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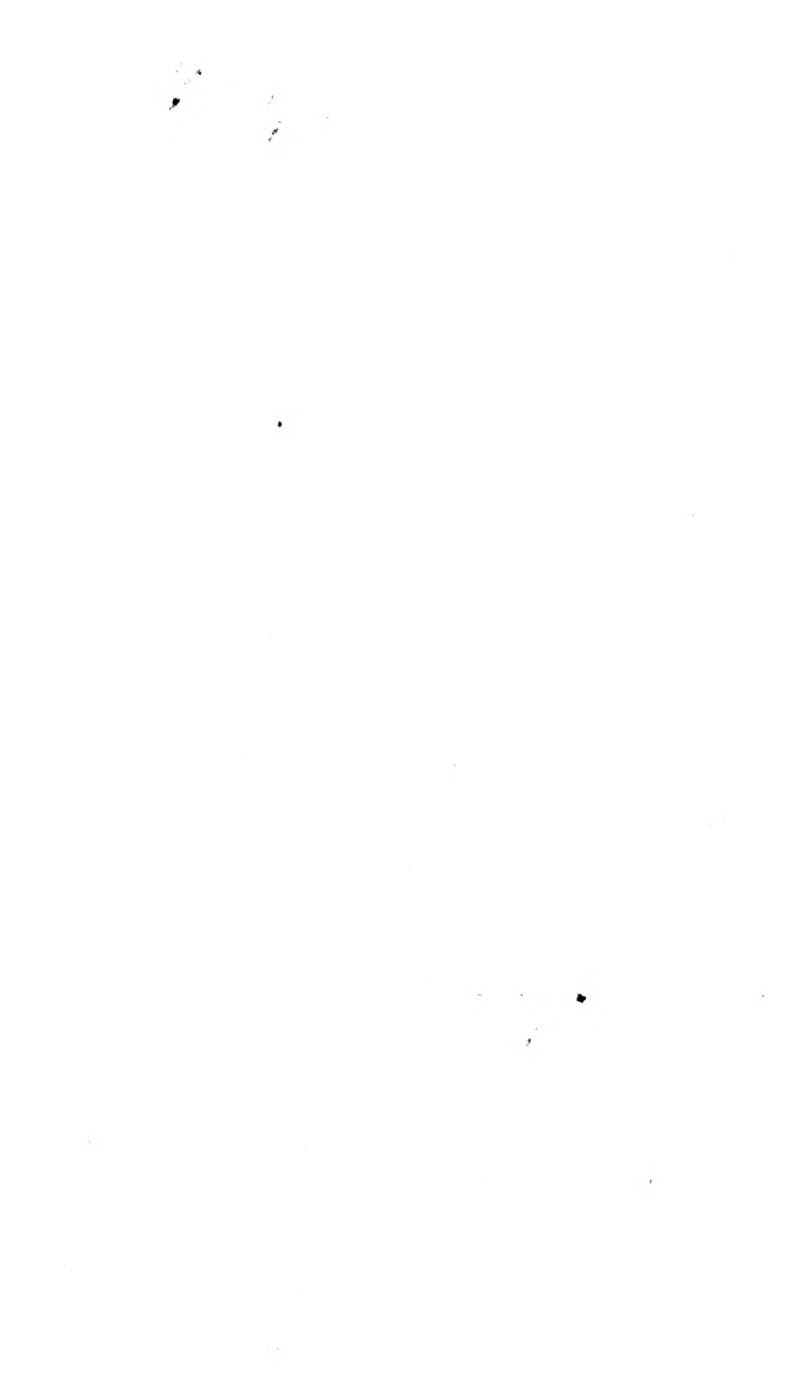
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P R A C T I C A L
D I S C O U R S E S

O N S E V E R A L

Important Subjects.

In T W O V O L U M E S.

By the Late R E V E R E N D
DANIEL WILLIAMS, D. D.

Published singly by H I M S E L F, and now collected
by the Appointment of his Will.

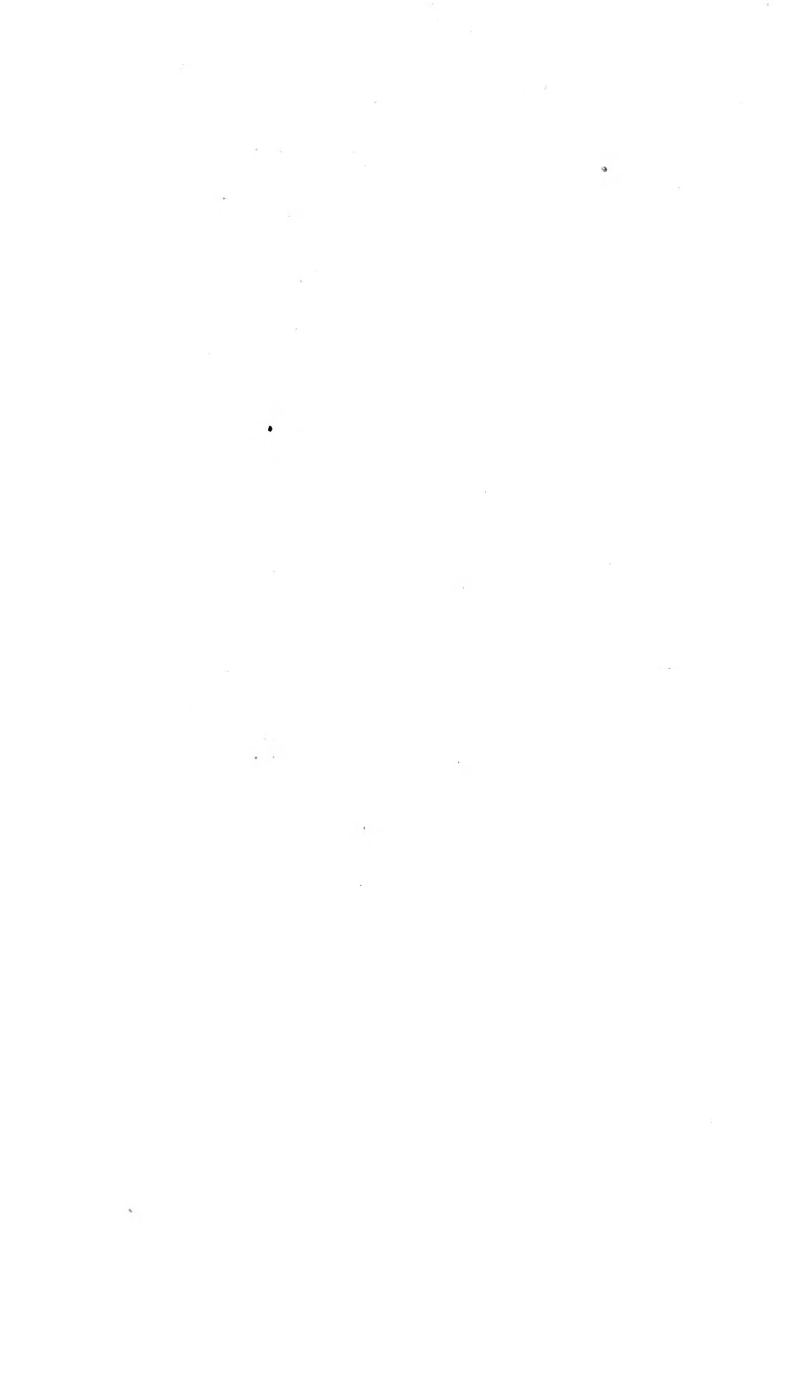
To which is prefixed,
Some *Account* of his L I F E and C H A R A C T E R.

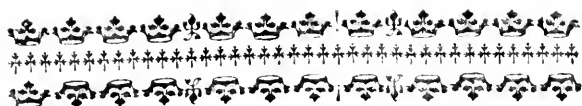
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M D C C X X X V I I I.





T H E
C O N T E N T S

O F T H E
S E C O N D V O L U M E.

7. **A** *Sermon to the Societies for Reformation of Manners in Dublin, July 18. 1700.*

8. *A Funeral Sermon for the Reverend Mr. John Woodhouse, 1701.*

9. *A Thanksgiving Sermon for the Success of her Majesty's Forces, Nov. 12. 1702.*

10. *A Funeral Sermon for the Reverend Mr. John Quick, May 7. 1706.*

11. *A Thanksgiving Sermon, Decemb. 31. 1706.*

12. *A Thanksgiving Sermon for the Union, May 1. 1707.*

C O N T E N T S.

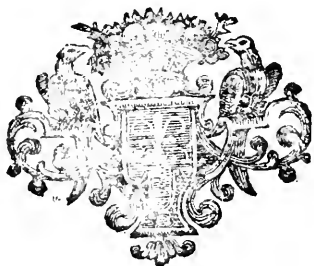
13. *Christian Sincerity*: A Funeral Sermon for the Rev. Mr. *Thomas Doolittle*, June 1. 1707.

14. A *Funeral Sermon* for Mrs. *Mary Gravener*, Nov. 30. 1707.

15. An *Enquiry into the present Duty of Protestant Dissenters*, Jan. 22. 1711-12.

16. A *Funeral Sermon* for the Reverend Mr. *Matthew Henry*, June 27. 1714.

The *Preface* to Mr. *Samuel Clark's* *Orpination Sermon* at *St. Albans*, 1712.



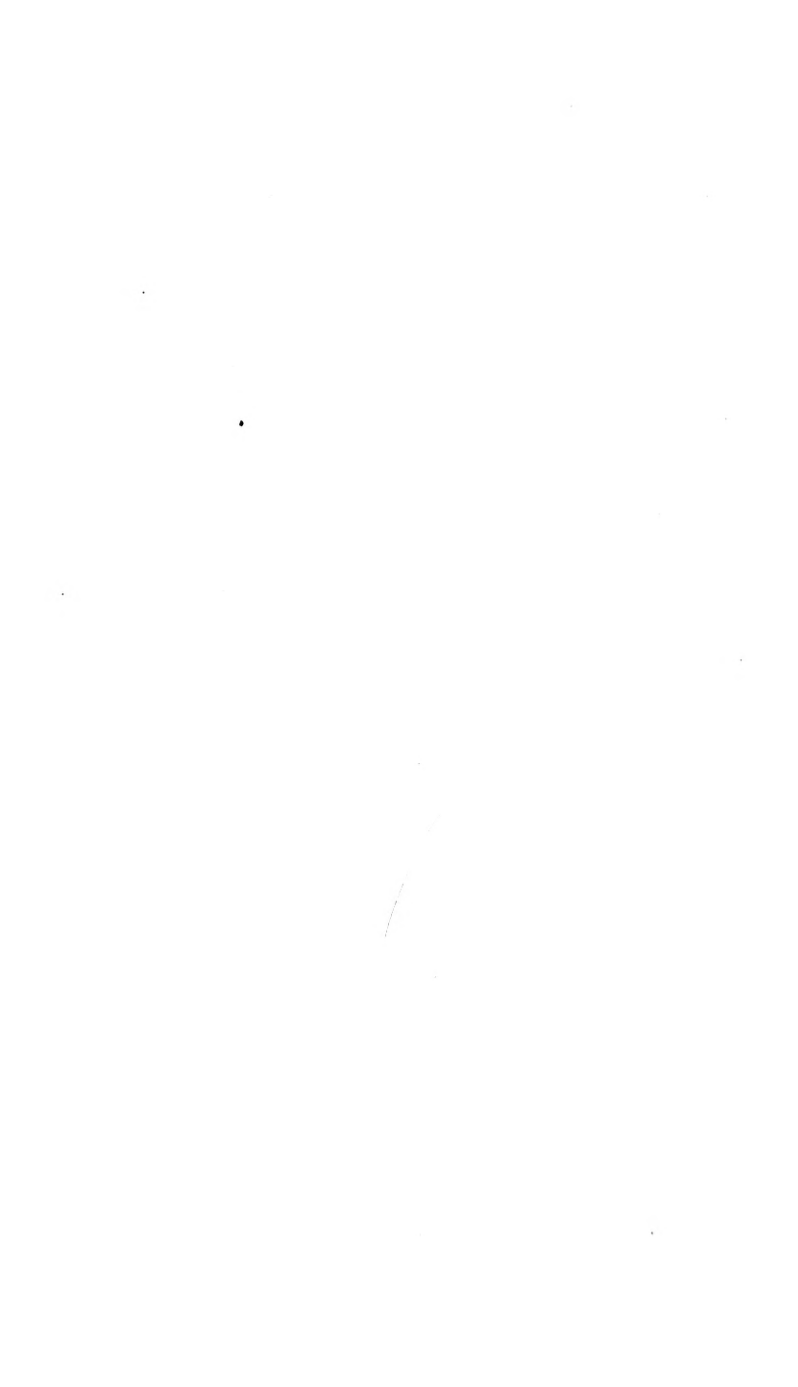


A
SERMON

PREACHED BEFORE THE
SOCIETIES
FOR
Reformation of MANNERS,
IN
DUBLIN,

July 18. 1700.








T O T H E

Societies for Reformation.

 *HIS* title wherewith you are adorned, is so divine, beneficent, and truly catholick, that your request obliged my compliance in preaching the following sermon, under all the disadvantages of a traveller. Yet had I conferred with flesh and blood, those many accurate discourses you have on this subject, must have render'd my hurry of business, and want of books, an insuperable argument against the publication of it.

But being persuaded the bible is not only the fittest book to justify the truth of the duty insisted on, but attended with greatest authority to inforce it on the conscience, the censures of the polite for my want of other ornaments, cannot

deter me from exposing what you think serviceable to your good design, as that which I am sure is not only according to God's word, but undertaken in obedience to it.

I am not ashamed the world should know how my love for Ireland exalts my joy at your attempts to suppress that wickedness which alone can ruin it, and to promote practical religion, which must cause its flourishing against all assaults: They who less affect you, ought to be thankful for your good success herein, and ascribe the sudden prosperity of this land, to God's approbation of your vigorous endeavours to reform it.

The argument whereby I urge all to assist in your blessed work, is too evident to be resisted by any, who account service to God either a privilege or a duty; and next in force to that I published on the same occasion in London; viz. That they who promote national reformation

tion

tion are on Christ's side, and they who neglect it are of the devil's party, in the contest managed by them as the heads of their respective opposite kingdoms.

The consequence of your undertaking may excuse my importunity, because I am under conviction, that when you become remiss, or altogether unsuccessful, this nation will be under more than a probable preface of sudden desolation, and much severer than any that hath befallen it heretofore.

If any think me too close and plain, faithfulness to my Lord whom you serve, and a peculiar regard for this land which you would save, must afford the only apology I dare make. As the enterprize you are inspired to engage in, is too fully authorized by divine and human laws, to be thought unjust, and too plainly commanded, and important in its effects, to be esteemed indifferent; so its too con-

trary to *satan's* interest, and the degenerate inclinations of mankind, to be executed without great fortitude, vigour, wisdom, self-denial, and union; or to keep your hearts by these in a fixed disposition to pursue it, without rich supplies of grace, and great care and labour with your own spirits, whence all remains of sin are not yet expelled.

Many do join with you in prayer, that your fitness may improve by your work, your resolution by your difficulties, your union by ill designs to break it, your success by opposition, and the purity and sedateness of your own spirits, by all your endeavours to reform others; which (among the rest) is heartily desired by,

Your Servant in the

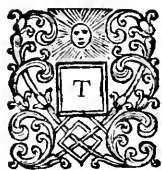
Work of the LORD,

Daniel Williams.



PROV. XXVIII. 4.

They that forsake the law, praise the wicked; but such as keep the law, contend with them.



HE text includes so full a SERM. VII. distribution of mankind, that none of us can be exempted; one part *forsakes* the law, others *keep* it; some *praise* the wicked, others *contend* with them; some are wicked, others are godly.

THE *contrariety* of what they are distinguished by, is *extreme*; one renounceth that rule which the other sacredly observes, *viz.* the divine law; the one approves and commends those, whom the other reproves and punisheth, *viz.* the wicked. And no doubt the difference extends equally to what is implied, though not expressed; *i. e.* the good man renounceth those lusts and customs, which the wicked submit to as their governing law, and praiseth the righteous with whom the ungodly do contend.


IT might seem an unaccountable wonder, that men should thus greatly differ in

SERM. their rules, behaviour, favourites, and adversaries, were the springs of this contrariety altogether unknown: But that wonder will cease, when we consider that these distinguished persons have spirits, tempers, leaders, and supreme ends and designs, more contrary than their very behaviour is. Nay, were it not for the unhealed remains of sins in the godly, and some operations of the Holy Ghost on the wicked, the difference between these men would be as great as between established *angels*, and apostate devils; and when I have said this, can any of you forbear to cry out, Oh how *necessary* is regeneration! and how *great* a work must that be, which so changeth a man from what himself once was, as well as others!

THE last part of the *text* I shall insist on, because it most properly answers the present occasion: *Such as keep the law, contend with them*, i. e. with the *wicked*.

THE words give us, 1. The *character* of a good man. 2. An instance whereby the *sincerity* of that character is made good.

1. THE character of a good man, *He keeps the law*; that which others forsake, he sets before him as his directing light, and a determining rule; *Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path*. What this injoineth, he sets himself to observe; what it forbids, he is watchful to avoid: He acknowledgeth the obliging force

force of the will of God, whether it be SERM. signified to him by the light of nature, or VII. positive precepts and institutions. He is  subject to every part, as well as to any: *I have put away none of thy statutes from me.* Pfal. xviii. He observes it at *all times* as well as some, and in *secret* as well as *publick*. To this he adheres against all *discouragements*, as well as when most countenanced; he will keep it, tho' all *others* should forsake it; Pfal. cxix. yea, declineth it not, tho' the *proud have* 51. *him greatly in derision*, for obeying it.

THIS divine law effectually prescribeth to him what he will believe and profess; it formeth his inward temper, regulates his *thoughts*, words, and behaviour; hereby he frameth his desires, designs, and resolves. Obedience thereto is with him a sufficient reason for his undertakings, and that which his chief respect is to, in whatever he deliberately performs. To exemplify this in his inclinations, affections, and carriage, is his chief endeavour and aim; he prays, strives, and industriously contriveth and watcheth to be *compleat in the whole will* Col. iv. 12. *of God, and walketh in all the command-* Luke i. 6. *ments and ordinances of the Lord blameless.* Finally, wherein he is defective, or offends, he seriously blameth himself; bewails his fault, hates his sin, and sincerely resolves amendment by greater watchfulness, and more fervent applications to Christ for the assistance of his Spirit.

SERM. HE that answers this account, keeps
 VII. the law in a *gospel* sense ; his obedience is
 evangelical, though in many things it be
 short of that which is legal or perfect.

2. WE have one instance whereby the
 sincerity of this character is made good :
They contend with the wicked ; q. d. The
 behaviour of men towards the wicked shews
 whether themselves keep or forsake the law.
 Its a plain characteristick, if they *praise* the
 wicked, they are men who forsake the law ;
 but if they *contend* with such, they are keep-
 ers of the law. Whatever effectually inclines
 men to keep the law, will compel them to
 contend with the wicked ; as that which
 prevails with men to forsake it will disin-
 cline them to contend with such. Its indeed
 not to be expected that such as live in sta-
 ted rebellion against the will of God, should
 oppose the profligate ; but it is so decent,
 congruous, and necessary, for the keepers
 of the law, to oppose the wicked, and
 therefore to be expected, that God sets it
 down as a fixed distinguishing property of
 such, *They contend with the wicked*. You
 will find them thus employed against vio-
 lent transgressors, and thereby discrimina-
 ted from them.

I SHALL, in some few positions, explain
 the words, and thereby come to state that
 observation, which will more directly sup-
 port you in the work of reformation, and
 justify your engaging therein.

1. *Keeping*

(1.) *Keeping the law is a fit description of the faithful subjects and servants of the living God, and such are intended thereby.* SERM. VII.

The servants of God are variously denominated, as men fearing God, lovers of God, believers, saints, godly, righteous, &c. But all these titles center in, and refer to this in the text; *they keep the law.* For this law is the measure of all goodness, all true excellency of spirit, and all regularity of practice do lie in a conformity to this rule. This perfect law appoints all that's truly good; and all that is accepted with God is done with a respect of obedience to this will of his. Whatever justly bears the name of any grace or virtue, must be answerable to what this defineth to be such a grace or virtue, or it is no better than an hypocritical image. Moreover, the *truth* of the highest graces must be adjudged by their operative efficacy to the obedience of this law: *Faith* James ii. 20. without this is dead; and our Saviour determines the integrity of *love* in this manner:

If you love me, keep my commandments. Yea, his Apostle saith, *This is love, that we walk after his commandments.* John xiv. 15. Not that this is the formal notion of love, but it is such a necessary effect of it, that it is no true Christian love which is too weak to produce obedience. 2 John vi.

Now who is a *keeper* of the law? none but he who hath renounced his own will and humour, and is resigned to the divine will,

SERM. will, the language of whose heart is, *Lord,*

VII. *what wilt thou have me to do?* And is this any other than a *servant* and *subject* of the living God; even one who hath freely accepted God in Christ for his supream lord and law-giver, upon which his relation of servant and subject is founded. But doth this devotedness confine itself to a meer *profession* of obedience, however solemn it be? No, there must be real *performance* to make that good: *His we are whom we obey.* But this may suffice to evidence that to keep the law, and to be God's faithful servants and subjects, are equipollent terms.

Acts ix. 6.
Rom. vi. 16.

(2.) *Offenders committing gross and notorious crimes, are design'd by the wicked in the text.* Not bad men whose crimes are *concealed*, for notice cannot be taken of such: neither can one be called wicked for meer *infirmities*; for though *Job* could not acquit himself of such, yet he appeals to God, *Thou knowest I am not wicked.* The persons therefore chiefly to be contended with, are such as commit flagitious crimes; crimes which infect others, defile the land, and stigmatize the offender; of which sort are idolatry, blasphemy, prophane swearing, cursing, sabbath prophanation, murder, whoredom, thefts, drunkenness, &c.

Job x. 7.

(3.) *Contending with the wicked, imports all just and due methods to repel the wickedness of transgressors.* The difference between good and bad men is fixed, each pleads

pleads his respective cause, pursues his proper design, acteth his own inclination, propagates his own likeness, and abets his party and leader. *Christ* and his interest command the strength of his subjects, in opposition to *Satan* and his followers: *Satan* as the head of the apostacy employs his followers in opposition to *Christ* and his *reforming* purposes: Great is the contradiction, and the contest vehement and extensive. The wicked are intent to restrain the godly from adhering to the laws of *Christ* their sovereign, and hence violence and persecution have their rise: On the other hand, the subjects of *Christ* endeavour to stop the deluge of impiety; they reason, exhort, pray, and live down immoralities; these do what they can to reform the world, as the others struggle to pervert it. They would rejoice that their instructions and intreaties were successful to reclaim the profligate; but when these avail not, they instance their zeal by a sharper testimony against crying provocations, and to their power subserve mens amendments by what embitters notorious crimes.

MAGISTRATES become a terror to evil doers, by the sword of justice; *ministers* rebuke and inflict church censures; *parents* and *masters* apply the correcting rod, lest sin grow by the impunity of children and servants.

Object.

SERM. VII. *Object.* SOME will say, these are oblig'd by *relation* and *office* to contend with offending correlates, but what obligation and power hath one *neighbour* or *equal* to embitter sin in another?

Ansiv. NEIGHBOURS and equals are obliged to reprove the faults of one another, Levit. xix. 17. it's God's exprefs charge; *Thou shalt in any wise rebuke thy neighbour, and not suffer sin upon him.* This is by no means to be omitted, nor should any pretence excuse from it: Thou shalt rebuke him *in any wise*; they must be the prophane imitators of Gen. iv 9. *Cain*, who say, *Am I my brother's keeper?* What is it to me, if he swear or be drunk? Let him look to himself, he is none of my charge; but such language is an affront to God's authority, who enacts, that thou shalt reprove him, and requires the sinner to accept of thy reproof. You must tell him the evil and danger of his wicked course; his amendment you must thus attempt, however displeasing it may be to him to bear it, or to yourselves to intermeddle in it.

Object. BUT suppose it be a duty to reprove by *words*, sure we may rest at that, whether the offender reform or no.

1. *Ansiv.* YOU must stop at this, if you lived where no punishments are *enacted* against those crimes which your reproof is unavailable to reform. In such a *Sodom* as allows the fore-mentioned enormities,
you

you must be satisfied with *Lot* to intreat, SERM. VII.
I pray you, brethren, do not so wickedly; Gen. xix. 7.
 the despised reprovor must not usurp the
 sword of the magistrate, but grieve at the
 abominations he wants authority to punish;
 the case is the same as to all such offences
 the law of the land takes no cognizance of,
 when other crimes be punishable by its in-
 stitutions.

2. *Ans. BUT verbal reproof will not
 be sufficient, where unreformed crimes are
 punishable by the law. If words will re-
 claim, 'tis well; but where these reclaim
 not, you are obliged to endeavour to re-
 form transgressors by legal severities, and
 inforce despised reproof by such punish-
 ments as they will more regard: An evil* Prov. xvii.
man seeketh only rebellion, therefore a cruel 11.
*messenger shall be sent against him; and this
 private persons should do by complaints to
 such as are authorized to judge, and inflict
 the penalties enacted. Informing in such
 cases is the necessary work of some; for if
 there be none to convict offenders, the pu-
 nishment is enacted in vain against the
 crimes they are guilty of, seeing it cannot
 be executed: Therefore as the declaring of* Deut. xvii.
mens faults to the magistrates is supposed 5.
to judicial censures, so the very parent was Deut. xxi. 20.
*obliged to inform against that debauched
 son, whom his own correction would not
 restrain. Nay, several think that very text,
 Reprove not a scorner, excuseth from ver-* Prov. ix. 8.
 bal

SERM. VII. bal reproof, only by exposing him to punishments more severe, which private persons cannot otherwise do, than by information; neither should any esteem this a reproach, for it was not accounted a work too mean for *princes* to be employed in.

Ezr. ix. 1.

HAVING made it plain, that *such as keep the law* is a periphrasis of the servants and subjects of the living God; and that the *wicked* here, are such as are found committing gross crimes; also that *contending* includeth severe penalties as well as reproof by words: I am sure the text is a sufficient ground for this observation.

Doct. SUCH as would approve themselves the subjects and servants of the living God, ought, nay, will, by just severities as well as reproof, endeavour the reformation of notorious offenders.

THIS doctrine enlarged and altered into other words, is the same as to say; he whose heart is right with God, will, (in this nation, where good laws are enacted against wickedness) not only reprove, but duly convict and bring to legal punishment, such as he finds to be cursers, swearers, prophaners of the Lord's-day, whoremongers, drunkards, &c. he will not forbear this for fear of shame, let who will reproach him; he'll do it, tho' his trade be in danger, and his person threatned and exposed.

THE text, as before explained, is a sufficient proof of the doctrine, but sad experience

perience acquainting us, how much harder it is to prevail with people to do what is their duty, than to prove it to be so; I shall not only add some further evidence for this duty from the argument included in the doctrine, but endeavour to plead that argument with your consciences; that if possible I may bring such to attempt the reformation of others, who have hitherto neglected it, and invigorate the hearts of those who have therein so laudably engaged.


