers punishment and condemnation. And therefore when we have to do with such men, we shall be accepted, if we earnestly seek reconciliation, although we cannot find it. So that if in this case we seriously express our sorrow, and beg pardon for our faults, and promise never after to repeat it, and, by our obliging carriage and after-kindness, endeavour to atone for our past offence, and to shew them how safely they may confide in our present engagements : If all this doth not melt them into a compliance, the sinful continuation of the breach is now their own ; but as for us, we have done enough to mend what was amiss, and shall deliver our own souls.

And even with those men from whom it might be had, there is then only a necessity of an actual reconcilement, when we have an opportunity of doing it. For in the infinite mixture of conversation, and variety of company which we meet withal in this world, how commonly are men, especially of an abusive sportful wit, and a proud petulant humour, guilty of these offences towards those persons, whom they shall never see again, and whom they know not where to find, or when ; now here, by reason of absence of the persons whom they should make it

to, an actual acknowledgment and reconciliation, is impossible, and all that can be done towards it, is only sincerely and firmly to resolve to seek it, whensoever an opportunity shall be offer'd. And this *honest purpose of reconciliation*, till such time as we have an opportunity to perform it, shall be as available to our pardon, as if we were indeed reconciled. The *will*, as I have shewn, shall be taken for the *deed*, where 'tis in our power to will only, but not to do, and where the *deed* would certainly follow, if there were but an opportunity to shew it in. For in this case, the *Apostles rule* is sure; *Where there is first a willing mind, it is accepted according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not*, 2 Cor. 8. 12.

As for the Duty of seeking Reconciliation then, where our sin has given offence to men, it is plainly this: *If they know nothing of our trespass against them, they are not angry with us for it*, and so have need of no atonement. But if they do understand it, and are offended at it; we must seek a reconciliation, if it can be had, and where we have an opportunity to endeavour it. But if there be no opportunity of making our acknowledgment at present, we must firmly purpose it in our own minds, and resolve to make it when a fitting season shall be offer'd: And upon this *honest purpose* which would prove effectual, were the persons present, we shall be pardoned, as if we had performed it.

3. In sin we are to consider the *damage and injury* which it implies towards our Neighbour, as it causes his *unjust loss* or hindrance, whether as to his *Life*, his *Liberty*, his *Bed*, his *Good Name*, or his *Estate*; and this is to be expiated by making amends for the wrong, and restoring what our injury took away, by a just and full reparation.

How often doth mens *Envy* and *Revenge*, their *Covetousness*, and *Ambition*, and unbridled *Lusts*, render them not only offensive by *indignities* and *affronts*, but really *hurtful* and *injurious* to their Brethren. They wrong their *Bed*, by *Adultery*; they blast their *Reputation* by *flanders* and *false reports*; they spoil them of their *Goods*, by *theft* or *oppression*, by *fraud* and *couzenage*; they rob them of their *lives*, or *liberties*, by *murder* and *false witness*; they inflame their *enemies*, estrange their *friends*, and stop or destroy their *preferment*, be their *malicious*

(a) Book
1, c. 3.

icious suggestions, unjust suspicions, and spiteful representations of them. And when at any time we do thus by our Neighbour, he is really a loser by reason of our sin, and has just reason to complain of us, and stand at a distance from us as dangerous and hurtful persons, till we do not only confess our fault, and seek a reconciliation, but moreover make him a just amends, and set him in the same state, if possibly we can, which he enjoyed before.

This we shall surely do, if we are truly and compleatly penitent; and till we have thus restored a spcil, and repaired a wrong, we cannot be thought truly, or at least perfectly to have repented of it.

We cannot ordinarily be thought, I say, to have repented of it truly, but only under a (b) false disguise and vain hypocrisy. For that is ordinarily no true sorrow, which doth not undo the fault, and set things, as much as may be in the same state which they held before. We shall not be thought to be really angry at the crime, if still we hold fast the Bait, and are pleased with the temptation. We shall not be esteemed to hate it, so long as we are in love with that which comes by it; for we did not love it for it self at first, but only for the unjust gains sake which led us on to it; and if we yet hold that fast, and will not restore it and let it go, 'tis plain we love it, and adhere to it for its sake still. So long then as men are pleased in the fruits of their injustice, and continue the damage which their brother suffered, or hold fast the unlawful gain which they themselves acquired by it; they cannot in reason be thought to renounce or to redress it, but to justifie and confirm it. They are resolved to have their end in it, and to enjoy what they sought thereby; and this is not to be punished and afflicted for a fault, but to be enriched by it; it is not repenting of it, but owning and avowing it.

But if the sense of God's wrath, which they have incur'd by their unjust dealings, should put these men who will not repair them, into some real trouble of mind and grief of heart, as sometimes it doth: yet so long as they make no just amends, but suffer all the ill effects upon their brethren to remain, their Repentance, such as it is, although it be real and sincere, is not yet perfect and entire,

tire, and able to work that reformation which it is designed for. Their mind is changed in part, but 'tis but half way ; their sorrow for their sin is something, but not enough ; it would not have strength sufficient to prevent the sin, because it cannot wean them from the temptation. For the *unjust gain* still keeps possession of their heart, and all their grief and change of mind is not able to remove it : Their brothers loss is still their love and delight, and all their repentance cannot bring them to repair it. They still adhere to, and love the *fruits of their offence*, more than they do the *rewards of amendment and obedience* : So that if they should be tempted by these inducements again, they would have the same effect upon them which they had at first, and make them as unjust as they were before.

Thus necessary is *restitution and reparation of a wrong*, to evidence that men truly and perfectly repent of it.

But besides this way of its being necessary, *viz*, as a necessary effect of a compleat repentance ; it is also necessary in it self, as a piece of common justice and natural equity, without which no man, who has done wrong, can be an equal or a just man. For the great Rule of Justice is, That every man should have his own, and that no other mens force or fraud should spoil him of it, or any ways detain it from him. So that if any man has destroyed or wasted any thing belonging to another, he must make it up ; if he has taken it to himself, he must restore it. For whatsoever Goods he has wrested wrongfully from his Neighbour, are not his Goods, but his Neighbours still. For that which transfers Propriety from one private person to another, is his own consent ; this being the very nature of Dominion, that a man may dispose of a thing at his own will, and no other man may meddle with it, without his agree to it : So that it must be his own voluntary act, and not anothers force or fraud, that can justly make an alienation. If then one man wrongfully possesses anothers Goods, he is no Owner, but an Usurper ; he enjoys what belongs not to him, and cannot be a just man, till he has cleared his hands of the others Goods, and made restitu-

tion necessary is *restitution of unjust Possessions*, and *reparation of unjust damages*, not only to evidence a sincere

and

and sufficient repentance, but also as an instance of common Equity and natural Justice, and to maintain a mutual peace, security, and confidence in the World. And therefore God, that he might take away all temptation to sportful, or malicious injuries, and unjust gettings in some; and all enmity and strife, unsociable fears and jealousies, murmurings and complaints by reason of them in others; has laid a great stress upon it, and made it plainly necessary to the obtaining of his (c) pardon. Render to every man his due, saith the Apostle, and owe no man any thing, but to love one another, Rom. 13. 7, 8. This is (c) Non re-peccatum; plainly necessary, and a duty that will not be dispensed nisi restitu-with. For as Ezekiel says, it is not only, if the wicked man turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and tum. Aug. right: but if, together with that, he give again what he ad Maced. hath robbed, that he shall surely live, and not die, Ezek.

33. 14, 15.

If then we are guilty of any injury, and have at any time wrongfully damned our Neighbour; we must not only seek to be reconciled, and remove the offence, but withal we must repair the loss, and make him in as good a state, if by any means we can, as he was in before. And therefore if we have spoiled him of his Goods by fraud, oppression, or robbery; we must in the fittest way, which our own prudence, or the wisdom our friends and spiritual Guides shall direct, restore them unto him again. If we have injured him in his good name, and by slanders, false stories, and malicious representations, put a blot upon his honour, advantaged his enemies, disengaged his friends, and stopt his promotion; we must confess our fault, and declare our miscarriage; we must endeavour to wipe off all the dirt which we have thrown upon him, and to set him right again in the apprehensions of all men; but of those most especially, who by our means were brought to think ill and hardly of him. If we have wrongfully deprived him of his liberty, or of any thing else, by false witness, or corrupt judgment, or any other way, we must take shame to our selves, and clear up his innocence, and take off all the undeserved reproach, and all the criminal disguise, wherein we had involved him.

As for some injuries, 'tis true, they never can be repaired, nor is it possible to make the persons whole again,

who

who suffered by them. Of which sort, are *Murder*, *Adultery*, a customary constant fraud in traffick, and the like. But although the damage in these can never be intirely repaired, yet in part it may; and when we cannot do as much as we should, 'tis but just and necessary that we do as much as we can. And therefore in thole injuries whereby many are made to suffer, as it ordinarily happens in *Murder* and *Adultery*, which damnifie not the persons injured alone, but their *Families* also and *Dependants*; we must make restitution to those that can, that we may be pardoned for neglecting those who cannot receive it. And if few of the injured persons are to be met with, as it happens through the infinity of *Sufferers* by a constant fraud in commerce; there cannot be a better commutation, than to put the poor into their place, and make the needy their *Receivers*. Which exchange was most commendably resolved on by a great offender in this kind, viz. *Zacchæus*, the Chief among the *Publicans*. For when he comes to repent of his *Publican* sins, at Christ's calling of him, *Luke* 19. He makes his penitential profession thus; *If I have taken away any thing by false accusation, or unjust force*, says he, *from any man*, whom I

(d) *Exod.* know and can repay again, according as the (d) Law prescribes in that Point, *I restore him it again fourfold*.
 (e) πάντες τελῶνας, πάντες οἰον ἀγ- πάντες.
Dicit. Ze-
non.Comed. And as for all other exactions, which can never be particularly repaid, whereof I, and generally (e) all in my employment are guilty without number; I endeavour to atone them, according to the (f) Jewish custom, by giving as much, or more to the indigent and needy in their stead: For behold the half of my Goods I give unto the poor,
 (f) *Vid. Dr. ver. 8.*

Light.Hor. Thus is restitution to repair the damage, as necessary, as confession is to atone the offence, which our sins have given to our Brethren. And this it is, whether our Brethren know of the unjust loss or hindrance which we have caused to them, or no. As for the confession of our fault, to have the offended party reconciled; that, 'tis true, is necessary only to make peace where they have taken offence, and therefore it is of no necessity where they do not know our sin, because there they cannot be offended by it. But as for the reparations of unjust damages, that is necessary out of natural equity and strict Justice; so that we are bound to it, wheresoever Justice is infringed, and

and any one is injured, whether he understands it, and be offended at it, or no. If then our Neighbour knows he has been injured by us, and is offended at it, we must not only make restitution to repair his loss, but also beg his pardon to atone the offences ; and to procure a reconciliation. But if he is wronged and knows it not, we need make no acknowledgments, 'tis true, since he has no need to be reconciled ; but still we must make a just amends, and repair the damage, be the way of doing it never so private, and managed with as much discretion as can be used about it.

But to prevent needless fears, as well as to press a necessary practice in this point ; I think it not amiss, to add these limitations to the obligation of this Duty, viz. that we are bound to it only in matters of strict Justice, not of Charity and Courtesy ; and there too only so far as we can, and as we have an opportunity to perform it.

First, We are bound to make amends and restitution, only upon sins against strict Justice, not upon sins against Charity. All restitution must be of something, whereto another man has a full and compleat right, otherwise it is not restoring, but giving it. It is returning of a thing to its right owner, and putting him into possession who has the just title and propriety. Now such right as this, no man has to things of Charity, but only to things of strict Justice.

'Tis true indeed, there is a certain dueness in them, as well as there is in these ; we ought to give Alms, as well as to perform Contracts ; to be grateful, compassionate, courteous, and condescensive, as well as to restore a pledge, or fulfil a bargain. And since there is a Duty on our parts to bestow these Offices, there must be answerable some kind of right in others to receive them. So that even the instances of Charity and Ingenuity, are in some sense a matter of right and duty ; and because those who receive them are not altogether void of title, but have some right to them, they are oft-times in Scripture called works of Righteousness, and the persons who perform them, are called upon that account just or righteous Men. Thus where we read, Take heed that you do not your (g) Alms before (g) ἄλεν-
men ; it is read by several Copies, Take heed that you do μουσίλω. not your (h) righteousness before them, Matth. 6. 1. The (h) δικαιο-
merciful men, Matib. 25. who are described by their οὐρίλω.

Compassionateness, Aims, and Hospitality, ver. 35, 36. are called the righteous men in the next Verse, *Then shall the righteous say, Lord, when saw we thee an hungry? &c.* ver. 37. Thus the charitable Lender, is called a righteous person, Psal. 37. the righteous is merciful, and lendeth, ver. 25, 26. and Joseph's being a pitiful, kind Husband, and unwilling publickly to expose his Wife Mary, whom he found with child before they came together, but resolving to put her away privily, is called his being a (i) just man, Matth. 1. 19.

(i) *Justus*
as wv.

Some right then our Brethren have to our works of mercy, liberality, gratitude, candor, affability, courtesy, and other instances of common charity and ingenuity: So much dueness there is in them, and so much right and title they have to them, as can denominate them works of righteousness, and us who perform them just and righteous men.

But this right, is much less than that, which they have to all expressions of strict Justice; and is rather an imperfect draught and a beginning of right, than right it self. For all full and perfect right bestows a title, and invests a man in *propriety*; so that what he has a compleat right to, he may justly call his own. And such a right as this, all men have to the safety of their persons, goods, and reputations, and all other things which are a matter of strict Justice. They have a full claim to them, and cannot, without their own consent be deprived of them: And therefore if any private person like themselves damifies them in these, they may justly complain he wrongs them, and demand satisfaction; and when they receive it, they do not thank him as for a free and charitable gift, but look on it as their own, and accept it as a debt and necessary restitution.

But as for that right, which men have to all expressions of kindness and charity; it finds no full claim, nor invests a man with Lordship and Propriety; so that he must own another's kindness when he receives them, and cannot say he is deprived of his own, when they are withheld

held from him. This right does not confer Propriety, but doth only something towards it ; it makes it another's duty to give us something, and his gift must compleat our Title and bestow a perfect Claim to it. Thus, for instance, if any person has an opportunity put into his hands, to be helpful to a man in want or misery, when the needful persons ask an alms, they do not demand a debt, but intreat his charity ; they do not exact what is their own, but beg what is his ; So that he has an opportunity, not of doing justice, but of shewing kindness and charity when he gives ; and they are under a duty, of acknowledging his kindness, and being thankful when they receive it. And the case is the same, in gratitude, candor, courtesie, and other instances of Ingenuity and Charity. The right which any man has to them, is not so full, that he can say they are his own. There is a duty indeed on other men to give, and that gift may make them his in time ; but till that is done, he cannot say he is injuriously deprived of any thing which of compleat right belongs to him, or requires that they, who have taken nothing that is his from him, should repair the loss, and make him a restitution.

Restitution then, in transgressions against strict justice, is a duty, because there men are deprived of that which is really their own ; and it is but justice, and not thank-worthy, that he who deprives them of that, should give it back again, and restore it to them. But in sins against meer Charity, it is no duty ; for there, since men have lost nothing that is their own, they can demand nothing to be restored to them. By these sins of uncharitableness, indeed, God is dishonoured, and by our amendment that must be repaired ; our Brethren are sometimes justly offended, and when they are so, by our penitential acknowledgment they must be reconciled ; but by a bare uncharitableness none of them is injured, so that there is no unjust loss which should be repaired, nor any thing taken from them which ought again to be restored to them.

2. We are bound to make amends for injuries, and to restore that which was taken away by them, so far only

only as we can, and as we have an opportunity of doing it.

We are bound, I say, to make restitution so far only as we (k) can. Some injuries in the nature of the thing can never wholly be repaired, as *Murder* and *Adu'tery*, for which satisfaction cannot be made to the persons principally concerned, but only to their families and dependents. Others cannot be compleatly recompensed, because of the number of persons that suffered by them, many whereof will never be seen again, or are forgotten; as it happens in a *customary constant fraud in commerce*, which cannot otherwise be perfectly requited, than by putting the poor into their stead, or by some other pious and religious commutation. And others, lastly, cannot have a compleat amends, by reason of our inability compleatly to amend them. Some cross accidents of Providence, or some former vices or carelessness of our own, (which though, now we repent of, yet we cannot help,) have made us poor, and so unable to preserve all from being losers by us, and to restore to every man again what at any time we had injuriously spoiled, or taken from them. And now, when by any of these ways restitution is impossible, and a thing which the truest penitent cannot perform, God will not exact it of him. If he doth what he is able, when he cannot do all; if he restores the damage to the injured persons dependents and relations, when he can make no restitution to himself; or if he restores it to charitable and religious uses, when he can do neither; or if, lastly, he confess his fault, and beg pardon, and be forward to return service and good offices; when he can make no other restitution at all, he has done what a true penitent ought to do, and God will graciously accept him. His will shall be taken for the deed, since it is in his power to will only, but not to do; and through his honest readiness and endeavours to perform it, if he could, he shall be interpreted to have performed it.

We are bound, I say again, to make an actual restitution, only when we have an opportunity of doing it. An honest purpose, as was laid above, shall be accepted for all affirmative precepts, till there be a season offered for an actual performance. When there is an opportunity for it, we must not only will, but do and practise them: But till that happens, all that God expects, or that we can do,

(k) Non
remittitur
peccatum,
nisi restitu-
atur abla-
tum; sed
cum resti-
tui potest.
Aug.
Ep. ad
Maced.
qua' est
Ep. 54.

is to resolve to practise them, as we shall find occasion. And therefore if honestly we seek an opportunity to repair a wrong, but cannot find it, let us not disturb our souls with fears and scruples, but rest in peace, in confidence that our honest purpose shall bear us out, till God's Providence affords us an opportune season wherein we may perform.

And in judging of this, *when a fit season is come, and when such an opportunity is offered as we are bound to make our restitution in:* we must neither be too strict and rigorous, nor too gentle and remiss.

We must not be too strict, and tye our selves up to so much quickness in restoring, as to run upon great inconveniences that are of far more weight than the thing is worth, to prejudice considerably our own affairs, and neglect, it may be, some other as weighty duties, rather than delay a little longer; especially when it may be done at another time as well as then, and the damage which the injured person sustains by such delay of the restitution, is nothing in respect of that which we incur by a precipitate dispatch of it. Under such incommodious circumstances, we may be allowed to put it off a while, and we need not fear lest our Brother should be offended, or farther injured by such delay, since we have *just reason to presume he willingly agrees to it.* For thus far we may reasonably presume upon the *free consent* of all the *conver-sable part of mankind,* that, out of *common humanity, and compassion,* they will be content to deny themselves in *small things, to advantage us in great ones;* and to want some slight conveniences themselves, rather than put us, for the supplying of them, to deprive our selves of such as are *considerably weightier.* And where we have so good a reason to *presume of their consent to it,* we shall not be trespassers against them, or any ways offensive to them, by our delaying of it.