CAN any argument be likelier than this to persuade all men to use due ways to reform offenders, that you cannot appear the real servants of Christ, if you omit it? Will any thing so compel such to this work who think they are his servants, as a demonstration that you have not the temper nor spirit of his servants, but are meer hypocritical pretenders, if you neglect it? And how can such who are his faithful servants be so excited to zeal for this work, as by convincing evidence, that if you be remiss, you *so far* offer violence to the *instincts* of your renewed nature? you disregard the *honour* and interests of your Blessed Lord; you frustrate the design of that *relation* to which you are admitted; you counter-act the genuine dispositions of all who are sincerely *devoted* to God's service; you desert the *party* to which you are united; you favour *satan* and his cause, whom you have renounced; and neglect that real *felicity*

SERM. which you are determined to pursue. Now
 VII. if such considerations remove not your in-
 ~~~~~ difference, and secure you not against fear  
 and idleness in this great design, what will?

ALL these motives will occur, but the great argument I shall more directly insist on is that which the doctrine presents to us, *viz.* *That none approve themselves the faithful servants of God, who do not endeavour the reformation of notorious offenders.* As for the other point, *viz.* that this endeavour must be by *severities* as well as by reproof, or milder ways, I think already proved, and therefore shall less enlarge on that.

Now, my well-beloved friends! would not you be found among the loyal subjects and faithful servants of your Creator and Redeemer? Yea, do not all of you profess to be so? Now God's challenge as to this foremention'd case, as well as others, is  
 Mal. i. 6. strict, *If I be a master, where is my fear; if I be a father, where is my honour? If I be your master, shew it by pleading my cause against transgressors; by that service shew I am indeed your Lord, and you my servants.* The time is hastening when all disguises will be taken off, and God shall  
 Mal. iii. 18. make an apparent *difference* between such as serve him in reality, and such as put him off with meer pretence; therefore be now willing to endure such convictions from his word, as he will fasten by his sentence  
 when

when he comes to judge your state by this SERM.  
 as the *rule of judgment*. Let no soul guilty VII.

as to this very matter of reforming others,  vainly support his pretence to God's service; for if you live in a stated neglect of resisting sin, and endeavours to reform the wicked, you are not a servant of God's: If you omit this, whatever you call yourselves, you do want the great essentials which constitute the temper, disposition and behaviour of those who are God's servants in reality. This will appear if you consider,

1. *You have not a true zeal for God's honour.* Can any of you doubt whether a man can be God's servant, who hath no zeal for his glory? whereas if you know any thing of religion, you must acknowledge that the glory of God is the *chief end* of every good man; and to that it's impossible to be indifferent. I must have a zeal for my chief end, and when that's exposed, I cannot but resent it, and endeavour its vindication and security with great concernedness of mind.

Now wherein is God more dishonoured than by open flagitious crimes? His sacred *name* is despised by common oaths; his *vengeance* play'd with by curses; his *day* polluted by prophaning the sabbath; the *authority* of our Almighty God, and of his laws, are trampled on by these and other open sins. When men dare *declare* I sa. iii. 9.  
*their sins as Sodom*, they bid defiance to his

SERM. government, they slight his threatenings,  
 VII. they condemn his precepts as unjust, they  
 contemn his promised rewards as trifles,  
 they openly avow the empire of the devil,  
 they justify man's apostacy in the view of  
 the world, and to their power they rase out  
 the divine image, and shut out the spirit's  
 operations, which would, if complied with,  
 produce in the soul those *impresses* of God's  
 perfections, wherein he is most properly  
 glorified.

AND can any one who serves and loves  
 his God, forbear to oppose this? Must not  
 Num.xxii. the zeal of all such kindle as *Phineas's* did?  
 30. Will not he take hold of all opportunities  
 to vindicate the laws, and assert the govern-  
 ment of his redeemer, benefactor and  
 ruler?

Mat. xxii. 2. IF you neglect the reforming of others,  
 30. you shew no true compassion or love to the souls  
 of sinners. Love to our neighbour is one  
 half of God's law; our neighbour's soul is  
 his better part, and therefore it's benefit is  
 to be most attended as an evidence of the  
 sincerity of that love to him, which our  
 Lord requires in his servants. Moreover,  
 love to men is an essential part of godliness;  
 for wherein are we like God, who is *love*,  
 if love be a stranger to us? Nor can any  
 thing be a grosser contradiction than to pre-  
 tend subjection to Christ, and yet renounce  
 love to our neighbour: And no less irre-  
 concilable would it be to love men, and  
 yet

yet suffer them to destroy themselves if we are capable to prevent it, by stopping their self-ruining course, and forcing them to consider. When persons openly commit their horrid villanies, *their sins go before-hand to judgment.* And can you with any face profess to love such men, whilst you tamely endure them to proceed for want of a warning by reproof, or fixing that warning by punishment when reproof is ineffectual? In which last case, *Ab! be thou reformed without penal restraint,* is no more an evidence of hearty love than, *Ab! be thou clothed* when garments are denied. It's no light matter to be accessary to the damnation of souls; and be sure there is a secret enmity in you against them, whose case requires your utmost pity, and yet it will not move you to do what you can towards their salvation, no not to assist the magistrate to inflict those penalties which may bring offenders to themselves.

3. IF you neglect reformation-work, you have not a just concern for the welfare of the community. A man truly devoted to God, will serve his generation; a publick spirit inspires him, and a common good is dearer to him than his own particular affairs: *David* is their pattern when he saith, *If I prefer not Jerusalem above my chiefest joy, let my right-hand forget her cunning.* The servant of God is so far under the power of self-denial, as to esteem the welfare of the

SERM.  
VII.



1 Tim. 5  
24.

Acts xiii.  
36.

Pfalm  
cxxxvii. 6

SERM. body of his people, in itself preferable to his  
 VII. own; and less than this cannot be inferred,  
 as the meaning of the words of *Moses* and  
*Paul*, to whatever transport you assign their  
 wishes. Now its impossible to have a publick  
 spirit, and not strive to reform the wicked;  
 because a general mischief is much promoted  
 by unsubdued vices, and the publick good  
 greatly depends upon reformation. This will  
 appear, if you consider how far,

(1.) UNCONTROULED vices do corrupt a people.

(2.) UNREFORMED vices expose a nation to judgments.

(1.) *Uncontrouled vices do corrupt a people.*  
 Evil examples infect and ensnare; and where  
 sin goes unpunished, it spreads the faster,  
 because it appears so innocent a thing as not  
 to deserve correction. How violently will men  
 be drawn into those crimes whereto degenerate  
 nature inclineth, when they find all seem to  
 approve of them, because none call the most  
 notorious offenders to account? The torrent  
 of impiety must rise in that place, where many  
 allure, and none rebuke it. But surely the  
*best men* in such a region must be base, selfish,  
 and cowardly; it can never agree with a  
 publick spirit to sit still when you see the  
 plague to spread, a plague which so defileth,  
 enslaveth, debaseth, disordereth, and  
 perverts your countrymen and fellow citizens:

zens: All which is fulfilled by the immoralities which are unrepelled by punishments.

(2.) *Unreformed vices expose a nation to judgments.* Gross transgressions are called *crying sins*, because they cry aloud to heaven for desolating punishments; where these abound, the Lord will avenge. This righteous governor of the world will not suffer *proclaimed* wickedness to go unpunished, no not where his worship is frequented; yea, he is surer to visit his professing people than any other, for their abominations: *You only have I known of all the families of the earth, therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities.* Amos iii. Calamities hang over that place where rebellion is committed against God; and certainly he whose quiver is so full of destructive arrows, cannot be at a loss how to visit all ranks of men with judgments, of which they shall be *sensible*, and against which they cannot *preserve* themselves.

BUT can any of you imagine that you are concerned for the good of your nation, and not divert its misery by opposing those sins which do procure it? All care for the community is extinct when you do as good as say, I will not be at the least pains or trouble to make them a holy and a happy people; I'll not cast in my mite to prevent their defilement or destruction: Such *Gal-lio's* are unnatural as well as unchristian.

SERM. Pretend not inability, for each of you may  
 VII. do something, at least you are able to complain against obstinate sinners; and if you can do no more towards saving the land, this will acquit you, and be accepted: whereas if you omit this little you can do, you would not advance reformation had you the greatest power; for that selfish, base, careless, cowardly spirit, would *then* restrain you from this good work as well as now.

I MIGHT have added the greatness of those benefits which reformation secures to a land, every one whereof makes thy neglect in promoting that reformation, a great instance of thy unconcernedness for the publick. But I proceed,

4. *If you neglect national reformation, you have not that true regard to your own happiness, which rational self-love directs. Carnal self-love destroys mankind, but rational self-love is that principle by which God governs this world, and on which he grafteth grace itself: This God owneth himself the author of, and never separates his service from our aim at our own happiness, but requires the pursuit of both these together. Nor indeed can we attain the one without the other; for if we truly glorify God in a way of service, we shall be happy; and if ever we be happy, it must be by serving him who is glorified in our happiness.*

I THINK



I THINK it needless to spend words to SERM. prove that you cannot serve God acceptably, unless you love yourselves; nor that VII. you love not yourselves if you disregard your own happiness. The thing most likely to be doubted by rational creatures, is, that you despise your own happiness, if you neglect national reformation; yet this you must be convinced of, when you lay to heart,

(1.) *That you contract much guilt by your neglect to reprove and rebuke great sinners in order to their reformation.*

THIS is part of that divine law, which the servants of God are obliged to keep: He hath set this upon your consciences as part of your duty; *Thou shalt not suffer sin on thy brother, but thou shalt rebuke him.* Lev. xix. 17. And we are enjoined to *reprove the unfruitful works of darkness.* Eph. v. 11. Must not guilt lie on that man who lives in the stated omission hereof? Moreover, if thy grace be true, thou dost not only violate plain precepts, but guilt is aggravated, because thou offerest violence to the *instincts* of a regenerate nature; for that prompts thee to testify against sin from a divine *antipathy*, and excites thee to make men better from those holy propensions which render goodness amiable and delightful, wherever it may be found.

GUILT thus aggravated, attending the neglect of national reformation, where is he

SERM. he that truly serves the Lord, who dares  
 VII. contract it, and make himself partaker of  
 ~~~~~ other mens crimes by sinful connivance?  
 Or can a man of that character sit easy
 under this guilt from day to day? Is it a
 small thing to have God to charge you
 with a disregard to his interest; and to
 say concerning you, Here's one who pro-
 fesseth himself of my *army*, but will not
 strike a stroke for me: He prays, *Thy*
 name be ballowed, but dares not contend
 with open blasphemers: *Thy kingdom come*,
 yet suffereth *satan* to empire it without
 controul: *Thy will be done on earth as it is*
in heaven, and yet allows my laws to be
 openly trampled on, without so much as a
 complaint against the most heinous trans-
 gressor.

Matt. vi.

GREAT rebukes from heaven may well
 be expected against such as this accusation
 belongs to; nor could you arraign God's
 justice, if you and your children should be
 given up to be infected with those abomi-
 nations you will not reprove: Yea, must
 not you and your families expect a deep
 share in those miseries you refused to pre-
 vent? Nay, should God make the land
 happy upon its reformation by other in-
 struments, may not you fear that neither
 you nor your families should be sharers in
 that blessedness?

(2.) *You lose great benefits for yourselves
 and posterity, which endeavoured reforma-
 tion*

tion would entail. If desolation comes on this unreformed land, notwithstanding thy lost labour, thou mayest hope to be marked for deliverance; for we see *Noah*, who strove to reform the old world, saved from the common deluge with his family; and grieved *Lot*, with his children, escaped the flames of *Sodom*.

SERM.

VII.

Ez. ix. 41.
Gen. vi.

NEITHER will it be a light matter if sin should still abound, and judgments ensue, that these quieting thoughts will possess thy mind: Could I have reformed and saved this people, I would have done it; my conscience bears me witness, that I, to my utmost, have endeavoured to put a stop to those impieties that procured these woes which now so distress my country. But if virtue should spring up, and wickedness hide the head, how happy wilt thou find thyself in having *contributed* thereto? Those *tears* which streamed at the view of heinous sins, will be turned into the truest joy and gladness; gladness to see sabbaths sanctified, which used to be profaned; the name of God hallowed by a sacred reverence, instead of oaths or blasphemy; and sobriety and temperance obtaining in the room of debauchery and excesses.

Pf. cxix.
136.

How will it revive thy years to see the blessed effect of this change of things? when peace, prosperity, love, health, the success of the ministry, and a harmony among all sorts and degrees of men, shall jointly witness

SERM. nefs God's approbation of a *reformed* people!

VII. Thy own *graces* will improve by the good examples such a state of things affords, and those pourings out of the Spirit which it supposeth: Thou wilt be free from the *dread* of impending judgments, and instead thereof live in the chearful expectance of publick good: Nay, how comfortable will it be when thou *dieſt*, to behold an entail of helps to the holinefs and happinefs of thy poſterity? Theſe things may well convince us, that ſuch as neglect national reformation, diſregard their *own happinefs*.

I THINK I need inſiſt on no other *mediums* to prove that none keep the law who contend not with the wicked, or which is the ſenſe of that, *None are the true ſervants of God who oppoſe not ſin, and endeavour not the reformation of notorious ſinners*. This you muſt allow to be beyond diſpute, unleſs you can think him a faithful ſervant of God, who hath no true zeal for God's honour, no real compaſſion or love to ſouls, no due concern for the community, nor true regard to his own happinefs, or to that of his poſterity. It follows therefore that you muſt *renounce* that name, or engage yourſelves in reſiſting ſin, and promoting the reformation of others by all juſt means; and know, that your aſſuming that *name unjuſtly*, will no more avail you than if it were renounced; and if you are not the ſervants of God in *reality*, the
privileges

privileges of such belong not to you; nay, you are the slaves of the devil, and the servants of the flesh; and, oh! how miserable will the portion of such be found at last? SERM.
VII.

I SHALL apply this truth, 1. *Particularly* to the societies for reformation.

2. *MORE generally* to all who hear me.

1. To such as are members of the societies for reformation, or any way engaged in this great work. You deserve *encouragement*, nor may a word of *advice* be altogether needless. What I judge proper to you, will be comprehended under two heads.

(1.) *Make light of the discouragements which attend the work of national reformation.* What you have heard may vindicate you from reproach, and steel you against fears. Can that be called *busy meddling*, by which you approve yourselves the servants of the living God, and fill up your places as such for God's glory, and a common good? Or should any call you *severe*, when you stop men from destroying themselves and nation? Can any wonder that reproachful *lies* pursue you in this enterprize? or be so imprudent as not allow for it when you thus disturb the kingdom of the devil, stem the tide of wickedness to which nature is so prone, and contend with a multitude who, by long custom, have become too licentious to scruple either what they *say* or *do*. Need you *fear* your opposers,

SERM. opposers, when you see *what* their contest
 VII. is for, even vices reprov'd by the light of
 nature; *and works the Lord Jesus came to
 destroy?* And *who* they are that contend
 with you, even no other than the *wicked*,
 who make God their enemy by breaking
 his laws, who espouse the cause of *satan*
 against that of Christ, and when awa-
 kened will *condemn* their own follies, and
 approve of your restraints.

1 John
 iii. 8.

OUGHT you to *despond* as if too feeble
 to *carry on this* work, when you have
 Christ, and all men of true publick spirits,
 on your side; when your attempts are sus-
 tained by *good laws*; when you are blessed
 already with so considerable *success*; and
 the cause is God's, in whose power are the
 hearts of all men?

DARE you be so impressed by discour-
 agements, as to *cease* this divine work!
 when it is so *noble* in itself, so peculiarly
 the care of the Almighty, so certain of suc-
 cess at last, so glorious in its rewards, and
 your time so short to labour or suffer be-
 fore you wear the crown? I join with my
 brethren in bidding you *be of good courage*,
 and to depend on God's protection, which
 hath hitherto so interposed, that as yet you
 have not resisted unto blood, striving against
 sin.

Isa. xli. 6.

Heb. xii.

4.

(2.) *Manage this reforming work as will
 most tend to its success.* To this end, keep
 far from the evils you do rebuke in others;
 convince

convince, by good examples, such as you SERM.
 inforce by penalties; watch your temper VII.
 and words, that you give no cause of
 stumbling to those with whom you con-
 tend; let your contests be with men *as*
wicked, and not from by-respects; let it be
 without partiality, with *all* whom you find
 obstinately wicked. Use *prudence* as well
 as conscience in all your undertakings;
 therefore never exceed the laws, neither
 accuse any whom you cannot fully convict.
 Make it appear to the criminal that it is
 sense of duty, and not a meddling temper;
 it is a design of reforming sinners, and not
 enmity, cruelty, or selfish ends, which en-
 cline you to get them punished. Finally,
 be humble, modest, and watchful; faith-
 fully reform, to the *utmost* of your power,
 and back all your attempts with fervent
prayer to God for his conduct, success, and
 blessing.

2. I SHALL now address myself more
generally to all who hear me, and con-
 tract the improvement of this truth to two
 heads.

(1.) *Love and readily submit to reforming* Amos v.
means. I wish too many are not guilty of 10.
bating him who reproveth, whereas such a
 man is your best friend, for he exposeth
 himself to *pluck you as a brand out of the* Jude 23.
burning. He spends his time, and adven-
 tures your indignation, to keep you from
 destroying yourselves and others. Its great
 folly

SERM. folly to embrace the *flatterer*, who serves
 VII. his own turn, and to abhor a *reformer*,
 ~~~~~ who is intent on your truest interest.

Jer. vii. 5. BE also willing to *amend your ways and doings*. Tremble lest you be in their number who hate and refuse to be reformed. How sad is it to be fond of your ugliest *blemishes*, and unwilling to be delivered from your mortal *disease*! Whatever mistaken conceits possess you, its your *shame*

Phil. iii. 19. you *glory in*; its self-ruin you are so resolved on; and your obstinate adherence to your vicious courses, is no other than des-

Prov. i. 28. perate *madness*: the considerate do now esteem it so, and in a while it will be confessed such by yourselves. God is now *esaying* your amendment, by exciting his *servants* to reprove and punish your villainies; for this you will be accountable as well as for all his other methods of conversion. Whilst he strives, there's hope of thy reclaiming; but know he numbers the days of his patience, and the means by which he would cleanse thee, and if thou still resist, he will give thee up to thy lusts, and soon destroy thee as incorrigible; *Because I have purged thee, and thou wast not purged, thou shalt not be purged any more from thy filthiness, until I have caused my fury to rest upon thee.*

Ezek. xxiv. 13.

ON then that you would strive to obey all the ways whereby God instructs you! Engage your minds to serious *consideration*,  
 that



that so things may be represented in a true light, and with that pressing weight as to *affect* you suitably to their nature; then it may be expected that you will be willing to part with the abominations, which you dare not *justify* on a death-bed. I charge you, in the name of that God who is your *owner*, and will be your *judge*, that you love not what he abhors; that you venture not on what he so plainly, seriously, and often forbids; and that you be not such *fools as to make a mock at those sins* which will render you infinitely more miserable than all the punishments of God or man *in this life* can make you. In a word, blush that your lusts should ever be so loved, as to make you content to suffer any thing upon their account; and now apply yourselves to Christ for liberty from that thralldom, wherein your vice restrains you; that so the good laws of men may not be a terror, nor God an enemy.

2. *Let your reformation extend beyond those sins the laws of the land take cognizance of.* The law of God is the only adequate rule of reformation; whatever is a *transgression of this, is sin*, tho' human laws should command it, or think it too trivial to be forbidden. Therefore study God's law in the extent and *spirituality* of it, and frame your lives by no lower a rule. Watch against *inward sins*, which the eyes of man discern not, *for God will*

Prov. xiv.

9.

1 John iii.

4.

Rom. ii.

16.

SERM. judge the secrets of the heart, and eternally punish many *civil* persons for their *heart* unbelief, malignity and impenitency. Amend also those *outward faults* of which magistrates take no notice; they restrain gross affronts to the divine being, and such things as disturb human societies. But be you convinced that God's *penal sanctions* extend to whatever himself hath forbidden; and its at thy utmost peril if thou repent not of thy lies, thy neglect of God's worship in thy family and closet, thy covetous griping, thy concealed knaveries, thy levity and backsliding, thy waste of time, thy inordinate passions, and the like. *My brethren!* God will reprove *all these* as well as those crimes which the laws of the land do punish: therefore *these* must be conscientiously forsaken, as ever you desire a saving interest in God's covenant, or would avoid eternal destruction from the presence of the Lord.

TAKE therefore your measure from *God's statute-book*, (the bible) and not only from man's. Oh live! and be what that appoints, for God will vindicate his own authority, and be *sincerely* regarded in whatever he hath made to be the duty of his creatures.

Finally, BE not content to abstain from the sins forbidden by the divine law, but *strive to obtain and exercise the opposite graces and virtues which it commandeth*; for  
negative

negative goodness will not suffice to save any person capable of obedience in what the statutes of God enjoin as our endowment and employ: therefore let your habitual *frame* and constant *exercise* discover, that the *affirmative* precepts do as effectually direct your temper and practice, as the *negative* precepts do restrain them: *Learn* Iſa. i. 17. *to do well as carefully as you cease to do evil.* I shall conclude with a few *motives* to excite you both to reform *yourselves*, and to endeavour the reformation of *others*.

I. *Remember your late troubles, and retain their voice.* Can you forget what you so lately felt, as the effect of your former sins? What poverty accompanied such as fled? what frights, losses, and anguish, possessed them as staid behind! You felt much, and were in the highest danger of undergoing more. Oh! will you not reform those immoralities which provoked a merciful God to disarm you, and leave you naked in your enemies hands? Were their insults and threatnings so agreeable, as to leave no impression? Had your dangers no voice because they are past? Know you not that it was owing to *providential restraints*, and not to your power, or the good-will of many of your foes, that you were not butchered, and your infants tossed on pikes as formerly? And can you be so *stupid*, as to think God called you not to reformation, when he exposed you to the brink

SERM. of ruin for former sins? or that your past  
 VII. calamities do not remain a *lively caution*  
 against persisting in those sins? Must not  
 you be *infatuated*, if you reassume the  
 crimes you were so lately convinced of,  
 and be horridly *ungrateful*, if you repeat  
 them because your dangers are removed by  
 his goodness whom you had provoked? He  
 is profane who acknowledgeth not God's  
 design by all you felt or feared, *was to take*  
 away your sin; therefore be so regardful  
 of God, and so wise for yourselves, as to  
 say, *After all that is come upon us for our*  
*evil deeds, &c. should we again break thy*  
*commandments, wouldst not thou be angry*  
*with us till thou hast consumed us; so that*  
*there should be no remnant, nor escaping?* Re-  
 solve then, we will not commit those evils,  
 nor suffer others to repeat those abomina-  
 tions, against which God so plainly testi-  
 fied in the distresses we lately suffered.

Isa. xxvii.  
 4.

Ezra ix.  
 13, 14.

Deut.  
 xxxiii. 29.

2. CONSIDER the signal deliverances God  
 hath wrought, and the amazing prosperity  
 to which you are so soon arrived. He is  
 blind and base spirited, who owns not that  
 Ireland was saved by the Lord. Review the  
 strength of the enemy, and disadvantages  
 of your friends: Was it of man, that dis-  
 tressed, feeble, exposed Londonderry was  
 preserved against so formidable an host? Or  
 that such a multitude of well equipped sol-  
 diers were routed by a few undisciplin'd  
 Fenniskillen men? Was not God seen in the  
 amazing

amazing retreat of those weak, ill provided, diseased forces with duke *Schomberg*? Was it not *the Lord's doing*, that our *king* fell not by that cannon ball which wounded his shoulder? and that he obtained a victory under such great disadvantages at the *Boyn*? Was it not our God that saved *this city* from being burnt by the enraged enemy, at his return? How near was all to be lost again at *Atblone*, if God had not infatuated the enemy to leave the works of that town undemolished, and so afford a defence for our forces that had passed the river, who must otherwise have been cut off by that far superior strength which the enemy had brought down upon them? Who can deny God the honour of guiding that bullet which cut off *St. Ruth*, when he was directing the guarding of that advantageous pass, where our forces without a miracle must have been destroyed?

SERM.  
VII.

ALL must see the *arm of God was made* Iſa. lii. 10. *bare* for your help; he dispirited, divided, and infatuated the enemy, and this apparently and often. And can you be so *vile* as to think God did all this that you might commit abominations? that you might return to your vomit? and commence a new rebellion against himself?

MOREOVER, your *sudden healing* is as signally the Lord's doing as your very safety: who could imagine you should in so few years be so fully peopled; your stocks

SERM. fo increased ; your houfes built ; your trade  
 VII. revive ; your rents advanced ; the ordinances  
 of God reftored ; and all things flourish  
 fo as to make you the objects of envy.

How can you perfift in provoking a God fo great, and finning againft a God fo merciful and kind ? Hath he done all this to make you capable of offending him more, or to oblige you in gratitude to reform ?

Rôm ii. 4. Sure his *goodnefs leads to repentance* ; therefore magiftrates fhould refolve, and all affift them to do as Jofiah, *who took away all the abominations out of all the countries, and made all that were prefent to ferve the Lord their God.*

2 Chron.  
 xxxiv. 33.

3. You may humbly and mournfully confefs, *there's much to be reformed, notwithstanding all the evil you have fuffered, and the good you receive.* God might well expect that a people fo fmitted and ftrange-ly faved, fhould be very peculiar in their walk, and devout in their inward frame. But alas, is it not far from this with many, with moft ! How much open prophane- nefs, (which the laws difcountenance) doth ftill abound ! Oaths may be heard, and drunkennefs feen in your ftreets ; the *Strand* and other places, witnefs how fabbaths are un- fanctified : ftupid is he that cannot wonder to behold fuch a return to fin, after fuch fhakes, defolations, terrors and deliverances. Were provocations confined to the mockers at ferious religion, the aggravation were lefs :

less: But alas, many who profess strictness, and expect eternal happiness in God's service, are corrupted, and forsake the *law of our God*; many such are drowned in the *world*, as if heaven had not room in your hearts; you *match* your children without regard to grace, as if you cared not tho' the devil had their souls; you neglect God's worship in your *families*, as if you despised the curse that hangeth over such, *Jer. x. 25*. You are *proud* and vain, as if you would vye with the world in its fashion; you are *extravagant*, as if you had never wanted any thing, or were never in danger of losing all: nay, as if this were not enough, I hear some professors and church-members are grown so loose, as to frequent and plead for those nurseries and schools of wickedness, the *play-houses*, places the devil claimeth as his own, by his own account when he was dispossessed of one, he entred into there, saying, *What had she to do on my ground*; places the visible saints of all sects account scandalous, and ministers of all professions wrote against. What have many ascribed your debaucheries and ruin to, more than these? And can you encourage such by your presence, when your awakened consciences must tell you, at least on your sick beds, wretched I! that time was unredeemed which I spent there; oh that I could recal it! It was the gratifying my vitious vain heart which brought me

SERM. there, and now I feel my guilt! There  
 VII. are other more inward faults to be amended,  
 ~~~~~ which I must leave to your own consciences, as decays in grace, loss of your first love, formalities in duties; yet these are great faults, and will produce bitter fruits if unreformed.

4. You are but upon trial in all that prosperity you now enjoy, and far from being out of the reach of danger; you have no lease of it, that is not forfeitable, and God tries you how you will carry it, and speaks to delivered *Ireland*, as *John v. 14. Sin no more, lest a worse thing do befall thee.* God can strike again, your enemies are not dead, nor your defence impregnable; former sins which you may commit may bring your former woes: Say not prophanely as they, *Isa. ix. 9, 10.* lest he say, as *ver. 11.* How easily can God scatter you again, if you sin again! how soon can God take away the life of the *king*, upon whom so much depends of your safety! Your unreformedness after such methods looks like a sad presage, that God's sword will yet be drawn, and that he hath not made an end of smiting, when you seem resolved to begin to sin afresh; know that God's jealous eye is upon you, to observe whether after all that's past over you, you amend or not.

5. If God be forced by your growing worse to renew his controversy, your calamities

ties

ties will be heavier than what you have yet SERM.
 endured, if not your utter ruin. Your sins VII.
 will be aggravated hereafter by the fore
 judgments you have felt, the loud warn-
 ings you have met with, the strange delive-
 rances you have found, and the means and
 mercies you now enjoy; and be sure these
 aggravations will be found in the weight of
 those strokes whereby God will testify a-
 gainst them, *Isa.* lxiii. 9, 10. God's re-
 bukes do rise still higher, *Amos* iv. Bethink
 you then how oft God had smitten and
 saved *Ireland*; and how desolate he hath
 made the churches of *France*, *Hungary*,
Bobemia, *Alsatia*, and the *Palatinate*:
 they were oft smitten, oft delivered, and
 at last are laid utterly waste; and do we
 hold our mercies by a firmer charter than
 they did? Have we past under less methods
 of amendment than they? Hath God
 waited longer on them than you? Is God's
 honour more concerned in our ruin than in
 theirs? Will not your sins cry as loud in
 God's ears? Are not the men God employ'd
 to correct them, the popish enemies to God's
 cause as well as ours? And were there not
 some faithful, godly, praying protestants in
 those places as well as among us? Oh then,
 what can allay your fears, or uphold your
 hopes, that you, the protestants of *Ireland*,
 may think to sin on and prosper, or at
 most be but gently smitten still? Flatter
 not yourselves when you see God is ma-
 naging

SERM. naging his controversy with others, by utter desolations; it's a time of jealousy, therefore awake: Reformation must be your safe-guard, or you delude yourselves, and will but dream yourselves out of the Gospel, the plenty and the peace you do now enjoy. You will find that a resolution to provoke God more, will end in such plagues as will devour your mercies, and embitter the remembrance of them; when God shall lay you waste with his judgments, and pursue you with his wrath wherever you fly.

OH that these things, which ought to persuade, may by the blessing of God, force and fix such resolves as these! I will by the grace of Christ faithfully search what needs amendment, and reform to the *utmost* of my conviction, whatever I find amiss in myself and family; that so we may not forfeit our present enjoyments, and bring utter woe upon ourselves and others. Yea, I will *contend with the wicked*, and do my utmost to restrain their sins, that at least they may not cry so loud as to make the nation desolate.



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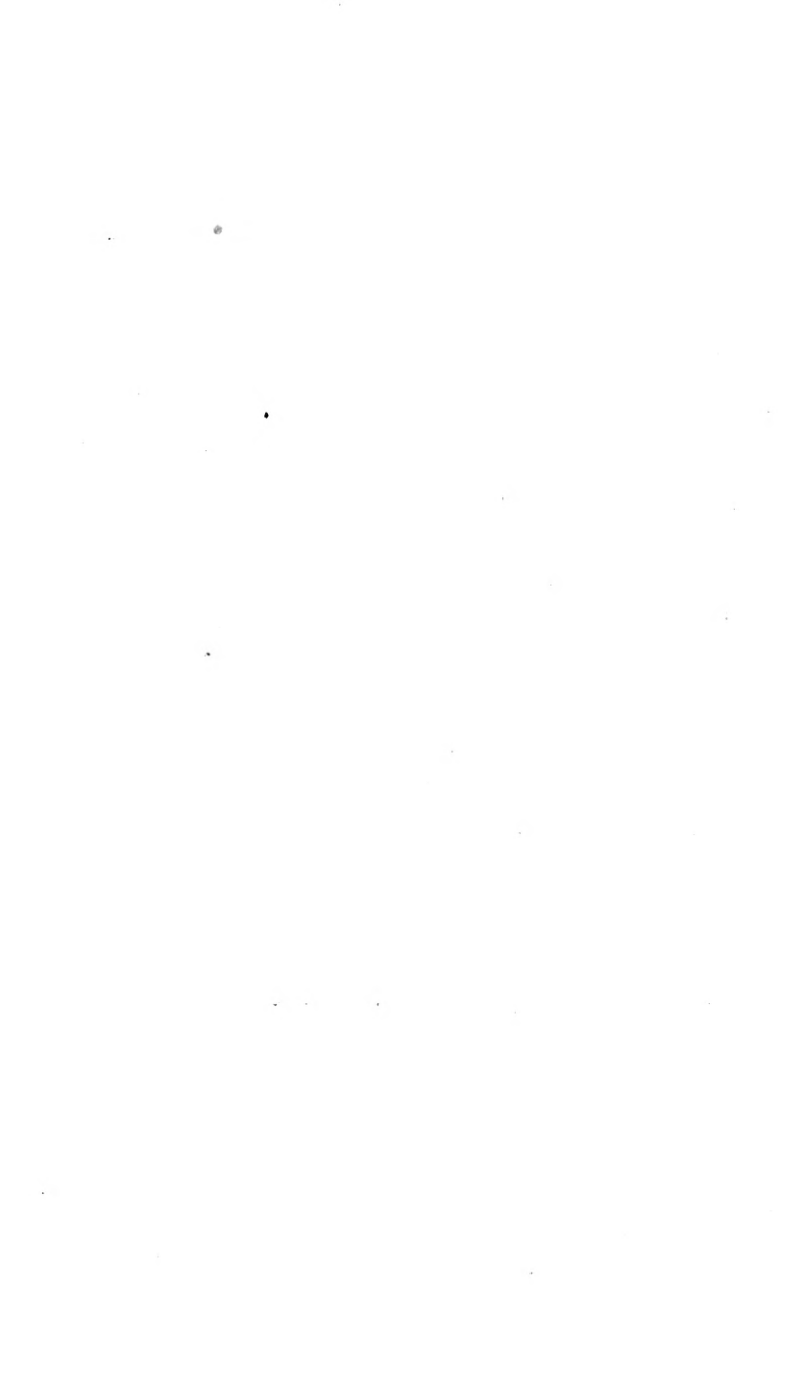
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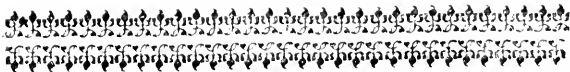
O N

The D E A T H of the

Rev. Mr. WOODHOUSE.







T O

The CONGREGATION at
Little St. Helens, lately attend-
 ing the ministry of the Reverend
 Mr. *Woodhouse*.



Several indispositions, with some backwardness to publish this sermon, made it late before I could attempt an answer to your request. In transcribing it, I found a necessity of enlarging on those heads in the former part, which were but named in your hearing. There the subject is something obscure, yet seeing the scriptures only, were capable of giving any certain account of the nature of prophecy; I less repine, that I am confined to my bible, by circumstances which deny access to my other books, to search the conjectures of Jewish or Christian writers.

There's a paragraph likewise added to the character of your late worthy pastor, viz. Some instances of divine mercy to him in his life and death; which I would not have mistaken, as if I thought the want of, yea, or the evils contrary to most of those,
were

The Epistle Dedicatory.

were any way inconsistent with the true felicity of a faithful minister. No, no: He is happy notwithstanding hardships, whom God guideth here with his counsel, and afterwards brings to glory. Nevertheless such privileges ought to be regarded, because however sovereignty may exert itself in withholding these from some; yet those servants of Christ who enjoy them, seem fitted to use them without a snare; and not so capable of designed service in the want of them. Yea, all must thence conclude, we serve a master as able to supply us with the blessings of a present state, as with those of a future; and therefore it's from the contrivances of wisdom ever join'd with goodness, that any useful minister shall want them.

You have a great stock to account for, whom God entrusted with two such ministers; the death of both should be entertain'd as a solemn warning, to apply yourselves to give a comfortable account by due improvements. That this as well as the former discourse may greatly contribute thereto, shall be the prayer of,

Your Servant in the Gospel,

Daniel Williams,



ZECHARIAH i. 5.

And the prophets, do they live for ever ?



IT'S usual with the sacred writers, in cases which are plain, to conclude a point by *interrogations*; that so we might be more affectingly convinced, when an appeal is thus made to the common sense of mankind, that it cannot be other wise. My text is among the instances of this kind, *Do the prophets live for ever? q. d.* It's most plain and certain they do not live for ever; it's manifest to every man, that the prophets of *former ages* are among the dead, and those of the *present* are sure to follow into the same state. You of this congregation will not easily suspect a truth, so sadly attested by the death of one and another faithful dispensers of the Gospel among you. Nor can I without sorrow find

SERM.
VIII.

SERM. find myself preaching the funeral sermons
 VIII. of both of them, in so short a span; but
 submission to divine providence is as well
 our interest as our duty, and when the im-
 provement of the most severe is possible and
 required: I have for that end fixed on this
 subject, as the plain language of these sud-
 den breaches.

Obf. *The prophets do not live for ever,
 but die as other men.*

I shall consider,

I. THE persons spoken of: viz. *pro-
 phets.*

II. WHAT'S predicated concerning
 them: *They do not live for ever, but die
 as other men.*

S E C T. I.

I. THE persons spoken of are *prophets*:
 A prophet is a title of such trust and ho-
 nour, that *Christ* himself bears this charac-
 ter, which you see in those words, *But*
Moses truly said unto the fathers, a prophet
shall the Lord your God raise up unto you,
&c. And it shall come to pass, that every
soul that beareth not this prophet, shall be
destroyed from among the people. Persons
 in this office are reputed of that necessity
 and use to the world, that king *Joash* be-
 wails a dying prophet in these words;

My

My father, my father, the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. From their peculiar intimacy with God, they are called *men of God*. And undoubtedly they are his instruments in effecting his most gracious purposes towards mankind: For by them he makes known himself, and reveals his will and counsel, in what concerneth their *eternal* happiness, as well as *temporal*.

THESE are the persons whose *mission* God solemnly and oft avoucheth, and whose message he is most concerned to stand by and execute. For the safety of their persons he is so solicitous, *Do my prophets no harm*; they who receive them are sure of a *reward*. Yea, so jealous is God on their behalf, that the arm of a king shall wither, if he *stretch out a hand against them*; and very children are devoured by *bears* for but scoffing at them.

BUT lest you should on the one hand think I shall assume too much, in applying to Gospel-ministers, any thing spoken of the prophets; or, on the other hand be misled to ascribe too much to us, if we are included in that character: I shall let you see, that two sorts of persons are designed by the name of *prophets*.

I. SOME are *prophets in the more eminent sense*, viz. Such persons as are extraordinarily called, and inspired, for the im-

SERM.
VIII.

2 Kings
xiii. 14.
1 Sam. ii.

27.

Psal. cv.

15.

Mat. x. 41.

1 Kings

xiii. 4.

2 Kings ii.

24.

SERM. mediate revelation of God's will, or future
VIII. events.

2. SOME are prophets in a less eminent sense; viz. Such as are called in a more ordinary manner, and by the more common gifts and assistances of the Spirit, in conjunction with their own study; and explain and apply the truths published and revealed before. Of this sort are the ordinary ministers of the Gospel, tho' those immediate revelations are not pretended by them, as were common to the other sort of prophets.

I shall speak of each of these.

I. THE prophets in a more eminent sense, were persons called in an extraordinary manner, and inspired for the more immediate revelation of God's will, or of future events. These indeed are most commonly designed by the word *prophets*. They were not confined to one family or tribe, as the *Aaronical* priesthood was: They were not such by education, preparation or acquirements of their own; tho' sometimes God was pleased to inspire some of those societies, called, *The sons of the prophets*. If you ask, why these are termed the *sons of the prophets*? I answer, because they did altogether apply themselves to the duties of religion, and devout exercises under the conduct of some great acknowledged prophet, as *Samuel*, *Elijah*, *Elisha*, &c. but you ought not to think that

that all of them became prophets; and much less, that their guides could at their own will, derive to them a spirit of prophecy by their preparatory education; however that might tend to remove sundry impediments to that office. This subject requires to be enlarged on, beyond what a part of a sermon can admit; yet I give a few hints.

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(I.) GOD revealed his will to these prophets in a more *immediate* manner, than to ordinary ministers: I say *more* immediately than to us, because it was so, even when God made use of the ministry of *angels* to declare his mind. Indeed, this way of revelation cannot be called so immediate, as when the matter was internally suggested by the Holy Ghost to the prophet's mind; or when God himself formed words, externally conveyed to the ear of the prophet, as *1 Sam. iii. 11.* or figures placed before his eyes.

NEVERTHELESS a message by angels may be called immediate, if compared with the common way of God's discovering his mind to us; as when the angel bid *Zechariah, Cry thou, saying, thus saith the Lord of hosts, I am jealous, &c.* You will find several receive some of their prophecies in this manner; as *Daniel, St. John, &c.* In such cases, the angel is, at least, as properly to be called the prophet; as the man who received the discovery from him.

Zech. i.

14, 16.

Dan. x.

&c.

Rev. i. 1:

SERM. On which account it may be, that the
 VIII. angel spake to St. *John*, *I am thy fellow*
 Rev. xxii. *servant, and of thy brethren the prophets.*

9.

BUT the more immediate revelation was, when the Spirit himself represented objectively to the prophets, what they were to deliver as the will of God; which as much obliged the faith, and obedience of such they were sent to, as if God had immediately spoken to them, what he so uttered by these as his mouth. And *David's* account of the matter is clear; *The Spirit of the Lord spake by me, and his word was in my tongue.* The same is signified as to others by such words as these, *It's revealed by his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.* And as he spake by the mouth of the holy prophets. And what God hath spoken by the mouths of all his prophets. What obedience was due to the words of these you may easily infer, when they are declared to be the very commandments of God, which he commanded by his servants the prophets; and disobedience is confessed to be a sin, charged and punished as such.

2 Sam.

xxiii. 20.

Eph. iii. 5.

Lukei. 70.

Act. iii. 21.

Ezra ix.

10, 11.

(2.) The manner of this more immediate revelation was *different*. Sometimes by dreams and visions: God came to *Abraham* in a dream, *God said to him in a dream.* The *Psalmist* in like manner informs us, *Thou spakest in vision to thy holy one, and saidst, &c.* The same *Ezekiel*, *Isaiab*, *Daniel*, and most of the prophets found frequently.

Gen. xx.

3, 5.

Pf. lxxxix.

19.

frequently. Several prophecies are called SERM. visions, as the vision of *Nabum* and of *Obadiab*. VIII. Oft there was no difference between revelations by dreams, and by visions; *viz.* when the vision befel them in their sleep, and when figures were presented to them in their dreams. Things thus occurring, the words are used promiscuously, and signify but the same thing even when both the words are used: So as *Job xxxiii. 15. In a dream, in a vision of the night. Daniel speaks to Nebuchadnezzar, Thy dream and the visions of thy head.* Dan. ii. 28. In the same manner speaking of himself, *Daniel had a dream, and visions of his head.* Dan. vii. 1. But sometimes there were visions seen when the person was awake; and as the others are called visions of the *night*, and *night* visions; so these appeared when it was *day*, and the prophet free from sleep. Such *Daniel* mentions at the river *Hiddekil*; *I lift up mine eye and looked, and behold a man clothed in linnen, &c.* yet this vision struck him on his face, and put him into a sleep, *v. 9.* but raised him up, *v. 10.* The like vision had *Samuel* when awake, which is called a *vision*; tho' he only heard the word of the Lord by a *voice*, and saw not any similitude. Nay, the word [*vision*] is oft used for internal inspiration, as well as for emblematical resemblances; so the *vision* of *Isaiab*, Isa. i. 1. &c.

SERM. YET however extensively the word [vi-
 VIII. sion] is applied, there is an inspiration
 whereby God oft revealed his will to the
 prophets, wherein there were not those im-
 pressive images, appearances and voices,
 which more commonly attended visions
 taken in the strictest sense, and did greatly
 affect the bodies and animal spirits of such
 as had these visions.

By this *inspiration* I mean, the holy
 spirit *suggesting* inwardly and in a still man-
 ner, the truths he moved the prophets to
 make known, and deliver in the name of
 God. With respect to this it's often said,
 the word of the Lord came to men; as to
Jeremiah, Jonah, Samuel, Elisha, &c.

Jer. i. 4.
 Jon. i. 1.
 1 Sam. v.
 10.
 2 Kings
 xvii. 3.

Yet mistake me not, as if inspirations
 were confined to this more still manner of
 revelation: For there was as real, and pro-
 per an inspiration by dreams and visions, as
 in this; and the Spirit of the Lord is said
 to fall upon them, and his word to come
 unto them by each of these; as you may
 see by *Ezekiel* and many others. Yea, and
All scripture is given by inspiration, as well
 as some: Yea, it's extended to all true pro-
 phets; as St. *Peter* instructs us, *The pro-
 phesy in old time came not by the will of man,
 but holy men of God spake as they were moved
 by the Holy Ghost.* Moreover, as to the
 designed effect, they all came to the same
 thing; if you respect such revelations as
 had a common regard, especially in what
 concerns

Ezek. i. 3,
 4, 5, &
 cap. xi. 5.
 1 Tim. iii.
 16.
 2 Pet. i. 21.

concerns any part of the rule of faith or manners: For by each, the Spirit signified the matter intended to be revealed, in such a manner, as the prophet was enabled, infallibly and truly to deliver the very mind of God, as it was represented to himself, whether it was in dream, vision, or in a more sedate inspiration. His imagination received and retained it, according as it was impressed, whether the matter was signified more plainly or more obscurely: I say more *obscurely*, because the prophets did not always understand the meaning of their own prophecies; but were forced to ask help for the explication of them. This is acknowledg'd by them, as when *I Daniel had seen the vision, and sought for the meaning; then behold there stood before me, as the appearance of a man, who explained the vision.* But whether the prophet understood it or no, and however the *word of prophecy* was given, it was sure.

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Dan. viii.

25.

2Pet. i. 19.

(3.) REVELATION, as used in scripture, must be distinguished into that which was *proper* to the prophets as such; and that which is *common* to them with other good men.

I. REVELATION *proper* to the prophets as such, is when the Spirit of God represents to the mind, or impresses on the imagination, the thing to be revealed. (1.) Without any intervening act of man's invention or judgment. (2.) It carried in it,

SERM. the obligation and force of an original rule
 VIII. and standard. (3.) It was not to be in any
 ~~~~~ thing changed, or altered by the prophet's  
 consideration, or by comparing of it with  
 any other rule. (4.) In sundry cases, the  
 prophet's understanding might be no fur-  
 ther improved, or enlightned by that reve-  
 lation, than the understanding of such as  
 perused it, after it was published by him.  
 (5.) It had not always a sanctifying effi-  
 cacy on the understanding, or will of the  
 prophet, to whom it was given; as you see  
 in *Baalam*, &c.

2. REVELATION is often mentioned in  
 a sense *common* to the holy prophets with  
 other good men. This lies in the illumina-  
 tion of the mind by the Spirit, to discern  
 spiritually, and more fully, those objects  
 that were before prophetically revealed.  
 This the apostle prays that all the *Ephesians*  
 might be partakers of: *That the Father of glory may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation, for the knowledge of him; the eye of your understanding being enlightned, that ye may know the hope of your calling, &c.* In this sort of revelation, (1.) There was room for, yea, need of, diligent search, meditation, and exercise of judgment. This is not only enjoined *Timothy*, *Meditate on these things, give up thyself wholly to them, that thy profiting may appear to all;* but it was practised by the prophets, and that as to their own prophecies:

Eph. i. 17,  
 18.

1 Tim. iv.  
 15.



cies: *Of which salvation the prophets have enquired and searched diligently, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow; unto whom it was revealed that not unto themselves, but unto us, they did minister the things that are now reported unto you.* (2.) This revelation hath not the form of an original rule or standard, and must not only be compared with, but *regulated* by what was before prophetically revealed; nor is it to be obeyed, nor doth it oblige otherwise, than by its conformity to the law of nature, or such prophetick inspirations, as were given to be a rule and standard: *To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them.* (3.) This is capable of additional improvement and advances of light, and the object to be presented in juster and more adequate thoughts, as it is more extensively, and in higher degrees represented and conceived of. (4.) The understanding of a good man, by this sort of revelation, is enlightned beyond what the recital of his own thoughts, when most illuminated thereby, will necessarily make his mind to be, to whom they are related. Yea, farther, by this sort persons may better understand a published prophetick revelation, than the prophet to whom it was manifested at first. Therefore *David* prays, *Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold the wondrous*

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1 Pet. i. 10,  
11, 12.

Isa. viii.

20.

Psal. cxix.

13.

SERM. *wondrous things out of the law.* And he  
 VIII. meditated in God's precepts, and thereby  
 became wiser than his teachers. (5.) They  
 who have this revelation, find the sanctify-  
 ing efficacy of the truth revealed; they  
 know it affectingly and operatively. Tho'  
 the matter receives its evidencing *proofs*  
 from the authority of a prophetick reve-  
 lation, of the Spirit recorded in the word,  
 yet it becomes *spiritually* perceived, and  
 savingly efficacious, by this enlightning and  
 renewing operation of the Holy Ghost, who  
 fills that truth with power.

Pfal. cxix.  
 99.

I hope these short hints will guard you  
 against the mistakes of the *Quakers* on the  
 one hand, who make the *rule* of faith and  
 life in the scriptures to be imperfect, and  
 to stand in need of additions; and on the  
 other hand, against those profane men  
 who despise, as well as deny, the visitati-  
 ons of the *Holy Spirit*, as if he could not  
 concur with our rational faculties in their  
 operations, by his illuminating light and  
 sanctifying efficacy. And indeed both the  
*Quakers* notion, and that of these men, do  
 reduce all revelation to that which is *pro-  
 phetick*, whereby the canon was framed;  
 and, in the mean time, exclude this *spiri-  
 tual* manifestation of those canonical truths,  
 whereby they are made effectual to sanctify  
 and save us, and which we have reason to  
 covet as most necessary for us, since the  
 scripture canon is compleated.

3. THE prophetick revelations were attended with such *self-evidencing* light and power, as gave the prophets a satisfying conviction, that they were truly from God, and no delusion. It's undoubted, that God can give men an assurance, past all suspicion, that it is he who speaks, and is the immediate author of those notices which he gives them. He can satisfy them that there is no possibility of delusion as to what is suggested; yea, and that in such a manner, as to exclude (as too low) those rational proofs of, and enquiries concerning them, which are requisite in ordinary cases.

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THE evidence was so great, that disobeying what was commanded, or refusing to go upon any enjoined message, or concealing any thing they were required to publish, was very sinful; tho' the prophet had no other notice besides this revelation to oblige him; as we see in *Moses*, *Jonah*, &c.

MOREOVER, we find the prophets distrusted not their revelations, even tho' the thing revealed was often strange or improbable, or far transcending former discoveries, or dangerous to their own lives, yea, or seemingly *unlawful*, as against plain precepts. Of each of these instances might be given. Of the last you have that command to *Abraham*, for offering up his son *Isaac*; for his consent whereto, he was so rewarded,

SERM. rewarded, as well as applauded ; *Gen. xxiii. VIII. 2, 16, 17.*

~ BUT to describe the way whereby God assured the prophets, that it was he who appeared, and spake to them by dreams, visions, or more silent inspiration ; and how this assurance became such, as to set them beyond jealousy and danger of delusion, must be dark to any who never felt it, or at least somewhat like it in the extraordinary approaches of God to his own soul. Whether it was by some objective, sensible glory, accompanying the revelation, or by the peculiar power of that *afflatus* which moved them, or by the strongly impressed effect of the thing revealed upon the soul, yea, and body too ; or by a powerful assent of the mind, wrought and excited by the virtue of the Spirit, in such near approaches of his unto the prophet, called, *his coming upon him* : Whether it was sometimes by one, or the other, or by all conjunctly in some cases, or by any other way, it's difficult to determine, and not very needful to enquire.

2 Chron.  
xx. 14.

4. THE matter thus revealed to the prophets was of *sundry* sorts.

Isa. xlvi.  
10.

THEY were eminently called *prophets*, from their foreseeing and foretelling things to come : to enable them hereto, is the prerogative of God, *by whom the end is declared from the beginning*. But there are other things as proper to their office, and

at

at least of as great importance in their nature, as well as usefulness to man, and subserviency to God's government over him, as predictions of future things can be. For to them was revealed the nature and perfections of God, especially with respect to what the light of nature did imperfectly, uncertainly, or not at all discover; as the Trinity, the reconcileableness of his offended majesty to man, and not fallen angels, &c.

To them did God make known the person and offices of Christ the mediator, the covenant of *redemption*, the way of the salvation of sinners: To them God revealed the conditions of pardon and peace, the true nature of those conditions, and the certain *connexion* between those conditions and those benefits: To them God revealed the *means* of our deriving grace, and the manner and nature of the Spirit's operations; as also the privileges of saints, the promises to the church, the glorious condition of the blessed in *heaven*, and the solemnities of the *judgment-day*, the *resurrection* of the dead, the power and miseries of *devils*, and the undone and distressed state of impenitent sinners in hell. Nor must we exclude the account given of our depravedness by the *fall*, nor a more certain account of *moral* duties, and man's true happiness, than the darkned light of nature yields; and much less any *positive* duties and institutions. In short, the articles

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SERM. ticles of our faith, the rule of our duty,  
 VIII. and the things that most affect our fear and  
 hope, do chiefly depend on the revelations  
 given to these inspired persons.

THE imperfect, wild, false, and uncertain notions, the wisest philosophers had of the least obscure of such things, as moral duties, and man's true happiness; and their utter ignorance of most, may assure us the sublimest matters were beyond humane invention: Nor can we imagine, that any thing below revelation could afford that *certainty* or *obligation*, as the nature and consequence of the great things of salvation do require.

THEREFORE, how ungrateful to God, and cruel are they to themselves, who despise the benefit we have by those inspired persons whom God employed to make known what is of so near concernment to us, and we could not otherwise be acquainted with!

You see I meddle not with *special messages*, or warnings upon particular occasions to this or that man or place; and much less, with what may concern one's self in the way of comfort, warning, or reproof, by personal application of some established truth, or direction as to dangers or events (something whereof may still continue.) But my point refers to predications of the general state of the church; and

and more especially to such revelations as the rule of faith and duty is fixed by. SERM.  
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5. THE apostles, and all such as had immediate revelation of God's will by the inspiration of the Holy Ghost, for the use of the church, are to be esteemed in a rank at least *equal* with the prophets. Under this head I include the evangelists, who recorded the acts and sayings of our Lord Jesus; tho' I insist chiefly on what concerns the apostles.

I KNOW the apostles are distinguished from the prophets of their time: *Some apostles, some prophets.* But that is because in that place, by *prophets*, are mostly designed foretellers of future things; whereas revelations of doctrinal articles and rules for practice, were chiefly granted to the apostles. Apostles are likewise distinguished from those *former* prophets, by whose revelations the way of salvation was made known to the world; but there the ground of distinction lies in that additional part of their office to that of prophets, *viz.* their being *witnesses of Christ's resurrection.* But that doth not exclude them from being prophets, for they were persons by whom God spake to men, as his own mouth, *1 Thess.* iv. 15. Upon them the church was built: *You are built on the foundation of the prophets and apostles, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner-stone.* Their doctrine was to be received as revealed to them,

SERM. them, hence called *their doctrine*. And  
 VIII. tho', when they appealed to former record-  
 ed revelations, for the conversion of *Jewish*  
 unbelievers, the *Bereans* justly examined  
 the scriptures; yet in many things their  
 revelations were an original rule, and obli-  
 ged to credit and compliance, without any  
 other attestation than their testimony that  
 it was of God: This, I say, was sufficient  
 after their mission was proved.

Acts ii. 42.

2 Pet. iii.  
 2.

AND it will appear, if you consider how  
 many duties we are under by God's com-  
 mandment, received only from them, which  
 commands are of equal obligation with those  
 of the prophets: *That you may be mindful  
 of the words which were spoken before by the  
 holy prophets, and the commandment of the  
 apostles of our Lord and Saviour.*

THEY changed the *Jewish* oeconomy,  
 worship, and officers, and put an end to  
 sacrifices and circumcision, which, with  
 the like, were the appointments of God,  
 and therefore could not be altered but by  
 himself. They erected church-officers, pre-  
 scribed several parts of worship and rules  
 of discipline. Now if these are not the  
*laws* of God, it's no sin to transgress or  
 neglect them: if they be his laws, then  
 the Holy Ghost spake by these apostles;  
 and what articles he delivered by them,  
 must be believed as from men propheti-  
 cally inspired.

SHOULD



SHOULD any say, They had not prophetic revelations, but as men of grace and judgment, they inferred, under common assistances from reason, or former revelations, whatever they declared or appointed; I answer, Many of these things were contrary to the former institutions of *Moses*, and other inspired persons; and the apostle *Paul* distinguisheth what he so inferred, from what he delivers by *revelation* as the infallible will of God; *I speak this by permission, and not of commandment.* 1 Cor. vii. 6, 10, 12, 25. *Unto the married I command, yet not I, but the Lord; but to the rest speak I, not the Lord, &c. Now concerning virgins I have no commandment, yet I give my judgment, &c. Eph. iii. 4, 5.* Finally, What was unknown to former ages, was revealed unto holy apostles and prophets by the Holy Spirit.

6. WHEN men were obliged to receive from the prophets their revelations as the word or will of God, he sufficiently attested their office, and that they were inspired and sent by him.

WE see, when God gave laws, and settled his worship in *Israel* by *Moses*, many miracles were performed by him, and such visible appearances of God among them, as could not but convince that God spake those things by *Moses*. Moreover, tho' we do not read that miracles attended every prophet, who was only employed to apply those truths which had been before attest-

SERM. VIII. ed; yet either by the truth of his predictions, some peculiar power attending him, the testimony of established prophets, or other signs of his mission, they were convinced of his call, before he was esteemed a *prophet of the Lord*.

IN times of great revolt, God was pleased to grant sometimes the power of working miracles, altho' the prophets made no change in worship, nor afforded any further light in points of doctrine; but principally were employed to reprove apostasy from those rules of worship and practice, which were before revealed. This we find when *Elijah*, *Elisha*, and several others, were sent to testify against revolting *Israel*.

WHEN the *Jewish* oeconomy was to be dissolved, a gospel constitution to be erected, several articles of faith to be assented to, and Christ to be received as the *Messias* and teacher of the church; then many miracles were performed by Christ and his apostles, as God's attestation to their mission, and to the things revealed by them. And tho' we see not such miracles in our days, yet we have no reason for our incredulity, because the truth and rules we are enjoined to entertain, were fully and openly established and recorded, and due means used for transmitting the same with the evidencing miracles of that time to us of this age; and this beyond the certainty of any other history, yea, and supported by

by the accomplishment of scripture prophecies, yea, those of the most improbable fort; and the continued efficacy of those truths upon the hearts of the most prejudiced, and that without human force, yea, and in the face of opposition.

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7. **WHATSOEVER**, in the sacred scriptures, is revealed by the holy prophets or apostles, in the name of God, as his revelation, we *ought* to receive as the will and truths of God, infallibly recorded and transmitted to us. *All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable, &c.* Among the scriptures St. Peter includes the writings of St. Paul. Its true of all as of David, *He spake by the Holy Ghost*; i. e. by his unerring direction: Nay, as if the Spirit had designed to obviate some late objections, we find, in another place, *That the scriptures might be fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost spake by the mouth of David.* Which notes that the Spirit of God made use of David, as his mouth, to utter his own mind; and as his hand, by which he wrote his own will; for it is a *written psalm* to which he refers. *Thus saith the Lord*, is often prefixed to what the prophet declared, which are terms too great for any inferences made by a fallible light; nor can any acquit themselves from being impostors, when they use this phrase, if uncertain as to the matter, and conscious that God was not the author.

<sup>2</sup> Tim. iii.  
16.

<sup>2</sup> Pet. iii.  
16.

Mark xii.  
37.

Acts i. 16.

SERM. I MUST a little enlarge on the several  
VIII. parts included in this particular.

(1.) THAT the persons speaking or writing, were the *inspired* prophets of God at that time; which I offer, because the speeches of other persons in the bible, are not the infallible will of God, unless they are approved as such, by the inspired penmen, or some other acknowledged prophet.

I ADD, that at *that time* they were prophets, because some were employed upon an occasional message, and others more stately entrusted with divine revelations; of this last sort were *Moses, Samuel, Elijah, Elisha, Nathan*, and fundry others in the old testament; and all the apostles, except *Judas*, in the new testament. Of the former, among others, was the *old prophet* near *Bethel*; he was of old a prophet, in delivering some particular message; but not so stately employed, as that his pretensions deserved credit with the other prophet, against the former revelation to himself, altho' a vision from God was pleaded by him. For when the Spirit of the Lord went from any, a regard to their words as propheticall was to cease.

(2.) THAT the prophets mention it as the *revealed* mind of God, and in his name. This I suggest, because where they express only their private sentiments, without pretending to a revelation, or to declare it as from God, that must not be believed as the  
infallible

infallible testimony of God, but is to be examined by the common rules of truth. SERM. VIII.  
*Nathan* highly approves *David's* purpose to build a house for God, and by his private judgment encourageth him thereto: ~~~~~  
*Go, do all that is in thine heart, for the Lord is with thee.* He, without a revelation, thought so good a design as that, in the hand of one so favoured by God as *David* was, could fail neither of acceptance nor success. Thus he proposed his private sentiments, as such, without pretending an immediate message from God, or the use of such words, as, *Thus saith the Lord*: Whereas, upon the ensuing vision, he contradicts his private judgment, and, *in the name of the Lord*, forbids the design he approved before; whereto *David* submits, from a sense of the very different authority of this, from what the prophet had formerly declared; for now the word of the Lord came to *Nathan*, saying, *Go, and tell my servant David, thus saith the Lord, shalt thou build me a house; &c.* According to all these words, and according to all this vision, did *Nathan* speak to *David*. Then went King *David* and sate before the Lord, &c. The apostle *Paul* (as already instanced) plainly distinguisheth between what he uttered in the name of God as an apostle, and what he inferred to be truth, in a manner common to other saints, by the ordinary assistances of the Spirit upon

<sup>2</sup> Sam. vii.  
3----18.

<sup>1</sup> Cor. vii.  
25.

SERM. VII. serious diligence. And as holy inspired persons could easily judge between their own reasonings, and immediate revelations; so their piety, as they were saints, and the blessed Spirit, as they were his instruments, must lead them to signify that difference to others, whenever there was a danger of mistake.

(3.) THE will of God is *infallibly* recorded in the scriptures, by such as were employed to transmit the same to us.

THE great design of revelations, was to instruct and oblige other persons besides him who was inspired; therefore that which was revealed, must be justly represented, or men must be imposed on, and at utter uncertainty, whenever the matter of the revelation was declared to them. But, besides this mistake in the guide of our faith, and rule of our duty, which we are subject to where the will of God is misrepresented, its further to be considered, that if the Holy Ghost did not so influence the penmen as to prevent error, our faith would be altogether a *human* faith, as to whatever the penman, thus left to himself, recorded. The reason whereof is this; a divine faith must terminate on a divine testimony, which because such is infallible, and is resolved into this, *the truth of God declares it*. But if you do not suppose, at least, the conduct of the Spirit, whereby the penman shall declare infallibly:

bly the will of God, his declaration will be fallible, because himself is so; and the ground of credibility is safely resolved into what *he is*, if you allow him to be under unerring assistance, which nothing below what's divine can be. SERM. VIII.

I AM sensible there are two doubts, which deserve a larger discourse than my time will allow for the discussing of.

I. THE *integrity* and veracity of the penmen of the new testament, suffice to assure us of the truth of what they write, tho' they had no immediate revelations; and therefore such revelations were needless.

*Answ.* I GRANT, that in recital of such matters of fact as themselves beheld, their veracity is sufficient to induce our assent to the truth of such things: Nevertheless it appears necessary,

(1.) THAT if the belief of those matters of fact be a *condition of life*, and the disbelief thereof be damning, those persons, in relating those things, must be under such a character, as may assure us that God will not suffer them to misrecite what is of such consequence to be believed, and danger if distrusted.

(2.) WHEN they deliver articles of faith, not so expressly revealed before, or require duties uncommanded till then, or give notice of further privileges than the church was before acquainted with; in such cases

SERM. a divine revelation is necessary, and their  
 VIII. veracity is of no further avail, than as they  
 ~~~~~ witness that God revealed such things to  
 them. And indeed what more in those
 cases do they witness, than that they re-
 ceive such things *from God*, and were
 moved by his Spirit to publish them? Nor
 is the mere integrity of the persons, of
 greater use to induce our belief therein,
 than as it assures us, they durst not affirm
 God declared such things to them, if no
 such thing had been declared by him. But
 still, their office and employ by divine
 command, with promise of his assistance
 in their transmitting his will to us, doth
 give a higher assurance of the certainty of
 what they deliver, than their personal in-
 tegrity will afford. Yea, be this never so
 great, their testimony is but *human*, and
 therefore an insufficient ground to specify
 our faith as *divine*; or to render it con-
 gruous, that our belief should be saving,
 or unbelief destructive, without a divine
 attestation. This point is decided, if St.
Paul were either sincerely honest, or in-
 2 Tim. iii. inspired, when he tells us, *All scripture is*
 16. *given by inspiration from God, &c.*