But then, on the other hand, we must not be *too remiss and partial to our selves,* in judging of a fitting season for such a preparation, nor prone to press upon our Brethrens wants and inconveniences, but to spare our own. We must not refuse an offer, because it is joined with *some pains, and clogg'd with some difficulties,* and may occasion *some loss and hindrance to us, or additional expence.* Our slowness in returning a just amends at any time, but chiefly

chiefly where the opportunities for it are more uncertain, must not be such as argues that we seek to excuse it, or are very indifferent to it, and easily put by it: It must not seem to intimate that we are in suspense about it, or have not perfectly resolved upon it, or, at least, that the performance of it is a forced, ungrateful thing, so that we would not come to it so long as we can find any pretence to turn it off, or are able to overlook it. For this shews evidently, that our *repentance is without zeal*, that our *sorrow is without life*, and that, at best, we are acted only by an *imperfect and insufficient*, if not also by an *un-sincere Purpose*. And therefore to *vindicate the honour, and perfect the degrees of our repentance and obedient purposes*, which are absolutely necessary to our pardon and acceptance, we must shew such an *overplus of affectionate haste* to repair our injured Brother's loss, as manifestis that we are more concerned for him, than we are for our selves, and that we regard the pains and burden of our own part much less, than in all rational presumption, were he to judge of it, he himself would. This we shall do where the *sorrow of our sin is great*, where we have a *high zeal against it*, and have *fully and compleatly repented of it*: And when we are actuated and carried on by these, they will prevent all doubts, and never suffer any *hard and uncertain question* about the fitness of the opportunity, to come into a debate of Conscience. But if men have not so much *love* for the duty of Restitution, and so much *zeal* in their *repentance*, as will make them overlook *little things*; if their *repentance* has no more warmth, than is just necessary to make them do what is indispensibly to be done, so that they come to *weigh scruples*, and nicely to debate whether some *doubtful hindrances* are *sufficient to delay their restitution, or no*: The best way that I can direct them to, is to refer their *Brothers loss in wanting for some time*, and theirs in *making a present reparation*, to the judgment of their *Spiritual Guides*, or any other wise advisers; and then peaceably to acquiesce in that course, whereto those wise and good men shall direct them.

As for the duty of *making reparation* then, where our sins have *injured men*, it is plainly this. In sins which are not only against *Charity*, but also against *Justice*, whereby we have wronged any man either in his *Person, Goods,*

Goods, or Reputation, or the like; whether he knows that we have injured him or no, we must make a just *Amends* and *Restitution*. This must be made, where it can, to the *injured man himself*; and where that is not to be done, to his *Family and Dependents*; and where that is impracticable too, to the poor, or to God himself, by some charitable or pious *Commutation*. And this we are bound to do, so far as it is in our Power, and according as we can find an Opportunity; being desirous of it, and fully resolved upon it when we want one; and doing as much as we can towards it, and asking Pardon for that wherein we fail, when we are disabled from doing all. It is not enough after these Sins to do so no more, unless, according to these Rules, we make amendment for what we have done already. Reformation and forsaking of the Fault, will atone for any other wilful Sin, whereby we have offended none but God: and that, and penitential Acknowledgements, will expiate those, whereby we have offended both God and Men: but if we have not only offended, but wronged also and injured them, we must not only amend our Fault to please God, and penitentially acknowledge it to appease them; but, as ever we would secure the Pardon of it, we must restore the Spoil, and repair the Wrong, and set them, as far as may be, in as good a State as our Sin took from them.

C H A P. III.

Of the Remedies for our Involuntary Sins.

Having shewed in the former Chapters, what Ready Christ's Gospel has afforded us for the most dangerous sort of Offences, viz. our chosen and wilful ones; I shall proceed now in this, to enquire what Remedy he has likewise provided for our involuntary and unchosen Sins.

As for our involuntary Slips themselves, they also come under the Letter of the Law, and so far are within the compass of the Penalty. They are a doing what the Law forbids, and so an incurring of that Evil

which it threatens. For the Words of the Law it self are unlimited and universal, they make no exception of voluntary or involuntary, considered or unconsidered; but they require that something should be performed or omitted, and threaten us if we do it not. So that if they were to be tryed by the Strictness of the Letter and the Rigour of the Laws, even our involuntary Slips themselves would prove a matter of our Condemnation.

But if God should proceed to judge us, I will not say according to what the compass of the Letter of Law would comprehend, but even according to the utmost of what the *justice of the thing* would bear, the greatest part of our involuntary Sins would be charged upon us, for how few are there, who live up to the *utmost of their Possibilities?* but they fall sometimes where they might stand, and are rash in some instances, when, if they had used due Care, they might have deliberated. We do not come up to that, which according to the highest Ability of our Natures, and the utmost Stretch of our Faculties, might be done: And therefore letting aside the Rigour of the Letter, which, requiring more than can be performed, must threaten where the Punishment that is threatened cannot in justice be exacted: Yet should God proceed with us for *most* of our involuntary Slips, according to the utmost Severity which Justice it self would bear, we should be in an evil State, and give in a sad account for them. So that we have need to be *sorrowful*, even for the *greatest part* of our *involuntary Sins*, and to *beg God's Pardon* for them, that all the Defects of our Care may be made up by the Riches of his Mercy and Goodness.

And as for the rest of them, which steal from us not so much through any thing of our *culpable Neglect* as our *unhappiness*, and are purely involuntary and unavoidable; an *after-Grief* is necessary in them also, although it be only to *evidence our Involuntariness* in doing them, and that our Wills were perfectly against them. Because, as was observed above, our *ignorant Offences* themselves cannot in reason be esteemed *involuntary*, further than we shew our Wills to be set against them, by our *trouble at them*, and our *Prayers for Pardon*, when afterwards we come to discover and understand

stand them. So that some Repentance is still due, even for our *involuntary and unchosen Sins*, and they must have our Sorrow and our Prayers before they are fit to be forgiven.

And here we all experience the abundance of God's Love; for he allows for these pitiable InfirmitieS, and has provided us of a Remedy, which if we make use of, we shall never be condemned for them.

Under *Moses's Law*, these involuntary Slips of Ignorance and Inconsideration, being they were continually incurred, were allowed the Benefit of a continual Atonement. For God himself appointed several Sacrifices for them which should expiate their Guilt, so that every Man, who was subject to them, was furnished with a sufficient Remedy against them.

And since †Grace abounding more by *Jesus Christ* than † *John it.* it did by *Moses*, as they had their Remedy and Relief 17. under the *Law of Moses*; so ought they to have the same much more, and accordingly they have it, under the *Gospel of Christ*.

But now as for this Remedy which Christ has prescribed for the Expiation of our *involuntary Sins*; it is not the same which he requires to the Expiation of our *voluntary and wilful ones*. For that, as we have seen, is nothing less than a particular Repentance and amendment; in the forsaking of that very Sin which we committed wilfully. But as for our involuntary Sins, this can be no cure for them, because it is impracticable, and not possible to be effectually used about them. For we shall always live subject to them more or less; and although we may labour and strive against them, yet shall we never be able, as long as we are in this World, to get entirely free from them. For we have no Power and Choice to avoid that, which either we cannot see, or cannot consider of; and all these Sins come in upon the account, either of our unwill'd Ignorance, or Inconsideration. And that cannot be the Cure assigned for our involuntary Sins, which is impossible in their Case, nor can their pardon be made to depend upon it, because then they would be wholly unpardonable and desperate, and the Offer of Pardon to them could not be in earnest. -

But that Remedy which Christ has appointed for them, and that Repentance whereupon he will graciously

ously pardon and forgive them, is in the general; an hearty, (a) Repentance and Reformation of all wilful Sins,

and an intire Obedience in all such Actions as are voluntary and chosen.

If we serve God faithfully and truly in all our other Actions, where we do see our duty, and can chuse to practise it; he will connive at these Slips, which, after an honest Care and Industry, are involuntary and unchosen. For any kind Master would do so, to his honest Servant; and more espe-

(a) ἀποτελήσωμεν τὸ ἀίδιοντα τῷ αἰώνῳ βελήσος αὐτῷ στροφῆς φαντεῖς, ἀφ' ἔσυντος πάσιν ἀνθρακῶν καὶ ἀνομίας, πλεονεξίαν, ἔρους, πανοψίας, θλεᾶς, ψιθυρισμὸς, μελαλαίας, ὑπερηφανίαν, &c. --- αὐτὴν δὲ δοῦλον, αγαπητοῖς, εἰς ἣν οὐρανὸν τὸ σωτηρίου ἡμῶν Ἰησὸν Χειρὸν τὸν πρεσβάτην καὶ βούλην τὸν ἀδερφαῖς ἡμῶν. Clem. Rom. I. Ep. ad Cor. 35, 36.

cially every tender Father would, to his Obedient Child. And God, who is Love it self, being the first Foun:ain and the compleatest Pattern of all kindnes in the World, will never be out-done in any Love, that is excellent and Praiseworthy, by his own Creatures. But if their kindness would bear with such infirmities and Oversight of an honest Mind, his will dispense with them much rather.

The faithful Servants therefore and obedient Children of God, who repent particularly of all their other Sins that are known and wilful, and effectually amend them; shall be sure to find this Favour at the Hands of their heavenly Lord and Father, for all these Failings which are involuntary and unchosen. Their Obedience in other things shall plead their Excuse, and make their unwill'd Slips in these to be uncondemning.

But to be yet more particular, these involuntary Transgressions of Men, who are obedient in all their voluntary Actions, shall certainly be pardoned through the means of these particular Duties.

1. Their Prayers.

2. Their Charity and Forgiveness towards the Offences of others.

1. Their involuntary Failings of Ignorance and Inconsideration, shall be forgiven them upon their Prayers. If they beg God's pardon for them, he is as ready to grant it, as they are to desire it. And this we are sure of, because no earthly Parent, who is wise and good, would refuse to bestow it in such Cases at the Request of his Children; whereas they have nothing near that Pity and Tenderness for their Children, which

God

God has for his. And this is an Argument, which Christ himself has taught us to rely upon in this Matter : *If you, says he, being evil, will yet, for all that, at their Request, give good Gifts to your Children ; how much more shall your heavenly Father, who has not the least Taint of your Illness, give the best of Gifts, even the Holy Spirit to them that ask him ? Luke 11. 13.*

And indeed that we may never want this Remedy, Christ has put a Prayer for this purpose daily into our Mouths ; that since our involuntary Sins are of *daily Incursion*, we may as daily beg pardon for them. For he has made it a part of our *daily Prayers*, to ask Pardon, among others, for our *daily Trespasses*, this being one of those Petitions, which he has taught us to put up as often as we do that for our *daily Bread*, that he would forgive us our *Trespasses*, Matt. 6. 11, 12. And this St. Austin observes of it ; (b) *For those small Sins, saith he, which no Man can avoid, was this Petition in the Lord's Prayer inserted.*

(b) *Tenete vitam bonam in Preceptis*

Dei, ut Baptismum custodiatis in finem. Non dico vobis quia sine peccato hic vivetis : sed sunt venialia, sine quibus vita ista non est. Propter omnia peccata Baptismus inventus est : Propter levia, sine quibus esse non possumus, Oratio inventa. Quid habet Oratio ? Dimitte nobis debita nostra, sicut nos dimittimus Debitoribus nostris. Semel abluimus Baptismate, quotidie Oratione, Augustin. de Symb. ad Catechum. in Art. de Remissione Peccatorum. l. 1. c. 6.

Nay, long before him, St. Clement teaches the same Doctrine, of our Prayers being a most sure expiation for all our involuntary Sins. For in his first Epistle to the Corinthians, relating that truly Christian State wherein their great Apostle Paul had very lately left them : among several other parts of their Character, he gives this for one : (c) *Being filled with holy desires, and a virtuous Will, with a good and commendable Forwardness of Mind, and with a pious Assurance of being heard, you lifted up your Hands to Almighty God, beseeching him to be merciful and propitious to you, if in any thing you had sinned*

(c) *Mεσοὶ τε δὲ σπιλαῖς θεληταῖς μετοιθίστες, ἐξετείνατε τὰς χεῖρας ὑμῶν πρὸς τὸν παντοκράτορα Θεόν, ἵκετεύοντες αὐτὸν ἵλεως γένεσαι, εἰπὲ ἀκούτες παράδειτε.*

Clem. Rom. Ep. 1. ad Cor. c. 2.

INVOLUNTARILY. Having first, as says the good Father, a *virtuous Heart*, and a *Holy disposed Will*, so that in nothing their Heart was disobedient by sinning wilfully ; they were forward to ask God Forgiveness for all those Sins, which they had committed involuntarily. And this *forwardness*, says he, was (d) good and commendable, and their Confidence of obtaining Pardon upon their Prayer, was *pious* ; it was a (e) *gody* and a *pious Confidence*.

(d) ἐν ἀ-
γάπῃ περ-
θυ ἀρ.
(e) αὐτὸν
ἐποιεῖς
μνοιαθή-
μενος.

This is a *plain and full Testimony*, and withal it is of more Authority than ordinary. For this *Clement*, as we may observe, was one who was sent out by the Apostles themselves to preach Christ's Will, and intrusted by them to declare unto the World, what are the Terms of Remission of Sins and the Condition of Pardon ; so that what we hear from his Mouth, we may almost look upon as *Gospel*. St. Paul himself makes honourable mention of him, calling him his *Fellow-Labourer* : *Help Clement my fellow-Labourer, whose Name is in the Book of Life*, Phil. 4. 3. And the thing it self which he testifies, is not so much a Matter of *Faith* and *Opinion*, wherein an honest Man may sometimes err and be mistaken ; as an *historical Relation* of a Matter of *Fact*. For he is recounting, what a brave and gallant Church they were in that state, wherein the great Apostle left them : And as one of the *Particulars* of that Religion, this comes in, That as for their *involuntary Sins*, they begged God's *Pardon* for them, and that too with a *pious Assurance* of obtaining it. So that as for this Practice, of a *confident Hope* of *Pardon* for their *involuntary Sins* upon their *Prayers*, it was not only such as St. Clement the Companion and *Fellow-Labourer* of St. Paul approved ; but such moreover as the *Apostle Paul* himself, who had planted Christianity among them, had left with them.

This therefore is one great Remedy for our involuntary Slips, *They shall be forgiven us upon our Prayers for Pardon and Forgiveness*.

And so shall they,

2. Upon our *Charity*, and *Forgiveness* of the *Offences* of others.

As God himself delights in Mercy, so doth he require that we should; and to oblige us to it the more, he has made our kind dealing towards our Brethren the (f) Condition of this kindness towards us. Above all things, says S. Peter, have fervent Charity among your selves; for Charity shall cover, or procure Pardon for, the multitude of those many, because unavoidable and involuntary Sins, 1 Pet. 4. 8. And hereto Charity is then especially available, when it is shewn in the highest Instance of all, viz. in procuring our Brethrens repentance and conversion. For thus says S. James, Brethren, if any of you do err from the Truth, and one convert him; for his Encouragement let him know this from me, That he who converts the Sinner from the Error of his way, shall not only save the other's Soul from death, but shall also hide a multitude of his own sins, James 5. 19, 20.

Thus is charity in all Acts of Kindness and Beneficence, most available to procure the Pardon of our many because unavoidable and involuntary Sins. But among all the Instances of Charity, one is particularly singled out by our Saviour as a necessary Condition to our Forgiveness at God's Hands, and that is our forgiving others that offend against us. For the Man, who would have no pity upon his fellow-servant as his Lord had shewed upon him, was unpardoned all again, and delivered over to the Tormentors till he should pay the utmost Farthing, Matth. 18. 32, 33, 34. and the same measure our heavenly Father will mete out to us, if we forgive not every one his Brother their trespasses, v. 35. And that a Condition so necessary to our Forgiveness might never be forgotten, our Lord has put it expressly into that Prayer, which he has taught us to put up daily for the Pardon of our own Sins. For he bids us pray, that God would forgive us our trespasses against him, even as we forgive those that trespass against us, Matth. 6. 12. And that we may take the more notice of a Point so indispensible, he tells us as soon as ever the Prayer is done, that if we forgive men their trespasses, our heavenly Father will also forgive us; but if we forgive not men their trespasses, neither will our heavenly Father forgive us our trespasses, verse 14. 15.

If we are rigorous and severe therefore with our Brethren, God will be so with us also; and when he comes to judge us, we shall find as little Allowance at his Hands

as they have done at ours. For he shall have Judgment from God without Mercy, who to Men hath shewn no Mercy; but if any Man has been merciful to his Brethren, God will be much more so to him; for *Mercy rejoiceth even against Judgment*, James 2. 13. This will be the greatest Motive to procure Grace, and the best Plea we can urge to obtain Mercy at God's Hands; *Blessed are the Merciful*, says our Saviour, *for they shall obtain Mercy*, Matt. 5. 7.

And thus, as for our *involuntary Slips*, we see now what is their Remedy; they shall be forgiven us upon our Prayers, and upon the Prayers of our Friends and other good Christians for us, and upon our Charity and forgiveness of other Men. *With the same measure that we mete, God will mete out to us again*, Mat. 7. 2. So that if we shew Mercy to the unwill'd Sins, yea and the voluntary Offences of other Men; if in other things we are obedient, we shall be sure to find it for our own.

And thus at last we see, what Remedy the Gospel has provided us for all sorts of Offences, whether they be our *voluntary* or *involuntary* Sins. And upon the whole matter we find, that our Case is not desperate under any sort of Sins, but that if we will use it, we have a sufficient Cure for them. For if we are in a State of Death by reason of any wilful Sin; let us but particularly repent of it and amend it, and if it either injured or offended our Brethren, seek to be reconciled and repair the Wrong, and we are restored to Pardon. And if in any thing we have fallen *involuntarily*, let us but pray and be merciful, and we are forgiven. And either way, when God comes to judge us, whether we have in all Points fulfilled his Laws, or are pardoned our Transgressions of them, we shall be acquitted by him. We shall be safe at that Day, if we have either kept the Condition, or used the Remedy; for a Pardon will justifie us to as much purpose, as we should have been justified by an *unerring Obedience*.

To apply this then to every Man's particular Case. Has any Man, whether learned or unlearned, wilfully and advisedly committed an Act of any known and notorious Sin, whether of Blasphemy, Perjury, common Swearing, Witchcraft, Idolatry, Drunkenness, Fornication, Adultery, Lying, Slander, Fraud, Oppression, Theft, Murder, Rebellion, Tumult, or the like? has he been guilty

guilty of these, or of any other sins of like nature whereat all mens consciences are wont to boggle, and their hearts to check them, till they have sinned themselves into numbness and stupefaction? Let him particularly amend that evil way, and retract that very sin, and, if his Crime implied any, as far as he can, repair the wrong which it did his Brethren; and then he is in a safe condition. For his particular repentance and amendment, shall make up the breach which such wilful offence had made betwixt God and him, and shall most certainly procure his pardon.

Has any man of opportunities and understanding committed any Action, of *Lasciviousness, Uncleanness, Passionateness, Fierceness, Evil Speaking, Backbiting, Censoriousness, Uncandidness, Unmercifulness, Unpeaceableness*, or the like? has any such man, or any other whatsoever, been guilty of these or the like offences when his own Soul reproved him, and either did, or would have set the sinfulness of his present action before him, unless he has sinned in it so long, as to lose all sense of it, and to stifle all suggestions against it? Let him also particularly amend and reform such voluntary sin, and make his peace with his offended Brethren that he may be saved. His particular repentance shall likewise make his peace, and procure for him God's favour and acceptance.

Has any man, lastly, been surprized into rash words and censures, into sudden anger, and trifling discontents, and peevish, or uncourteous, or uncandid, or uncondescensive behaviour? Has he been wearied by long importunity, into some loose thoughts and wanton fancies, into some small fretfulness, or impatience, or the like? Has he spoke or acted unadvisedly, through deep grief, or violent fears, or other astonishing unwill'd passion? Let him bewail his failings, and strive against them, although he be not able perfectly to overcome them; let him seek peace, and practise charity, and shew mercy upon the like errors and escapades, and upon the more wilful offences of his Brethren, and then with comfort beg God's Pardon. For his Prayers thus attended, shall set him strait, and procure his reconciliation.