2d *Doubt*. THE words of scripture need
 not be indited by the Holy Ghost, altho'
 the revelation of the matter expressed be
 granted.

Ansiv. I. UNLESS the words which are
 made use of, do truly and fully signify
 what

what the Spirit would have recorded, his SERM. revelations are misrepresented to men; and VIII. the danger of this, if the choice of words had always been left to the mere skill of every penman, is too apparent to need more than I have already spoken on that head.

Anfw. 2. WHEN the Holy Spirit suggested truths to the mind of an inspired person, those truths might as easily be signified by words *indited* by the Spirit, as by words *invented* by the inspired. For instance, when the Spirit informed St. *John* of the future state of the church, could not the Spirit excite and direct his mind, to conceive the revelation under determined words, and enable his memory to retain the matter under those very words, as well as under any words of his own inventing. And yet this will not hinder the Spirit's accommodating himself to the instruments he is pleased to employ; for he declares his mind by words directed by himself, according to the various endowments and style of such whom he makes use of; yea, and serveth great purposes by that variety. If he design to speak of plain things, or to men who can better understand, and be more affected with more vulgar words, he inspires such as *Amos*, and excites and guides his imagination to conceive of, and utter, what is revealed, in terms familiar to himself. In like manner, he chuseth such as *Isaiab*
the

SERM. the prophet, to deliver things more sub-
 VIII. lime, and for the advantage of such to
 whom a loftier way of expression is more agreeable.

Ansiv. 3. IN fundry cases it was necessary, that the very words by which the will of God is expressed, be *dictated* by the Holy Spirit. For instance, when the prophets *understood not* the meaning of what they heard and wrote, it was dangerous (if possible) to declare the thing truly, unless they confined themselves to words indited by the Holy Ghost. So in *sublime* matters, the notice whereof is entirely depending on revelation, and where great stress lies on a word, and the least variation is dangerous, as in some articles of faith, and descriptions of the terms of life, &c. in such cases, the Holy Ghost would not leave it to man's invention to form words, upon which the faith of his church, and the rule of judgment, so entirely depended. He who *chargeth his angels with folly*, would not place such trust in fallen man, in matters for which he is so insufficient, as he is in the forecited cases; whatever their fitness might be to record matters of fact, or such plain matters as the duties made evident by the light of nature; or which, by former revelations, become universally received and understood.

Ansiv. 4. It can scarce be doubted, that the *very words* recorded in many parts of
 the

the scriptures, were indited by the Holy Ghost. SERM.
VIII.

WE find several passages called, *The words of the Lord*, and this when they are recited after they had been spoken, and written, by the prophets. And *Baruch* Jer. xxxvi. wrote, *from the mouth of Jeremiah, all the words of the Lord, which he had spoken unto him.* Of prophecies, when written, the Holy Spirit saith, *Until the words of God be fulfilled.* Can any doubt whether Rev. xvii. the ten commandments, written by *Moses*, were the very words which he received from God? Nor is it unusual for God to enjoin the prophets to write the words which he gave them; as to *Daniel*, *Write these words.* Dan. x. 9. The same to *Jeremiah*, *Write thee all the words that I have spoken to thee in a book, &c.* Jer. xxx. And these are the words the Lord spake, &c. In like manner, God gives a charge to *St. John*, *He said to me, Write, for these words are true and faithful.* Rev. xxi. Need I add, how often is the Holy Spirit said to speak *to*, and *by*, his servants in the recorded words. 5.

MANY other considerations might be offered, but those persons who think to solve some difficulties in the historical account of several things in the scriptures, by denying the words to be dictated by the Spirit, I hope, may yet esteem what is already proposed, sufficient to prove, that many of the very words of scripture were indited

SERM. indited by the Holy Ghost; and that it
 VIII. cannot safely be otherwise, in proposing
 ~~~~~ the great articles of faith, or terms of sal-  
 vation, or promises of saving benefits; es-  
 pecially where such things are called the  
*words of the Lord*, or connected with such  
 phrases, as, *Thus saith the Lord*, *Thus spake*  
*the Holy Ghost*, *The word of the Lord came*  
*to such a prophet*; or such an apostle spake  
 thus, *By the will of God*, and the like.  
 Having thus far taken notice of these two  
 doubts about the sacred books of the in-  
 spired writers, I proceed to the last thing  
 included in the *seventh proposition*.

(4.) THE divine revelations thus trans-  
 mitted to us in the scriptures, we *ought* to  
 receive as the infallible will and truths of  
 God.

THIS needs no proof; for to refuse it, is  
 only to proclaim our own ignorance, im-  
 potency, injustice, infidelity, evil disposi-  
 tion, and perverseness, not to receive things  
 of this moment as set in that light, evi-  
 dence, and authority proper to them, ar-  
 gues a disregard of our own welfare, and  
 is no other than to shut our eyes that we  
 may post to hell securely, and come short  
 of salvation without a sense of our loss.  
 Nevertheless this evil is too common, and  
 it appears by the lukewarm regard we have  
 to these heavenly oracles, and their weak  
 effects upon the temper and lives of most  
 men. We all lose the great benefit of the  
 scriptures,

scriptures, as far as we neglect to acknowledge their divine original, and overlook the impress of God upon them; but did we behold them as the true revelations of God, words *himself* spake, as surely as if we had heard him; did we consider them enforced by such expressions as these, *Thus saith the Lord, This spake the Holy Ghost, This God hath declared to us by his Son, or by his chosen witnesses*: Oh! what power would we feel in every truth, to direct our judgment, affect our hearts, and govern our wills and practice?

WERE they thus received, we should firmly assent to those revealed *doctrines*, which seem least reconcilable with our *reason*, and realize, by faith, what's more *remote* from our senses; for he hath appointed them, *who knows all things, and cannot lie*.


How cheerfully and firmly should we expect the performance of the richest *promises*, and accomplishment of the greatest *prophecies*, when the *almighty God of truth* hath thus solemnly and certainly engaged himself, by his own mouth, to fulfil them! With what humble reverence should we search the things we yet *apprehend not*, when we look at them as beams of light, darting immediately from unerring *wisdom*! Every *precept* must command subjection, when entertained as the *charge* of him, who

SERM. who is our great *ruler, judge,* and a jealous *inspector* of our hearts and ways.

ALL the *threatnings* would strike an awe upon the stoutest heart, when clearly apprehended as pronounced by the mouth of a *just ruler,* who is a *consuming fire,* and *able* to execute the severest sanctions of his law.

WHAT *concernedness* would possess our trifling minds, when truths are considered by us with conviction; that the *excellent Majesty* of heaven and earth, is thereby informing, pleading, warning, and directing us his creatures, designed for an endless state of happiness or misery. Neither would such a view be useless to encline our hearts to love those truths, for the sake of this great God, who thus *condescends* to guide, plead, importune, and persuade such inconsiderable, guilty, carnal, obstinate, earthly, vain, incredulous *apostates*.

OH! how would our prejudices, excuses, delays, and carnal disputings be silenced and overcome, if we never thought of scripture discoveries, but as the infallible will and truths of the living God. Things most fully attested, most true, and that shall hereafter be acknowledged by all of us, to be true and most important. Thus they are apprehended wherever they are savingly effectual, 1 Thess. ii. 13. *When ye received the word of God which ye heard of us,*

us, ye received it not as the word of men, SERM. VIII.  
 but as it is in deed the word of God; which VIII.  
 effectually also worketh in you that believe.   
 And to the degree they are thus received by  
 us, we shall find their efficacy.

## S E C T. II.

II. HAVING finished what I judged necessary to be spoken, concerning prophets in the first and more eminent sense; I proceed to such as are called *prophets*, tho' in a lower sense than the former; viz. the ordinary ministers of the Gospel, who by divine institution, stately preach to men in the name of Christ; by duly explaining and applying the scriptures and law of nature, under the assistances of the Holy Spirit, and his blessing on their studies.

THOSE parts of their office which refer to sacraments, discipline, &c. are more remote from my purpose than what I have mentioned.

THAT these ministers are not excluded from the name of prophets, is thus evinced. The whole body of true Gospel ministers during the reign of *Antichrist*, are called prophets; *They have shed the blood of* Rev. xvi. 6.  
*saints and prophets, i. e.* of the godly members and ministers of the church, who opposed the man of sin; and it's most probable they are designed by those words, *And they shall send gifts to one another, be-* Ch. xi. 10.  
*cause*

SERM. *cause those two prophets tormented those that*  
 VIII. *dwelt on the earth; which torment was by*

Ver. 5. *their doctrine, called, A fire which proceeded out of their mouth. The ministration*

Ver. 16. *of the Gospel by them is termed prophesying; That it rain not in the days of their prophesy. Nor can the reason given for*

*Judas and Silas being mentioned as prophets, argue that they were other than*

Acts xv. *Gospel ministers; And Judas and Silas being prophets also themselves, exhorted the*  
 32. *brethren with many words, and confirmed them. Their publick ministerial exhortation,*

*(which is the work of common ministers) is justified by, and ascribed to their being prophets. And the apostle's words*

*can scarce allow preaching the Gospel not to be meant by prophesying; He that prophesiech speaketh unto men, to edification,*

*and exhortation, and comfort.*

1 Cor. vii. *He that prophesiech speaketh unto men, to edification,*  
 3, 4, 39. *and exhortation, and comfort.*

OF the prophets of this kind, *viz.* Gospel ministers, I shall briefly remark three things.

I. As these do not since the finishing of the scripture canon, need the eminent prophetick inspiration, or immediate objective revelation; so they ought to *manage* themselves as men who pretend not thereto.

THEY must use prayer, and study, and rational helps to search the scriptures, to understand what is revealed in the word; and not depend on, nor pretend to *immediate* teachings: Thus *Timothy* was advised

by



by the apostle *Paul*. And they who assume more, do too often either falsely deny their pre-meditations, or profane the Gospel by their confused impertinencies and nonsense. Moreover, the Gospel preachers must humbly depend on the assistance and blessing of the Holy Ghost, as men subject to error and mistake; yea, as such, they ought patiently to suffer their hearers to examine their doctrinal assertions, without expecting their assent, further than their assertions are proved by scripture, or the light of reason.

SERM.  
VIII.



NEITHER may they without the brand of usurpation, invent new doctrines or duties; coin new terms of *communion* of saints, nor rules for, or parts of divine worship; nor yet charge that to be *sin*, which neither the scriptures nor light of nature forbid.

No other reason for these limitations need be urged, than that these things are peculiar to the eminently inspired prophets; and can be warranted only by such immediate revelations, as constituted the divine rule of faith and practice; which rule must be violated by such additions, and the transgressor becomes thereby exposed to that dreadful curse, *If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book.*

Rev. xxii.  
18.

To aspire at immediate revelations in ministerial work, without designing such

SERM. changes and additions to the divine esta-  
 VIII. blished rule, is extremely *vain*; and to  
 ~~~~~ make these changes and additions without  
 pretending to such revelations, is the grossest
usurpation. Happy church! if humility
 had always prevented both the extremes.

2. MINISTERS must be *qualified* with ministerial gifts, and called to this office.

THEIR employment cannot be discharged without suitable gifts: Can they
 2 Tim. ii. *teach* what they understand not? How
 24. will they *divide the word*, who are not able
 Tit. i. 9. to distinguish truth from error? How
 will they *confute gainsayers*, who will be
 baffled in defending fundamental truths? Will they *declare the whole counsel of God*, who need to be catechis'd in the plainest doctrines? Are they *apt to teach*, who have not learned the *first principles* of the oracles of God, and are as bad at persuading as instructing? Such men can never be a blessing to the church, who neither edify others in knowledge, nor establish them in the true faith, nor use apt means to promote their holiness.

THE *scrupulous* are sure to waver and be tormented, while their doubts must be resolved by men so unskilful; and to be misled in difficulties, when solved by *casuists* of this kind. People may be pleased with their noise and seeming affection, until by some better helps, they grow judicious enough to nauseate them; or by learning
 their

their nonsense, become confident enough to ascend the *pulpit*, as well as they.

SERM.
VIII.

By such *unqualified* preachers the *worship* of God becomes contemptible, the *souls* of men endangered; able *ministers* of unequal lungs deserted, for putting men to some pains to learn; the veneration due to the *office*, and necessary to its good effects, converted into profane disdain; and the *peace and order* of God's house unavoidably broken and overturned.

THEY must be ignorant of *satan's devices*, if they mean well, who serve such bad purposes; and the worst of men, if they intend these, or other base designs. Such *ambassadors* dishonour our Blessed Lord, by their incapacity to deliver his message; and while they still continue ignorant, have no reason to plead that Christ did chuse illiterate tradesmen to be apostles; for tho' he found them such, they became eminently accomplished. But neither these men, nor their predecessors, are approved by such a miracle; nor have they ground to expect such a reward for their presumption.

OUR Blessed Lord intended no such unfit persons for *gifts* to his church; and the office pretended to by such is a *nullity*, tho' the most conceited church elect them, or fifty bishops should ordain them.

BUT will gifts, much less a conceit of them, suffice to constitute a minister? No:

SERM. for, *How shall they preach, except they be VIII. sent?* A call is requisite, tho' not in that extraordinary way, peculiar to the first Rom. x. 4. prophets. Christ hath taken more care of his name and church, than that self-conceit, or the opinion of the ignorant should be the judge of mens fitness; or that persons out of the sacred office should invest men in it. It's enough, that the people judge what minister is most like to edify them; it's too much for them to determine, who is fit to be a *minister*, or to convey the office, which, by divine appointment, is to be *by the laying on of the hands of the presbytery*. The welfare of the church is provided for, by confining it to this *body*, in bar both to such who are less fit to judge of qualifications, and more careless of the honour of the ministry; as also such, who form a depending *disparity*, by pretence of an higher office, than Christ discriminates from *presbyters*, by either power, honour, work, or name.

1 Tim. iv.
14.

It's true, an inclinable devotedness, with gospel designs and sincere piety, give satisfaction of God's call to the minister himself, but I mention only what falls under the decision of others; heartily wishing, that neither *ambition*, mere concern for a *livelibood*, or discontentment with their *own station*, pass not with many for an *inward call*; especially with such, who refuse

refuse a trial by impartial, able ministers, from a sense of their own unfitness.

SERM.
VIII.

I HAVE been larger on this head, from a conviction that it must prove well or ill with the church of Christ; as the pulpit is guarded, and ministers are qualified.

3. THESE prophets or gospel ministers are greatly *intrusted, privileged, and encouraged* by our Lord Jesus.

THEY are *stewards* in God's house, they *watch* for souls, and are *rulers* of Christ's flock, they are *ambassadors for Christ*, his *special* presence is with them, the Holy Spirit breaths in, and works by their ministry; they dispense to men the *truest* blessings, and treat of the *highest* matters. Whatever they *duly* threaten, promise, censure or seal, Christ ratifies in heaven, and in due time will fully *execute*.

Tit. i. 7.
Heb. xiii.
7, 17, 24.
2 Cor. v.
19.
Matthew
xxviii. 20.

THEY are entitled to *honour*, and creditable *maintenance*. Christ is concerned for them, and in the treatment they meet with, holding *them in his right hand*. They have opportunity to possess the *higher* degrees of glory. That blessed heaven will make amends for the contempt, sufferings, self-denial and reproach, to all which they are more exposed than others. Nor will the greatness of their account or labour, which require more than ordinary sollicitousness be repined at, if they are adjudged faithful.

Mat. xvi.
19.
1 Tim. v.
17.
1 Cor. ix.
14.
Rev. i. 16.
Dan. xii. 3

SERM. I HAVE finished the first point, *viz.*
 VIII. The subject or prophets, including gospel-
 ministers: It remains I speak of what in
 my text is said concerning them.

II. *These prophets do not live for ever*; i. e. They do not always abide on this earth, but their souls are separated from their bodies; they are *dissolved* and removed from this present state by death, as well as others. Not only the false prophets die, but the true, who pleaded God's cause, and stood in his *secret*. If any might be exempted, it's these; of whose number were the only *two* that were translated, *viz.* *Enoch* and *Elias*, whose grosser parts were refined, and souls purified to a meetness for the life, sights and employs of the *heavenly* regions. This was a change equal to what they, who are found alive at the coming of Christ do undergo; and no low privilege to them, not only as it made the *whole* person sooner happy, but as it was less awful, and averse to nature, than separation by death, and the rottenness of the grave; and therefore seems desired by the apostle *Paul*, who expresseth a regret at the common death in his greatest longings for
 2 Cor. v. 4. *glory*; when he saith, *Not that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon.*

BUT the sovereign exception of these *two*, shall not violate the common rule: Others, tho' prophets, must die. Aged
Samuel

Samuel lives not always. You see they die, yea, *all sorts* of them expire and depart. The grave receives the *royal* prophet *David*, and the *eloquent* prophet *Isaiak*, as well as the *berdjsinan* *Amos*. *Moses* was in many things privileged above all other prophets, and his prayer secured the lives of thousands, yet could not he delay his own death till he entered *Canaan*. *John* the Baptist, tho' *greater* than a prophet, lives not for ever. In this I'm sure *Peter* hath no priority above others. The apostle *John*, tho' by a mistake of Christ's words, John xxi. reported to be immortal, and lived so long ^{23.} that his co-ævals might be fixed in that conceit, yet he is overcome by death at last. *St. Paul*, tho' carried up to heaven while alive, must yet return and come down to die.

WHERE'S our publick-spirited Dr. *Annesly*, our penetrating Mr. *Baxter*, our polite and upright Dr. *Bates*? Among the dead we have lodged them. And now we are recording, that the useful Mr. *Woodhouse* is dead, is dead; yea, in a short uncertain time, it will be true of me, and the rest of my brethren, they are also dead.

IT may seem needless to prove what's writ with the sun-beams, and experienced every day; yet I shall inforce it by two things.

1. THE prophets are sure to die, upon reasons *common* to them with other men.

SERM. THESE are of the same brittle make
 VIII. with others: *Frail earthen vessels they be,*
 2 Cor. iv. *notwithstanding the treasure they contain;*
 7. *dust weakly cemented; their life is breath*
 Rev. ii. 1. *soon stopp'd a thousand ways; angels by*
 Ezek. ii. 3. *office, but far from these in constitution;*
 and God minds *Ezekiel*, amidst his seraphick visions, that he was still a *son of man*.

HOWEVER endowed or renewed they
 Heb. ix. are still among the *all*, against whom a
 27. sentence of death is past, they have sin attending them, which is the cause of death, and frequent harbingers of its approach; they are subject to accidents common to the most exposed. This earth, since the curse, can no more be a *paradise* to them, than to others; they need that purgation by death, which shall consume the root of sin: Nor will God always keep them from their home and rest. Oh! vain man, that cannot realize a thing so *sure* as death; and earthly man, that cannot get above an *inordinate* love of life.

2. THEY are sure to die, from some reasons *more peculiar* to themselves than to others.

SEDENTARINESS much exposeth them to diseases, intense exercise of *mind* wastes their spirits; whoever escape, the rage of *persecutors* takes hold of them: They are under disquietness of spirit, and filled with disturbing thoughts, by growing errors,
 divisions,

divisions, reproaches, and resistance of sin-
ners.

SERM.
VIII.

THEIR hearts are daily pierced by the unper-suadable obstinateness of their hearers, scandals of their people, and the death of useful instruments; and often are they eaten up by *zeal* for the house of God, and grief at the declension of Christ's interest in the world, as well as pressed down by their cares and *labours*.



IT'S not seldom that the *sins* of the *people* kill their ministers, commonly, as they forfeit their lives by unprofitableness, and sometimes (tho' scarce ever in this age) by too great an esteem of them. Their great labours also make *rest* the more necessary; and should these *outlive* a capacity for service, not only would their former repute and performances be eclipsed, but there are few in such danger to expose the sacred ordinances to contempt, and to dishonour religion so much as they. If we reflect on all these things, we may better wonder, that *ministers* live so long, than that they die *so soon*, as well as certainly.

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

THE *former* part affords scope for many practical inferences, but this being a *Funeral* discourse, I shall confine myself to the *last* part, *viz.* The mortal, dying state of ministers. *Sirs*, We shall die as certainly as any of you, our breath is in

our

SERM. our nostrils, a period will be soon put to
VIII. our labours and opportunities of service.

It is not long before you and we must part, and your eyes see us no more in a present state. Surely this cannot be so empty a subject as to afford no instruction; it's not so faint a matter as to excite no practical thoughts either in you or us. Are so many prophets dead, are we all within a step of death, and must not the *living lay it to heart*? Living ministers and living people too?

S E C T. III.

I SHALL therefore apply myself in sundry exhortations,

1. *To ministers.*

2. *To our bearers in general.*

3. *To you of this congregation in particular.*

Exhort. 1. *To ministers.* And this shall be, (1.) *With respect to successors.* (2.) *To your people.* (3.) *To yourselves.*

Exhort. 1. *To ministers* of the gospel.

THIS text speaks aloud to you, God gives warning that your *end* will come. Oh! how happy were it that all our labours and behaviour did express a lively sense, and constant becoming impressions of it! Did we perform and contrive all with *death* in our eye, right and great ends would be still designed; and care, vigour,

vigour, and sollicitousness, would be excited for effecting those ends. You shall SERM. VIII.
certainly die, and that soon, and, for ought you know, suddenly: Oh! then manage yourselves accordingly, ~

(1.) *With respect to successors in your work.* Be concerned to raise up and improve such, as may fill up your places when you are removed. Aged *Paul* cultivated young *Timothy*, and he took care of a succession; *For this cause I left thee in Crete, &c. to ordain elders in every city.* Titus i. 5.
 As you would not suffer the interest of Christ to die with you, nor let the following age be destitute of helps to their salvation, be sollicitous that such helps be provided, who may propagate religion, and defend the *truth*, when your service is at a period. That selfishness were devilish, which would be pleased to have posterity mourn over you, as the last ministers employed to save sinners.


To avoid all suspicion of this, I beseech you, persuade youth of parts and probity, to fit themselves for gospel-work; yield them all assistance to enter upon it when qualified (yet with care to *lay hands so suddenly on none*, who may endanger the church by errors, ignorance, or scandal) impart to such hopeful instructed persons, the effects of your experience, by warning them against snares, directing them in their studies, fortifying them against all assaults they 1 Tim. v. 22.

SERM. they may meet with ; supplying their un-
 VIII. acquainted minds with advice, how they
 ~~~~~ may prove most universal, successful, and  
 significant blessings in their generations.

As an instance of your sincere desire to have the work of Christ prosper when you are dead, look to your spirits, that you who are aged envy not the *younger* ministers, but cheerfully encourage them as the hopes of the rising ages. Youth affords them some advantages beyond those of your declining years ; be truly pleased therewith, as far as they contribute to greater service ; if their gifts exceed yours, rejoice in all such presages, that religion will flourish when you can no longer serve it.

IT'S as much your duty to delight in, and promote the usefulness and acceptance of young ministers, as it's their duty to *honour* you for transmitting the gospel to them, by your labours and sufferings, when they were incapable of yielding any advantage to it.


IF they *despise* you, they consider not that you spent your vigorous youth in faithful service ; nor that they will find decays and uneasinesses when they grow aged. On the other hand, for you to envy and discourage them, would argue not only a forgetfulness of the encouragements you expected, and the allowances you needed, in your younger years ; but also  
 discover,

discover, that in your old age, you are SERM. concerned for your own credit, more than VIII. for the cause of Christ, or the welfare of the church. 

(2.) *With respect to the people.* Carry it in all things to them, as persons you must shortly leave. Do for them, and contribute to their eternal welfare what you can, without delay. St. Peter was still careful to improve the churches, from a sense of his own dying state; and to fix those truths in them, which might be profitable after his decease: *I think it meet, as long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance, &c. Knowing that shortly I must put off this tabernacle.* 2 Pet. i. 13, 14, 15.

IF you with-hold reproof from offenders, you may die before you have an opportunity to apply it; and so they perish in their sins, without possibility of being awakened, or reformed, in your days. Therefore rebuke and warn them, in the first season which is offered; for as future time hath its own work, so you are not sure of that time to repair your present omissions. Be in constant travail to get Christ formed in dead sinners, and pursue this as men who consider, that if you are long unsuccessful, you shall never prevail with them.

WHEN you purpose to benefit any soul, engage therein with such thoughts: Here is

SERM. is one I cannot many years be useful to, if  
 VIII. he long wander, I shall not recover him;  what help I can give for his establishment or comfort, he must *soon* improve, or remain as he is. It will be vain on a death-bed, to lament over the state of any neglected soul, let his misery be never so great or dangerous; when you *might* have done them good, then you *would not*, will be a very bitter reflection.

HAVE you not pity enough for souls that you pretend to love? then look what a distressed state you are like to leave them in, and ask yourselves, Am I content to depart while they are slaves to the devil, enemies to Christ, and self-destroyers? Look among your hearers, consider your own families, and examine the case of your friends. And do none offer themselves to your view, whose case needs to be greatly alter'd; some ignorant, some secure, or backslidden; others weak in grace, or under sinking doubts, unstable and erroneous; the condition of each presseth hard for relief? Can you endure to think of entering into eternity, before those are instructed and converted, and the others more improved, comforted, and established? If you cannot be willing to this, attempt their amendment *presently*, that you may have a hand in their relief, and the comfort of beholding a change in their state *before* you die.

IF you have been too unconcerned, how matters stand with people for another world, bewail your disregard, and be more affected with, and solicitous about, their happiness; for *indifferency* ill becomes dying ministers, in what concerneth the salvation of dying souls. St. Paul judg'd the benefit of the *Philippians* worth a suspence of his entrance into glory, tho' assured of it; yea, could even with himself *accursed* from Christ, to have his *kinsmen* saved. And is the worth of a soul abated in our days, and the salvation thereof so lessen'd in value, that we can be so unconcerned where kindness is professed, and duty doth oblige? Shew your own belief of unseen things, by suddenly helping all those to final safety, whose welfare you desire.

(3.) *With respect to yourselves, both as to your trust and personal state.*

As qualified *young* men should not needlessly delay entering into the ministry, because time for service may be shorter than they imagine; so they, who are engaged in this work, ought to govern themselves, as *tender, mortal* persons.

I SHALL not insist on such rules of mere prudence as these: Neglect not your *health* so as either to hasten your end, or to indispose you for service before you are removed; the *former* will imbitter death, and the *latter* will make life grievous as far as you are necessary thereto. Neither

be

SERM.  
VIII.

Phil. i. 24.

Rom. ix.

3.

SERM. be so careless of your *families*, as by waste  
 VIII. or improvidence to expose them to beg-  
 gary; for you should consider their sub-  
 sistance generally depends on your lives,  
 which are frail and short; and you, of all  
 men, should not seem *worse than infidels*,  
 in not providing for them. Nor yet should  
 your affairs be unsettled, if you have any  
 thing to dispose of by *will*; for ministers,  
 who must not live *always*, may die as *sud-*  
*dently* as other men. But my design is to  
*exhort* you to what refers to your discharge  
 of your *trust*, and securing the *state* of  
 your own souls, and both under a lively  
 prospect of your *approaching* end.

1. *Be diligent and vigorous in your place,  
 as knowing you will die soon.*

TRIFLE not in your *study*, if you  
 would acquire a considerable stock of know-  
 ledge; waste not time, or else despair of  
 being great proficient, and eminently fitted  
 for your work. Such as are *young*, have the  
 season of laying up a stock to spend, when  
 the employs and hurries of a greater age  
 will much divert them; and the *eldest* have  
 such room for improvement, that no hour  
 should be idly spent, nor any means be  
 slightly applied to.

2 Tim. ii.  
 15.

I WISH none were *workmen who need be  
 ashamed*; yet such will they continue al-  
 ways, who squander *time*, and are as *remiss*  
 in the means of profit, as if they were sure  
 to live for ever. But they who are mini-  
 sters



sters have a *great trust* committed to them, even the souls of many persons, and the interest of Christ in their day and place. You have *hard* work, and therefore be earnest and resolved; you have *much* work, therefore be industrious and diligent; and that you may neglect neither the one or other, always meditate that the *season* of working is fixed, and of short duration. Our Lord gives us an example; *I must work while it is day, for the night cometh, wherein no man can work.* He would neglect no minute of the day, tho' he could do much in a little time.

SERM.  
VIII.



John ix.

4.

Ecclef. ix.

10.

You may outlive your *liberty*, you may outlive your *health* and abilities for service; but be assured, death must put a full stop to all your opportunities of labour: *What thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might; for there is no working, nor device, nor wisdom in the grave, whither thou art going.* A view of an unseen world would excite all the powers of our souls; and can we refuse to look into that, when we are so near it, or coldly plead with sinners, while heaven and hell are present and plain to our eyes? We deal in matters of the highest *nature*, even things divine and eternal; we treat of things of the greatest *consequence*, no less than the everlasting life and death of souls; we pursue designs which are most *difficult* to be effected, opening the eyes of the *blind*, raising the *dead*, pull-

SERM. ing down *satan's* kingdom, erecting the  
 VIII. *throne* of Christ, and all this against a de-  
 generate nature, a mighty and unwearied  
 tempter, and a world full of diversions and  
 snares. How then can we loiter or be re-  
 mifs? Without assiduity and a fervent spi-  
 rit, our business appears to be mistaken,  
 and hope of success is very ungrounded.  
 Past unsuccessfulness might convince us  
 with what difficulty, and how slowly our  
 work doth prosper: What fruit then can  
 you reckon on, if you trifle away the few  
 remaining sands, or be remifs and indiffe-  
 rent in your performances?

2. *Be faithful in your office, as men sure to give an account, and that e're long.*

IT'S a strict account we are to give for others, as well as for ourselves; and the *event* will be extraordinary, be it reward or vengeance. Tremble therefore at the least suspicion, that God will then *require the blood of any lost sinner at your hand*. He will be found the wisest minister, who can say with *Paul*, *I am pure from the blood of all men*. But this it is impossible to be, if you spare due reproof for fear of offending some kind *benefactor*. When you avoid a close, searching, importunate ministry, to please the secure, you destroy yourselves and them. If you pluck not sinners as *brands out of the burning*, you will stand guilty of their remaining miserable; and your not *compelling them to come in*, will be

Ezek. iii.  
18.

Acts xx.  
26.

be imputed to you, as if you had kept them out. Take heed that you speak not *peace* to such, upon whom *destruction* is coming: every wound you *slightly heal*, will prove your own hurt.

SERM.  
VIII.  
~

A CONNIVANCE at any fault, silence under dangerous symptoms, a neglect of subjects that would more edify, and superficialness in applying proper truths, will be charged on you, as downright treachery to souls, perfidiousness to Christ, and perjury against your *ordination vow*.

AND the same accusation will lie against you, if you misapply or neglect church-censures; yea, or if you connive at growing *errors*, or suffer any truth of Christ to be trampled on by your base cowardice; or comply with sinful impositions, or desert your work, or knowingly quit the interests of a Redeemer in any point: *It is* <sup>1 Cor. iv.</sup> *required of stewards that a man be faithful.*<sup>2.</sup> You are appointed by Christ stewards in his church, and very shortly you will hear that awakening peal, *Give an account of thy stewardship.* How nearly doth it concern you to carry it so in all respects, that you may be approved faithful by that judge, who is acquainted with all your hearts and ways? You are warned, *Take* <sup>Col. iv. 17.</sup> *heed to thy ministry that thou hast received of the Lord, that thou fulfil it.* Let no part be neglected at any time; and in all your administrations, approve yourselves to

SERM. God, and to your own consciences; if  
 VIII. these *condemn* you as false and deceitful,  
 the flattering yourselves, and being applauded by others, will avail you nothing. Seek not to please men to their hurt, but benefit them to their displeasure; the last will hereafter bless you, when the first shall curse you. Let it be manifest, that you have both heartily accepted Christ's allotted *work*, and are well contented with Christ's promised assistances and *rewards*; and that therefore your fidelity influenced the little time you had to spend; if so, be sure your acceptance shall be published, and your reward proportioned to your faithful *endeavours*, and not to your success or esteem with men.

3. *Live not to selfish purposes, nor be in chace of base designs, which must fill you with blushes in so few years.*

Phil. ii. 21. WE are fallen into an age, wherein every one seeks his own things, and no man (i. e. few) the things of Christ; a temper ill becoming any man, because it's against human society; it agrees far less with a *christian*, because he is bought by, and self-dedicated to, the Lord Jesus. But it's most abominable in a *minister*, not only as his dedication and vow are solemnly renewed, but as it is a direct profanation of, and contradiction to, the whole of his sacred office. Here's an *ambassador* who chiefly runs on his own errand, to the neglect

lect of the message our king sends him on. SERM.  
Behold a *steward* of Christ's house, but VIII.  
mostly solicitous and employ'd about his  
own little affairs; a *watchman* who seldom  
looks beyond his own cottage. Christ  
hath invested him with *honour* and *power*  
for publick service, and these he prosti-  
tutes to the service of a carnal turn.

OH! bethink you, have I no *greater*  
things to mind, and *surer* things to pur-  
sue than vain-glory, man-pleasing, or pe-  
rishing riches? Shall the honour of Christ,  
and the souls of men, be postponed, or a  
pretence of serving these, be made use of  
to such servile purposes? Is it not an abo-  
mination to Christ, when he beholds me  
neglecting his work for these; or accom-  
modating my labour in his work, to the  
obtaining of these? Hath Christ called, qua-  
lified, entrusted, and privileged me as a  
minister, to drive on this selfish trade, and  
make all sacred things a stepping-block to  
my own advancement? This is worse than  
primitive *simony*, for it's a selling the holiest  
things for money or applause. But while  
you drive such *bargains*, do you think how  
short a while you shall enjoy the benefit of  
them, and how little they will signify to  
your happiness in another world?

BE so wise, as not to suffer the noise  
of thy petty projects, to stop thy ears a-  
gainst the cry of sinking souls, or the claim  
which the church's interest hath to be pre-

SERM. ferr'd; and know, that what the *publick*  
 VIII. suffers by thy private traffick, will make  
 thee at last a far greater loser, than all  
 thy gettings can countervail.

4. *Believe and obey the gospel which you dispense, as those whose estate after death depends thereon, as much as others.*

A BELIEF of the gospel is not only necessary to make you warm, earnest, and diligent in your *preaching* to others, but it is necessary to the salvation of your *own souls*; for remember, an assent which is unavailable to thy penitent return to God, and sincere acceptance of an *entire* Saviour, can no more save, than a mere *trust* or persuasion, exclusive of those. Therefore be earnest for a share in covenant-mercy, and be solicitous to clear thy title thereto, by the grace to which it's promised. It were strange *blindness* to think, thou can't get to heaven by an easier way than the common people, when the rule of thy judgment is in some respects *more strict*. And it's strange *cruelty* to thyself, to be earnest for the salvation of others, and neglect thy own. St. Paul exerciseth so much *rational self-love*, as to prevent his own damnation, as carefully as that of others: *I keep my body under, lest when I have preached to others, I myself should be a cast away.* Yea, it's part of his meaning, that his preaching to others would aggravate his misery, if he prov'd a reprobate.

1 Cor. ix.  
27.

Not

Nor can it be less, if we consider that all the warnings and pleadings we used to others, will testify against our unperfuadableness. Every mark of grace we proposed to others, must reproach us, that it was not used in the examining ourselves; and each *direction* we give others, will witness against *us* for not observing them. What matter will *conscience* find for gnawing torments, when it reflects, that we lived in the *sins* we so often declared the evil and danger of? We were *careless*, when we still minded others to be diligent; we *omitted* the duties we so frequently persuaded others to perform; those very *snare*s and *dangers* we warned others to avoid, we securely fell into ourselves; we took up with the very *hopes*, which we foretold others would prove false and vain; and at last perished, notwithstanding we had preached those truths by which others were convinced, regenerated, and made to persevere unto salvation.

WHAT folly can be so unaccountable, as to commend *heaven* so highly, and yet to miss of it by sloth, or for a base idol; to set forth *hell* as so terrible, and yet to fall into it for the love of a brutish or devilish lust; to offer *Christ* so importunately to thy neighbours, as so needful, useful, amiable, and sufficient, and yet to refuse him thyself, as of no use or value.

IT'S very sad we should be found to

SERM. have studied the gospel only for a liveli-  
 VIII. hood *in this* world, and never considered  
 and applied it as a means of eternal life  
 in a *future* world. Surely *infidelity* must  
 be the cause, that we should take up with  
 this earth, as a reward for helping others  
 to heaven: Or, do we vainly dream, that  
 ministers shall have a state of trial *after*  
 they are dead, that we dare end our pre-  
 sent life so unprovided for happiness, and  
 marked for destruction, by *that very rule*  
 we assure the world all others shall be  
 judged by?

BUT I beseech you to be serious and  
 intent, *to save yourselves as well as those*  
*that bear you*; apply the edge of truths to  
 your own souls: When you beg grace  
 for others, forget not yourselves; and re-  
 member your *own concern* in that way of  
 salvation you teach your hearers.

5. *Be patient and resolved under all*  
*your hardships, as knowing you shall be*  
*delivered from them, and possessed of eter-*  
*nal glory.*

By this argument the former servants of  
 Christ composed their minds under their  
 heavy sufferings, and recovered fresh vigor  
 of spirit for their work, when almost sunk  
 with labour: *For which cause we faint*  
 not; *but tho' our outward man perish, our*  
*inward man is renewed day by day: For*  
*our light affliction, which is but for a mo-*  
*ment, worketh for us an eternal weight of*  
*glory.*



glory. Heavy work, and oppressing service, were but for a *moment*, tho' as long as they hoped to live; and also soon to be exchanged into a glory, which should always last, and far *outweigh* their pressures. A *short* life, and that which is *eternal*, makes a great difference in the good that any man enjoys, and in the evil that he suffers; but when the good is great, and *eternally* to be enjoy'd, in the room of *momentary* hardships, we have good reason cheerfully to undergo our forest afflictions, and reassume our hardest work. Therefore silence your complaints, and relieve your weariness by this thought, The evening of this irksome day is *near*, a full period to all that seems irksome will *presently* be set, and then will commence the morning of that pleasant felicitating day, which can *never* end; a day wherein our labours will be fully rewarded, and our tribulation not be remembered, except with joy that we were called to bear them.

2. *I shall apply this to such as are our bearers in general.* You who attend our administrations, and frequent those assemblies wherein ministers spend themselves, have much duty to learn from this subject: But I shall confine myself to four exhortations.

(1.) *Improve by us, as by men whose breath will soon be stopped.* Get all the good

SERM. good by us that's possible, and that with-  
 VIII. out *delay* ; for if you long abide unconverted, we must leave you so ; if you much longer continue weaklings in grace and comfort, we shall be capable of yielding no further helps for your edification, let your need and our desires be never so great.

BE intent to profit in knowledge and holiness, for *our days are number'd* ; and when that period comes, you can no longer have us to admonish you of your faults, warn you of your danger, direct you to your duties, persuade you to obedience, or solve your doubts.

OH ! then make not *our* death-bed uneasy, or *your own* case desperate, by giving us bitter reflections ; that we leave you slaves to satan, and the world, and the flesh, after all we have done, or hereafter can do, to reclaim you ; you are not sure of more probable helps, at least you may be certain the profit you get by us, must be soon or never. And for your further excitement, consider,

I. WHEN we die, we shall give an *account* of our pains and success with you. It will be your loss to give in our complaints against you ; I left them as barren and un-persuasive as I found them : but that crown is yours if we have succeeded ; *Heb. xiii. 17.* You shall be happy, and we shall with joy declare, they received and savingly felt the truth.

2. THE word remains in God's register, SERM. tho' we be dead : No sermon will be for- VIII. gotten, all will be reviewed ; you must account for all our pains and pleadings, our warnings, directions and counsels ; *They shall know there was a prophet among them.* Ezek. ii. 5. Our words shall not fall to the ground as quite lost, *My word shall not return in vain ;* and know, that as the prophetick word died not with the prophet, so its effects will be of the highest nature ; viz. salvation or condemnation to you. It should startle you to think, that as short as our lives be, *we are to you a savour of life or death.* Isa. lv. 11.

(2.) ADMIT *and bear with our faithfulness and plainness* : You cannot expect, that we who are on the borders of eternity, dare trifle to please your vain fancy, or flatter to gratify your humour ; or daub and palliate to avoid your displeasure.

WERE we to live always here, we might be more easily tempted to consult your pleasure in what we say ; but when we consider, that both you and we are hastening into a world of spirits, we must venture to *profit* you, tho' it should displease ; and be useful to *your* souls and true to our *own*, tho' your kindness should be abated for it. In another world you would curse us, and we condemn ourselves, if by flattery, fear or fondness, we should contribute to your damnation.

(3.) *Do*

SERM. (3.) *Do not hasten the death of your prophets.* They will die soon enough; your great blessings are removed, when they are thrust out of the world; contribute not to it by unkindness; drive them not hence by grief, by unperfuadableness, divisions, or reproaches (which are frequently heart-breaks) nor yet starve them and their families by your penuriousness.

IT was a prophet who reckon'd *God would put his tears into his bottles.* You have but a short time to express your kindness, and that may be shortned by your provoking God to remove them, or by your disturbing them to such an agitation of mind, as may hasten their death: But know, as they deserve better at your hands, so the *calmer* their returns may be, the *sooner* and *suddener* will be God's testimony against you in their vindication.

Pfal. lviii.  
8.

(4.) *Expect and prepare for your own death.* If the *prophet* is not to live for ever, be sure the gentleman or tradesman shall not do so. Can't thou, who art drowned in worldly cares, look to be spared, when the most useful men must die? Is thy service to a common good, or thy fitness for it, equal to many dead prophets, whose bodies are meat for worms long since? God, who values men and their lives by *usefulness*, will not be more tender of the dry tree than the green. When he arrests by death, those who spend and  
are

are spent for the good of souls, he'll make less of cutting thee down, who either cumberest the ground, or art less significant to the publick. SERM. VIII.

OH! therefore learn to die, by *dying daily*; be and do what you would wish yourselves to have been and done, when on a death-bed. Get into a state which God's gospel-covenant secures; see your hopes be such, as the nearness of eternal objects cannot shake, when by their nearness they shall awaken thee. Carry it so, as not to be *ashamed at Christ's coming*; busy yourselves to lay up what will prove *treasures* in another world; and take not up with, nor lay out your prime thoughts and strength, on what you must leave, and be disappointed by. 1 John ii. 28.

IN a word, never think your title to eternal life can be too clear; and be you always intent to improve your meetness for heaven's enjoyments and employs, that so you may be suited to find felicity in the former, and pleasure in the latter.

3. *To you of this flock, from whom two ministers have been snatched away in so little time.*

(1.) *Be awakened and humbled, as far as divine displeasure is instanced by the death of your pastor.* Our deceased brother is taken away in an age fit for the labour of many years, and yet advantaged by experience to be of greater use than  
younger

SERM. younger men; and therefore his death is a  
 VIII. greater indication of *anger*, than if he had  
 ~~~~~ been either too aged or raw for service.  
 Tho' I have nothing to lay to your charge,
 yet I call you to make enquiry what God
 reproveth. Believe it, the death of ministers
 of years, adapted to publick good, is no
 small judgment *in itself*, and very often a
 presage of greater. Is it nothing to see a
 bright *light* extinguished in this dark world?
 a *praying* person taken away, when sins
 cry aloud, and fore judgments threaten this
 land? What's a stroke, if it be none to have
 such a one removed, who, knowing the
 state of your souls, could adapt his exhor-
 tations to it. You must feel it a calamity
 that you shall see him no more, by whom
 God communicated his grace and comfort
 to your souls. It must be a doleful com-
 plaint, I shall be no more *warned* by him,
 who oft kindled in me an holy fire; I shall
 learn no more of him, who, by the blessing
 of Christ, often conveyed to me a saving
 light; he shall not again rouse me out
 of a secure frame, satisfy my perplexing
 doubts, or reduce me from those wander-
 ings which tended to my ruin. You who
 were converted by his labours, need not
 be taught to cry, *My father, my father, to
 my unspeakable loss and grief, is dead.* As
 to the *presage*, the righteous are generally
taken away from the evil to come. Sirs, it
 is coming, it will be fore: All can per-
 ceive,

ceive, that way is made for wolves among straggling sheep, when shepherds are called hence, &c. SERM.
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(2.) *Be not a reproach to your deceased prophets after their decease.* Should you be giddy, should you backslide, their care and skill would be subject to challenge, as if they had not established your minds by their ministry and example. Let their name be made precious by your soundness, stability, religious walk, and fruitfulness in every good work.

(3.) *Tremble lest they witness against any of you.* Many will be their joy and crown ^{Isa. xlix.} in the great day; see that all be such: for it will be dreadful, that they who loved you as their own souls, should give a testimony that shall render your aggravated condemnation just; they will honour the sentence of Christ even against you.

(4.) *Be careful in the choice of a successor.* Adore the goodness of God, that your loss may be tolerably repaired, so that ye need not be long as *sheep without a shepherd.* I am thankful to God, you are neither indifferent about a supply, nor so nice and captious, as no man can please you, who is most likely to profit you: A distemper too common in our days, and will bring fatal consequences.

ALL the advice I would give you is, be *unanimous*, as hath hitherto been your praise, and propose your *truly spiritual edification*,

SERM. *edification*, as that you would have him,
 VIII. whom you call, most fitted to subserve.

He that can most assist you to be safe in reaching, and most *meet* to enter into heaven, will be your surest and highest blessing. Niceties and triflings will yield but little pleasure, when you come upon the borders of another world; these, I'm sure, were not approved by either of your former pastors, while they lived in this.

I SHALL conclude with some account of him lately deceased; and be the shorter, because it was his own way, and also his own desire, when I preached on the occasion of his *wife's* funeral.

GOD began to deal effectually with his heart in his tender years, and *prayer* (his great talent) was his frequent exercise when very young. His soul thus truly changed by conversion, and assisted by constant supplies in return of prayer, he avoided infection, and became armed against the snares of the *university*; yea, so notably serious, as to be admitted into the intimate society of some of the gravest divines in that place.

HE was but young when he removed thence to a *family* of note; there the evil disposition of some persons, made him more cautious than usual; and the restraints his prudence set on his warrantable freedom, commended retirement to his choice;

choice; that neither the crimes of others might corrupt or grieve him, nor any inadvertency of his harden, or be exposed by them. SERM.
VIII.

THIS retirement was so blest, that he often acknowledged he never enjoyed that uninterrupted communion with God in secret, as in the aforefaid family.

IN this private condition he lived many years, which he spent partly in securing the great concernments of his own soul, by clearing his evidences, improving his graces, and attaining to a more confirmed state; and partly in informing and fixing his judgment, both in the disputed articles of faith, and in the business of conformity, required of all that were admitted ministers in the national church established by law. The *latter* he disallowed upon maturest thoughts; nor know I many so qualified to manage that controversy as he was. In the *former*, he proved skilful as well as orthodox, tho' disallowing extreams, particularly as to the *extent* of the death of Christ, and *conditionality* of the covenant, with several things depending thereupon.

HE to whom the end is known from the beginning, and hath in prospect the service he designeth by every instrument, made use of this long retiredness, to qualify our brother for greater usefulness than himself foresaw, or rationally could expect. By this was he prepared to be an eminent

SERM.
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bleffing in his generation, both in the education of youth, and the falvation of finners, by well-adapted labours: Nor did God long forbear, by fuccefs, to encourage him in his ministerial fervice, but gave him an early pledge of more extenfive fruits, by the converfion of fome in that very family.

AND left his zeal in awakening the feure, might carry him to break the *bruifed reed*, by unbounded feverity in his notions or expreffions, providence, about that time, directed his acquaintance with a pious gentlewoman, under great doubts and perplexities of mind; by her experience he became instructed in the various exercifes of a child of light *walking in darknefs*: There he found an inftance, what a godly perfon may be reduced to, and how fuch fhould be dealt with, in thofe *self-condemning fears*; which proceed either from temptation, weaknefs of mind, bodily indispoftion, or the hidings of God's face; yea, fometimes from *all* together. But as hereby he was prepared to be a *vessel of confolation* to many, fo he became, by the divine bleffing, a means of peace to this diftrefsed perfon, after the long endeavours of feveral good minifters had failed to fatisfy her.

THE purpofes of his more obfcure courfe of life being obtained, he was directed into a *married ftate*, and that under circumftances greatly tending to his own comfort and publick benefit. The

perfon

person God gave him to be his wife, was a daughter of major *Hubbard* in *Leicestershire*; a woman of singular piety, good estate, and to *him* in all respects agreeable. She had refused very considerable matches, from a fixed resolution to dispose of herself, as might be most conducive to guard her against the *snare*s of a *present* life, and prepare her for an *endless* happiness; and that she was not disappointed herein, was evident by her constant advances in holiness, great meetness for heaven, and comfortable serenity in death.