If a man is conscious to himself, of any of these sorts of sins, these Remedies will certainly restore him. And as

for those unknown and secret sins, whereof his conscience cannot inform him; he has an obvious and an easie expedient, for a general penitential Prayer will undoubtedly be accepted for his pardon of them.

Whatsoever therefore his sins be, if he please to make use of it, he is provided of his remedy. Repentance shall surely save his soul, and make atonement for all his offences. So that of whatsoever nature, number, or degree his faults have been, after once he has thus repented of them, they shall never be imputed to him; but through the Merits of Christ's Death, and the Grace of his Gospel, they shall be looked upon as if they had never been.

And thus at last we have seen, what that Condition is which the Gospel indispensably exacts of us towards our acceptance in the last Judgment, what those defects are whereof it allows, and what those Salvo's for all sorts of disobedience which it offers. For it requires an entire obedience of all our voluntary actions; it bears with all our innocently involuntary failings, and pardons them upon our Prayers and Charity towards others; and it admits us to recover our former state when once we have lost it, by a particular repentance and amendment of all our wilful sins.

This then is the true Test, whereby at the last Day we must all be tryed. If we have obeyed entirely, and have been guilty of no wilful sin; or if, when we have, we did not rest in it, but repented and amended it, and, where there was any, repaired the wrong, and sought to be reconciled; and if we have begg'd pardon for all our involuntary slips, and have been diligent in shewing charity, and mercy, and forgiveness, to atone for them: then are we innocent in the accounts of the Gospel, and when Christ comes to judge us, we shall hear the joyful Sentence, of Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you, Matt. 25. 34. This repentance and obedience will bear us out, and secure our happiness; but we must not hope that less than this will do it. For God will take vengeance, saith S. Paul, on all that obey not the Gospel of Christ, 2 Thess. 1. 8. and, Except you repent, says our Saviour, you shall all perish, Luke 13. 5.

And thus having shewn, what Condition that is, which the Gospel indispensably exacts to our acceptance in the last

Judg-

Judgment, what defects are consistent with it, and what remedies, when once 'tis lost, shall again restore to it; I shall now proceed to that, which I proposed in the fourth and last place, namely, to remove those groundless scruples, which perplex the minds of good and safe, but yet erring and misguided people, concerning it, whereof I shall discourse in the remaining Chapters.

C H A P. IV.

Of such groundless Scruples, as make safe, but weak Minds, doubt of their Title to Salvation.

IN matters of Religion and another World, nothing is more ordinarily observable, than that those People are wont to have the greatest fears, who have the least reason for them. For good Christians, altho' they think the best of others, are generally very suspicious of themselves. They have a deep sense of the danger of sin, and a full conviction of the fatal end of disobedience; and that makes them think, that in a matter wherein it so highly concerns them not to be mistaken, they can never be over jealous of their own hearts, or too cautious, lest after all those insupportable punishments, sin should fall to be their own portion.

And this they do especially, if in any material point, whereupon as to the Sentence of Life or Death, the Gospel lays a great stress, they are ignorant and erroneous. For there are no terrors in the World comparable to those of Religion, nor have any men upon Earth so much reason to be afraid, as they who are in danger to fall under them. And therefore if there is any thing, which will be of great account in the last Judgment, or what is all one, which they think will be severely accounted for; and they either find themselves to be guilty of it, or, which comes to the same thing, fansie that they are: they must needs be fearfully perplexed, and deprived of all peace and comfort, tho' really they are in

the greatest *safety*. 'Tis true, indeed, that in the end they shall be no losers, nor shall their *mistaken fears* ever be *fulfilled* upon them: Because at the last Day, God will judge them according to his own Rule, (which they have really performed tho' they knew it not) and not according to their errors and *misapprehensions* of it. Their errors shall in no wise pervert his Truth, for he sees what they are, howsoever they may mistake it; and if he sees them to be righteous, his sentence will follow his own knowledge, and he will declare to all the World that they are so.

This is the security of all good men, as it is the eternal terror and astonishment of all hypocrites and sinners, that they shall be brought before an unerring and uncorrupt Judge, who can neither be bribed nor deceived, and who cannot mistake them, or wrongfully condemn them. howsoever they may mistake, or wrongfully condemn themselves. And since it is so, they are really safe in their own goodness, when they most of all suspect their own danger; and secure from evil, even whilst they are afraid of falling under it.

But although every good man is in this *safety*, let his understanding of himself be what it will; yet if in any of those things which he takes to be a matter of life or death, he judges wrong of himself, and thinks erroneously, he can enjoy no *peace* and *comfort*. He will go to Heaven full of fears, and foreboding thoughts; and never think himself in the way to Bliss till he is actually enthroned in it, and possessed of it. He will meet indeed with happiness in the end, but he will have no sight or expectation of it in the way; for all his life long, he will be tormented with doubts and suspicions, fears and jealousies; and be still by turns concluding himself lost as to the next World, though he be lost nowhere but in his own fancy. And this imagined future misery, will bring him under a real one for the present; it will make him have sad thoughts and a sorrowful heart; it will bereave him of all joy and peace, and almost overwhelm him in groundless perplexity and vexation.

But that pious Souls may not fear where no fear is, nor torment themselves with unreasonable expectations; having before shewn what that condition really

is which renders any man's a safe condition, I will go on now to remove their groundless scruples and mistakes concerning it, by shewing, what, and of what force those things are, which are wont, without any sufficient reason, to disquiet the minds, and to disturb the peace, of good and safe, but mistaken Christians, about it.

And as for the causes of good mens fears, so far as I have been able to learn them, they are chiefly these that follow.

1. First, Good men are wont to call in question the saveableness of their present, and the happiness of their future state ; because after all their care against them, they find that some motions of the Flesh, some stirrings of their Lusts, some thoughts of evil, do still arise up in them. They feel themselves subject, to delightsome fancies and desires of forbidden things. They are liable to a lustful thought, a covetous wish, an insurrection of anger, of envy, and of several other damning sins.

'Tis true indeed, that these Lusts do not reign in them, because they do not consent to their instigations, nor do what they would have them. They can only inhabit and stir in them, but have not strength enough to give Laws to them ; for they repress them e're they are come to will, and chuse much less to fulfil and practise what they incline to. They may, perhaps, have thought and fancy, a wish and inclination after unchaste pleasures ; but they correct themselves there, and never in their hearts consent to an unlawful embrace, nor ever proceed to an unclean action. In a sudden motion of anger, it may be, they may have several expressions of wrath and instances of revenge occur to their thoughts, and obtruding themselves upon their fancy ; but they stop there, and do not consent to utter an injurious word, or to commit a spiteful action ; and the same they experience by themselves in other instances. In all which, several forbidden things will get into their thoughts and desires, and steal from them a wish or inclination ; but when once they have done that, they can do no more, being unable either to gain their consent, or to command their practice, so as that they should not only desire, but also chuse and fulfil them.

But altho' they do not suffer sin to reign in them, so as to consent to it, or to fulfil it in the lusts thereof ; yet they fear, lest their very thoughts, and inclinations after it, should

should prove *damnable*. For God requires the obedience of our *whole man*, of the *mind* and *affections*, as well as of our *wills* and *actions*; and he is disobeyed by *any*, as well as by *all* our faculties. And seeing every sin is forbidden under pain of death, who knows, but that this admission of sin into our thoughts and desires, is a deadly transgression. This is one great cause of fear, and a rock of offence, to truly honest and good Men.

But to take off all doubt and scruple upon this account, we must know, that *our impotent lusts and ineffective desires of evil things, if they are able to get no further than a thought or wish, tho' at present they are a matter of our exercise and humiliation, yet at the Day of Judgment they shall be no Article of death or condemnation*. For Christ's Gospel doth not sentence us severely upon these first *motions of a lust*, or *beginnings of a sin*; no, if they arrive no higher than *fancy* and *inclination*, through the Merits of Christ's Sacrifice there is Grace enough in store for them, and in the Gospel account they are not grown up to be a matter of Death, nor come within the Confines of destruction.

That I may speak with the more distinctness to this Point, I will here shew these two things.

1. That for *our feeble lusts and desires after evil, which are unconsented unto, and unfulfilled, we shall not at the last day be condemned*.

2. For what lusts and desires of them we shall.

1. I say; for *our feeble lusts and desires of evil, which are unconsented to, and unfulfilled, at the day of Judgment no man otherwise good shall ever be condemned*. God will never sentence us to Hell, for every sudden desire and inclination after sinful things; but if it rest there, and goes no further than bare desire, he will pardon and pass it by, but not eternally avenge it.

To speak distinctly to this Point, these *lustings and desires* are considerable, either as to their *first birth*, or as to their *indulged and allowed continuance*: the *first* are *never damning*, and the *latter many times are no Article of condemnation*.

As for our bodily lusts and desires of evil, in their *first birth*, I say, *they are never damning, nor shall any man, who is otherwise vertuous and obedient, be ever judged to die for them*.

And if it were otherwise, who could possibly be saved? For as long as we live in this World, we have all of us these *first motions* of appetite after evil things, more or less, and there is no avoiding of it. For the Laws of God, which are impositions superinduced upon our Natures, by their prohibitions, make several of our most natural appetites and *desires* themselves to be sinful; the *lusts of the Flesh*, making up a good part of the *prohibitions* of the Gospel. But although God by his after-prohibition has made them sinful, yet from that natural necessity which he had laid upon us before, we cannot live intirely free from them. For our Flesh will lust, and make offers after such things as are naturally fitted to its liking, and we cannot help it: because our Bodies, so long as they are conversant among the things of this World, from their natural frame and constitution will still be delighted with some things, to *crave* and *desire*; and pained by others, to *hate* and *abhor* them. This, I say, is *natural*, and whilst there is any life and sense in our Bodies, the good and evil things of the World must of necessity thus sensibly affect them; and where they are affected with pleasure, there 'tis natural for them to desire; as where they feel pain, 'tis natural for them to abhor the thing which occasions and produces it.

These *first lustings* then and cravings after forbidden things, are natural, and were made necessary before the prohibition came to make them sinful. And if by an after Law men shall be condemned for being sensibly affected with outward things, or for having a sudden lust and inclination after them upon their being so sensibly affected with them; then shall they be condemned for what they could not help, and die for not performing impossibilities.

But God neither *can*, nor doth make any Laws which exact things so rigorous: He *punishes nothing in us but what proceeded from our own will*, nor exacts an account of us for our *natural lusts*, and *inclinations*, further than they are subject to their own choice and *free disposal*. If a sudden fear, or an *unclean desire*, arise up in the heart of an *holy man*, from the presence of outward objects or *inward imaginations*, and the *natural temper of his Blood and Spirits*; he shall not be put to answer for it, because

he could not prevent it. He could no more hinder it, than he can hinder the *beating of his heart*, or the *motion of his blood*; seeing it was no free work of his *will*, but a natural effect of his *temper*. And to be condemned for that, is to suffer for having *Flesh and Blood*, as well as *Reason and Spirit*; and to undergo punishment for being made up of *Body* as well as *Soul*, for being a *Man* and not an *Angel*.

As for several things indeed, which follow upon the *first suggestion of a prohibited object*, and upon the *first lusting after it*; they are not the effects of *nature*, but of our own *choice*. For though at first *thought* and *fancy* of *evil*, and also a *sudden lusting* after it from its *fansied agreeableness*, may obtrude it self upon us e're we can observe it, and whether we will or no, either by *chance*, or by *occasion of a temptation*; yet a *continued entertainment of it*, and a *stay upon it* in our *imaginings*, to *cherish lust*, and *inflame desire*, cannot come upon us but by our own *liking* and *connivence*. For as soon as ever we can observe them, our thoughts are our own, to *dispose of how*, and upon *what we please*. And therefore if we please, we may call them off from the *forbidden object*. They started it without our leave, but they must have our leave to stay upon it.

But yet even these *after-thoughts* and *inclinations after forbidden things*, which come thus from the free determination, or at least from the connivence of our own *Wills*, are not always an Article of our condemnation; but then only, when we *consent* to do what they suggest, or *practise* and *fulfil* the same. For if the *forbidden thing* is only *fansied* in our minds, and craved by our *appetites*, but has got no consent of our hearts, nor any *endeavours* of our lives and actions; according to the *gracious terms* of that *Gospel* whereby we must stand or fall, it is not yet come within the terrors of *Judgment*, nor has made us liable to *Death and Hell*.

For the evil and danger of our *bodily desires*, we must know, is the evil and danger of a *temptation*. When our *appetites* desire what the *prohibition* has made *evil*, and our *Spirits* on the other side declare what the *Commandment* has made *good*: then is the time of *temptation* or *tryal*, whether our *Wills* are resolved to stick to our *Lusts* or to our *Duty*, and whether they will prefer *God* or

or Sin. And herein lies the great Danger of our natural Appetites; for although *in themselves they are not deadly and damning to any Man otherwise good*, yet are they Traps and Snares to deadly and damning Sins.

In *themselves*, I say, to any Christian Man, who is otherwise good and vertuous, our natural Appetites are not deadly and damning. The Lusting and Inclination of our Flesh, after Meats, and Drinks, and after Ease, and Pleasures; and the Lusting of the Eye after Gain and Riches, are not absolutely and directly forbidden, or in *themselves*, and before they have got any further, an Article of our Condemnation. No, all the Desires of the Flesh are naturally necessary, some to preserve our own Persons, and some to the Preservation and Propagation of Mankind. This God himself has made, and he allows of it. It is no Man's Sin to have a Stomach to his Meat, or to have Desires after Ease, and a fleshy Inclination after bodily Pleasures: Because God has so framed our Bodies that they should, and therefore he cannot be angry with us if we do desire them.

Indeed he has not left these Desires to their own Swing, but has put several Restraints upon them: He has bound them up from *some Objects*, and in *some degrees*. For we are forbid to desire and lust after Meat and Drink, Ease and Pleasure, Riches and Plenty, when either we are injurious to other Men in procuring that which we lust after, or when we are excessive and intemperate in the use of it, or for its sake transgress any other Commandment. Our Desires of Meat and Drink, for instance, must not carry us on to excessive Measures, in Gluttony and Drunkenness; our carnal Lusts, must not draw us on to act them with undue Objects, in Fornication, Adultery, Rapes, or other prohibited uncleannesses; and our Desire of Money, must not betray us into Thefts or Robberies, Fraud and Circumvention, Extortion and Oppression, Niggardliness, Uncharitableness, or other Sins whether against Justice or Charity. As on the other Side, our Fears and Aversations from Want or Pain, or other bodily Evils, must not induce us to neglect a Commandment that we may please our Flesh, or to deny our Religion for the securing of a bodily Enjoyment.

These Restraints God has laid upon our bodily Appetites, having given us these Commands, with several others

others mentioned above, which we are oft-times tempted to transgress in order to the fulfilling of them. For our bodily Appetites themselves, do not distinguish, either of Objects, or of Degrees. A Man's Palate, or his Stomach, in any delicious Meat or Drink which yields a Pleasure to it, do not tell him when they have enough, or cease desiring before they are gone on to be intemperate. Our Eyes lust after Money, but they consider not whose it is; but so they may have it, they matter not to whom it belongs, or how they come by it: And so it is in our fleshly Appetites of other things. For it is the natural Pleasure of those things which we lust after, that moves our Bodies; and therefore they lust after them so long, as they are pleased with them. They never stop at a fit Measure, or turn away from a forbidden Object; so that if we will be ruled by them, they will carry us on to any thing that agrees with them, whether it be *lawful* or *unlawful*, and so are sure to insnare us into sin. And here indeed God has set a strict Restraint upon them, and will punish them severely if they go beyond it. For

Then, as I said, our Lusts are deadly to us, and Articles of our Condemnation, when they have damning Effects, and ensnare us into deadly and damning Sins. To any good Man, the bare Lusts and desires of Evil are not so truly a damning Sin, as a dangerous Temptation; they are not in themselves an Article of Death to him, but they are apt to carry him on to that which is. For that which puts any Sin into a Capacity to tempt us, is our Lust or Desire of something which is annexed to it, and which we hope to obtain by it. There is always something that goes along with it, which is naturally fitted to please our Flesh, and to exite a carnal Appetite; and by this we are tempted, and allured into the Practice and Commission of it. For bare Sin could never tempt any Man, nor could any one in his Wits ever chuse to disobey for disobedience sake, without any thing further: because there is no good in Transgression nakedly considered, which should move any Man's Will to chuse and embrace it; but on the contrary, much evil that will dissuade and affright him from it. For it deprives us of God's Favour, and subjects us to his Vengeance, and fills us with sad Hearts, and anxious and terrible Expectations. But that which wins us over

over to a Liking and Approbation of it, is the Appearance of some *Pleasure, Profit, Honour*, or other annexed Allurement, which we expect to reap by it. It is one or other of these, that overcomes all our Fears, and inveagles us into the commission thereof ; for they strike in with our natural Appetites, and raise in us Desires after it ; and those prove the Bait which draws us in, and are the insnaring Temptation.

For herein lies all the Force of any Temptation : *The Satisfaction of a Lust is joyned with the Acting of a Sin, which is an Invitation to us, for the sake of the one, to commit the other also.* The Transgression has something annexed, which is agreeable to our fleshly Natures, and raises in us Desires of it, and Cravings after it ; and when it has got this Hold of us, it draws us as much as we can be drawn by our Love or our own Lusts, and the Gratification of our bodily Appetites ; which is indeed a great Step to our Choice and Commission of it, and a strong Temptation.

For this is the *natural Order* of our Actions ; either our *Consciences*, or our *Passions*, move and excite us to them ; and then our *Wills*, chuse and intend them ; and, upon that Choice and Intention, our *Understandings contrive and direct*, and last of all our *bodily and executive Powers fulfil and perform them*. All our bodily Actions, are at the Choice and under the Command of our Wills, and all our Choice is upon the Appearance of some Good or other, which either our Consciences, or our fleshly Lusts and Appetites propose to us. For our Wills, we must remember, are placed in a middle State, and are canvased and beset on both Sides, our Lusts being urgent with us to consent to one thing, and our Consciences to another. And this is that *Strife betwixt the Flesh and Spirit*, which is mentioned in the Scriptures ; and that Contention which St. Paul describes in the 7th Chapter to the Romans, between the *Law of Lust in the Members, and the Law of God in the Mind*. These two Principles, our *Body and Spirit*, or our *Lusts and our Consciences*, are those great Interests that vie and struggle in us, and emulously contend which shall obtain the Consent and Choice of the Will of Man. And whensoever either of them has got that, our Actions follow in Course. For our bodily Members move at our

own Choice ; and therefore if our Lusts after the Pleasures of Sin have once prevailed upon our Wills to consent to it, they have gained their Point, and we shall go on without more ado to act and commit it.

In this then lies all the Force of a Temptation, that the Sin which we are tempted to, has something annexed to it wherein our Flesh is delighted, and which it lusts after and desires, for the sake of that Pleasure which it finds in it. And when by this means any Sin has got our fleshly Love and Desire, it has got a powerful Friend in our own Bosoms. For our Lusts are strong and violent, and where they set upon a thing, they will not easily be denied, but are urgent and importunate with our Wills, to consent to the Gratification and fulfilling of them. So that if once any Sin has struck in with them, it is able to try its Strength, and contend with the Law of God in the Mind ; being furnished now with a powerful Bait, and a strong temptation.