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UPON this change in his condition, he applied himself to *educate* young men, and to preach more publickly and constantly. So far was he from that base spirit of some, who espouse *idleness*, when they are capable to *subsist* without dependance; whereas our friend reckoned an estate a further obligation to serve the donor, and an *encouragement* for more successful service, as it shelter'd him against the *temptations* of the necessitous, set him above *contempt*, and obviated that *prejudice* against all ministers, as if their most serious endeavours came from no higher aims than to procure a *maintenance*. His *governing dexterity* by a due mixture of sweetness, art, and authority, gave him no small advantage to *profit* youth, under the disadvantages of a *private* academy. His *diligence* was extraordinary, until a great dif-

SERM. temper enfeebled him. He *piouſly* managed his houſe, as a nurſery for *heaven*, as well as a ſchool for improving learning; and there are ſo very many excellent *miniſters* in the church, and eminent *gentlemen* already qualified to ſerve their country; yea, diſpoſed ſo to do ſo by his care and ſkill to principle them, as are fully ſufficient to excuſe my ſaying any thing as to his ſtock of *learning* and *judgment*.

WHAT more deſerves my regard, is, that of which himſelf made the higheſt account, and frequently inculcated on other ſtudents, *viz.* A faithful, diligent *aim* at uſefulneſs in ſaving immortal ſouls, and the preciſeſt care to *adapt* their ſtudy and labours to this end. From this deſign he could not be *bribed*, by an employ of far higher benefit to his family; nor *diverted* by thoſe many threatnings, ſeveral loſſes or impriſonments he endured. Faith gave him ſuch a view of the intrinſick nature, and eternal conſequence of the work of the miniſtry, that he could not fail to judge it to be worthy of the *deepeſt ſtudies*, a reward of the moſt *diligent labour*, a compensation for the *foreſt ſufferings*, and beſt becoming the *greateſt ſouls*.

As the eternal ſalvation of men was his fixed deſign, ſo he concluded the beſt way to effect it, was a plain, warm, *familiar* way of preaching; therefore he chiefly regarded the frame of his *own heart* in his work,

work, as what suggested the most *moving* words, and whence, by the divine blessing, he expected greatest success. And indeed the affectionate seriousness of his auditory under this method, encouraged him thereto, altho' his sermons should not please the eye of the *reader*, as they moved people at the *hearing*.

IN pursuit of this end, he took hold of private seasons, especially the time of sickness, and very industriously *visited sick people*, in hope that the nearness of another world might awaken attention and concernedness, in all directions tending to prepare them for safety in it. As he would cheerfully and thankfully mention the *success* of his pains with any person, so he with bitterness *bewailed* that certain juncture of his life, wherein a blessing was more *sparingly* afforded to his endeavours.

BUT tho' God secured to himself the *glory* of making the word efficacious, and awaken'd his servant to *inquisitiveness* and *humility*, by suffering him sometime to cry, *I have laboured in vain*; yet he often favoured his zeal for the benefit of others, by a *signal blessing* on his ministry. Many of his *pupils* call him spiritual father. About the vale of *Beaver* he diffused saving light, and was an instrument in the conversion of great numbers; among whom some *despisers* of himself were very remarkable instances. In other parts of the country,

SERM. he was not without seals to his ministry ;
 VIII. nor did his words altogether return in vain
 in *this city*, but had good effect to convince and regenerate several perishing sinners, as well as to establish and edify many whom he found begotten unto Christ.

NOR is it very *common* with God to withhold his influences, where there are such *good presages* of success ; as a humble distrust of our performances, an entire dependance on God's assistance and blessing, and a solicitous dread of being useless : Each of which took up much place in his discourse with intimates. It was a common saying with him, *I am much afraid of my work, from a sense of my own indisposition and insufficiency ; but when I have looked up to God for help, I found his presence warming and enlarging me, &c. And yet sometimes, what I had thought best prepared, bath had least success.*

A FEAR of an *unuseful life*, was what frequently and deeply possessed his mind ; nor was there any thing he did oftner and more expressly *deprecate*. When some unhappy circumstances brake his *school*, it was his frequent moan, *Now every field is unpleasant, for fear I shall live to no purpose.* Also in his last *sickness*, his usual cry was, *Oh ! let me not live incapable of service, unfit to be employed.* And when, a little before his *death*, his indisposition for study and preaching seemed a little abated,

bated, what joy possessed him, what thankful acknowledgments did he utter!

SERM.
VIII.

NEITHER is it unworthy our notice, how indulgent the providence of God was towards his servant, and regardful of his concernedness for his work; for in a few days after his complaints upon the period put to his school, he was invited to be a *pastor* in this place: And God also put an end, by *death*, to that his *latter* dread of an unprofitable life; yet not before he had improved that short lightning, by *returning* to his preaching work, which he intermitted not till a very few days before he died; as if God at once would remarkably *prevent* what his servant *feared*, and grant him an opportunity to shew his faithful *zeal*.

BUT his *useful attempts* were not confined to mere ministerial work, or the education of young men, but he was of publick influence in the *country* (where he was better acquainted than in *London*) in advising his neighbours in their intricate affairs, and composing differences among them; yea, also in successfully guiding multitudes in what concerned the safety and liberty of this nation, when the tide ran high against *religion and property*.

I THINK what I have already instanced, will justify my saying that we have lost an *useful man*, and also discover his great *zeal* to be such. And yet besides what his prosperous ministry, with other things, do contribute

SERM. tribute to that character, many of his *pupils*
 VIII. are winning souls, and promoting the in-
 ~~~~~ terest of our blessed Redeemer, whereby  
 the *extent* of his usefulness is beyond my  
 reach to measure; for the blessing in it, is  
 like *successively* to descend to several ages.

MOREOVER, his care to observe the  
*conduct of providence* was very strict, well-  
 knowing man's *unskilfulness* to direct his  
 ways, and the *bitterness* of displeasing  
 events, when we trust to our own con-  
 duct; as well as our *usurpation* of God's  
 place, whenever we assume it. Therefore  
 he was accustomed to say, *I can go any*  
*where, if God will lead.* Nor was he less  
 ready, with thankfulness, to ascribe all wel-  
 come *issues* and *benefits* received, to the  
 same providence; as also to be submissively  
 resigned to its disposals in what appeared  
 more *severe*. A greater instance of this last  
 can scarce be given, than his calm submis-  
 sion under the loss of his yoke-fellow;  
 which is little less than rending from one  
 the half of one's self.

By his great *moderation* towards all who  
 differed in judgment, he became accepta-  
 ble to men of several denominations; nor  
 could it be otherwise on the account of  
 opinion, except with such who limit their  
 charity, as well as their communion, by the  
 narrow bounds of their own party; which  
 on this very account is to be suspected, to  
 have neither a good cause, nor much judg-  
 ment,



ment, further than selfishness is concerned. SERM.

As he was ready to shew *kindness* to his friends, so his *charity* to the necessitous was not barren. Several poor students he supported, yea, at times hath maintained a minister and his family, until an employment was provided for their subsistence. VIII.

NOR was he *ungrateful* for any favour he received: With how tender a sense did he acknowledge the abundant affection of this church! yet still therewith bewailing he could be no more useful to you; which testified that he laboured willingly with you, from a grateful sense of your kindness, as well as faithfully from his duty to God. Happy ministers so obliged! and happily advantaged people who so engage them!

*But served he God for nought?* Far from it: Mercy fill'd his *life* beyond that of many faithful *ministers*: He felt not the streights or snares of an *indigent* condition. Instead of trouble or temptation by a *wife*, she was a relief under trial, a support to his integrity, and a helper on of his salvation; and he apparently saw many of his *children* in the way to heaven, and one well qualified and useful to bring others thither. He was tenderly *loved* by his *relations*, and survived neither a *will* nor *gifts* for service: He took a kind of solemn leave in the sermon he preached, with his usual *warmth*, within a *few days* of the *period* of his life; and mercy followed

SERM. followed him *in his death*; exercise of *rea-*  
 VIII. *son* was not intermitted, no, nor grace nei-  
 ther. He prayed with great fervor; the  
 tempter was chained from *disturbing*; he  
 was full of *inward* comfort; gasping, he  
 cheerfully joined with the prayers of others,  
 and *died* without a *groan*.

THESE gleanings from his useful life,  
 should awaken us to follow his steps, where-  
 in he is imitable. His faithful labours with  
 you, call aloud for proportionable fruit;  
 and seeing a capacity employed in service,  
 will not perpetuate life, let all of us spend  
 ours as dying persons.





A

Thanksgiving-SERMON

FOR THE

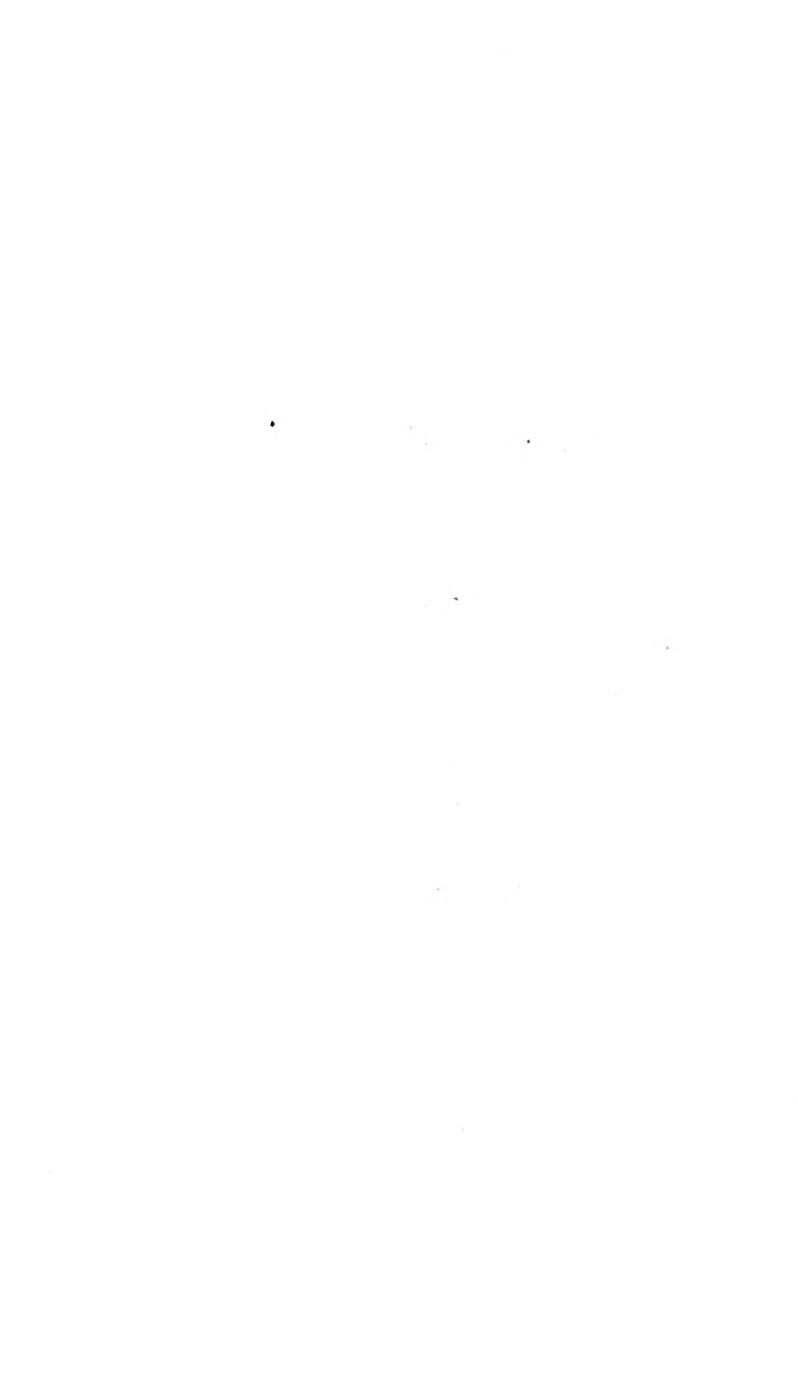
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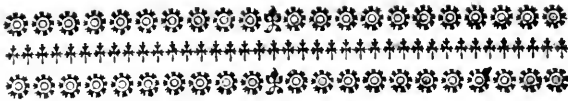
O F

HER MAJESTY'S FORCES.


Preach'd at *Hand-Alley*, Nov. 12. 1702.







T H E  
P R E F A C E.

 *REPORT* that the success of her Majesty's arms was not pleasing to us Dissenters, is one reason of publishing this sermon; wherein ill-willers may find us affected with our victories, as a common benefit, as well as directions to improve them. I was at some loss whence this suspicion could arise, after we had solemnly, in the appointed fast, and usually throughout the campaign, prayed for this success; yea, and when we neither do, nor can, propose any interest separate from that of all true English Protestants.

But by the early use some hot clergymen make of our prosperity, I am instructed, that a consciousness of the wound designed us by them, raised a jealousy in themselves, that what render'd the execution more safe, must needs be displeasing to the sufferers: Yet here their narrow spirits are not our standard; for I assure them, that we still thank God for this publick benefit, by weakening France; though we are grieved, that what's so great a blessing in its own nature,

ture,

*ture, should be abused by them to purposes no more hurtful to the enemy, than if the French king were the adviser.*

*The moderate principles I still espouse, (to the offence of several) gives me the greater uneasiness, when moderation is exposed as the worst of crimes, and more mortal strokes are still levelled at the dying remains of charity among us; as if the holy catholick church, and the communion of saints, were expung'd out of our present creed. But why must this course be supported by the imputation of hypocrisy? when none can be ignorant, that the generality of English Presbyterians avow'd occasional communion with the church of England, as their principle, and frequently did so communicate, before the sacramental test was enacted: Nor saw they how it's blameable, when Christ and his apostles worshipp'd in the Jewish temple and synagogues, and in their separate meetings too.*

*However, since divisions are so lightly accounted of during a war, which needs our united strength, if prosecuted as our own and Europe's safety requires; and when it's the undoubted interest of our glorious Queen, to be the head of the Protestants; a zeal for publick good must engage all mens foresight, to what these tend, and where they will issue.*

*A church standing on its steeple spire, is not a figure of what's most established; yet*  
*this*

*this it a fit emblem of any Protestant party that lays its whole stress upon, and discriminates itself with severity from all others, by that which is not any pretended article of faith, and wholly useless to divine worship, discipline, or any other truly christian purpose, except a mere recognition of the authority of the imposer; which is no ordinary reason for any human laws, and much less decent for those made by a church, which hath no power, except for edification. Besides this narrowness of the bottom, I, and all others who desire the national church to be ever a strong bulwark against popery, do observe, that among its members, there will be left a great number of persons truly pious and moderate, hating violence, and zealous only for the essentials of religion, in principle and practice; and not a few heterodox, or profane, or haters of all clergy. Now, when none of these can be thought well cemented by the forecited points, the warm and narrow party, as such, will be subject to great temptations, when they find Popish assaults, not against what they distinguished themselves by, but only against what's common to all other Protestants.*

*Nor ought it to be a despised indication of providence, that the two grand points, by which the high men of the clergy were characteriz'd in former reigns, have been exposed and disowned by themselves; the*  
*doctrine*

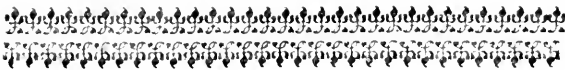
*doctrine of passive obedience by the Jurors in the last, yea, this present reign; and that of the magistrates power in religion, by the Nonjurors, and many others.*

*That God would avert his judgments, by preventing an increase of guilt by our successes, and make us as happy by them, as the influence of a publick, wise, and moderate spirit, on all our affairs, would render us; is my unfeigned prayer, as a true lover of the Protestant religion, the government, and nation.*

Decemb. 2.  
1702.

*Daniel Williams.*





2 CHRON. XX. 26, 27, 28.

*And on the fourth day they assembled themselves in the valley of Berachah, for there they blessed the Lord, &c. Then they returned every man of Judah and Jerusalem, and Jehoshaphat in the fore-front of them, to go again to Jerusalem with joy: For the Lord had made them to rejoice over their enemies, and they came to Jerusalem with psalteries, and harp, and trumpets, unto the house of the Lord.*



**T**HAT the fitness of this SERM. text to our present solemnity may be more evident, IX. I shall state the occasion of this triumph, with short remarks on each head.

1. *Jehoshaphat*, after a great reformation, is assaulted by a numerous host of  
VOL. II.                      I                      idolatrous

SERM. idolatrous enemies, *ver. 1, 2.* It came to  
 IX. pass after this also, that the children of  
 Moab, and the children of Ammon, &c. came against *Jehoshaphat* to battle, &c. Idolaters are apt to combine against reformed churches; nor ought ensuing wars to be accounted a divine rebuke for reformation.

2. THE sense of this danger excites *Jehoshaphat* to publick fasting, and fervent prayers, *ver. 3, to 13.* This is the safest course in all extremities: And oh hopeful and happy *Judah* in a truly reforming and praying prince!

3. GOD presently assures them of conquest, and this by his own more immediate hand, *ver. 14, to 17.* The serious prayers of a reformed people, in extreme dangers, soon meet with signal answers.

4. THE king believeth, and praiseth God, as if the victory were already obtained, and persuades the people to the highest confidence in the prophet's message; *ver. 18, to 21.* Faith, in the promises of God, and thankfulness for them, are good pledges of their accomplishment.

5. God fulfils what he engaged; both in the ruin of the enemy, and in the very manner predicted, that vast multitude is destroyed by their own hands. *Jehoshaphat's* army was too faint for so great a slaughter; God therefore employs an angel, or impresseth the minds of the adversaries

versaries upon mistakes, or jealousies, to become their own mutual executioners. Yea, God doth not only perform the utmost of his engagement by subduing the enemy, but exceeds his word by enriching *Judah* with their vast and unexpected treasures; *ver. 22, to 25.* The multitude and strength of united armies, become but greater trophies to the despised, when God engageth their defeat. And those treasures which were to help the strongest, are easily made enriching spoils to the weakest bands, whom God undertakes to lead. I need not add, God's performances oft exceed, but never fall short of the utmost good included in his promises.

6. *Jehoshaphat* and his people entertain this signal mercy with a becoming sense of God's hand; it struck their minds, and well it might, when the appearance of God in the success of this war, and the consequences thereof to their church and state, were so manifestly great and affecting. The sudden change made in their circumstances was very extreme, *viz.* the most entire victory over an enemy, every way fitted and ready to destroy them. The hand of God in this victory was also very extraordinary, of which they were convinced, by his *foretelling* it by his prophet, upon their prayers, as well as by the method of obtaining it. This affecting *sense* is that, which exerts it self in the

SERM. text as a proper expression thereof; for  
 IX. which you read of a *first* and *second* time  
 of thanksgiving. The *first* in the valley  
 of *Berachba*, as soon as the work was  
 finished; the *other* at *Jerusalem*, in the  
*house of the Lord*. Both discovered a grate-  
 ful mind towards God, and a zeal for his  
 honour; the former by the *haste*, the  
 latter by the *solemnity* of their acknow-  
 ledgments. They thought the publishing  
 of God's praise could be neither too soon,  
 too often, nor too solemn.

To introduce the doctrine, of which I  
 shall treat, I need no further reference to  
 the *context*, than saying, the war attended  
 with the forementioned success was a *just*  
 war; for it was approved by God to be  
 such, and undertaken by authorized per-  
 sons in self-defence, *ver. 11, 15*.

Doct. *Signal successes given by God in a  
 just war, are ground of great joy, as  
 also of the most devout praises, blessings,  
 and thanksgivings to God.*

THIS doctrine is self-evident as to the  
 truth of it, for not to *rejoice*, were unna-  
 tural; not to be *thankful*, were devilish;  
 not to *bleſs and praise* the Lord, were  
 brutal; and to do this otherwise than  
*devoutly*, would be hypocritical and pro-  
 fane. Signal successes given by God in  
 a just war, afford sufficient reason for *all*  
 this; thence cogent motives are derived.

Yea,

Yea, and being granted as the state of our case, the light of nature and common ingenuity demand such acts in return; they being no other than a just tribute from the *receivers* to the blessed *donor*.

INDEED, were there *no success*, there would be place for mourning; if the success be *inconsiderable*, joy would be in lower degrees; if the war be *unjust*, success would be a snare: Moreover, if God had no hand in the success of a just war, he should not be entitled to *praises* and *thanksgivings* for that success; yea, were not the success *signal*, and his hand *great* in the victory, the argument for *very high* praises would not be so evidently strong.

BUT when all such *abatements* are excluded, and their *contraries* very manifest, there can be no excuse from any of those acts (no, nor from *any degree* of them) which are by the doctrine required as a dutiful return for the benefits mentioned therein.

HAVING hinted at the evident *truth* of the doctrine, as far as it *connects* the benefit received, and the duties enjoined, I need not enlarge further on it, as a *general* head; and the rather, because the suitability of it to our *present* solemnity is so exact, that whatever *explication* is necessary shall be attended to, either, when I urge the forementioned *duties*, or when I demonstrate, that *our* acknow-

SERM. ledg'd mercies do include all these supposed reasons of such duties.

IX. I shall therefore apply and confine the doctrine to our case, wherein the whole of it is comprehended; there we shall find what will justify a becoming joy over our enemies, and awaken us gratefully to praise and bless the Lord our God. For this we have eminent cause; in this we cannot exceed, if we regard the description which I shall give of these several duties.

It being impossible to pursue the full scope of this head in one discourse, I shall consider it under these two more substantial parts.

I. THE grounds upon which sundry duties are required. These are summed up in those words; signal successes given us by God in a just war against our enemies. This is the very mercy we possess; and it is of that nature, as to support the fitness and necessity of those solemn thanksgivings we profess to offer: Thanksgivings appointed by the government, and wherein our glorious queen is, with *Jehoshaphat*, in the fore front of her people.

II. The duties required upon these grounds: These are several, viz. Praise, blessing, thanksgiving, and joy. Each of these, whereof not one may be omitted, for all these are just upon the same common reason; yea, and somewhat of each ought to be intermingled, which ever of them is most expressly

*expressly* attended to. We should *cheerfully* and *thankfully* praise and bless our Lord; we must rejoice with thankful *adoration and praises to our God*; we should offer thanksgivings with *joy and adoring praises*. So that if you perform *any* one of these aright, you must take in *all* as necessary ingredients; because to rejoice without praises and thanksgivings to God is a *carnal joy*: To thank and praise the Lord without joy is too *sullen*, and must be so far streightened: To thank God without  *blessing* him would set us on too *rude a level* with God, whom we ought most devoutly to adore: To bless and praise God without *joyful thanksgivings* would too much extinguish praise, and shew our want of a due sense of *our own* interest in the benefit received.

THEREFORE we ought to exercise our selves in *all* these, and get every motion of our hearts tinctured with each, calling up our spirits to excite whichsoever of them seems omitted, or more remiss.

## S E C T. I.

BUT I shall consider both these parts more distinctly and fully.

I. THE *grounds* upon which the several duties are required, *viz.* The signal successes given us by God in our just war against the enemy.

SERM. THESE I shall clear, that the reasons and  
 IX. motives to the several duties may be more  
 ~~~~~ evident, affecting, and forcible. I shall  
 reduce these, 1. To the justness of the
 war. 2. To the signalness of the success.
 (1.) In the greatness of it. (2.) In the mo-
 mentous consequences of it. (3.) In the
 manifestation of God therein.

1. *The war wherein we are engaged is a just war.* Had we undertaken this war for *ill ends*, such as vain glory, unjust usurpations of power, rapine, enlargement of territories, or unlawful revenge; had it been entered into to defend a bad cause, or in a treacherous breach of contracts, or needlessly to disturb our neighbours, or to overturn the ballance of *Europe*, or the like; we could not then justly have prayed for the Almighty's blessing on our arms, neither would our success prove in the issue a national mercy.

BUT it is not thus: No, the *injustice* lies altogether on our enemies part, on the *French king's* ambition, oppressions, cruelty, depredations, treachery, and usurping designs; these lodge at his door; and this so evidently, that the world might have been assured God intended no real blessing for him, even when he was most victorious; but that he was reserved for greater vengeance, which he now begins to feel, to the lessening his *glory*, that *idol*,
 the

the total eclipse whereof is prefaged by this present stroke. SERM.
IX.

WHEREAS the *cause* on our part is the defence of our just rights, and those of our allies against his attempts; the recovering of what he so injuriously usurped, and the securing of *Europe* from that slavery and ruin, which his preparations and advantages visibly threatned; yea, so near was the danger, that a short delay must have subjected the *Empire, Holland,* and our selves to his insults. And when we once had been reduced under his *power*, you may judge by his former invasions and perfidiousness, whether justice, honour, or charity, could restrain his *will*. His barbarous management of advantages appears in numerous instances, to all persons, who remember his proceedings against *Lorain, Netherlands, Suabia, Treves, Palatinate, Cologn, Mentz, Wirtemberg, Spires, &c.*

BUT besides our taking the alarm from his exorbitant power, and vast preparations, which the law of nations admit to be a *just* cause for war; we have much more to justify our undertaking. He, against the most solemn oaths of renunciation, hath taken possession of *Spain*, to the injury of the emperor; yea, this is done against the express articles covenanted with us in the treaty of *Partition*. It is true, he offers for apology, that he could
not

SERM. not divest his children of their right by
 IX. his renouncing. But besides the falshood
 of this, as to *national* contracts, was not
 he barred from employing his *own* treasure,
 arms, and power, against his oaths? If
 this be not enough, he hath set up and
 proclaimed for *king* of these our nations,
 the pretended prince of *Wales*, against the
 established laws of this realm, yea, and
 against his solemn covenants in the treaty
 at *Reswick*.

THESE *reasons* of the war so demon-
 strate the *justice* of it, that this, with the
 things depending on the war, may give
 it the title of one of the *wars of the Lord*,
 and not unfitly allow us to apply our success
 thereto, in these words; *And they made*
 1 Chron. v. 20, 21. *war with the Hagarites, and they were*
helped against them, and the Hagarites were
delivered into their hands, &c. because the
war was of God.

2. THE *success* of this just war against
 our enemies is *very signal*. It is not so
 common as to be overlooked among *ordi-*
nary occurrences; there's that impressed
 upon it which commands observation and
 wonder, yea, and obligeth to unusual ac-
 knowledgments, which will be granted,
 if we rightly consider the greatness and
 the consequences of this success, with the
 evident tokens of the hand of God therein.

(I.) THE success is signal, with respect
 to the *greatness of it*. We, with our
 allies,

allies, have prevailed both at sea and at land; not in a few, but many places; not in a small number of struggles, but in multitudes; not in mean instances, but in those very considerable; not against a weak unprepared baffled enemy, but against a powerful prepared adversary, confident of victories, and accustomed to them. Take a small part instead of a full enumeration; in *Flanders*, *Liege*, *Keiserfwart*, *Venlo*, *Ruremond*, are reduced by the united forces under the earl of *Marlborough*: Upon the *Rhine*, *Landaw*, considerable as a pass, and for its strength, is taken: In *Italy*, prince *Eugene* obtained great advantages at *Luzara*, and other places. Our forces under the duke of *Ormond*, at *Vigo*, have gotten a considerable treasure, and there are burnt and taken seventeen galleons, fifteen men of war, with several other vessels. It would be tedious to include in this account what prizes we have taken at sea, and what we have gained at *New-England*, *Newfoundland*, and the *Leeward Islands*, the one half would suffice to commend our success as very great.

(2.) THE success is signal in its consequences and probable effects. They are not small mischiefs which are obstructed, no less than slavery, popery, and barbarous usages; the good in prospect is not trivial, unless religion, civil liberties, our inheritance,

SERM. tance, safety, and trade, must be so ac-
IX. counted. The ships and treasure lost at

~ *Vigo* conduce to break the *French* measures; that king reckoned by this *flota* to bribe men of influence in several courts, camps, and navies, and greatly to augment his forces. Nor is it improbable that he ventured on vaster expence than his stated funds did answer, in prospect of this money, a disappointment wherein strikes in the tenderest part!

THE ships and seamen taken and lost in this war, will not a little check his formidableness at *sea*, where, for many years, he hath so applied his care. His trade, and awful name, will be subject to abatement, and his resolved obstruction to his neighbours *traffick* far less promising. At *land*, there's a way almost opened to *France* by *Landaw*: good frontiers obtained for *Holland*, with forage and contribution for the confederate forces in *Flanders*; besides an advantage for further conquests by their situation: Nor is it a small matter that in *Italy*, there's time for the relief of prince *Eugene*, for a more hopeful campaign.

NOR doth it less affect the whole, that the alliances have encouragement to be more fixed against the attempts to gull men; yea, they are like to be enlarged by *Portugal*, and other states, who were deterred by fear; and an addition made to their force, by such as a most unhappy
war

war in the *North* diverted. Tho' I may SERM. have occasion under another head to en- IX. large this account, yet with any who have a love to their country, a regard for mankind, a zeal for religion, and an abhorrence of publick devastations, with any sense to judge of the tendency of things; enough is already offered for their conviction, that the success is to be allowed signal in respect of its consequences.

(3.) THE success is signal, by the eminent appearances of the *hand of God* therein.

THOUGH God did not give us victories so *immediately*, or by means altogether so *improbable*, as in the case of *Jehoshaphat*; yet the fool may see, and the profane must acknowledge a very remarkable concern of God therein. Can we strictly observe an exact account of successes, and not be forced to say, *Surely the Lord our God fought for us?* Josh. xxiii. 10. A calm view of sundry circumstances will affectingly inform us, that its a signal *providence* which continued and invigorated the *confederacy* after king *William's* death, who, by his greatness and integrity, was the very heart and centre of it; and when too many influencing persons shewed an aversion to the war.

DID not the hand of God appear, that in *bodies* of military men so *different* in temper, interest, and inclination; yet so great a *harmony* was maintained among both officers

SERM. officers and private soldiers? Who, be-
 IX. low our almighty God, was able to sup-
 port the forces of our allies in *Italy*,
 when under such disadvantage for num-
 ber, garrisons, money, and supplies? yet
 they did not only *maintain* their ground,
 where the *French* king directed his *chief*
 strength, but had often the better of his
 army, though so much advantaged to ex-
 ecute his resolution, to rid that country of
 the *Germans* this last year. Did not our
 God so spirit our *soldiers* at *Venlo*, and the
 citadel of *Liege*, that the enemy with
 wonder exclaimed, these men have *wings*
 as well as hands for their assaults!

WAS it not a divine adjustment which
 so *hastened* the surrender of *Landaw*, be-
 yond the duke of *Bavaria's* expectation,
 whereby a force was set at *liberty* to restrain
 the depredations, he, with the *French*,
 were resolved to commit? When God let
 us see how subject we were to baffling dis-
 appointments in our attempts on *Cadiz*,
 even where we seemed most assured of
 success, and best provided; his mere pro-
 vidence locked up our fleet by contrary un-
 usual *winds*, which else had arrived in
England under that reproach. By his pro-
 vidence the *unexpected* news of the *flota's*
 being at *Vigo* was brought to our fleet, thus
 imprisoned to wait the tidings, which the
 bearer came to the knowledge of without
 design. Our God, the *God of the spirit*
 of

of all flesh, made the best advice to sway the officers to the attempt. He provided a popish priest, with two or three other men, to be near the shore, who (though unwillingly) discovered to us our difficulties, dangers, and best way of assaulting their own friends. He, the Lord, raised a *mist*, which concealed us from our surprized enemies, and hurried our men down an unwonted *precipice* to their amazement, whereby the volunteers possessed the fort, before the appointed parties arrived. Are not each of these a divine footstep? and yet, without these, that momentous affair had been either unattempted, or miscarried. But God directed the whole matter so to cover our *reproach* abroad, and prevent our murmurs at home, as if we had left *Cadiz* only to seize the *flota*. Who can disregard his providence, which found a way so seasonably to make *full amends* for our disappointment? and contrived for us a *greater* benefit, by finding them secured at *Vigo*, than if we had beaten them at *sea*, where a great number of the ships had *escaped* by flight?

THESE were the *Lord's doings*, and they are *marvellous in our eyes*, as they are the traces of his wisdom, and indications of his favour to unworthy *England*, under so perplexed an exigency. Nor dare I overlook in this propitious event of our retreat from *Cadiz*, a divine tenderness for king
William's

SERM.

IX.



SERM. *William's reputation*, who adjusted that

IX. enterprize; which though he designed in a way *more* favourably circumstantiated for success, than could be followed as to several particulars; yet *ungrateful* people arraigned his name, as if he had been the author of the miscarriage in the execution. But tho' that clamour be hushed by this occurrence, yet in what amazement must every *true Protestant Englishman* enquire, What is the design to be served, by what principle are they acted, who pretending the same *character*, do prostitute the fame of that *glorious* prince, as if he had never *delivered* us from popery and slavery; or that his making the way to Protestant successors (both at *present* and hereafter) in the throne; or his chusing the *best* of the clergy to fill the *sees*, and justest of lawyers to fill the *bench*, were injuries never to be forgiven?

MOREOVER, the lustre of providence is not obscured by reserving this heap of humbling victories over the *French* king, to a *time* when he thought his long-designed project could no further be obstructed; when the riches, force, and territories of *Spain* were in his hand; when King *William* (his only dreaded impediment) was removed; when his preparations, in all respects, so assured him of a general triumph, and an *universal monarchy*, that he publicly affronted every *state* which he could
not

not *bribe*; insulted all potentates whom he might not *blind* to be their own betrayers and destroyers: *Then*, even then, God proceeds to sully his glory, to abase his excellency, and bring down his high looks. But as if this were not enough to aggravate his abasement, a yet keener edge is set to his galling frets; for God directs these successes to a time when a *female* sits upon our throne; under *her* conduct our forces triumph; in the words whereby *Deborah* did accent the praise of God, and the reproach of *Jabin*, our Queen may say, *The Lord* Judg. v. 13.
made me have dominion over the mighty:

ME, a woman, over this MIGHTY *French* king. By this very circumstance, God adds to his humiliation, which must more affect his mind, than if such insults had befallen him when our affairs were managed by our late *king*, who had stopped this torrent so long, baffled his designs so often, who was so sure to improve and pursue all advantages against him; and who, by his approved sagacity, experience, and zeal for the *essentials* of the Protestant religion, and liberties of *Europe*, was so far above the insinuations of the *French tools*, that none such could have confidence to suggest them, unless they were forward to be exposed.

To add no more, We ought to acknowledge the hand of God, in that by this success he provides for *the honour of his own worship*, when the age profanely ridi-

SERM. cules fasting and prayer, as things of mere
 IX. form, and uselefs. Therefore God gives
 this fuccefs in return of folemn *national*
prayers. He who decreeth as well the
 means as the end, excited our *gracious*
Queen to begin the campaign with a *publick*
faft, and it juft *endeth* with a moft fignifi-
 cant part of our fuccefs, when all our de-
 signed attempts were over with the feafon
 of action. This feems to be caft in with a
 fpecial purpofe, to encourage devotion;
 that whilft his workings fhew his *appro-*
bation of the homage paid him, all may
 confeff, *he faid not to the feed of Jacob,*
feek ye me in vain.

IIa. xlv.
 19.

THE *firft* part of the doctrine being fi-
 nifhed, with fome enlargement on the *laft*
 head, as what moft directly induceth that
 regard to God, which is to be expreffed in
 the following duties, I proceed to the fe-
 cond part.

II. THE *duties* towards God, which
 are required in return for thefe fucceffes.

HE who conferr'd thefe benefits, is our
 proprietor and *ruler*; he governs us as well
 as faves us, and therefore wifely provides
 that all his mercies are fubfervient to our
 obedience. When he, as a benefactor, own-
 eth us, it is that we may acknowledge him,
 and that in fome proportion to his appea-
 rance for us, and to the bleffings he con-
 veys thereby.

THE Holy God worketh *marvellous* SERM. things, not to indulge mens *lusts*, or fondle *regardless* sinners: such a design by the IX. *least* of his works, must highly reflect on his purity, and his just regard for his own honour and government. His blessed nature must be unknown to them, who are insensible that he inclines them to *dutifulness* by every deliverance, he supports the obligation of his *laws* by all successes, claims a tribute of *praise* at the expence of wonders, and expects loyal observance in agreeable *duties*, as he displays the glory of his nature by his marvellous works.

THE doctrine mentions those duties wherewith *Jehoshaphat* and his people entertain'd their victory; nor can we be just to God; if we, in the like case, imitate not their *example*, at least in what is naturally moral, and positively instituted under the *gospel* oeconomy. That praising and blessing the ever-blessed God, and rendring to him our thanksgivings, accompanied with joy, are of this kind, cannot be disputed by such as scruple the *psaltery, harp, and trumpet*: nor yet can they, who have liberty to use the *latter*, so much as doubt the other duties to be the most *essential*, and so highly regarded by God, that he will no further accept of any *externals*, than as expressive of them; yea, that he, as an infinitely wise and holy Spirit, must despise all *musical* performances, if the *soul* be not

SERM. duly exercised in praising and blessing him,

IX. and that with a *heart* impressed by thankfulness, and enlarged with joy. I shall therefore call you to apply yourselves with all seriousness to each of these duties.

S E C T. II.

I. PRAISE God for all that's *great* in the success of our arms.

I WOULD not detract from the valour, conduct, or fidelity of any instruments; they were appointed for this purpose, and God hath put great honour on their names, by making use of them in this glorious success. But God must not be overlook'd, no nor *rival'd* by them; they and we, from a conviction of his *greater* influence, must say, *Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory.* They are but instruments, whom God doth *qualify*, and therefore may be content to affirm it in the words of a man, who was well instructed in military affairs: *Blessed is the Lord my strength, which teacheth my hands to war, and my fingers to fight.* It argues a profane mind, to ascribe little to him, who gave *every* degree of the *success*: For it was his eye directed to whatever tended to it, and his will determined the issue of each encounter.

THE Almighty ought to be praised even for such victories wherein second causes

causes act, and succeed most *consonantly* to their aptitude; for 'tis he dispenseth virtue, skill, and courage to every agent; yea, he could have suspended these, and by assisting the other side, made it invincible. But where God hath manifested himself for our success, by means *incompetent*, by ways *improbable* and surprizing, and given victory *beyond* rational hopes; we are then in an especial manner to observe his hand, and ascribe the entire glory to him.

THEREFORE NOW review our successes in every instance, in every aggrandizing circumstance, and thereupon lift your very hearts to God as the *author*; say, Lord, these are *thy* works, this and that hast *thou* done; it was too great for a weaker hand, it was too remarkable for a less glorious agent; but they are in all respects what become *thine excellency* to perform. Take heed of *formality* in your acknowledgements, but from a convinced judgment, a well persuaded mind, and with warm affections, declare before him, *Neither did their own arm save them, but thy right hand, and thine arm.*

Pfal. xliv.

3.
Pfal. lxi.

10.

HE ought to be *highly* praised upon all his works, which appear *great*; and among these, conquest in war is often mentioned, and with respect hereto, *He will be called the Lord of hosts, and the God of battel.* Nor is it strange, that he is in holy writ so frequently addressed under *this title*, be-

SERM. cause his own honour, and his peoples
 XI. happiness, are secured by his being the sole
 ~~~~~ *arbiter* of wars; and the last decision of  
 national contests, and grandest affairs, be-  
 ing by hosts and battels. His praise as  
*Lord of Hosts*, is the same as *Lord* of all  
 human affairs, against the greatest force  
 which can be muster'd, yea, *served* by all  
 those forces, tho' raised for *contrary* pur-  
 poses; and not disappointed by the *weakest*  
 bands, which are intended to execute his  
 designs. Upon this very account, as he  
 wisely forbids our *trust in the arm of flesh*,  
 when war is undertaken, so he justly de-  
 mands the praise whenever *we* do succeed.

LET us then with one heart proclaim,  
 Thou, our God, art *Lord of hosts*, and as  
 such hast several ways this year abated the  
 pride of *France*; thou hast assisted us and  
 our allies, wherein ever they or we have  
 prospered against that enemy. Hadst not  
 thou been *on our side*, we had been over-  
 whelmed, as well as been disappointed of  
 that success, wherein we now rejoice. Thus  
 it becomes us to commend and publish his  
 great name for all his mighty works.

2. BLESS God for all the displays of his  
*glory*, in those successes you praise him for:

Pf. CXXXIV. *Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and*  
 2. *blest the Lord.* Blessing as man's act to-  
 wards God as the *object*, is far from being  
 the same with his blessing of men; for we  
 thereby can in no wise better him, nor add

to his glory or happiness, tho' in that sense indeed we are blessed *by him*. Praising God, and blessing him, are often convertible terms, and when either of them alone is mentioned, the other is connoted. But when both are mentioned together as *distinct* duties, blessing God implies somewhat besides mere offering of praises to him, or celebrating his fame, as the *recognized efficient* of those great works which we commemorate. What that is, will be collected out of the following passages, wherein I shall call upon you to bless his venerable name.

THE glory of the Lord hath been *displayed*; the *excellency* of his nature, and the transcendency of many of his attributes have brightly *shined*, in bringing about those great things for which we have praised him. Let us now join our  *blessings* with his praises, *adore* him for those perfections which are so eminently represented; let your minds be irradiated, your whole souls be filled, your wills be impressed, yea, your very fancy and imagination be in an *extasy*, at the effulgent beams of his glory. Let his *brightness* force you to cry out, *Thou art* Neh. ix. 5. *above all blessing and praise.*

STAND amazed at his *own blessedness* in and from himself: He, that all the mighty do thus *depend* upon for assistance; He, at whose beck the greatest affairs are determined; He, at whose entire disposal are all

SERM. succesſes, with an indifferent regard to the  
 IX. strength or weakneſs of instruments; ſure-  
 ly He can ſtand in need of no creature,  
 nor be controuled by any. What muſt  
 his *fulneſs* be, when all ſpend on his ſtock  
 from age to age? How unapproachable is  
 that *light* wherein he dwells, ſeeing a few  
 beams do overwhelm us, when moſt qua-  
 lified to entertain them, as darting forth by  
 his benign workings? What a fountain of  
 bleſſedneſs is he in himſelf, and unto him-  
 ſelf, when the overflowing *drops* thus enrich  
 and advance nations in a moment?

IN TO a tranſport conclude; all are bleſſed  
 as they are favoured by, and related to him;  
*Happy art thou, O Iſrael; who is like to*  
*thee, a people ſaved by the Lord? Yea,*  
*happy is that people whoſe God is the Lord.*  
 The multitude, riches, military ſkill, or  
 power of the enemy, cannot make us mi-  
 ſerable, if thou art our God; nor doth our  
 welfare depend on ſuch things among our-  
 ſelves, but on thy favour, the only bleſſed  
 God, and the *author of all bleſſings!*

IN order to a higher extaſy in your con-  
 ceptions of God, as happy in himſelf, and  
 of the happineſs of his people in him, get  
 your ſouls enlivened, enlarged, and fixed in  
 the *contemplations* of ſuch divine perfecti-  
 ons, as break forth moſt diſcernably by our  
 ſucceſs, and review each of theſe with *won-*  
*der*, until your *preſſ'd* ſouls do vent them-  
 ſelves in ſuch words as theſe: O how deep

Deut.

xxxiii. 29.

Pſal. cxliv.

15.



is *thy wisdom*, which defeated the plots of SERM.  
 our crafty adversaries, though so famed IX.  
 for wisdom, secrecy, experience, and unanimity! His *enlargement* of territory is  
 become his weakness; by his confidence in  
 his bribed dependants, is he betrayed; by  
 his vast expence in heaping treasures, he  
 hath enriched his enemies; by violating  
 treaties, he is become a looser; by his  
 needless early insolence, he is insulted; by  
 publishing his preparations, his foes be-  
 came capable to overcome him: thou,  
 O Lord, art wise, only wise, by whom  
*the council of the froward is carried head-* Job v. 13.  
*long*, and the baffled are led blindfold to  
 great successes!

How irresistible is *thy power*! who  
 hast checked such great armies by *lesser*  
 numbers, reduced so many towns in so  
 short a time, and put a stop to an ene-  
 my, who had such disciplined hosts, and  
 so many faithful experienced officers, uni-  
 ted in their dependance on *one head*!

Who can fathom *thy mercy*! who  
 hast succeeded forces so far from religious,  
 and given advantages against a cruel ene-  
 my, to a people so profane, so divided,  
 so full of malignity against real godliness,  
 so unwilling to be reformed by several  
 tried methods, and so disposed to abuse  
 this very success! which may incline us to  
 express our admiring thoughts as they did:

*He overthrew Pharaoh in the red sea, for* Pf. cxxxvi.  
*his* 15, 23.

SERM. *his mercy endureth for ever : He remembered*

IX. *us in our low estate, for his mercy endureth*  
 ~~~~~ *for ever.* Thence did he derive his arguments, and how vast is that stock which is thus expended from year to year on an unworthy people. When such thoughts are entertained, must not your enlarged hearts break forth a-fresh in such exclamations : Thou art inconceivably happy in these and others of thy blisful perfections! Oh blessed *Israel*, above the greatest potentates! because this God is thy rock, defence, strength, and great reward. O happy, the most *distressed*, if they have a covenant interest in this favour! Most blessed they who are nearest to thee, who beset thy throne, who are winged for thy service, behold thy face, and ever sing thy praise! they need no other weal, they are *capable* of no higher.

BUT, oh *unhappy* those, who sway the brightest scepters, possess the largest territories, command the greatest armies, and insult by the most absolute power, if they have no share in thy favour; for they are not safe, they cannot long be glorious. If their time be come, how soon will thy omnipotency overwhelm them into so abject a state, as shall convince the astonished world, *That those who walk in pride, thou art able to debase.*

Dan. iv.
37.

Finally, We cannot be said to bless God, unless we so contemplate his glory display'd

play'd in what we bless him for, as to be transform'd and rais'd into *desires* and *resolves*, which are correspondent thereto. SERM.
IX.

While we amazedly view his excellency, we must be so impressed and affected, as to find such breathings as these; Oh that I could serve thee with resolution becoming that *protection*, thy power assures me of, and that *reward*, which thy benignity will not deny! O, my soul, canst thou fear the greatest strength, when this God is on my side! trust him, trust him with firmest affiance, yea, in extremest cases it cannot be in vain: O Lord, *its* 2 Chron. xiv. 11. *nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them, who have no power: Help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude: O Lord, thou art our God, let not man prevail against thee.*

Blush, O my soul! that I ever doubted a *providence*, when I now see the footsteps thereof so evidently, that to deny it would be to affront the plainest sense. Be ashamed, O soul! that I *love* him so faintly (when I love him most) after such indications of his goodness. Awaken, O my soul! to live to him, to act entirely for him, cleave for ever to him, who is thus wise to guide, thus able to defend, thus gracious to afford his presence, and thus faithful to perform, nay, to *outdo* his promise.

SERM. *All that is within me, blefs him; yea, let*

IX. *all of us unanimously eccho these words*

Psal. lxxii.
18, 19.

Blessed be the Lord God, the God of Israel, who only doth wondrous things: And blessed be his glorious name for ever, and let the whole earth be filled with his glory. Amen, and Amen.

IN this manner blefs you the Lord for all his *excellent* works, and the great displays of his glory therein: Nor need we fear any snare by the *affectionate* warmth, or that extacy, which supposeth the concurring motion of the *animal spirits*; for though I require these in blessing our God, yet it is after the *nature* and *reason* of our duty have been examined and judged by *sedate* and cooler thoughts. But tho' this *last* posture must be preserved, when we are to pass a *judgment* on what we are to believe or do; yet for what end are our animal spirits given to *intermediate* between this earthy dull body, and our heaven-born soul, except it be to wing the soul in its ascending flights, and make the body as its associate, sharer in its *motion*, as far as possible. I now proceed to the third duty.

3. OFFER *thanksgivings* to God for that *good* you reap, by the successes you praise and blefs him for.

JOIN we in offering that zealous request: *Oh that man would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works*

Psal. cvii.
21, 22.

to the children of men: And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgivings, and declare his works with rejoicing. Heartily acknowledge the *benefits* received, and that you are deeply *indebted* to God for each of them. Let the sense of your obligations command your *lives* entirely, in serious purposes now, in real performance at all times hereafter; yea, desire and contrive occasions, which may yield the *fullest* opportunity to express your unfeigned gratitude; and when you have made the highest returns, be yet still inquiring, *What I shall render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me?* SERM. IX.

IN order to the better discharge of this part of your duty, acquaint yourselves with the *benefits* conferred, study and *relish* the utmost good concluded therein; thank the Almighty God, that you have obtained *success*, whereas total *defeats* might have been our lot; thank him, for our success against an enemy, who hath been long the plague of *Europe*, by his oppressing attempts, cruel blood-shed, and enslaving example. An enemy for many years mischievous to *England*, his councils and bribes oft procured *divisions* among ourselves, to the hazard of our utter ruin. By his influence we engaged in wars against *Holland*, to the danger of the whole *protestant* interest, as well as the balance of *Europe*: He brought those distresses on *Ireland*,

SERM. *Ireland*, attended with the expence of so
 IX. much blood and treasure: To his en-
 ~~~~~ couragements we owe those *plots* and  
 treacherous methods, which so frequently  
 threatned the *last reign*: To him we must  
 ascribe the obstruction to trade, the great  
 consumption of money, and men, in these  
 tedious wars.

How greatly do we stand obliged to  
 God! who hath granted us this success  
 against an enemy, who is so unwearied  
 to bring upon us *popery* and *slavery*. Had  
 he now prevailed, his cruelty towards  
 his own protestant subjects (tho' slavishly  
 obsequious and fond of his glory) assures  
 us, what violence, insolence, and spoil  
 must have ensued. Render dutiful thanks  
 to our God, who by this success hath so  
 far disabled our adversary from devouring  
 his neighbours, from extinguishing the Pro-  
 testant religion, from trampling on the li-  
 berties of *Europe*, and reducing *England*  
 to that narrow abject state, which the  
 meer performance of the *articles* agreed  
 to by the late king *James* would fix us in.

CAN formal heartless thanks become  
 us towards him by whose interposal we  
 have as yet our religion, our liberties, es-  
 tates and relations continued secure? What  
 can oblige us, if we are not thankful, that  
 the *honour* of the nation is preserved, the  
 name of our *Queen* made great, the way  
 for our confined trade somewhat opened,  
 and

and so much addition to our fleet and treasure, by what had been employed to our overthrow? Oh, press on your minds a deep sense of the divine goodness! feel the engaging power of the benefits God hath bestowed; but see that your *hearts* be thankful, as well as your lips, and instance your *sincerity* by greater zeal for his glory, love to his name, delight in his service, and all holy obedience to him in your conversation: *Vow and pay* suitable returns, both in kind and in degree. Surely he hath intitled himself to a *higher* place in our affectionate regards, unless we'll bear the brand of the highest disingenuity, and basest ingratitude.

SERM. IX.

Can we neglect to live his praises, unless we despise these available blessings, the want whereof had overwhelmed us? or that we think, we shall no more stand in any need of his favourable assistance?

BUT before I conclude this head, I must put you in mind to consider, that you have another signal mercy added to that of the success of our arms, and which ought to have a place in our thanksgivings, *viz.* the recovery of his *Highness the prince of Denmark*, from a dangerous fit of sickness. When he was in danger, he had a share in our prayers, because his death, on several accounts, had been a publick judgment: His prolonged life is a greater blessing, than most apprehend; therefore

SERM. therefore stir up your selves to be truly  
 IX. thankful; yea, praise and bless the Lord  
 ~~~~~ for his recovery; because he supported nature when decay'd, and his blessing gave a healing efficacy to means.

4. ADD *joy* to your praises and thanksgivings. This is so natural, when providence contributes to our *sensible* advantage, that there is not so much need to excite our rejoicing, as to regulate and direct it, both as to its degrees, and the considerations, which do most affect us: this as well as other passions being apt to degenerate to what is merely *carnal*, or to exceed its bounds.

MY *text* mentions a two-fold rejoicing.
 (1.) A rejoicing *over their ruined enemies*.
 (2.) A joy, *that God had made them to rejoice over their enemies*. Consonantly to this example,

(1.) *Rejoice over your baffled enemies*. This is lawful as they are the enemies of God, and as far as their evil designs and unjust enterprizes are defeated by the hand of God, in favour of our *righteous* cause, yea, and *of us*, who are concerned in that cause. Human bowels are tender to the afflicted; christian charity inclines to yet more compassion, as well as its laws oblige to forgiveness: but the true observance of all these consists well with our joy, at the reduction of our adversaries, as their welfare obstructed a *publick*

lick good, and their overthrow contribute to it: Yea, as the justice of God vindicates his own and his peoples interest, and his judgments testify the faithfulness of his promises to them, its their duty to rejoice: *They shall be as mighty men, which tread down their enemies in the mire of the streets, in battle; and they shall fight, because the Lord is with them, &c. and their heart shall rejoice, as through wine, their children shall see it, and be glad, their heart shall rejoice in the Lord.* Nor will this be strange to the most improved saints, in the best state of the christian church, if the triumphant be not intended in that place; *Rejoice over her, thou heaven, ye holy apostles and prophets, for God hath avenged you on her.*

SERM.
IX.



Zach. x.

5. 7.

Rev. xix.

20.

THEREFORE, without any scruple, I call you to rejoice over the baffled forces, and reduced garisons of your enemies: be glad that their ships are seized, their flota, with much of their cargo sunk or taken. Rejoice for the blasted hopes of the *French King*, that check to his ambition, and cloud upon his glory. Rejoice, that God vindicates his *persecuted* subjects, and testifies his displeasure at his violence.

INDULGE a holy joy, because of his sufferings, as they are *means* to that good, for which we this day offer thanks to our God; yea, as they are means or *presages* of further good hereafter. Rejoice, that

SERM. hereby he is somewhat less able to corrupt men in places of trust by his *bribes*; IX. less fitted to impede or scant the trade of his neighbours by his force. Let us be glad, that we have any more hopeful prospect of ease to his own Protestant people, barbarously persecuted for so many years; yea, may not we hope a re-settlement of the protestant religion in his kingdom, which would fill our souls with gladness. Rejoice, that his *universal* monarchy is less probable, and a stop may be put to that ocean of blood he is so earnest to shed for the gratifying of his insatiable ambition.

How can we but rejoice, and be exceeding glad, that he is less capable to depose our glorious *Queen Anne*, or interrupt the succession of the protestant house of *Hanover*, on failure of issue by the *Queen*; both which were unavoidable, if his *power* were sufficient to force upon us the pretended *Prince of Wales*, as his *vice-roy*: the remote supposition whereof fills any mind with horreur, who hath a true zeal for the protestant religion, which is undoubtedly to be sacrificed; or for the welfare of his country, *already* pawned and articed away; or for the *innocency* of the nation, which must be laden with perjury, whilst they, who fear an oath, and are faithful to their God and national rights, will be sub-

jected

jected to the insolences of incensed Pa-
 pists, and of those more perfidious wretches,
 who ridicule the obligation of *government*
oaths, even when they qualify themselves
 for power, by subscribing the *abjuration*.
 But to wave further thoughts of a sub-
 ject, that must damp our joys, otherwise
 than as this success contributes to the pre-
 vention of our feared mischief; once
 more, I say, rejoice over your weakned
 enemies, inasmuch as he is less furnished
 to encourage the *dependance* of such upon
 him, who shall be tempted at any time to
 be false to their religion, or betrayers of
 their country, in prospect of his supports.

2. LET your *chiefest* joy be in this,
 that *it is the Lord* who made you to rejoice
 over your enemy: *Judah returned with*
joy, because God had made them to rejoice
over their enemy. They are affected, that
 God was the *author* of this victory, and
 not only, that the victory was obtained;
 that God was so concerned in them, and
 appeared so wonderfully and immediately
 in their behalf, enhanced their gladness.

OUGHT not the same disposition to
 prevail in us, who as much depend upon
 him, as they could any ways pretend to?
 Therefore unite your hearts in this re-
 sentment. Let us rejoice in God's inter-
 posal, as the very heart and substance of
 the benefits we have received, and the
 best support of our hopes, as to what

SERM. good we may hereafter need or expect.