Thus are our Lusts and Desires of forbidden things, not the forbidden Sin it self, but the Temptation to it ; so that in bare lusting or desiring of them, we do not commit the damning Sins themselves, but are tempted only to their Commission. And in this St. James is most express ; for then, says he, *every Man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own Lusts, and enticed to evil by them, Jam. 1. 14.*

And as for meer Temptation to a damning Sin, it is not deadly and damning. For our being tempted to Sin, is not a renouncing of our Lord, but an Exercise of our Service and Obedience to him, and a tryal whether or no we will renounce him. It is the great Proof and Argument, how dearly we love him, and how closely and faithfully our Wills adhere to him. It shews how Obedience is uppermost in our Hearts, and that we will rather deny our dearest Lusts and importunate Desires than venture, for their sakes, to offend him. So that to be tempted is no instance of damning Disobedience, but a plain Proof how much we will lose and suffer rather than we will disobey. It is a Tryal of us how we prefer God and our Duty before other things, even those that are most dear to us of all things in the World besides. We do not sin damnable then in being tempted,

ted, so long as we consent not to it, but manfully resist and overcome the Temptation.

And this is evident from hence, because those very men, who had lived most free from sin, have not for all that lived free from temptation. Even *Adam* himself, before he knew what sin was, and during his state of Innocence, was liable to be tempted. For the Tree of *Knowledge of good and evil*, whereof God had forbidden him to eat, was alluring to his eyes, and an incentive to his lust, as well as any other Tree of the Garden. And because it was so, the Woman was wont to eat of it through the strength of such desire after it, notwithstanding God had commanded her to abstain from it, *The woman saw, that the Tree was good for food, and pleasant to the eye, and she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat*, and by the same inducement she drew in her Husband, and gave it unto him, and he did eat also, Gen. 3. 6. And the second *Adam*, who was most entirely innocent and guilty of no sort of (a) sin, was yet liable to temptation like as we are, being (a) 1 Pet. in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin, Heb. 2. 22. Joh. 4. 15. Nay, says the Apostles, it was necessary that he 14. 30. should be so; that by what he felt in himself, he might the better know how to shew mercy and have compassion upon us. In all things, says he, it behoved him to be made like unto his Brethren, that he might be a merciful as well as a faithful High Priest; for in that he himself hath suffer'd being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted, Heb. 2. 17, 18.

As for our being tempted then, or invited to any sin by our bare Lusts and Inclinations after it; in it self, and before it has got any further, it is no deadly sin or damnable transgression. It is the scene of good endeavour, the tryal of obedience, a test of our great love and preference of God and his Law before all the world besides, yea even before our own dearest lusts, and our own selves. It is nothing more than beset *Adam* before he had sinned, or than beset Christ who never knew sin; and therefore in it self, bare lust and desire, or being tempted and invited to sin, cannot be damably sinful.

As for our Lusts or Temptations, 'tis true they differ in degrees, according as our desires of that evil which we are tempted to, are indulged, and have advanced more or less. For sometimes a lust may stir, but as soon

as ever it is observed it is again extinguished. The Pleasure of the Sin, whether by being seen or fancied, raffles in us a sudden Thought or Desire after it; but the Lust is expelled, and the fancy is turned away from the evil thing, as soon as it is discovered; it is not suffered to remain and dwell in us, but is presently thrown out with Indignation. And this is a Power over our own Desires, and a way of breaking the Strength of Temptation, which is incident only to *grown Men* and to *perfect Christians*: And that not in all Instances of Temptation, but only in such as are not *extraordinary in themselves*, and which have been often vanquished and triumphed over. It is in such Cases where Use has made the Conquest easie, and long Custom of ceasing and turning away from the inveigling Desire, has taken off all the Difficulty; so that now we are able to silence and subdue the lust, as soon as we discern it. And as for these feeble Desires and impotent Temptations, there is no question but that a good Christian may be under them, and yet be in no danger of being condemned for them.

Burthen at other Times, our *Lusts live longer*, and *advance higher*: They grow up to good degrees, till they are able to contend and strive against our Mind and Conscience: so that even when at last they are denied, and our Wills chuse to do what God commands us in spite of them, yet is that after much struggling and opposition. The Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, as well as the Spirit lusteth against the Flesh: and although at last the fleshly Lusts are overpower'd, and cannot prevail with our Wills to chuse on their Side; yet do they strive hard and contend for it. And here a lust is not presently subdued as soon as it is discerned, but it strives and struggles; it can make Head against the Law in the Mind, although it cannot overcome it; it has some Interest in the Will, although it have not an Interest sufficient; for the Will hearkens to it for some Time, and considers of what it offers, notwithstanding at last it rejects its Suit, and through the solicitations of a more powerful Favourite, resolves against it. And this Power our Lusts have in us whilst we are *young Converts*, and of a more *imperfect Goodness*; nay, in some very great Temptations indeed, such as are the *fear of Death* and *bodily Torments* especially, they will struggle thus in those, who are the most *perfect Christians* of all,

But now when our Lusts are in this degree, so as to stay upon our Souls for some time, and to strive against our Spirits for the Consent of our Wills before they are finally denied it : yet if they go no further than bare Lust, and our Wills do not after all their struggling consent to them, or chuse the evil thing which is craved by them, they are still uncondemning, and incident to an Heir of Salvation. And this, as I take it, is clear, from what St. Paul himself says of the truly *regenerate*, or of those who, in his Words, *walk in the Spirit*. For in them he says plainly, that the *Flesh lusteth against the Spirit*, albeit it is not able to prevail over it : *The Flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the Flesh ; so that even in fulfilling the Will of the Spirit, you contradict another Will of your Lusts, and cannot do, (b) or do not the (b) ^{un} things that you would,* Gal. 5. 16, 17. ^{moⁿte.}

Nay, even Christ himself, who knew no Sin, nor ever committed any thing which could in strict Justice be worthy of Death ; was yet subject to such a Conflict of Flesh and Spirit, as this now mentioned. His very *Death and Passion*, which was the very (c) *Consummation and highest part of his Obedience*, was not without great struggling of 2. 8. his Flesh, and a long and earnest Conflict of his bodily Desires against it. For he was in a *strange Fear and Discomposure* about it ; *he began*, says St. Mark, *to be sore amazed*, Mark 14. 34. And when he had recovered himself a little from the Maze of that sudden Fright, he *prays against it-----O my Father, if it be possible, let this Cup pass from me*, Matt. 26. 39. And when his Request was not granted at first, he makes a fresh Address, wherein he is more importunate---*being in his Agony*, says St. Luke, *he prayed more earnestly*, Luke 22. 44. *his supplications he offered up, with strong crying and tears*, Heb. 5. 7. All this Strife and Opposition did the Desire of Life, and the bodily Appetite after Ease and Safety, together with the Sense of God's Wrath and high Displeasure, raise in him against his Obedience of his Sufferings. But because all this was only carnal Desire, which although it lasted some time, and discomposed him much, was not yet able to gain any thing of his Will and (d) Consent to the refusal of his Duty ; therefore notwithstanding it, he was perfectly innocent. All that can be said is, *That he was tempted by the Desires of his* (a) Matth. 25. 39, 42. *Flesh*

Flesh against this great and last Instance of Obedience ; but he did not yield, or consent to the Temptation.

Thus then, as for the Lusts and Desires of our Flesh, whether they be suddenly rejected and make no Resistance, or are longer lived and contend much ; yet if they have got no consent of our Wills to the fulfilling of them, nor any Choice or Performance of the evil Thing or Action which is craved by them. (as those have not which are the Complaint and Fear of good Men) they are only a Temptation to a damning Sin, but in themselves thus far they are not damning.

And having shewn thus, *for what Lusts and Desires of Evil, we shall at the last day be pardoned* ; I come now,

2. To shew for which of them we shall be condemned.

And as for this, we have in great part our answer to it already. For our Lusts are then damnable and dangerously evil, when they are effectual Instruments and Temptations to damning Evils, and carry us on, either to chuse, or practise them. For they are the great Favourites and Seducers of our Wills, and thereby the Authors of our Actions : They first bring us to chuse and consent to the deadly Sin whereby they are gratified, and then to act it ; and when they are gone on to either of these, they are an Article of our Condemnation. They are uncondemning till they come so far, but if once they have got us to consent to the alluring Sin, from that Consent begins their Sting, and both it, and all that follow it, makes us liable to eternal Destruction.

To make this Discourse more clear, I will here set down those several Steps whereby we ascend to the completion, and are carried on to the working and commission of any Sin.

1. At the Representation of the Object which is to tempt us thereto, whether it be an *unchaste Embrace*, an *unlawful Gain*, or the like, either by what we feel of it now if it be before our *Senses*, or by what we *fantise* if it is in our *Imagination*, our *Flesh* is pleased and delighted with it. And from this *Pleasure*, it naturally goes on to *Love*, and from *loving desire* it. And *Desire* or *Lust*, is the *last Step* among the Passions ; for *Delight* begets *Love*, and *Love* ends in *Desire* : but when once we are come to desire a thing, our Passions have done their Part, and all that in them lies toward the Actions.

2. When

2. When in the *appetite* or *animal Soul* the sin has gone thus far, the next step is, that, to gratifie this desire or lust of our *Flesh*, our *wills* should consent to it. For our *Wills* are the *Disposers* of all that follows, so that unless they consent to get that which the *Flesh* so much desires, there can nothing more be done towards it. But if they do *consent to the desire*, and *intend to fulfil it*; then,

3. Our *understanding* and *contrivance* is employed, in *deliberating* and *consulting*, what time, what place, what means are fitteſt to accomplish it with the least difficulty, and the most delight, and, to the greatest advantage. And when our minds have ſeen which to preferr and fix upon; then,

4. Our *wills* resolve upon them, and make choice of them. And when this is done, the last *Decree* is past; and all the time of *doubting* and *deliberation* is over; so that nothing more remains, but,

5. To apply our *bodily powers* to perform our *resolutions*, in the execution and commission of that, which was resolved upon.

This is the natural order of our faculties, and the process that is observed by our principles of action, in their completion and final commission of any sin. The first beginning is in the *lower Soul*, for that is the inlet of all sin, and the seat of temptation; and there it is that sin hath all its strength and insnaring power, upon which account it is called by St. Paul a *Law in the members*, Rom. 7. 27. And when these Lusts of our *Flesh* have won the consent of our *wills*, they are ſecure of all our after-contrivances for it, and of our actual performance and execution of it. For both our thoughts and our bodily powers, are at the Command of our own *Wills*; so that if at the instigation of our Lusts, our *Wills* have once consented to the sin, they will quickly set our heads a-work to contrive for it, and our hands and other bodily powers to execute and fulfil it.

And in this method our Principles of action move, when we act with full *deliberation*, and when they are all employed. Sometimes, indeed, there is no *contrivance* at all, because none is needful; as it happens when the opportunity of the sin is present with us, and just before us at ſuch time as we consent to it; so that nothing more

more is wanting, but only to act and fulfil it. But when the opportunity is absent, and we are put to forecast and contrive for it; then is the process of our Faculties in that order, which I have here described.

For an instance and illustration of this, we will take the sin of *Drunkenness*, and the process will appear to be as I have mentioned. For in a man whose inclination that way disposes him to be tempted by it, the *fancy* of it in himself, or the having it suggested to him by another, gives him a *thought* of the *pleasure* which accompanies it; and from that apprehension of its pleasurablements, he begins to *love*; and from that love he goes on straightway to *desire* it. And now his *will* being solicited by his lust or bodily desiring, *consents* to the fulfilling of it. And this content being once gained, the next thing in order is, to *deliberate*, and *contrive*, *what company*, *what time*, and *what place* are fittest for it. And when, by comparing all things together, he comes to make a judgment of that, he immediately *chuses* and *resolves* upon it; and that being done, there is nothing remaining further, but to *execute* what he has resolved, and go on to the performance thereof.

This then is the method and progress, from our lusting and desire of any thing that is evil, to our acting and committing it. It begins in *delight*, and *love*, and *desire*; and thence goes on to our *consenting* to it, to our *contrivance* for it, to our *resolutions* upon it, and after all these to our *practice* and *performance* of it.

Now so long as the evil is entertained only in a *short delightsome thought*, or *love*, or *desire*, and rests there, but goes no further, it is not so much our *damning sin*, as our *dangerous temptation*; it will be connived at, and at the last Day we shall not be condemned for it. For thus far the sin is only soliciting our choice, but has not got it; and as yet we have not committed a mortal crime, but are only under a tryal, whether we will be drawn to the commission of it, or no. But if once our *wills consent to it*, then begins the sting, and there the danger enters; for the lusting after evil so far as to *consent* to it, and much more so as to *contrive* for it, or to *fulfil* it, makes us liable to death and eternal condemnation. For our *own choice*, as we heard above, *makes any sin damning*; so that if by means of the tempting lust any Sin has prevailed

so far, it is become a deadly offence, and subjects us to destruction. *Lust*, says St. James, when it has conceived, or is imperfectly consented to, answering to conception, which is an imperfect formation, bringeth forth sin; and sin, when by being perfectly consented to, it is finished, bringeth forth death, which is the wages of it, Jam. 1.

15.

And that our lusts after any sin, are then damnably sinful, when they are gone beyond desire, and are come on either to our *consent* or *contrivance*, or actual performance, appears further from these instances in them all three.

If we lust so long after any evil thing, as to *consent* to the *sinful enjoyment of it*, we are guilty of all that punishment which is threatened to it. *He that looks upon a Woman*, says our Saviour, so long as to lust after her, or to * consent in his heart to the enjoyment of her, he hath committed adultery with her already in his heart, Matt. 5. 28.

* Juxta
Dominii no-
stri Di-

Eum, Qui Mulierem viderit ad concupiscendum, reus est Adulterii corde concepti: intelligere possumus, quod & si res turpes & damnabiles necessitate non agimus, pro ipsâ tamen rerum turpium voluntate damnamur. Sal. de, Prov. lib. 6. p. 205. Ed. Oxon.

If we lust so long, as to *contrive for it*, which is a degree further; we are more guilty of the sin, and more liable to the punishment of it still. The *Machinations* and contrivances of *Murder*, as was observed above, are reckoned among those things which pollute a man (and thereby unfit him for entring into Heaven, where nothing can ever have admittance that is unclean) as well as *Murder* it self is, Matt. 15. 19.

But if our lust after any sinful enjoyment carry us on, not only to *consent to it*, or to *contrive for it*, but, what is the perfection of all, to *work and fulfil it*; then has it ensnared us into as much mischief as it can, and is become dangerous and damning with a witness. For then it has prevailed with us, to compleat our sin, and give the last hand to it: has brought us under that which is most of all threatened; for now we *fulfil the lusts of the Flesh*, Gal. 5. 16, 19. *we work iniquity*, Matt. 7. 23.

And if we continue to do this, not only for once or twice, but in *constant returns*, and in a *sixt course* and *tenure*

tenure of action ; then as our sin is grown higher, (the Acts thereof being more numerous, and the guilt more crying) so will our punishment also be more dreadfully severe. And this is called, walking after the flesh, 2 Pet. 2. 10. and living after the flesh, Rom. 8. 13. And this being a state of wasted virtue, and habitual reigning sin, it is not only, through its obnoxiousness to punishment, a state of death ; but also, through its hardness of cure and difficult recovery, a state of great doubt and danger likewise.

<sup>* Balsamon and Zona-
ras note from the Fathers, these four Steps in Sin, viz.</sup> So that as for all these further degrees, * from the consent of our wills, onward ; if our Lust after sin have gone on to them, they are deadly and damning. For the same Law in the members which wars against the Law of the mind, so as thus to captivate and triumph over it, is, as the Law of sin, so, as the apostles says, the Law of death too, Rom. 7. 23, 24.

^{πρώτον, &c. i. e. The first motion or impression, the conflict betwixt Conscience and Appetite, the assent of the Mind, and the act it self. Whereof the two former are not liable to punishment, neither the first impression nor Iustation, being condemned, if Reason which conflicts therewith rejects the Thought. But the two latter are, the assent being tryable, and the Action punishable. Balf. & Zon. in Can. 4. Conc. Neo-cæs.}

All our Lustings after evil therefore, when once they come to be consented to, although before they were connived at, are thenceforth deadly and damning. So that whosoever hopes to be saved at the last Day from the punishment of them, must thus far mortifie and kill them : Mortifie, says St. Paul, those desires, which are seated in your earthly members, Col. 3. 5. for it is only if you through the spirit do mortifie the deeds of the body, that you shall live, Rom. 8. 13. As to these damnable degrees, all fleshly Lusts must of necessity be crucified in all good Christian men ; for no man will be reputed to belong to Christ, till this change is wrought in him. They that are Christs, says the same Apostle, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts, Gal. 5. 24.

Mortifie and crucifie them, I say, we must not so as to have no fleshly appetites and bodily desires of evil ; for then, must we have no bodily desires at all. Because our Lusts themselves, as was observed, do not distinguish of lawful or unlawful, but are naturally moved by an agreeable

able object, whether it be with God or against him. But we must mortifie them to that degree, as that they never be able to win us over, to consent to any forbidden thing for their gratification. They must never have so much interest in our Hearts, as to make us preferr them before our duty, and chuse to perform what they bid us, rather than what God doth. Some stirrings and ineffectiue motions of them, which cannot prevail against God, nor gain over the consent of our Wills to any thing that he has forbidden, are dispensed withal; they are the stage of temptation, but not of death; for God bears with them, and the mortified men themselves do daily feel and labour under them. But it is the prevailing strength of our Lusts after evil things, when they get our consent to them, and carry us on to transgress God's Laws to fulfil them: This conquering power of fleshly lusts, I say, is that which is to be mortified in every good man, because under this strength and empire of them he cannot go to Heaven.

And that no good man may call in question the safety of his state, from any needless fears about this mortification; this we must know every man has done, in his conversion to become a good Christian. For before he can be such, he has killed the reigning power of Lust, so as not to be acted any longer by its instigation. He feels some small stirrings of it afterwards, indeed; but they do not win upon him, or prevail over him; for he is always ready to deny the satisfaction of his Lust, before he will displease his God; and makes all the desires of his flesh, to give way to the dictates of his Conscience. *Ye that are Christs, saith St. Paul, have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts, Gal. 5. 24.*

And when this is once done, there is no great trouble in it afterwards: for the more any man is accustomed to obey, the less difficulty doth he find in mortification and self-denial, and in restraining of all those Lusts which tempt to disobedience. He is not now in every temptation, put to the pain and trouble, of cutting off a right-hand, or of plucking out a right-eye; the self-denial and mortification went so near him at first, 'tis true; but since he has been used to it, and his flesh is accustomed to bear the Yoke, there are no such pangs and uneasiness attending it. So that if he is not now still upon the severe

levere task of *painful mortification*, it is because he doth not need it, since it is done already to his hand. His Lusts are so far mortified, as it is absolutely necessary they should be ; they are crucified to that degree, as to be disabled from gaining his *consent to them*, his *contravance for them*, or his *fulfilling and performance of them*, and that is as much mortification as God will exact of him.

But yet when this is done, and our Lusts are mortified to this degree, there is still need of a watchful care over them, and of a continual strife against them, lest they should rebel again and go further. For the objects of sense, and the allurements of our flesh, are still before us ; and our Bodies naturally are still as capable to be delighted in them, and thereupon to lust and long after them, as ever they were before. It is only the overpowering strength of the Law in the mind or conscience, which maintains the resolution of our Wills against them, and by that means keep them under. And therefore if once we begin to slacken our care, and to keep no hank upon them, but to allow them to go where, and how far they please ; they will quickly grow upon us, and prove too hard for us, and bring us first to consent to them, and after that to compleat and fulfil them.

Let no man therefore *indulge to the thoughts of unlawful pleasures*, and by the delights of his fancy, foment and cherish the Lusts and Desires of his Flesh ; presuming that all is safe, whilst he doth not consent to them, nor yields to fulfil them. For admitting that all things else are innocent and uncondemning, yet however by this means he lays a Snare for his own Soul. For he throws himself into temptation, and so cannot expect that God should deliver him out of it. God has promised to relieve us indeed, in all necessities of his own making ; and if his Providence throws us upon his trial, his Grace shall support us under it, and make a way for our escape out of it. He will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able, saith the apostle, but, together with the temptation, he will make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear so much of it as befalls you, 1 Cor. 10. 10. But what is this to us, if we bring our selves into snares, and prove our own tempters ? For there is no reason at all to presume,

sume, that God, if he will deliver us from other Enemies, should deliver us also from our own selves ; and that he should secure us by his Spirit, from those very snares, which we lay for our own Vertue. No, if we will entertain Serpents in our bosoms, he has no where engaged, nor is there any reason why he should, that we shall not be stung by them. But on the contrary, he warns us against them, and bids us be careful to keep off from them. Yea, so far must we be from bringing temptations upon our selves, that, if we will observe his Orders, we must pray daily even against those, whereto his Providence might expose us. This being one of those Petitions, which, according to our Lord's appointment, we are to put up to God as often as we do that for our daily Bread, *viz.* That he would not lead us into temptation, Matth. 6. 13.

So that if by indulging to delightsome Fancies, and growing lusts of evil, we throw our selves into a great temptation, we have just reason to fear, lest God, for our punishment, should leave us in it, and suffer us damnable to fall by it. Such indulgence, is apt of it self to inflame our Lusts, and to weaken our resolutions ; and God is also prone to withdraw his Grace, and to leave us to our own strength upon it ; and since at the same time it increases our necessities, and withdraws our aids, it must needs put us into a dangerous condition. If then we would secure our Souls, and keep off from damning sins ; we must resist temptations at the beginning, and not give way to them ; we must not cherish and indulge, but timely check, and heedfully suppress them.

And thus at last we see, what is the just force of this first cause of fear to honest minds, their *ineffective lusts*, and *impotent desires of evil*. The first beginnings of lust cannot be avoided, and the longer entertainment of it shall not finally be punished, if it is soon checked by us ; nay, if it stays longer and contends much with us, so long as it doth not prevail upon us to consent to, and fulfil the sin, whereto it is a temptation : But when once it has gained our consent and choice of that sin, whereto it would engage us, then is it of a damning stain, and all its following effects are mortal. All which S. James insinuates to us in that account which he gives us of the progres and produc-

tion

ction of sin, which he sets down from the motive or first temptation, to the perfect birth or compleat production, in this order: *Then, says he, every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lusts, and inticed to evil by them.* This lust or desire of evil is only the first step, being as yet not grown up to the stature of sin, but only to that of temptation. But when it advances, and draws in our other Faculties, then sin begins, and ripens; it is first conceived, and then finished, and after the finishing of it, it is a matter of condemnation, although before it were uncondemning. For *then when lust hath conceived, by being in some imperfect measure willed and consented to, it bringeth forth, answerable to its conception, which is but an imperfect sort of production, an imperfect Embryo of sin; and this Embryo of sin, when by a full choice and perfect consent, and much more when by action and practice, it is finished, bringeth forth its proper wages, Death, Jam. 1. 14, 15.*

Although these lustings and desires therefore, which good men complain of, may justly be an employment of their watchfulness and care; yet ought they not to be a cause of their fear or scruple. For it shall not bring upon them those evils which they are afraid of, nor ever prove their ruin and destruction. The evil thing is entertained only in a thought, or a wish; they lust after it, and are tempted by it; but that is all, for they do not consent to the Temptation. And since their Lusts go no further than thus, they shall not harm them when Christ comes to Judgment, nor ever bring them into condemnation.

C H A P. V.

Of two other Causes of groundless Scruples to good Souls.

A Nother thing which disquiets the hearts of good and honest men, and makes them needlessly to call in question the saveableness of their present state, and their title to salvation, is the *coldness and unaffectedness, the unsettledness*

ness and distractions, which they find in themselves when they are at prayers. Good People are wont to cry out of desertions, to think that God has thrown them off, and that his Spirit has forsaken them, if at any time they find a great distraction and dulness of Spirit in their devotions, and a great abatement of that zeal and fervency, that fixedness and attention, which they have happily enjoyed at other times.

But this is a great mistake, from mens ignorance of God's Laws, and of their own selves. For God has nowhere told them, that he will judge them at the last day, by the steadiness and fixedness, the tide and fervency of their devotions ; but by the integrity of their hearts, and the uprightness of their obedience. The last Sentence shall not pass upon men, according to the heat of their affections ; but according to the goodness of their lives. So that if they have been careful to practise all God's Commandments according to their power and opportunities, and this of Prayer, among the rest, in such sort as their unavoidable infirmities would suffer them, they shall be safe in that Judgment, notwithstanding any inequality in their bodily tempers, or unconstancy and abatement in their bodily affections.

To state this busines so, as that we may neither be unnecessarily scrupulous about these qualifications of our Prayers when we cannot ; nor, on the other side, irreligiously careless of them, when we might enjoy them, I shall say something of their necessity when they can be had, as well as of that allowance which God will make to them, when, through any bodily indispositions, or unforeseen accidents, they cannot.

If we would put up our Prayers to God in such manner, as it is fit for us to offer them in, or for him to hear them, we must make them with a due fixedness and attention of mind, and fervency of affection.

We must offer them up, with a due fixedness and attention of mind. Our thoughts must go along with our lips, and our souls must be intent upon the busines which we are about, when we are making our Prayers to God. We must not expect that he should mind those vain words, and mere talk, which we do not; or that he should hear us, when we do not hear our selves : No, it is the work of the Soul, and not the bare labour of the lips, which

he attends to; so that if only our Tongues pray, but our Minds are straying, this is as good as no Prayer at all.

We must offer them up also, with much *earnestness of desire*, and *fervency of affection*. We must shew that we put a price upon a mercy, before we are fit to receive it; for otherwise there is no assurance that we shall be duly thankful for it. We must not seem cold, and indifferent after it, for that is a sign that we can almost be as well content without it. But we must be eager in our desire, and express a fervency of affection for the same, such as we are wont to use in the pursuit of any thing which we greatly value: and this is an inducement for God to give us that, which he sees we so dearly love; it sets a price upon his Blessings, and shews the measure of our own virtuous inclinations, and therefore he will encourage and reward it. *The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man, says St. James, availeth much, Jam. 5. 16.*

Thus are a due attention of mind, and a fervent heat of desire in devotion, such qualifications, as are necessary to render our Prayers becoming either us to offer, or God to hear; so that we must always strive, and, according to our power and present circumstances, endeavour after them. We must take care, as much as we can, to *compose our thoughts* when we pray, to draw them off from other things for some time before, and still to bring them back again when at any time we find them wandring. And we must endeavour also by a due sense of the necessity, the greatness, and undeservedness of God's mercies, to heighten our affections, and make them bend vigorously and eagerly after those things which we pray for; that so God seeing we are serious and in earnest with him, he may be induced to grant those benefits which we desire of him.

But then, in these, as in all other Duties, we are bound to them so far only, as they may come under the power and choice of our own Wills. And, on the other hand, after all our care and pains in fixing of our thoughts, and raising of our desires in Prayer, through some bodily indisposition or unforeseen accidents, which we cannot help, our minds sometimes will still run astray, and our desires will be cold and languid. And then this unwilling

unwill'd dulness and distraction, shall not influence our main state, more than our other unwill'd failures do ; it is a thing which we cannot help, and no man living is perfectly free from it, and therefore God will not be severe upon it, but in great mercy he will pity and connive at it.

For as for the *attention of our minds, and the fixedness of our thoughts,* either in *Prayer, or in any other business;* it is a thing, which is not always in our own power, but may be hindred and interrupted by many accidents, whether we will or no. For any thing, that makes our *bodily spirits tumultuary and restless,* disturbs and breaks our attention. Any *high motion of our blood,* or any *former impression upon our spirits,* either by our *precedent studies, or our crowd of business,* will make great variety of thoughts and roving fancies to obtrude themselves upon us ; and this is our natural frame and constitution, which we must submit to, and can never wholly remedy. We can no more prevent it, than we can prevent our dreams, when our fancies are struck by like impressions. For from the *natural union of our Souls and Bodies, our Minds,* in their most *spiritual operations of thinking and understanding,* go along with our *bodily spirits,* and apprehend after their impressions ; and we can as well refuse to see when our Eyes are open, or to taste what is put into our mouths, as we can refuse to have a thought of those things, which are *impressed upon our bodily fancy or imagination.* The connexion betwixt these, is necessary and natural ; and there is no breaking, or avoiding it. So that let us be either at our Prayers, or at any other exercise, if any temper of our Bodies, any accidental motion of our Blood, any former impressions of foregoing studies or other business stir in our fancies ; our thoughts must needs be diverted, and our attention disturbed by them.

Nay, in our Prayers we are more apt to find it thus, than in any other thing. For, besides that in these the Adversary is more busie with us, therein men oft-times use violence, and screw up the fixedness of their minds, and the fervency of their hearts, to the highest pitch. And then their bodily Spirits, being overstrained, are liable, not only to be discomposed by outward accidents, but also to give back and fall of themselves ;

and when in this manner they withdraw, there is room made, till they can be recollect ed again, for other thoughts to arise instead of them.

Indeed we may, and ought to strive against these distractions as much as we can, and to compose our thoughts as much as our natural temper, or our present circumstances will suffer us. When they wander in our Prayers, as soon as we discern it, we may recollect them; and when other thoughts intrude, as soon as they are observed we may reject them. But then this is all that we can do, or that God requires we should do; for we cannot pray perfectly and continuallly without them. And then, as for the *zeal and fervency of our affections*, whether in our Prayers, or in any thing else, they are *various and very changeable*, and do not depend so much upon the *choice of our wills*, as upon the *temper of our bodies*. Some, upon every occasion, are more *warm and eager in their passions*, either of *love or hatred, hopes or fears, joy or sorrow*, than other men either are, or can be: For there is a difference in *tempers*, as well as in *palates*; and mens *passions* do no more issue out upon the same things, in the same eagerness, than their *stomachs* do after the same food, with the same degrees of appetite. So that as for a *great fervency, and a vehement affection*, every man cannot work himself up to it, because all tempers do not admit of it. It is more a mans *temper*, than his *choice*; and therefore it is not to be expected that all people should be able to raise themselves up to a transporting pitch therein; but only that they should, who are born to it.

Nay, even they whose *natural temper* fits them for a *great fervency and a high affection*, are not able to work themselves up to it at *all times*. For no mans *temper* is *constant, and unchangeable*; seeing our very bodies are subject to a thousand alterations, either from *things within us*, or from others that are *without us*. If a mans *blood* is put into an *irregular ferment*, either by a *cold air*, or an *inward distemper*; or any *discomposing accident*; it spoils, not only the *fixedness* of his thoughts, but the *zeal of his affections* likewise. And let there be any *damp or disorder, any dulness or indisposition*, either upon a man's *blood or spirits*; and the *discomposure* of his body is presently felt in his *Soul*, for his thoughts flag, and his passions

run low, and all his Powers are under a Cloud, and suffer an Abatement. And this every Man finds in himself, when he labours under a *sickly* and *crazy Temper*, an *aching or a cloudy Head*, or any other *bodily Indisposition*. For our Passions are bodily Powers, and are performed altogether by bodily Instruments ; they live and die with them, and are subject to all their Coolings and Abatements, their Changes and Alterations. And therefore as long as our bodily Tempers and Dispositions alter, and, by reason of a number of Accidents, are still changeable and unconstant ; the Zeal and Fervency of our Affecti-
ons must needs be so too.

Thus is some Distraction of Mind, and Chilness of Affection, either in our Prayers, or in pursuit of any other thing, most necessarily incident to all Men. We cannot wholly prevent them, or live altogether free from them ; but sometimes they will break in, and seize upon us, do what we can.

And since we cannot help them, God will not be always angry, or eternally torment us for them. That which offends him, and endangers us, as I have shewn, not being any unwill'd Weaknes, but only the ill Choice or Faultinels of our own Wills, so that his Love and Favour to us will not alter, as our unsettled Thoughts, or Bodily Tempers do. And according to the Circumstances and Indispositions which at present we lie under, we are careful to be as fervent and affectionate as we can, and to recal our Thoughts when we observe them wan-
dering ; we need not doubt, but what ever *involuntary* di-
stractions there may be sometimes in our Thoughts, or Abatements in our bodily Tempers, whilst we are at our Prayers, we shall be still accepted by him.

We shall be accepted, I say, and the Blessings which we sue for obtained, although sometimes our Prayers are less attent, and less affectionate, than at other times they are, and we at all times greatly desire they might be. For our *fixedness* and *fervency*, tho' they are *great good things*, as I said, and such as we must take care still to be provided with when we pray, in such measure as we are able ; yet are they not the only qualifications of our Prayers ; which prevail with God, and move him to hear them. For our *holy Love* and *humble Fear*, our *Trust* and *Dependence*, *Submission* and *Resignednes*, and other

spiritual Virtues and Instances of Obedience, are likewise Dispositions which God respects in them; nay, indeed, which he prizes above all, and principally looks at. So that if we pray with these, God is honoured by our Prayers, and he will reward them; and our Petitions shall not be put up in vain, although, by reason of some bodily dulness or distraction, the fixt Attention of our Minds, and the Fervency of our Hearts, which we endeavour after always, and enjoy at other times, should happen to be wanting.

Yea, I add further, so long as our *Hearts* are *honest*, and our *Lives* entirely *obedient*, we are *always* furnished with those Qualifications, which are sufficient to bring down God's Grace and Blessing upon us, and which are the principal things that make our Prayers themselves an acceptable Offering. A good man is drawing down the Blessings of Heaven upon himself all his Life long, and not only whilst he is upon his Knees: So that if at any time his Prayers are less perfect than he desires they should be, and chance to falter, that defect will be otherwise supplied, and he will have all that Mercy conveyed to him through another means, which his Prayers should have obtained for him; seeing that which makes his Prayers procure God's Love and mercy for him, will make his Obedience procure the very same.

For I suppose no Man is so weak as to imagine, that it is merely the *lifting up of his Eyes and Hands*, the *Composedness of his Countenance*, the *Quaintness or Eloquence of his Phrase, and Expressions*, the *volubility of his Speech*, or any other *external thing*, which makes his Prayers so powerful, and brings down the Blessing of God upon them. But it is that *Reverence for God*, that *Dependence upon him*, that *Confidence in him*, that *Love of God and desire of Goodness*, that *Acknowledgment of his Kindness, Wisdom and Power*, and of our own *Vanity and Unworthiness*, that *Submission to his Authority*, and *Resignation to his Pleasure*, which are all implied in Prayer, and fitly expressed by it, and which make up the very *Life and Spirit* thereof: These, I say, it is, which God looks at in our Prayers, and for the sake whereof he so graciously accepts and rewards them.

But now, as for all these, they are expressed every whit as much by the *Obedience of our Lives*, as by the *Prayer of our Lips*; nay, indeed, much more, in as much as our *Actions* are a more perfect Expression, and certain Evidence of all these Tempers of a good Heart, than our *Words* are. They differ as much, as *Words* and *Deeds*, as *Profession* and *Performance*; for whereas in our Prayers we speak and profess all this, in the Obedience of our Lives we work and perform it. We shew our *Love* and *Resignation* to God, when for his sake we deny our selves, and give up our own *Will* and *Obedience* to his. We acknowledge his Power and Authority most effectually, when we obey it; and own his *Providence* to be the best Purpose, when we contentedly *acquiesce in it*, and patiently submit to it; and confess his *Love* and *Kindness* after the most acceptable sort, when we throw our selves upon it, and work and endeavour all our Lives long, in *Hopes* and *Expectations* of it. In our daily *Actions*, of *Justice* and *Charity*, of *Temperance* and *Sobriety*, of *Meekness*, *Patience*, *Mercy* and *Forgiveness*, and in all other Instances of Obedience, we give God the Honour to chuse for us, to dispise of us, to be sought after and intrusted by us. We evidence our *Esteem* of him, our *Love* and *Reverence* for him, our *Trust* in him, our *Dependance* on him, our *Resignation* to him: and that most effectually. So that whatsoever can move God in our Prayers, will move him in a higher degree, and after a better sort, in our Obedience; the Spirit of Goodness which is evidenced in our Prayers, being evidenced much more in the course of good Actions. No Rhetorick therefore of our Prayers is like to that of a good Life, every Action of Obedience in a good Man having the effect of a Prayer, and calling down upon him the same Mercy and the same Grace, which would be procured by a Supplication.

Let a Man therefore make sure in the first Place of a *good Life*, and of an honest and entire Obedience; and then he need not fear to want those things which all good Men have need to pray for, seeing he will shew so much daily in his Life, as will make his Requests be granted, and his Prayers be hearkned to. He cannot perish for want of those Mercies which he prays for, altho' it be sometimes, and will be, do what he can, with

Coldness and Distraction ; because not only *the other obedient Tempers of his Prayers*, when, through some unchosen Hindrances, a due fixedness and fervency are wanting, but also the constant and uninterrupted Obedience of his Life is daily ascending up, and brings them down upon him.

Let no good Soul therefore be further troubled and disquieted upon this account, as if, because after all his Care his Prayers are sometimes dull and cold, and his Thoughts therein are much distracted, he should either be eternally punished for them, or at least go without those Blessings which he desires in them. For so long as the Spirit of Obedience appears, both in his Prayers and in his Actions, the unwilling Distractions of his Mind, and the Dulness and Freeness of his Affections at some times, shall be no Hindrance either to his Suit at present, or to his Happiness hereafter. His Request shall not be thrown by, nor he condemned for them ; but, so far as God sees it fitting for him, it shall be granted, and he shall eternally be saved notwithstanding them.

3. A third Scruple which is wont causelessly to disquiet and trouble good and honest Minds, is the Words of our Saviour, Matrh. 12. *I say unto you, That as concerning every idle Word which Men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof at the Day of Judgment*, ver. 36.

This seems to be a strict, and a severe Saying. For in all the Crowd and Variety of Converse, in the infinite numbers of Questions and Answers, and other occasions of Discourse ; what man in all the World, but especially of those who are of a Conversation that is free and open, courteous and ingenuous, cheerful and delightsome, which Tempers the Gospel doth not only allow, but approve of ; who, I say, of all Men, but of Men of this Temper especially, among all the occasions of Speech can avoid a multitude of Words ? and where much is laid, how can it be, but that much must be idle and impertinent ?

And this has a very ill effect, for it frights Men from all the innocent freedom of Converse, and the cheerful Entertainments of Company. It makes them to appear staid and reserved, silent and morose ; to contribute nothing to the harmless Mirth and cheerfulness of Conversation

them-

themselves, and to frown upon it in others. For all Converse and Society is managed by the Tongue, and the ordinary entertainment of Company is talking and Discourse; but where Men think every idle and useless Word so dangerous a sin, they are afraid to speak. So that all that comes from them, is studied and deliberate, grave and composed; they neither dare use any freedom themselves, nor can without Offence allow it to be used by others.

But this is so far from being *injoined by Christ*, that it is discountenanced by Nature; it is so far from being a piece of Religion and a holy Duty, that 'tis rather a piece of immorality and ill Manners. For Aristotle and other Philosophers of old, have long ago made Urbanity, or an innocent Freedom and Facetiousness in Conversation, (a) διμούρησεν
a Virtue; and have noted this affected Reservedness and εἰπούτες
unpleasurable Moroseness in Discourse, with a harsh Cen- μηθὲν γέ-
sure. (a) Those, says he, who will neither contribute to the λοῖον, τοῖς
harmless Mirth of Company themselves, nor bear with it in τε λέγοσι
others, are justly to be branded with the reproachful Names δυρεγή-
of Clownish and Morose. ροντες, ἀ-
γελοι καὶ

σκληροί σκωττοί εἴναι. Ethic. ad Nicom. l. 4. c. 8.

And as it was discountenanced by the Light of Nature, so is it also by the Laws of Christ. For whatsoever some Men may think of it, or how innocently soever they may be misled into that conceit about it; yet is it a Temper which Christ never intended to plant among us. For his coming into the World was after another Way, in a free use of the innocent Allowances, and Liberties of Mankind. *The Son of Man*, says St. Matthew, *came eating and drinking*, i. e. not in the singular Austerities of *John the Baptist*, but in a free way of Conversation, such as others used, *Matth. 11. 19.* And his Religion enjoins the Virtues of *Candor* and *Benignity*, *Affability* and *Courtesie*, an open Freedom and Alacrity, and all those other ways whereby our Conversation may be rendered innocently agreeable, and whereby we may in any wise benefit, whether by profiting or pleasing one another.

Whatsoever things, says St. Paul, *are (b) lovely or grateful (b) περι-
to men, think on these things*, *Phil. 4. 8. Love is the φιλίη.
Epitome of our whole Duty, and all the Sweetners and Endearments of Society that can be, so long as they are
lawful*

lawful and honest, are not only consistent with it, but Parts and Expressions of it.

As for the grave Entertainments of Discourse, and religious Conference; they, without Doubt, have a great Use, and in their Place may deserve a great Commendation. For good Christians may be much better'd and improved, by having their Graces awakened, their pious Affections inflamed, their holy Purposes fixt and settled, their Endeavours directed and encouraged, and every thing that is good in them quickned and confirmed thereby. But then 'tis to be considered, that even good things themselves must be taken in their own Season, and must not be suffer'd to ingro's all our Time, a great part whereof is to be spent upon other things. For we have not only one thing to do, but at several times sundry things call for us. There is a Time, says Solomon, to every thing, and a Season to every Purpose under Heaven: There is a Time to weep, and a Time to laugh, a Time to mourn, and a Time to dance, Eccles. 3. 1, 4. There is a Time for Diversion, as well as a Time for Business; a Time wherein to have a more liberal and free Discourse, as well as a Time for godly and religious Conference.

Nay the innocent Delights of Conversation and pleasurable Entertainments of Discourse, are themselves a great Field of Virtue, and an Exercise and Occasion of many Instances of Obedience. For in them, we may every one of us exercise in our own Persons, and be Examples unto others, of much Courtesie and Kindness, Civility and Condescension, Affability and Obligingness. Let no Man think then, that his Hours of Common Converse are always lost Hours, and that whatsoever Time he spends upon Offices of Civility, and Freedom of Company, is misplaced, and stolen from God and Religion. For we are fulfilling God's Laws, and doing his Work, whilst, as occasion requires, we keep all these Commandments in the pleasurable Entertainments of common Life; they are such Business as he has set us, and our obedient Performance of them must pass for his service, as well as Devotion, holy Conference, and Meditation.

It is no Prejudice or Hindrance to Religion therefore, to be free and open in Conversation, and pleasurable and cheerful in common Life; but rather an Instance and

and expression of it. It is no part of any Man's Duty to be talking always in *Scripture-Phrase* and *sanctified Expression*, or else to be wholly silent and severely morose, and not to talk at all. For an Innocent Cheerfulness, and Freedom of Discourse, is not so truly the good Man's Sin, as the exercise of his Virtue and Obedience.

But as for that Opinion, that *every idle and impertinent Word shall be severely accounted for at the Day of Judgment*, which is the great Sourer of Conversation, and the occasion of this Conceit, it is a great Mistake. For it is not every *idle* and *unprofitable*, but every *false*, *slanderous*, or otherwise *sinful* and *unlawful Word*, whereof our Saviour speaks, when in that 12th of St. Matthew he tells us, that *every idle Word that Men shall speak, they shall give an account thereof in the Day of Judgment*.

As for the Word which we translate (c) *idle*, it may (c) $\alpha\epsilon\gamma\omega\nu$ signify *false* and *deceitful*; as those Words are which $\beta\eta\mu\alpha$. belye our (d) *Works*, when our Actions do not Answer (d) $\alpha\epsilon\gamma\alpha$. them. And this is agreeable to the Use of the Word (e) (e) $\mu\alpha\tau\alpha\tau\alpha$ *vain*, which sometimes signifies the same that *false* or *ly-ov-*ing. In which Sense it is used in the *third Commandment*, where we are bid *not to take the Name of God in vain*, i. e. in *Perjury* or *Falshood*. For the Sense our Saviour gives to it in his Repetition of the Commandments, Matt. 5. *It hath been said to them of old, saith he, in the third Commandment, thou shalt not forswear thy self, or swear falsely*, v. 33.

But if nothing more than *useless* and *unprofitable*, were noted by the word *it self* which we translate *idle*; yet is it no unusual thing in the Scriptures, by several Words to mean and intend more; than in their literal Sense they do express. Thus are the *abominable Works of Darkness*, mentioned Eph. 5. called (f) *unfruitful Works*; where the (f) $\alpha\epsilon\gamma\epsilon\gamma\epsilon$ meaning surely is, not only that they bring in no Profit $\pi\alpha\zeta\gamma\alpha$. or Advantage, but also that they are most deadly and mischievous, v. 11. And the *unfaithful wicked Servant*, spoken of Matt. 25. is called the (g) *unprofitable Servant*, (g) $\chi\zeta\kappa\epsilon\tilde{\epsilon}$. v. 30. And after the same use of Speech, our Words, Θ which do not only tend to none, but to very ill Fruit, $\delta\lambda\Theta$. may be called (h) *idle* or *unprofitable Words*. (h) $\alpha\epsilon\gamma\alpha$ or $\alpha\epsilon\gamma\alpha \beta\eta\mu\alpha$.

And so they are in this Place. For the idle Words whereof our Saviour speaks, v. 36. are such Words, as are

are not only *idle* and *unprofitable*, but positively *wicked* and *evil*; being indeed *false*, *slanderous*, and *reviling* words, as will appear from the consideration of these particulars.

For the words which are threatened in that 36th Verse are such as are a sign, not of a trifling, but of an *evil heart*. How can ye, says he, being *evil*, speak *good things*? for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh. So that as a good man out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth, or speaketh *good things*; an evil man likewise, out of the evil treasure of his heart, bringeth forth *evil things*, v. 34, 35.

And being the fruits of an *evil heart*, they are the signs, not of an *impertinent*, but of an *evil man*. The Tree is corrupt, says he, if the fruit be corrupt; for the Tree is known by its fruit, v. 33.

And since they are such words, as are thus *sinful in themselves*, and an argument of so much *sin in us*; in the last Judgment they shall be charged upon us to condemn us. For by thy words, says he, as well as actions, thou shalt be justified, and by thy words, if they be such idle words as I mean, thou shalt be condemned, v. 37.

The words then which are spoken of in this place, from the 33th to the 38th vers. are such as are a sign of a *wicked heart*, as make a *wicked man*, and renders us in the last Judgment liable to condemnation.

But now words of this black die and of these mischievous effects, are not every *idle* and *impertinent*, but *false*, *slanderous*, *railing*, or otherwise *sinful* and *forbidden words*. But *false* and *slanderous* words are especially struck at in this place, such as were those *lying* and *contumelious* ones that occasioned all this discourse, when the Jews most reproachfully charged his Miracles upon the Devil, telling him that he cast out Devils, through Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils, v. 24. Upon occasion of which black calumny, he proceeds in all the following Verses to warn them against such *blasphemous Speeches*; demonstrating clearly the *unreasonableness* of them, v. 25. to 31. the *sinfulness* of them, vers. 33. 34, 35; and the *mischievous effects* of them in the two next vertes. Such reproachful words as these, let me tell you, says he, you shall be called to an account for, as well as for your works and actions. I say unto you, that every *idle*, or *slanderous* and

reproachful word, such as now you have spoken against me, *that men shall speak. they shall give an account thereof in the day of Judgment.* For when that day comes, think you of it as you please now, mens words as well as their actions shall be called to an account; *by thy words thou shalt be justified, and, if they have been such as yours now are, by thy words thou shalt be condemned,* vers. 36, 37.

And thus by all this it appears, that the *idle* word here threatened by our Lord, is not every word that is *vain* and *useless*, but only *wicked words*, especially such as are *railing, false, or slanderous.* And in this sense some Manuscripts read the place. For in the Book of Steph. it is not every *idle*, but *every* wicked word that men shall ** Παντὶ-
speak, *they shall give an account thereof in the day of Judg- μα πονη-
ment.* *γὸν ἐσαν*

So that as for this third Scruple, it is as groundless as the former was; no good man need to be disquieted by *any, &c.* it, since they shall never be condemned for it.

CHAP. VI.

Of the Sin against the Holy Ghost, which is a fourth Cause of Scruple.

ANother causless ground of fears, which disquiets the minds, and affrights the hearts of good Christian People, is the *sin against the Holy Ghost.* They hear very dreadful things spoken of it; for our Saviour Christ who knew it best, and who at the last Day is to judge of it, has told us plainly before-hand, that *he who blasphemeth the Holy Ghost shall never be forgiven, neither in this world nor in the world to come,* Matt. 12. 32; or, as St. Mark expresses it, *he shall never have forgiveness, but is liable to eternal damnation,* Mark 3. 29. This is a fearful Sentence upon a desperate sin; and seeing they are in darkness about it, and do not well understand it, they know not but that they themselves may be guilty thereof; nay some of a *timorous temper and abused minds* go further, and think that they really are.

But

But to cure their fears, and to quiet their minds in this matter, there needs nothing more be done, than to give them right apprehensions, and a clear explication of this sin; for if they once knew what it is, they would be at ease from such tormenting suspicions, and unreasonable fears about it.

To explain this I will consider,

1. *What is meant in Scripture by the Holy Ghost.*
2. *What is meant here by sinning against it.*

1. *What is meant in Scripture by the Holy Ghost.* By the word *Holy Ghost* or *Holy Spirit*, according to an usual Metonymie of the giver for the gift, or of the cause for the effect, is very often meant the *Gifts* or *Effects* of the *holy Spirit*, whether they be such as he ordinarily produces in us, or such as are extraordinary and miraculous.

Sometimes it signifies such *gifts and dispositions*, whether of *mind* or *temper*, as the *Holy Ghost* or *Spirit of God*, is wont ordinarily to produce in Men. It notes, I say, the good qualifications of our *minds* or *understandings*, which, as all other good gifts, are wrought in us by the *Spirit*, and derived to us from *God*. Thus, a *man endued with wisdom and discretion*, such as *Joseph* advised *Pharoah* to set over all the *Land of Egypt*, is called a *man in whom the Spirit of God is*, Gen. 41. 33, 38. and the *Spirit of the Lord* mentioned, Isa. 11. is in the very next words explained, by the *Spirit of wisdom*, the *Spirit of understanding*, the *Spirit of council*, the *Spirit of knowledge*, and the *spirit of quick understanding*, vers. 2, 3. It signifies also the *virtuous tempers* and *good qualifications* of our *hearts*, which, like as the former were, are given us of *God*. Thus that *good and charitable temper* which is so exemplary in *God*, and which is wrought in our *Souls* by him, is called the *Spirit of God*, 1 John 4. If we love

(a) 1 John 3. 24. one another, God dwells in us; so that (a) hereby know we that we dwell in him and he in us, because he hath given us that loving temper of his *Spirit*, ver. 12, 13. The temper which was so observable in *Christ*, is called the *Spirit of Christ*, Rom. 8. 9. and temper of *Elias*, is called the *spirit of Elias*, Luke 1. 17. the *Spirit of the Lord*, is explained by the *Spirit of the fear of the Lord*, Isa. 11. 2. and that *Spirit* which *God* hath given us, says *St. Paul*, is not the *Spirit of fear*, but the *Spirit of power, of love, and of a sound mind*, 2 Tim. 1. 7.

Thus

Thus doth the Spirit of God signify many times in Scripture those ordinary Gifts and Graces, which are the good effects of the Spirit.

But besides these effects of it, in the good endowments and perfections of our natural faculties, whether of mind or temper, which are common and ordinary; sometimes it signifies more especially those Gifts which are extraordinary and miraculous. Of which sort are the Gift of Tongues, of Prophecy, of healing Diseases without any natural means, and performing other miraculous Operations, so famous in the first times of the Gospel. Thus, for Example, that Saying, *I will pour out in those days of my Spirit,* is interpreted by this in the next words. *And they shall Prophesie,* Acts 2. 18. And the elder Brothers, which was a double share of the prophetick power of Elias, is called a double portion of his Spirit, 2 Kings 2. 9. And the Corinthians zealous pursuit of the miraculous and extraordinary Gifts, of Prophecy, speaking with Tongues, healing Diseases, and working Miracles; is called by the Apostle their being (b) zealous of Spirits, or, as we translate it, of spiritual Gifts, 1 Cor. 14. 12. (b) ζελω-
ται πνευ-

Now as for these extraordinary Gifts, they are all wrought in us by the same cause, and proceed from the same Principle, viz. the Holy Spirit of God, or the Holy Ghost. There are in the Church now in our times, saith the Apostle, diversities of Gifts, but yet one and the same Spirit is the Donor of them all. For to one is given by the Spirit, the word of wisdom, or of Gospel Truths and Revelations; to another the word of knowledge, or discerning of remote things, and prophetical predictions, by the same Spirit; to another Faith of his being Divinely assisted to produce supernatural effects; to another miraculous Gifts of healing Diseases without use of means, by the same Spirit; to another the working of Miracles, or the (c) utmost activity and energy of powers in the highest instances and effects of them, of which sort are raising the Dead, casting out Devils, inflicting bodily Torments on contumacious Sinners, &c. to another Prophecy, or exposition of Scripture and inspired Hymns; to another discerning of Spirits, both in seeing into mens spiritual thoughts and intentions, and also in discerning who wrought true Miracles, and who Satanical Delusions, who were divinely inspired, and who were mere Pretenders; to another the

the ecstatick Gift of speaking divers kinds of Tongues in such rapturous Transports, as permitted them not to stay to interpret what they said, and made them afterwards forget it; to another the Gift of interpreting those strange Tongues into the vulgar Language of any in the Congregation. But all these diversities of Gifts, worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing all these different Gifts to every man severally as he will, 1 Cor. 12. 4, 8, 9, 10, 11.

And seeing it is the same Spirit or *Holy Ghost*, which is the *Author* and *Giver* of them all; therefore are they all indifferently called by either name. For sometimes all these extraordinary Gifts, both the power of Miracles, and the Gift of Tongues and Prophecy, are called the *Spirit*. Thus when the Apostles began to speak with Tongues, and to Prophesie, as well as to work Miracles and heal Diseases, it is said that the *Spirit* was poured out upon them, Acts 2. 17, 18, 19. And all these varieties of Gifts of one sort or other, which are reckoned up by St. Paul in this twelfth Chapter to the *Corinthians*, are attributed to the *Spirit*, and said to be wrought by it; and the Apostles being filled with the *Holy Ghost*, and speaking with Tongues, is called their speaking by the *Spirit*-----they were all filled with the *Holy Ghost*, says St. Luke, and began to speak as the *Spirit* gave them utterance, Acts 2. 4. And in like manner at other times, all these same powers, whether of Understanding or Action, of Tongues or Miracles, are called the *Holy Ghost*. Thus the Gifts of Signs and Wonders, and divers Miracles, are reckoned among the Gifts of the *Holy Ghost*, Heb. 2. God, says St. Paul, bearing the Apostles witness, with Signs, and Wonders, and divers Miracles, and other Gifts of the *Holy Ghost*, vers. 4. And the Signs and Wonders which were done by the hands of the Apostles, particularly that of healing the lame Man, so much taken notice of Acts 3. is said to be the witness of the *Holy Ghost*, Acts 5. 12, 32.

Thus, I say, by reason that all these extraordinary Gifts, whether relating to our minds in knowledge and speaking with Tongues, or to our executive powers in healing Diseases, and working Miracles, proceeded all from the self-same *Holy Ghost* or *Holy Spirit*: the Gifts of either sort are called indifferently by either name, being

ing, sometimes called the *Spirit*, and sometimes the *Holy Ghost*.

But although, as I say, for this Reason the Words *Spirit* and *Holy Ghost* are sometimes used *Promiscuously*, to signify all or any of these extraordinary Gifts indifferently; yet, what is very material to our purpose, sometimes, nay very frequently, they are (d) distinguished. And then by the *Holy Ghost* is meant, not all extraordinary excellent Gifts indifferently, but particularly those which respect Dr Patrick our Understandings, not executive Powers, consisting rather in Illumination, than in Power and Action; of which sort are, the *Gift of Tongues*, of *Prophecy*, of discerning Christ, Spirits, of Knowledge of Revelation, and such like. Thus, par. i.c. 7. the lying against that part of the *Gift of discerning Spirits*, which consisted in understanding the *Thoughts and Purposes of the Heart*, is called *lying to the Holy Ghost*. For so St Peter, who was endowed with this Gift, tells *Ananias*, when he would have imposed upon him; *Why hath Satan filled thine Heart*, saith he, *to lye to the Holy Ghost*, Acts 5. 3. And St. Stephen's being filled with an extraordinary Revelation of Christ's sitting at God's Right hand in Heaven, is called his being filled with the *Holy Ghost*, Acts 7. 55. But more especially the *Gifts of Tongues* and *Prophecy*, are dignified with that name. Thus in the 10th Chapter of the *Acts*, when the Gentiles in Cornelius's House begun to speak with Tongues upon St. Peter's Preaching; it is said that the *Holy Ghost* fell on all them that heard the word, and that on the Gentiles was poured out the gift of the *Holy Ghost*, v. 44, 45, 46. The Disciples at Ephesus, who being baptized with the *Baptism of John*, cannot be supposed ignorant of the many miraculous Cures so much talked of among the Jews, and of the strange Effects of the Spirit in Jesus whom John preached; did yet tell Paul, that they had not so much as heard of the *Holy Ghost*, Acts 19. 2. which might very well be, because the *Holy Ghost*, or *Gifts of Tongues* and *Prophecy*, were not given till after Jesus was glorified, John 7. 39. But upon the Preaching of St. Paul, they were made Partakers of it; for when Paul laid his hands on them, the *Holy Ghost* came upon them, and they spake with tongues, and prophesied, Acts 19. 6. And to name no more Instances in this Matter, that Place which I now hinted in the

7th Chapter of St. John, is a full Proof of this restrained Acceptation. For there, after all the Instances of curing Diseases, casting out Devils, and other Effects of the Spirit in miraculous Operations, which Christ shewed wheresoever he came; it is yet expressly affirmed, that the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because Jesus was not yet glorified by his Exaltation to the Right-hand of God, v. 37. The Holy Ghost, i. e. these Gifts of Tongues of Prophecy, and the like, which are all that remained still to be shed abroad, and which came upon the Apostles, at the Descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, Acts 2.

Thus is the *Holy Ghost*, sometimes set to denote, not all the miraculous and extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit promiscuously, but particularly those which respect the Mind or Understanding, such as the Gift of Tongues, of Prophecy, of deep Knowledge, and the like.

And on the other Side, as for the Word *Spirit*, it is sometimes set to express, not all extraordinary Gifts and Effects of the Spirit in general, but those by Name which respect our executive, not knowing Powers, and which consist not in Illumination, but in Action. Of which sort are, the Gift of healing Diseases, of casting out Devils, of raising the Dead, and other miraculous Operations. Thus, the miraculous Courage and Valour which was given to Othoniel, is called the *Spirit of the Lord*, Judges 3. 10. as is that likewise, which was given to Gideon, Judges 6. 34. and the miraculous strength of Sampson, is called the *Spirit of the Lord upon Sampson*, Judges 14. 6. And upon Christ's working the miraculous Cure upon the Man with the withered Hand, Sr. Matthew applies to him that saying of the Prophet, the *Spirit of the Lord came upon him*, Matt. 12. 18. and his casting out Devils, he himself attributes to the *Spirit of God*, I, says he, by the *Spirit of God cast out Devils*, v. 28.

As by the *Holy Ghost* therefore, are meant particularly the Gifts of Illumination, in Tongues and Prophecy; so by the *Spirit* are signified the Gifts of Power, in healing Diseases, casting out Devils, and doing mighty and miraculous Works.

And both these together, take up the full Compass of the extraordinary Gifts of the Spirit, and are both distinctly expressed by St. Peter, when he says, that *Jesus*

was anointed with the *Holy Ghost*, and with Power, Acts 10. 38.

These then are the several Meanings of the Words, *Holy Ghost*, and *Holy Spirit*. They denote, as the *Third Person in the Trinity*, the *Holy Ghost himself*; so also those *Gifts and Effects* which proceed from him. Whether those *Gifts* are *ordinary*, either in the *Endowments of our Minds*, or the *virtuous Tempers and Dispositions of our Wills and Hearts*; or *extraordinary* and *miraculous*. Wherein yet we must observe this difference, that the *Gifts of the executive Powers*, in *healing Diseases, casting out Devils, working Miracles*, are sometimes by a peculiar Name called the *Spirit*; and the *Gifts of the knowing or understanding Faculties*, in *Prophecies, Revelations, speaking with divers sorts of Tongues*, are by a *contradictinct Name* called the *Holy Ghost*.

And thus having shewn what is meant by the *Holy Ghost*, I proceed now to shew,

2. *What is meant by sinning against it; and which of all those which are committed against it, is the unpardonable Sin.*

The only way whereby any Men are capable to sin against God, as was observed, is by *Affront and Dishonour*; for God is out of our Reach for any other sort of Injury, and we cannot otherwise hurt him, than by shewing our *Contempt and Disrespect* of him.

And in regard the *Holy Ghost* in his own Person is *very and essential God*, this must needs be the only way whereby we can sin against him likewise. We cannot injure him in his *Nature*, but only in his *Honour*; but that we sin against him, when we *walk cross to him, and oppose him, or any way slight and contemn, undervalue or reproach him, or any of those Excellent and Divine Gifts which proceed from him.*

Now this we do more or less in every *Sin*. For this *Spirit of God*, is an *universal Instrument of Faith and good Life*; it has taken the utmost Care by *Miracles, and other its convictive Evidences, to Evince the Truth of Christ's Doctrine*; and doth now still, by his *daily Suggestions and Sollicitations*, excite Men to the *Observance* of it. And seeing the *Spirit of God* has shewn it self so much concerned, for our *Faith and Obedience*; every *Act of Unbelief and Disobedience*, is a *direct Opposition to it, and Reproach of it*, and therefore is a *Sin against it.*

But every such Sin is not the *unpardonable Fault* here mentioned. For our very wilful Sins themselves, as has been shewn, are not desperate under Christ's Religion, the Gospel being a Covenant that doth not damn Men upon all voluntary Sin, but encourages their Repentance with the Promise of Pardon; so that although all our Sins are against God and his Spirit, they are not *irremissible*, but will be remitted to every Man who repents of them.

But the *unpardonable Sin*, is a Sin by it self; it has something peculiar in it from all other Sins, which by shutting us out from all possibility of Repentance, excludes it from all Hopes of being forgiven.

And indeed, I think, it is plainly this. *It is a sinning against the Holy Ghost in the last Sense*, as it signifies not only the Power of Miracles, but also the Gift of Tongues, and other Illuminations of the Holy Ghost, which came down upon the Apostles at Pentecost: and is such a Sinning against these, as is particularly by Reviling and Blaspheming them. This, and none other I take to be the Sin here mentioned. For the clearer discerning whereof, we will consider the Sins against the *Holy Ghost* in all the Acceptations before laid down; and in all of them, except the last, we shall find room for Pardon and Remission.

First then, to sin against the *Holy Ghost*, as it signifies the ordinary Endowments, and virtuous Tempers of our Minds and Wills, is not the *unpardonable Sin* that is here spoken of. For every Sin against any particular Virtue, is a Sin against the *Holy Ghost* in that Sense. Every Act of Drunkenness, for instance, is against the Gift of Sobriety; and every Act of Uncleanness, is against the Gift of Continency; and so it is, in the several Actions of all other sorts of Sin. But now as for all these, the great Offer and Invitation of the Gospel is, that Men would accept of Mercy upon Repentance. The Incestuous Corinthian sinned deeply against the Grace of Chastity, and he repented, and was forgiven; St. Peter denied his Lord, and upon his Repentance he was also pardoned; and the same Grace has been allowed, as we have seen, to all other wilful Sinners.

Nay, in this sort of Sinning against the *Holy Ghost*, viz. by sinning against those Christian Gifts and Graces which he works in us, there is Mercy to very great degrees.

grees. For sometimes we do not hearken to his holy Motions, but fall into more ordinary Sins and offensive Indecencies, notwithstanding all his vertuous Suggestions and Endeavours to the contrary: And then he is troubled and grieved at us, *Eph. 4. 30.* And at other times, we venture upon more heinous Crimes, and after much Conflict within our selves, which almost quite lay waste the Conscience, and undo all the vertuous Tempers and Resolution of our Souls, so that we lie long in our Impenitence, as *David* did in the matter of *Uriah*, and are almost hardned in our wicked way before we are able again to recover out of it: And in these Offences, the Spirit has been so much affronted, and his importunate Suggestions so frequently thrown out, that he is almost ready to forsake us, and to leave us to our selves, so that it may be called a quenching of him, *1 Thess. 5. 19.* But although the last of thele especially be very dangerous; yet is neither of them desperate. But after we have been guilty of them, God continues still to make Offers and Invitations, and by his long Sufferance and his gracious Providences, and the repeated Calls of his Word and Ministers; he still endeavours to recover us to pardon, by recalling us to Repentance. Yea the holy Spirit it self makes fresh Assaults upon us, and tries again whether we will hearken to it, and be relieved by it; as it was with *David* after he had complained of his being deprived of God's presence, and of the Holy Spirits being taken from him, *Psal. 51. 11;* and as it is with every other reclaimed Back-slider.

The sinning against the *Holy Ghost* therefore in this Sense, as it signifies the ordinary Gifts and Graces of the *Holy Ghost*, is far from being the unpardonable Sin, and is manifestly under the Grace of Pardon and Repentance.

Secondly, Nor is a Sin against the extraordinary Gifts of Casting out Devils, healing Diseases, working Miracles, or other things called the Spirit, that unpardonable Sin which is here intended. To blaspheme the Spirit, 'tis true, comes very near it, and when Men are once gone on to that, God is very nigh giving of them up, and using no more means about them to bring them either to Faith or Repentance, which are the only way to Pardon and Forgiveness. But although this Pitch of Sin

be extreme dangerous, yet in great likelihood it is not wholly desperate. For after all the Dirt that Men had thrown upon this Evidence, *viz.* the *miraculous Operation wrought by Christ whilst he continued upon Earth*, God was still pleased to use some means further to bring them to believe and repent, which is the way to be pardoned ; and that was the Evidence of the *Holy Ghost*, which came down to compleat all after that *Jesus* was *glorified*, *Acts 2*. This great Proof which was to be poured out upon the Disciples at *Pentecost*, and upon other Christians at the Imposition of their Hands for a good while after, might effect that, wherein the other had failed, and be acknowledged by those very Men who had blasphemed the former. So that their Case, notwithstanding it were gone extreme far, was not for all that quite hopeless, because one Remedy still remained, which God resolved he would use to reclaim them from their Infidelity, though after that he would try no more.

And of this I think we have a clear Proof, even in those *blasphemous Pharisees*, whose *Reviling of the Spirit* was the occasion of all this Discourse. For as for the *Spirit*, they blasphemed it in this very Chapter, when upon occasion of the *miraculous Cure of the Man with the withered Hand*, v. 13. and of *Christ's casting out of Devils*, v. 28. both which were so manifestly wrought before their Eyes, that none of them durst question, or deny the Working of them ; they go blasphemously to charge these evident Effects of the *Spirit* upon the Power of *Magick*, and to say, that these Works of *God* were performed by the *Devil*. For when these mighty Effects of the *Spirit* were urged to them in behalf of *Jesus*, they answered and said, says *St. Matthew*, *This Fellow doth not cast out Devils, but by Beelzebub the Prince of the Devils*, v. 24. Here is a Reproach to these miraculous Gifts of the *Spirit*, as great as can be invented ; for it is nothing less than an attributing them to the most foul and loathsome Fiends in Nature, even to the very Devils themselves. But yet this Blasphemy, as dangerous as it was, is not utterly exclusive of Faith and Repentance, and thereby unpardonable and hopeless. For our Lord himself in this very Chapter, speaks still of seeking their Repentance, and gives them a Promise that

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some further Means should still be used to cure their Infidelity, after that they had blasphemed this; telling these very Men, that the *Sign of his Death and Resurrection*, with the other Evidences of the Holy Ghost which were to ensue upon it, should be a further Argument to satisfie them in what they enquired after, *viz. his being the Messiah, or the Son of God.* For when certain of the Pharisees, presently upon his finishing this Discourse of their blaspheming of the Holy Spirit, v. 37. made answer to him, saying, *Master, we would see a sign from thee to confirm to us the Truth of that Pretention:* He answered, as St. Matthew goes on, *an evil and an Adulterous Generation seeketh a sign, and there shall no further sign be given it, but only the sign of the Prophet Jonas,* and that indeed shall. For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the Whales Belly, and was afterwards delivered out of it to go and preach to the Ninevites; so shall the Son of Man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth, and after that rise again to preach by his Apostles to you and all the World, sending to you, for a further Evidence still, the Holy Ghost, v. 38, 39, 40.

And this Pardonableness of *blaspheming of the Spirit*, our Lord further intimates in that very Place, by a wary Change of the Phrase when he comes to speak of the unpardonableness of it; calling the unpardonable Blasphemy, not a *Blasphemy against the Spirit* (although it was the Spirit which was indeed blasphemed, v. 24. and whereof he had just made mention, v. 28.) but a *Blasphemy against the Holy Ghost*, which being, as St. John says,* not yet given, could not yet be blasphemed, v. 31, 32. * John 7.

But

Thirdly, the desperate and unpardonable Sin here mentioned, which shall never be forgiven, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come, is a Sin against the last and greatest Evidence of all, *viz. the Gift of Tongues, of Prophecy, and of other things called the Holy Ghost.* Of all the other Evidence that came before to win Men to a Belief of Christ's Religion, which is the only means of Pardon to the World, God had still a Reserve, and resolved upon some further Course if they proved ineffectual. If the Testimony of John Baptist to Christ's being the Lamb of God, if the Message of an Angel at his

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Conception, the Star at his Birth, and the Quire of Angels at his Entrance into the World; if the Innocency of his Life, the Wisdom of his Words, and the Mightiness of his Wonders, in commanding the Winds and Seas, in curing Diseases, in casting out Devils, in restoring the Weak to Strength, and the Dead to Life; if all these prove unsuccessful, and unable to persuade an Infidel and perverse Generation: yet still God resolves to try one Means more, which before that Time the World never saw nor heard of, and that is, the ample and most full effusion of the Holy Ghost upon the Apostles at Pentecost, and upon others at the Imposition of their Hands for a long time after. This further Evidence shall still be given, to subdue the stubbornness of Men's unbelief, which had proved too hard for all the former. When I am departed from you, says our Saviour to his Apostles, I will send the Holy

(d) πεπ-
κτισθαι. Ghost, who is the Comforter or (d) Advocate, unto you. And when he is come, he shall plead my Cause more convincingly, than the Operations of the Spirit have (e) ἐλέγη-
ξει. done hitherto. For he shall reprove and (e) convince the World, and those who remained Infidels after they had seen all the Evidence of the Spirit, of their own Sin in not believing on me, and of my Righteousness, and truth in saying I am the Messiah, because he shall shew that I am owned above, and am gone to my Father, whence I have sent him down so plentifully upon you, John 16. 8, 9, 10.

But when once God had given this Proof, he had done all that he designed: For this is the last Remedy, which he had decreed to make use of to cure the Infidelity of an unbelieving Age. So that if Men shall use it, as they have done all that went before; and if instead of being persuaded by it, they shall proceed, not only to slight and despise, but, what is more, to revile and blaspheme it, as they have already done with the Spirit; then is the irreversible Decree gone out against them, and God is unalterably resolved to strive no more with them, but to let them die in their Unbelief. If they should be won by it indeed, and believe upon it; be their former Offences what they will, no less than a blaspheming of the Spirit, yet may they just expect to be pardoned. For the offer of Grace is universal, whosoever believes and is baptized shall be saved,

ved, Mark 16. 16. and nothing is impossible to him that believeth, Mark 9. 23. But when once men have gone so far as to be guilty of it, their sin is unpardonable, because their Faith is impossible. For they have rejected all the evidence, which any man can urge for their conviction; seeing they have despised all that, which God has offered. Their infidelity is stronger than can be cured, by any Argument that Christ either has, or will afford to prevail over it; so that they must die in their sin, and there is no hope for them.

Indeed if God so please, there is no question but that after they have once blasphemed it, he can still so melt and soften, fashion and prepare their minds, that afterwards they shall hearken to the incomparable Evidence of the Spirit and the Holy Ghost, which to any honest mind are irresistible. But this sin is of so provoking a nature, that when once they are guilty of it he will not. He has past an irreversible Decree upon them, never more to meddle with them; so that they never will be pardoned, because, as things stand, they never will be reclaimed. Which is the very reason, which the Apostle himself gives of the desperate state of *Apostate Christians*. For by renouncing of that faith, which, upon the evidence both of the Spirit, and the Holy Ghost, they had been before convinced of; *they despite, says he, the Spirit of Grace*, as it implies both the Spirit and the Holy Ghost too, so that as for them, *it is impossible to renew them again unto repentance*, that being such a sin, as God will never give repentance to, *Heb. 6. 6.*

The sinning against the Holy Ghost in this sense then, as it denotes the *Gift of Tongues, of Prophecy, &c.* which is the last Evidence that God is resolved to make use of for the conversion of an unbelieving World, is that unpardonable sin which shall never be forgiven.

And yet even here, in this limited and contracted sense of the word *Holy Ghost*, we must still proceed with some caution. For it is not every *affront and dis-honour* that is put upon these Gifts, which is the sin here styled irremissible. *Simon Magus* cast a very high indignity, and reproach upon them in his *actions*; for he went about to purchase the *Gift of Tongues, and other sacred Illuminations* called the *Holy Ghost*, which fell upon

upon men at the imposition of the Apostles hands, as if they had been only a trick to get money, or a fit thing to drive trade withal, and make a gainful merchandice. *When Simon saw, that through the laying on of the hands of the Apostles the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money,* says St. Luke, saying, *Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost,* Acts 8. 18, 19. This was a very great abuse, and a most unworthy comparing of the heavenly and holy Spirit of God, to a mercenariable ware, and vendible commodity; thinking it fit to serve any ends, and to minister to the basest purposes of filthy lucre and covetousness. But yet this sin against the Holy Ghost in its strictest acceptation, was not the unpardonable sin; it came very near it indeed, and would hardly be remitted; but still in all likelihood it was remissible. And therefore St. Peter, although he be very severe upon this sordid man for the high affront, doth not yet pronounce an irreversible doom of damnation upon him, but on the contrary exhorts him to repent; that the sin of his heart may be forgiven. *Repent, says he, of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee,* verf. 22.

But that which is the desperately damning sin against the Holy Ghost, which shall never be forgiven, either in this World, or in that which is to come; is the sinning against it, not by interpretation only in our actions, but directly in our words and expressions. It is our speaking reproachfully and slanderously of it, as the Pharisees did of the spirit, when they attributed it to Beezebub. And therefore it is expressly called, the speaking blasphemously against the Holy Ghost. *Whosoever speaketh * blasphemously against the Holy Ghost when he shall come, it shall never be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in the world to come,* Matth. 12. 31, 32. The great weight lies in that, for this heavy doom he denounced upon them, says St. Mark, because they said he hath an unclean Spirit, Mark 3. 30.

And thus at length we see, what that sin against the Holy Ghost is, whose doom is so dreadful, and whose case is so desperate under the Gospel. It is nothing less, than a slandering and reviling, instead of owning and assenting to that last evidence, which God has given us of the truth

* Ελασ-
φρια
πρευμα-
τιον.

truth of the Gospel, in the Gifts of Tongues, Prophecy, and other extraordinary Illuminations called the Holy Ghost. So that no man who owns Christ's Religion, and thinks he was no Impostor, and believes that these miraculous Gifts of the Holy Ghost were no magical shows or diabolical delusions, can ever be guilty of it. No, before he arrive to that, he must not only be an Infidel to the faith, but also a Blasphemer of it ; he must not only disbelieve this last and greatest Evidence, but disparage and rail against it. If then there be any man who owns Christ's Authority, and obeys his Laws, and believes his Gospel, and hopes in its Promises, and fears its Threatnings, and expects that every word of that Covenant, which was confirmed to us by the infallible evidence of the Spirit and the Holy Ghost, shall come to pass ; he is not more guiltless of any sin, than of this against the Holy Ghost ; for he doth not so much as slight and disparage, but owns and submits to it.

If good men therefore are afraid, by reason of the irre-remissibleness of the sin against the Holy Ghost ; they fear where they need not, and their scruple is utterly unreasonable and groundless. For let it be as unpardonable as it will, that shall not hurt them, for they can never suffer by it, since, whilst they continue such as now they are, they cannot possibly be guilty of it, or of any thing that comes near it.

C H A P. VII.

The Conclusion.

BESIDES these Scruples already mentioned, some good minds may be put in fear and doubt of the safety of their present state, because St. John says, that *whosoever is born of God sinneth not*, being no longer a Child of God if he do, 1 John 3. 6, 9.

But the sin here spoken of, as was observed (a) above, is defined by St. John himself at the fourth Verse of this (a) Book 4. Chapter, to be, not every deviation or going beside the Chap. 2. Law,

* ἀνομία Law, but a wilful Transgression and * rejecting of the Law it self. And this indeed is inconsistent with a regenerate state, and puts us out of God's favour, making us liable to eternal destruction. But then the case for these sins is not desperate, seeing if once we forsake them, and repent of them, we are as safe again as ever we were before we committed them. For our Repentance will set us streight; and if we transgress not wilfully again, we are without the reach of condemnation.

Others doubt, whether, when once they have wilfully sinned, they ever can repent, or shall afterwards be pardoned, because they read of *Esau*, that after he had sold his birth-right with the blessing that attended it, when he would have inherited it afterwards he was rejected, and found no place of a * change of mind or repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears, Heb. 12. 17.

In answer to this, it will be sufficient to observe, that this change of mind or repentance which *Esau* sought, but could not find, was not in himself, but in his Father *Isaac*.

It was not in himself, I say, for there he did find a place for it, being he was really full thereof. For he was heartily sorry for his former folly, in parting with his birth-right; and for his present unhappiness, in being cozen'd of his Father *Isaac*'s blessing; and he sought to have them reverst with bitter crys, and importunate desires, and much unfeigned intreaties; which clearly shew, that *Esau*'s own mind was changed abundantly.

But that repentance, or change of mind in reversing of the blessing, for which he laboured hard, but without effect, was in his Father *Isaac*. The good Old Man had already pronounced the Blessing upon *Jacob*, and when *Esau* most earnestly intreated him to reverse it, he told him flatly he would not: *I have blessed him, saith he, yea, and he shall be blessed*, Gen. 27. 33. For the Story; as it is there recited, is plainly this. When *Isaac* bid his Son *Esau* provide him some Venison, that he might eat thereof, and bless him before he died: *Jacob*, by the counsel and assistance of his Mother *Rebecca*, counterfeited both the Person and the Venison of *Esau*, and going in therewith to his Father before

Esau

Esau returned, craftily stole away the Blessing from him : And when *Esau* came in afterwards, to receive the Blessing which *Isaac* his Father had promised him, he tells him, that *Jacob* his Brother had come with subtlety before him, and under a crafty disguise had taken it away from him. For I have made him thy Lord, saith he, Vers. 37. and all his Brethren have I given to him for Servants. And although *Esau* intreated his Father to reverse it, and cryed, Vers. 34, as it is there said, with a great and exceeding bitter cry ; 38. yet *Isaac* would not change his mind, or alter what he had pronounced : I have blessed him, says he, *yea and he shall be blessed*. This reversion of the Blessing, and repentance or change of mind, in his Father *Isaac*, was that which *Esau* endeavoured after, and which, as St. Paul here says, he sought carefully with tears. But, as he observes out of this Story, all was in vain, for it would not be granted him. When he sought to inherit the blessing, his suit was not granted, but rejected ; for *Isaac's* Decree was past, and he found no place of repentance, or way to make him change his mind ; although he sought that ^{* aut̄r.} change carefully with tears.

In this place then the Apostle says not at all, that it was impossible for *Esau* to repent of his sins against God, or that God would not forgive him upon his repentance : but only that *Isaac* would not repent of his decree, or reverse that Blessing which he had pronounced upon *Jacob*. Which inflexibleness of *Isaac* he doth indeed make use of in these Verses, to illustrate God's inexorableness towards some Sinners ; but then those are not all wilful Sinners indifferently, but only Apostates, who have wilfully renounced their Christianity, which, as we have seen before, is a sin that God will afford no more Grace, or place of repentance to. And this, as I take it, appears plainly from the foregoing Verses. Take care, says he, lest that which is lame, or the weak Christian, be turned out of the way of his Christian Profession through fears of Persecution, verl. 13. Look diligently lest any man fail, or fall from the Grace or Gospel of God, vers. 15. Whick I exhort you the more earnestly to do, because if any man doth reject all those Gospel-blessings and Privileges, which in that Religion which you have received are now offered to him, and apostatize from them ; God will never afford him the tender of them again, but will

will be as unalterable in his Decree against him, as Isaac was in his against Esau, who as you know from the Story, after once he had mist of the blessing, found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with his tears, v. 17.

Others again are troubled in mind, and are afraid lest their Souls are yet in danger, because they do not perceive themselves to grow in grace, and to be increased in goodness. They complain that their spiritual life is at a stand, and that they are not more devout and piously affected, more virtuous and better Christians, than they were for some considerable time before. And this makes them jealous, lest they should pass for idle Servants, who have not used and improved their Talents, and who shall be dealt with at the last Day as if they had abused them.

To speak clearly to this business, and yet to be as brief as conveniently I can, it is first observable, that to grow in grace, is the same thing as to grow in virtue and goodness, or to go on to higher measures of life and perfection, in any, or in all the instances of duty and obedience. For an obedient life, as I have largely shewn, is that sole instance and proof, of grace, which can render any of us acceptable in God's sight, and whereupon the Gospel encourages us to hope for pardon and a happy Sentence at the last Judgment. So that if any man's life is more perfect than it was, if he grows in knowing and doing good, and keeping back from evil; if he begins to have a greater honour for God, to be more careful to please, and more afraid to offend him; if he is more forward to depend upon his Providence, to trust in his Promises, to resign himself up to his Will, and to submit to his Pleasure, to praise him for all his Excellencies and Disposals, and to perform all his Precepts: If he is more humble and heavenly-minded, chaste and temperate, just and charitable; if he is more meek and gentle, courteous and affable, quiet and peaceable, more ready to repair wrongs, and to forgive injuries than formerly: If he thus advances to higher measures, to greater ease, or to more constancy and evenness of obedience, in any, or in all instances of Duty towards God and Men, and that in all Relations; his virtue is in its spring, and is still going on; he grows in grace, and God will accordingly reward him.

One particular Vertue there is, which men are wont to look at more especially in this matter, and that is *Prayer*. They measure their growth in grace by their improvement in this, and think their *spiritual life* is then most perfect, when their *Devotions* are most enlarged. Which they conclude they are not when they are put up with the greatest *humility* and *reverence*, *trust* and *dependence*, *submission* and *resignedness* to God Almighty, or with any other of those *obedient tempers* implied in *Prayer* which are apt to influence our whole lives; but when they are accompanied with the most *sensible joys* and *ravishing transports*, and *unusual height* of *fervency* and *affection*. So that if at any time they can *pray more passionately*, and put forth more *intense desires*, and work themselves up to more *heavenly Raptures* than ordinarily they have been able to attain to, they fansie that they do indeed grow in grace, and are become higher in God's favour and acceptance. But if ever this service happens to be more *irksome* to them, and they discharge it with much *backwardness* and *weariness*, *dulness* and *indifference*; they think God frowns upon them, and has deserted them, and that their grace is in a declining state, and sinking down to nothing.

But this is a very *uncertain* and *dangerous* mark, for any man in this case to judge by, and will very often deceive him that builds upon it. For these fervent heats, and delightsome transports of Devotion, are not so much a *duty* as a *privilege*, which all tempers cannot attain to, but only those that are naturally disposed for it: so that a growth in them, is not a growth in *saving grace*, but rather in *sensible joy* and *happiness*, and renders us not so truly gracious in God's Eyes, as happy in our own.

Besides, as an improvement in these religious and pleasing raptures, is not a growth in grace it self, so neither is it always joined with it, and therefore no sure argument can be deduced from it. For 'tis easily observable, that several persons of *devotional tempers*, who are usually raised up to a high pitch, and ravished with most delightsome transports in their Prayers; are yet very dangerously defective in many instances of necessary Duty and a *holy life*. They fall oft-times, even whilst they enjoy their blisful hearts and heavenly raptures of Devotion,

votion, into damning acts of *fraud and injustice, anger and malice, strife and variance, fierceness and revenge*: they live in them, and are habitually enslaved to them, and yet for all that they find no want of this delight in Prayer, nor any abatement of their devout intenseness of mind, and earnest fervour of affection still. But now these men, being so maimed and partial in their service, and having no *entire obedience* to confide in; they have not grace enough, as manifestly appears from what has

(a) Book 3. been (a) said upon that point, to bear them out, not so much virtue as God has indispensably required to save them.

As for these qualifications of our Prayers then, those *sensible joys and passionate transports* which accompany them; they are no instance of obedience and saving grace themselves, nor any certain argument that those persons are endowed with it who are allowed to enjoy them. They are oft-times found in ill men, who, so long as they rest there and grow no better, cannot reasonably expect to go to Heaven.

And then as for the other more acceptable and obedient tempers of our Prayers, such as *humble reverence, trust and dependence, submission and resignedness, &c.* which the men of sober devotion most justly prefer before the former, as usually most others do when once their *religious heats* are over: though a growth in them is truly a growth in grace, yet a growth in them *alone* is not enough to save us. They indeed in themselves are so many particular instances of obedience, and besides that, they are also great means and proper instruments to produce others so that our growth in them, is a growth in some particular Graces; and a very likely way to grow in others: also. But still we must remember, that they are but *one part of saving Grace*, and by no means the *whole*; so that till we are grown in others too, we cannot hope to be saved by them. For this is the indispensable condition of the Christian Religion, and this the (b) *perfect man and just stature* in the Christian Faith; that we be grown up to an *intire obedience in all our voluntary and chosen actions*, not only to *some few*, but to *all the parts of Duty, and the Laws of God*.

(b) Eph.
4. 13.

But if we would single out some one, or some few *Vertues*, from our growth and improvement wherein we may justly presume that we have attained to *saving degrees in all the rest*; Saint James directs us to the *Duties of the Tongue*, in abstaining from backbiting, censuring, and evil-speaking, &c. which under all the invitations of Conversation, and the temptations of common life, is usually the last point which good men gain, and that wherein (g) they, who scarce ever sin wilfully at all, or (g) Ecclus very rarely, are wont most frequently through indelibera- 19. 16. and 14. 1. tion and inadvisedness to miscarry. If any man, saith he, offendeth not in word, but has attained to an innocent and obedient guidance of his Tongue, that same man need not be defective in other Duties, he is a perfect man, and able also to bridle the whole body, James 3. 2.

Thus is mens growth in *saving Grace*, not a growth only in some one, or in some few *Vertues*; but in an universal and entire obedience. And then they grow in it, when they come to perform the same, with more ease and pleasure, constancy and evenness, with less mixture of involuntary sins, which need particular Repentance, and with a greater freedom from innocent and unwill'd Infirmities. And this growth every Christian is bound incessantly to endeavour after. The longer he lives, the higher improvement ought he to make, and to attain every Vertue in a larger measure, and in greater firmness and perfection, than he had before. Grow in grace, says St. Peter, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, 2 Pet. 3. 18. Forgetting those things which are behind me, and already attained, says St. Paul, and reaching out after those things which are still before me, I press on forward towards the mark, that I may acquire a more compleat growth than yet I have. And let as many among you, as be perfect be thus minded, Phil. 3. 13, 14.

But then the obligation to this growth in this intire Obedience, is not laid upon them under the forfeiture of Heaven, but only of some higher rewards, and greater degrees of happiness, which are to be enjoyed there. For there are different degrees in happiness, answerable to the different measures in this intire Obedience. They that perform it most perfectly, shall be rewarded highest; and the more fixt and perfect they are in it, the less danger

are they under of falling back from it. But they who perform it at all, although they miss of that accession of reward, which by the Grace of the Gospel is due to an eminent height of obedient endeavours, shall yet obtain the pardon of their sins, and a state of joy and blessedness in Heaven, as well as they who have endeavoured and performed more.

For an entire Obedience in all chosen actions, and a particular repentance and amendment of all those sins wherein at any time we have wilfully disobeyed God, is sufficient, as has been shewn, to secure the blessedness of the next life. And therefore if any Person has used God's Grace, and improved his Talents to this measure, he has not been unprofitable and useless, but hath profited so far as is necessary to his Happiness. So that whilst we are yet in the more imperfect measures of it, and only thirst after a more perfect Obedience, that we may still be more acceptable to God, and have right to a more noble and excellent Reward; we are in a safe state, and have no need to disquiet our Souls with fears and jealousies, lest they should eternally miscarry.

Several other Scruples there are, which are wont to disquiet and perplex the minds of good and honest People, who are safe in God's Account, although their Case seems never so hazardous in their own. And of this sort, are their fears, that their Obedience is unsincere, because they have an Eye at their own good, and a respect to their own safety; since they serve God in hopes to be better by him, and out of a fear, should they disobey, of suffering evil from him. They are afraid also that it is defective in a main Point, for they cannot love and serve him in that comprehensive Latitude which the Commandment requires, viz. With all their heart, and with all their soul, and with all their mind. They doubt they are past Grace and Pardon, because they have sinned after that they have been enlightened, and that wilfully: and the Apostle affirms that for such their remains no more Sacrifice for sins, Heb. 10. 26. These doubts are still apt to disturb their peace, and make sad their hearts; and some others of like nature.

But of these, and several others, I have given sufficient Accounts above: such as I hope, may satisfie any reasonable man, who is capable to read and to consider of them;

them ; and thither I refer the Reader, not thinking fit here to repeat them.

And thus at last we have seen, when an honest and entire Obedience is taken care for in the first place, how plainly groundless those fears are, which are wont to perplex the thoughts, of good and safe, yet ignorant and misguided People, about their state of happiness and salvation.

And now I have done with all those Points, which I thought necessary to be inquired into, to the end that I might shew every man now before-hand how he stands prepared for the next World ; and which at the beginning of this whole Discourse I proposed to treat of. I have shewn what *that condition is of bliss or misery, which the Gospel indispensibly exacts of*, and that as I take it, so particularly, that no man who will be at the pains to read and consider of it, need overlook or mistake it ; what *those defects are, which it bears and dispenseth with* ; what *those remedies and means of reconciliation are, which it has provided for us* ; and, when all these are taken care for, how groundless *all those other Scruples are, which are wont to disquiet honest minds about the goodness of their present state, and their title to eternal salvation*:

And upon the whole matter, the summ of all amounts to this, that when Christ shall come to sit in judgment at the last day, and to pass sentence of life or death upon every man according to the direction of his Gospel, he will pronounce upon *every man according to his works*. If he has *honestly and entirely obey'd the whole Will of God in all the particular Laws before-mentioned, never wilfully and deliberately offending in any one instance, nor indulging himself in the practice of any thing which he knows to be a sin* ; he is safe in the Accounts of the last Judgment, and shall never come into Condemnation. Nay, if he has been a *damnable Offender, and has wilfully transgressed, either in one instance, or in many ; in frequent repetitions of his sin, or in few* ; yet if he *repent of it before death seize him, and amend it e're he is haled away to Judgment* ; he is *safe still*. For he shall be judged according as his Works then are, when God comes to enquire of them ; so that if ever he be found in an honest Obedience observing every thing which he sees to be his duty, and

wilfully venturing upon nothing which his Conscience tells him is sinful ; he is found in the state of Grace and Pardon, and if he die in it, he shall be saved. All his *unwill'd ignorances, and innocent unadvisedneses, upon his Prayers for pardon and his mercifulness and forgiveness of other men,* shall be abated ; all his other causes of fear and scruple, shall be overlooked ; they shall not be brought against him to his Condemnation, but in the honest and entire Obedience which he hath performed, in that shall he live.

If then we have an *honest heart,* and walk so as our own Consciencē has no wilful sin yet unrepented of whereof to accuse us ; we may meet Death with a good Courage, and go out of the World with comfortable Expectations. For if we have an honest and a tender heart, whensoever we sin wilfully and against our Consciences, our own Souls will be our Remembrancers. They will be a witness against us, both whilst we are in this World, and after we are taken out of it, and brought to Judgment. *Mens Consciences,* says the Apostle, *shall accuse or excuse them, in the day when God shall judge the secrets of men according to my Gospel,* Rom. 2. 15.

Indeed, if men have *harden'd their hearts in wickedness,* and *sinn'd themselves out of the belief of their duty,* having come to call *evil, good ; and good, evil :* then their Conscience having no further sense of sin, will have no accusations upon it. But if they really believe the Gospel, and study to know their duty, and desire to observe it ; and are afraid to offend in any thing which they see is sinful : whilst thus their heart is soft, and their Conscience tender, they cannot venture upon any sin with open Eyes, but their own hearts will both check them before, and smite them afterwards. They will have a Witness against them in their own Bosoms ; which will scourge and awake them, so that they cannot approach Death without a sense of their sin, nor go out of the World without discerning themselves to be guilty.

If our own Conscience then cannot accuse us, of the wilful and presumptuous breach of any of God's Commandments, and we know of none but what we have repented of, we have just reason to take a good heart to ourselves, and to wait for death in hopeful expectations.

If our own (h) hearts condemn us not, says St. John, then (h) 1 Pet. have we confidence towards God, 1 John 3. 21. There is 3. 21. no Sin that will damn us, but a wilful one; and when we sin wilfully, if our Heart is soft and honest, we sin wittingly and against our Conscience; our own Heart sees and observes it before, and will keep us in mind of it after we have committed it. So that if any Man has a virtuous and a tender Heart, a Heart that is truly desirous to obey God, and afraid in any thing to offend him; when his Conscience is silent he may justly conclude that his Condition is safe, for if it doth not condemn him, God never will.

An honest Man's Heart, I say must condemn him, before he have sufficient reason to condemn himself. And that too, not for every *idle Word*, or every *fruitless Lust*, or every involuntary *dulness of Spirit*, and *distraction in Prayer*, and *coldness in Devotion*, or such other *mistaken Marks* whereby too many are wont to judge of their Title to Salvation. No, Heaven and Hell are not made to depend upon these things; but although a Man be guilty of them, he may be eternally happy notwithstanding them. But that accusation of his Conscience, which may give an honest Man just reason to condemn himself, must be an Accusation, for a *wilful Breach* or *deliberate Transgression* of some particular Law of *Sobriety*, *Piety*, *Justice*, *Charity*, *Peaceableness*; it must accuse him of an unrepented Breach of some of those Laws above-mentioned, which God has plainly made the Terms of Life, and the Condition of Salvation.

And the Accusation for the Breach of these Laws, must be *particular and express*; not *general and roving*. For some are of so *suspicious* and *timorous* a Temper, that they are still suspecting and condemning of themselves, when they know not for what Reason. They will indict themselves, as Men who have sinned greatly, but they cannot shew wherein; they judge of themselves, not from any *Reason* or *Experience*, but at a *Venture*, and by *Chance*; they speak not so truly their *Opinions*, as their *Fears*; not what their *Understandings* see and discern, but what their *Melancholy* suggests to them. For ask them as to any one particular of the Laws of God, and run them all over, and their Consciences cannot charge them with any *wilful*, whtch is withal an *unrepented Transgression*.

sion of it. But let them overlook all Particulars, and pass a Judgment of themselves only in general, when they do not judge from particular Instances, which are true evidence, but only from groundless and small Presumptions; and then they pass a hard Sentence upon themselves, and conclude that their Sins are very great, and their Condition dangerous.

But no Man shall be sentenced at the last Day, for Notions and Generalities; but it is our particular Sins, which must then condemn us. For God's Laws bind us all in single Actions; and if our own Consciences cannot condemn us for any one wilful, which is withal an unrepented action, God will not condemn us for them altogether.

If our own Heart therefore doth not accuse us, for the *particular, wilful, and unrepented Breaches* of some or other of those Laws above-mentioned, which God has made the indispensable Condition of our acceptance; we are secure as to the next World, and may comfortably hope to be acquitted in the last Judgment. Being conscious of no wilful Sin, but what we have repented of, and by Mercy and Forgiveness of other Men, and our Prayers to God, begging Pardon for our involuntary Sins; we shall have nothing that will lie heavy upon us at the last Day, but may go out of the World with ease, and die in Comfort. Our Departure hence may be in Peace, because our Appearance at God's Tribunal shall be in Safety. For we shall have no worse charged upon us there, than we are able here to charge upon our selves; but leaving this World in a good Conscience, we shall be sentenced in the next to a glorious Reward; and bid to enter into our Master's Joy, there to live with our Lord for ever and ever. *Amen.*

Soli Deo Gloria.





John McMillin his book



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