IX. We ought the rather terminate our exultings here, because the more God appeared in our success, the more it will be *sanctified* to us in the event, and the greater likelihood there is of its being *perfected*.

As it was an encouragement, when we engaged, that we were to encounter a notorious enemy to the interest of God; Est. vi. 13. so if a very noted *ancient observation* hold, when he is begun to decline, he'll fall suddenly, fully, and remarkably; for thro' Isa. xxx. 31, 32. *the voice of the Lord shall the Assyrian be beaten down, which beat with the rod, &c.* The common doom of persecutors, when they fall into the hands of God, after their inveterate rage is directed by him to vent itself, in correcting his people, in the manner and measure he thinks fittest. But however sovereign wisdom shall adjust that matter, its befitting us to rejoice in all the eminent discoveries of the hand of God, in fighting our battles; for this is a sign, that Jer. li. 5. *our Israel hath not been forsaken, nor Judah of his God, of the Lord of hosts; tho' the land was filled with sin against the Holy One of Israel.* In God's presence among us we have greater cause of joy, than in our victorious soldiers, enriching spoils, or augmented fleet. The divine presence is the glory and safety of a nation, this will supply all wants, answer every defect, succeed

succeed the weakest instruments, and strike a terror into our adversaries, as we find in the verse following my text: *And the fear of God was on all the kingdoms of those countries, when they heard that the Lord fought against the enemies of Israel: so the realm of Jehoshaphet was quiet.* The remaining power of the French is great still, his advantages many, and no doubt we shall hear of vast preparations by sea and land; but we may be free from terror, if God depart not from us; for his presence will defend us against multitudes, and render vain the most formidable strength: *Be strong and couragious, be not afraid or dismayed, for the king of Assyria, nor for all the multitude that is with him, for there be more with us, than with him. With him is the arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord our God, to help us, and to fight our battles.*

SERM. IX.
Ver. 29.

2 Chron. xxxi. 7, 8.

It's indeed a wonder of grace, that God, when so highly provoked, should be on our side, we could scarce expect it after our abuse of so many miraculous deliverances, and when our abominations had given him cause, not only to depart from us, but become our enemy. But to our amazement, we find by the manner of our success, that he is still with our forces; he hath not given us a *bill of divorce*, but tries to oblige us to reformation, by fresh wonders in the *beginning*

SERM. of the present reign. By these he acknowledg-
 IX. es us to be yet his people, and
 the objects of his special care; by these
 he invites our further trust in him, yea, if
 we forfeit not the relation wherein he
 Pf. lxxvii. 6. stands to us, we may conclude, *God, even
 our own God, shall bless us.* We may
 glory in his perfections, and joyfully tri-
 umph in his excellency; for whilst he is
 with us, all his perfections have their re-
 spective influence on our welfare; his
 wisdom will direct our counsels, and his
 power will succeed our armies. If he
 delight to dwell among us, we shall be
honourable among the nations, we shall be a
 blessing to the *reformed churches*, and a
 flourishing people at *home*. O let this be
 the highest accent of our joy, *God hath*
 Isa. xliii. 4. *not cast us off*, he accepted our prayers, he
 hath pleaded our cause, we are remarked
 by his special favour, therein we will, we
 must rejoice; yea, we will joy and glory
 in the God of our salvation; and that as
 our *own God*, and our only Saviour.

I HAVE finished both the parts of the doctrine, it remaineth I should make some *application*; but so much of this kind is included in the duties already mentioned, that I shall add only a few heads, that are obviously inferred from God's being the author of this success.

S E C T. III.

I. TAKE heed that you *abuse* not the success which you rejoice in, as the gift of God.

CAN you be glad in this consideration, the most Holy God hath expressed his regard for us, and it is his favour we glory in; and must not a terror form the next thoughts into a resolve against the abuse of his benefits? Dare we so provoke his glory, or abuse his goodness? He is jealous of the frame and behaviour of his people, after he hath done so great things for them; their sins are aggravated when they relapse, for at God's expence they serve the devil; and to make their mercies an occasion of any impious course, is to represent God a favourer of rebellion against himself, by putting them into a greater *capacity* for offending, which all must account a great blasphemy against the wisdom and purity of the divine nature.

WE have great cause to *suspect* our selves, when we know the *proneness* of degenerate nature, to abuse the benefits which we receive, yea, and find so good a man as *Jehoshaphat* to do so, even after this great victory, and the solemn praises recorded in my *text*. There are three things left as recorded blots upon him, *viz.* His indulging the *high places* in compliance with the in-

SERM.


IX.



disposedness of the people to a *perfect* reformation; ver. 33. *The places were not taken away, for as yet the people had not prepared their hearts unto the God of their fathers.* We read, that he had renounced and expelled *idolatry*, and greatly encouraged the *priests and Levites*, &c. yea, he removed such groves and high places out of *Judah*, wherein idols were *still* worshipped: But the people being fond of the high places, so adhered to *old customs*, as to be in danger to leave off the worship of God, unless they might worship him in those high places. *Jehoshaphat*, though he was too upright a prince to *encourage* this practice, yet he connived at these places which were appendages of idolatry, and which facilitated the *return* of it; however *indifferent* or inconvenient they were esteemed by the people.

Another thing you find, ver. 35. *And after this did Jehoshaphat join himself with Ahaziah, king of Israel.* He had too great a friendship for one, who was an enemy to the true worship, and who wickedly advanced idolatry (yea, on his death-bed attempted the life of the prophet *Elijah*.) The power of alliance, ambition, or interest, was great, which could induce him, who had so often promoted reformation, to come so near a relapse into the very same sin, as God had before so sharply reprov'd, saying, *Shouldst thou help the ungodly,*

godly, and love them that hate the Lord? SERM.
therefore is wrath upon thee from the Lord. IX.

Nay, its aggravated by the late eminent  deliverance, which is remarked by those words, *after this*. But whatever was his temptation to this amity, he meets with a severe rebuke, and so considerable a loss, as should caution against imbarcking our interest in the same *bottom* with any, who are ungodly, and hate the Lord; *ver. 37. Then Eliezer prophesied against Jehoshaphat, saying; Because thou hast joined thy self with Ahazia, the Lord hath broken thy work, and the ships were broken, that they were not able to go to Tarshish.*

THE other blot recorded, is in the chapter following my *text*, *viz.* making his idolatrous son king, from a zeal for the RIGHT LINE: *But the kingdom gave he* ^{2 Chron.} *to Jehoram, because he was the first-born.* ^{xxi. 4.} A gift, which proved the ruin of his own family, and of *Judah* too; of his family; for *Jehoram slew all his brethren with the sword*, tho' all of them were *men better than himself*; of *Judah*, for idolatry was restored, the *refugees of Israel*, who fled to *Judah* for religion's sake, were slain, as being most likely to animate the people to the defence of God's worship; and the *whole nation* was plagued in the loss of part ^{Ver. 10,} of their *territories*, in the insults of their ^{16, 17.} *idolatrous enemies*, and which was most undoing, in being *compelled* by this their king,

SERM. king, to fall in with his abominations.

IX. Foolish people, if they at first expected better from an idolatrous prince! And
 Ver. 11. *Jehoshaphat* was highly blameable, if he had reason to suspect his son's religion; and strange he should not do so, when he was *matched* with, and under the conduct of the house of *Abab*. What this wretched *Jehoram* suffered in his person, in his children, and in his grandchildren, was not only a just vengeance against him, but a testimony also against *Jehoshaphat*, who seems by his mere donation, if not *power*, to have made him king against the judgment of those, who desired the succession of some *better* branch of that royal stem.

CAN our prayers be too fervent, that our victories may not puff us up with pride, as if we had wrought these wonders without God's help, or merited his concurrence by our well-pleasing carriage. Nor is a common jealousy sufficient, lest we grow secure and settled on our lees, as if we might sin with impunity, seeing God hath once smiled upon our attempts, and reduced the strength of the most probable instrument to afflict us.

SHOULD it not be also deprecated with the greatest seriousness, that any become encouraged to *persecute* or irritate each other? which would be at once the grossest abuse of our mercy, and understanding too: Of our *mercy*, as if God did bless

our *united* endeavours, in weakning a per- SERM.
 secutor *abroad*, that we might be *able*, and IX.
 at leasure to divide and *persecute* at *home*:
 Sure divine *benignity* is affronted to the
 height, when its effects are made the en-
 gines of malignity and rancour, or any
 way a motive thereto. But our *under-*
standing is no better treated, if we are in-
 cited to violences by these successës: For
 the enemy and his abettors are not so weak,
 but that they may reduce us to such distress,
 as our *nation* may be in danger by the inca-
 pacity and resentment of the aggrieved;
 and suppose (as we ought to pray) that no
 such exigence occur, yet persecution must
 be now the greatest folly, because the *end*
 is not designed, for which it was formerly
 used as a *proper means*, i. e. popery and
 slavery. Yea, as it is vain, so it must be
 no less *fatal to piety*, as the preachers will
 be *diverted* from what promotes it: To
peace, as our minds will be irritated: To
trade, as people will be discouraged, spoi-
 led, and men of substance forced *abroad*,
 in order to safety, liberty, and quiet.

NOR can the *Protestant religion* be se-
 cure, when the *oppressed* part of its strength
 is made *useless*; and the *oppressing* part
 distinguished by a fiery zeal, not for any
 Protestant *principle*, but for things so *insig-*
nificant, as must narrow its *bottom* beyond
 stability in a time of debates, and when
 tottering, great despair will encline its fall
 to

SERM. to that *side*, which is next a-kin only in
 IX. *those* points whereto its power was sacrificed. O what heart can forbear bleeding, to think how the *true* Protestant interest will be exposed by violent divisions, when they are so very few among the hottest, who foresee the turn they serve!

YET, blessed be God, the *name* of *persecution* is become odious; and, that the thing shall be prevented, we have the royal word of her *Majesty*, for which we have reason to be greatly thankful, not only for our own sakes, but for the *nation's*, which can bear no addition to its *guilt*, nor spare the least degree of utmost endeavours to make it happy.

BUT to conclude, whatever others do, let not us allow our selves in any evil practice, under the countenance of these successes; for this will defecrate all our blessings into *snare*s, and render our mercy
 Ezr. ix. 14, a means of severest judgments; *After thou*
 15. *hast given us such a deliverance as this, should we again break thy commandments, and join in affinity with people of these abominations, wouldst not thou be angry with us, till thou hadst consumed us, so that there should be no remnant, nor escaping?*

2. *Answer the ends* for which God hath wrought thus marvellously for us.

NOT to abuse our success to ill purposes, is not sufficient, under a trust so capable to be improved. And to imagine
 either

either that God *expects* not such improve-
 ments, or will not *animadvert* on our
 omission, is to accuse him of a disregard in
 what concerns his *government* over this
 world; the contrary to which, the most
careless shall find to their own ruin, when
 summoned to give an *account of the least*
talent.

SERM.
IX.
Mat. xxv.
23.

AN ingenuous thankful mind will sug-
 gest *many* and *great* things, as fitly de-
 manded in return for this deliverance.
 Happy *England!* if all persons strive to
 answer God's expectations, in *proportion*
 to their ability; *some* can do much, *all*
 may do somewhat. Such as explain God's
 design in this providence to the *great*, no
 doubt will encourage them to *pursue* this
 war, till *France* be so reduced, as the bal-
 lance of *Europe* may be secure, and, if
 possible, the Protestant religion *restored*
 there, and established in other places where
 it's threatned. Nor can they fail to press
 their hearty endeavours to promote a *nati-*
onal reformation of manners, by power
 and example; as also what other things
for God, their influences capacitate them
 to do, either in church or state; of which
 kind, the removal of useles things which
divide us, is not the least.

BUT my concern is to persuade you to
 those things which are *common* to all of us,
 and they shall be what the Holy Ghost di-
 rects in the like case, *believe and revere a*
divine

SERM. *divine providence.* God hath begun to ex-

IX. ecute vengeance on insolent, persecuting blasphemers; is not God's end in this, *That man shall say, Verily, there is a God who judgeth in the earth?* He hath wrought a great salvation for our land; but to what end doth God exert himself, in the behalf of his people? *Hezekiah* answers, it is, *That all may know that thou art Lord, even thou only.* If you review the indication of a providence in our success, which I have already mentioned, an atheist cannot find a cause of any effect, if that had not the ordering of our victory. Learn then to acknowledge God in all your ways, to acquiesce in his disposals, and patiently wait to see the wisdom of those methods, which at first you may not understand.

Josh. xxiii. 10, 11. AGAIN; God requires, that if *he fight for you, you should take heed to yourselves, that you love the Lord your God.* Benefits engage to love: Let a sense therefore of his goodness unite our hearts to him, and greaten our esteem of him; supremely love him, who is God over all; sincerely love him, whose kindness for us is so fruitful and efficacious. To manifest the sincerity of your love, see that his *commandments are not grievous to you, his yoke not uneasy, nor fellowship with him slighted*; but that his honour commands your zeal, in his interest you freely embark, at what's offensive to him you are grieved; his loving-kindness

kindness is *better than life* to you, and you daily strive to be more transformed into his likeness. SERM.
IX.

A FARTHER design of God in his wonderful work, is, *That men may set their hope in God, and not forget his works, but keep his commandments; and not be as their fathers, a stubborn, rebellious generation.* Do not easily question his help, nor trust in any other: Let not such great things slip your mind, nor the due impressions of them wear off, but live under the conduct of his precepts, that you may not put a stop to his working in like manner, whenever you are in the same necessity, which your *fathers* experienced to their hurt; and therefore you should take warning not to imitate them in ways so fatal, nor think their *custom* will be your excuse, or ought to be your rule. Pf. lxxviii.
lxxxvii. 8.

NOR is it less the end of this success, *That you cleave unto the Lord your God; for the Lord your God hath driven out great nations from before you, great nations and strong; but as for you, no man hath been able to stand before you to this day.* Oh therefore apply your hearts to this, as what God expects! You have experienced his power against *popish* enemies, shall we ever comply with their errors, or wallow in their abominations? God forbid. Have we any cause to forsake our God, or desert his interest? See we not, that he is as *ready,*
as

SERM. as he is able to defend us? But who can
 IX. skreen us from his wrath, if we provoke
 him by our apostasy? *It's a fearful thing
 to fall into the hands of the living God.*
 For upon your revolt from him, those
 perfections which contributed to our present
safety, will become engaged in making us
 utterly *miserable*.

Heb. x.
 31.

THESE are some of the *ends* of God, by such successes, as we find them explained by his infallible Spirit. If you refuse to answer them, you do what in you lies to defeat God's purposes, as well as disappoint yourselves of the *best* part of the mercy, *viz.* your spiritual and eternal advantage by it. You'll also find these great successes will *testify* against you, and what you now remember with *joy*, you must review with *shame* and *bitterness*. Neither, if you neglect to comply with these ends of God, which respect *duty* on our part, shall you find comfort in those *ends*, which God, on his part, will *effectually* accomplish. Whether these be terrible or favourable to his *churches*, is a secret with himself: But be that as he pleaseth, this success against *outward* adversaries, may also direct us to fight against our *spiritual* enemies, and that with assuring hope, because the *grace* of Christ *is sufficient for us*; and *we are more than conquerors, through him that loved us*; which if experienced in the forest temptations

² Cor. xii.
 6.

tations and trials, exceeds all *other* victories, and will be matter of *eternal* praise.

SERM.
IX.

3. BE afraid lest we *forfeit* the presence of God with our armies.

THE *departure* of God is what we have reason to fear, for that will not only put a stop to our advances, but blast that success for which we are offering our praises: We are ready to say, *Thou hast made our mountain to stand strong*; but know, that's as true which follows, *Thou didst hide thy face, and I was moved*. When the mere *hiding* of his face will have such an effect, what more dismal things will ensue his *forsaking* a people? For the greatest darkness and desolation supply his absence, and nothing shall be more feelingly confess'd by us, than the force of that denunciation, *Wo also to them, when I depart from them*.

Psal. xxx.

1.

Hof. ix.

12.

IF, by our offences, our condition prove thus miserable, our *victorious* soldiers will become cowards, like *the children of Ephraim, who, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battel*. Our stoutest generals will be as *women*, our wisest counsellors will become *fools*, our enemies, though never so *weak*, will serve to baffle us; *Though ye fight with the Chaldeans, you shall not prosper*. When God departs from us, as his ordinances will have no good effect on the state of our *souls*, so his providence will act in a contrariety to our *temporal* welfare; we shall not only

Pf. lxxviii.

9.

Jer. xxxvii

10.

Ch. xxxvii.

10.

SERM. *want* its aid, but we must *undergo* those
 IX. defeats, disappointments, and vexatious confusions, which the terror of the Almighty will produce.

ENGLAND'S *All* is in God's power, for
 2 Chron. *he can help, or cast down*; and as he favours
 xxv. 8. or frowneth, as he is near or afar off, our case will be *determined*. 'Therefore that solemn caution to *Israel*, ought to be regarded by us; *If ye in any wise go back, know for a certainty, the Lord your God will no more drive out any of these nations from before you; but they shall be snares and traps unto you, &c.* Whilst God is with us, we shall find prosperity in our affairs; but when he *removes*, our defence, our guide, our glory, is departed from us; then we shall be contemptible abroad, and a terror to ourselves at home. As therefore you have any regard for yourselves, for the nation, and for posterity, *avoid* those things which provoke God to leave a nation, and be *intent* on such ways as will secure his presence.



A SERMON occasioned by
the Death of the Reverend
Mr. JOHN QUICK.

Preached May 7. 1706.

J O B iii. 17.

*There the wicked cease from troubling;
there the weary is at rest.*



N inordinate love of this present life, and too strong an aversion to death, are too common, since the entrance of sin. To allay both, the all-wise providence allots us many weaning exercises whilst we live, and a future release therefrom by death; whereby death is rendred more desirable than life itself. Holy *Job* expresseth this in a lively manner in my *text*. And they will appear to be words of truth and soberness, tho' utter'd in a paroxysm; wherein the extremity of his trial often appears above that patience, for which he is so eminent in sacred records.

SERM.
X.

SERM.

I SHALL consider,

X.

1. THE state to which *Job* refers.

2. THE privileges of persons in that state.

S E C T. I.

1. THE *state* he refers to. The state of the dead is expressed metonymically by the adverb *there*. It's in the grave where he reckons on such immunities, *ver.* 22. *They are glad when they can find the grave*; that is, be with the dead, as *ver.* 13, 14. he reckons then *he had been at rest*. Parallel to this, we commonly distinguish the living and the dead, by saying, the former are on this side the grave, the latter are in or on the other side of the grave. Strictly, the body is in the grave, the soul beyond it; but the whole man is in the state of the dead.

2. THE *privileges* of the dead. These are expressed in two parts: *The wicked cease from troubling*; *the weary are at rest*. The former limits the evil from which we are freed, by the instruments inflicting it; and so it points only to such hardships as the unjust do occasion or procure. The latter is more comprehensive; for as the word *weary* enlargeth the kind and causes of affliction, beyond those to which the wicked are accessaries, so to be *at rest*, signifies a further relief than a mere freedom from
the

the trouble to which the wicked do contribute. Yea, this rest, by a *meiosis*, connotes a greater good than a period to weariness. SERM.
X.

BEFORE I proceed to improve this subject, it's necessary to answer this *question*.

Quest. Do these words assure a redress and rest by death to *all* men who are troubled and weary, or only to *righteous men*?

Ans. 1. As to appearance to such as survive, they refer to *all* men, and in some respect they are true of such.

WHEN the worst man dies, he seems to survivors to be released from what they observed grievous to him whilst he lived, for what's left of him is insensible, and what's departed cannot express its moans to our hearing; so that he *seems* to be at rest. And he is indeed so in sundry respects; for his body, for a time, is freed from all torment; the whole man is out of the reach of surviving enemies, as to any present hurt from them, and all the afflictions and labours belonging to this lower state of life, are at a period.

Ans. 2. THE mentioned relief by death is in *reality*, as to what's *most* important, properly *only* to the righteous man. It's only he whom the wicked shall *trouble no more*; whereas sinners, in the other world, will meet with wicked men to trouble them; they shall mutually torment each

SERM. other. Such as were associates in sin here, reflecting on the influence their companions had on their ruin, by solliciting them to offend, will be enraged against them; and that rage will vent itself as far as they are capable; whilst the punishments of both are heightened for that hand they had in the tempting each other to that sinful course, which ends in this misery. Some think it was to prevent this trouble by his *brethren*, that the *rich man* was so desirous of their conversion, *Luke xvi. 27.*

THE godly person also will be the only man *at rest* in the unseen state; for the wicked, instead of being at rest, do, by death, enter into far heavier and more disquieting misery; and they are excluded from all refreshment. The soul sleeps not, but is in anguish beyond what was possible to be felt on earth. It's quick reflections on his past guilt and folly (with the powerful impressions of divine wrath) will make him the tormented expectant of the resurrection, when the *complete* misery of the whole man is to take place. This is proved by the scope of the parable just mentioned, *Luke xvi.* For as *ver. 19* to *25.* teach us, that rich men are in danger of hell, and sure to be there intolerably tormented, if they abuse their riches, or are content with them as their portion; and, *ver. 26.* shews us the unalterable endless misery of such as are in hell: So *ver. 27, 28, 29, 30, 31.* do
evidence

evidence that the soul subsists and acteth when separated from the body. For as the rich man's plea is *after* death, so it is *before* the resurrection; seeing his brethren were still alive on earth, and in a state of trial for eternity, as well as under sufficient means for their improvement.

SERM.

X.

THERE'S no danger of mistaking the emblems in the other parts of the parable, which are accommodated to what the body is to endure when re-united; but if it be an error, that the separate soul reflects with grief soon after death, I'm sure these words of Christ plainly lead men to think it, for they represent the rich man to do so just upon his death, and before a change is made in his family by the death of any of his brethren. They must think unworthily of the goodness, truth, and wisdom of Christ, who suspect he can so far countenance a false doctrine in a point relating to the unseen state, especially when all clear and sure notices of that state must be owing to revelation; and *Sadduces* were common among his hearers.

IF any *object* the design of this part of the parable is to prove, that if *Moses* and the prophets are ineffectual to reform men, one sent from the dead would have no better success. I answer, That is not the whole design; but if it were, yet our Saviour would not introduce this by asserting a false principle, *viz.* that the departed

SERM. souls of the wicked do with grief act and
 X. reflect; for if this were not a truth, he
 ~~~~~ had used otherways to vindicate *Moses* and  
 the prophets from insufficiency, than to  
 affirm that messengers from the dead are  
 not more apt means for conversion. That  
 Christ should do thus much to mislead us,  
 is far less probable, than that *Paul* would  
 judge the sleeping of a good man's soul af-  
 ter death, was both a *being with Christ*, and  
*far better* than so useful a life as his; yea,  
 and persuade the *Philippians* of his great  
*self-denial* in being content to *live*, when his  
 labours were so necessary to the church, and  
 advantageous to the interest of the Lord  
 Jesus, *Phil. i. 22, 24.*

I SHALL therefore confine this text to  
 the *righteous*, as to the chief consequences  
 of death; nor could *Job* intend it concern-  
 ing all men, otherwise than in my first an-  
 swer to the question; for he often shews,  
 that the wicked are in a wretchedly grie-  
 vous state upon their dying, *Job xxi. 20.*  
 and *cb. xx. 5, 6, 30.* and asserts his own  
 felicity after death, upon assurance of his  
 being an upright man, *Job xix. 25, 27.* and  
*xiv. 14, 15.*

WE are to consider righteous men in a  
 twofold state, living and dead; one dark,  
 and the other bright and comfortable.  
 Both of these have two parts answering  
 each other.



1. IN the state of life on earth, *The righteous are troubled by the wicked, and also weary.* SERM. X.

2. IN the state of the dead, the righteous are *no longer troubled by the wicked*; and they are *at rest* from all their weariness.

How great a difference! how blessed an issue! since their grievances are as *short* as life, and the redress not only perfect, but *everlasting*! Death indeed stands between these great extremes, and by divine constitution is the ordinary passage from one condition to the other; on which account the godly man is reconciled to it, tho' in itself repugnant to nature. The whole matter of the text will be comprehended under these four observations.

I. *Observ.* THE wicked cause much trouble to the godly in this life.

II. *Observ.* DEATH will put an end to all those troubles which the godly suffer by wicked men.

III. *Observ.* THE best and most active saints may, in this life, be weary.

IV. *Observ.* WEARY saints, when they are dead, shall be at rest.

I. *Observ.* THE wicked cause much *trouble* to the godly in this life. They are thorns in their sides, and by their means many are distressed: They would bring calamities

SERM. calamities on all upright persons, and heighten those which any endure, if God did not  
 X. restrain them. It's more from want of  
 ~~~~~ power than will, that any escape. Unless providence so over-rule affairs, that it becomes their own interest to deal more gently, their very mercies would be cruelty. They cause trouble to the righteous two ways.

1. BY the malignity of wicked men, the godly often suffer persecution.

2. FROM zeal for God, and love to souls, the righteous feel much grief by the notorious transgressions of the wicked.

1. BY the *malignity* of wicked men, the godly often suffer persecution. Their innate enmity against God's image, incline
 x John iii. them to hate and oppress the saints: *Cain*
 12, 13. *slaw his brother, because his works were righteous*: And thence you are commanded, *not to marvel that the world hates you*. By their number and strength they are generally capable to injure them; and when God, for wise ends, takes away his restraints, how cruelly do they exert the instances of their wrath? They disturb them by their railing scoffs, blast their names by slanders, bereave them of their estates, abridge them in their civil rights, forbid them religious exercises, cast them into prisons, torment their bodies, yea, spare not their lives, which in all places have been a sacrifice to their rage; and this to such a degree,
 that

that even the *Romish* church is said to be *drunken with the blood of the saints*. Mere dying will not appease, all kinds of torments are invented, that they may feel themselves die; of which we have instances in the late barbarities in *France*, as well as former usages, wherein *Papists* have equall'd the cruelty of the most savage *Pagans*.

SERM.
X.Rev. xvii.
6.

THE servants of Christ can attempt nothing for his interest, wherein the wicked do not oppose them; and the more useful any are found to be, the greater effects of hatred must such expect at these mens hands. They stop the mouths of faithful ministers; yea, this malignity is so powerful, that it will break forth in persons whose character is most *sacred*, rather than good men shall not be silenc'd. *Amazia* the priest, when his complaints to *Jeroboam* against *Amos*, as a conspirator, had gain'd a commission, soon tells him, *O thou* Amos vii. *Seer, go, flee thee away into the land of* 10, 12. *Judah, but prophesy not any more at Bethel, for it is the king's chapel.* The apostles are by the *high-priests* and elders commanded not to speak at all, nor teach in the name of *Jesus*. To sum up the various ways of persecution is impossible; our large *martyrologies* can describe but a small part of ill mens contrivances to suppress the servants of the living God. See in *2 Cor. xi. 23, 24, &c.* with what variety one apostle is exercised.

SERM. 2. FROM a zeal for God, and love to
 X. souls, the righteous feel much grief by
 the notorious transgressions of the wicked.

Psal. cxix. *David* is not alone in saying, *I beheld*
 136, 158. *the transgressors, and was grieved: Rivers*
of waters run down my eyes, because men
keep not thy law. For it must grieve all
 good men, to see their blessed God af-
 fronted, his holy laws violated, and his
 sacred authority trampled on by profligate
 wretches: *the soul of righteous Lot was*
 2 Pet. ii. *vexed with the filthy conversation of the*
 7, 8. *wicked.* That man's sincerity is justly ques-
 tionable, who can unconcernedly behold
 notorious wickedness; for a cordial, affec-
 tionate reverence for God must excite a
 deep indignation against such things: Nei-
 ther are the compassions of saints to man-
 kind so restrained, as to make light of
 their offences. They cannot without sad-
 ness behold those atrocious crimes, where-
 by they debase the glory of the human
 nature, and destroy themselves. They
 see the vengeance which waits them, and
 knowing it's terrible, sure, and near, cha-
 rity puts them on bemoaning the dismal-
 ness of their case. And it's no small ag-
 gravation to the grief of a righteous man,
 that sinners do not only heap mischief
 on themselves, but they corrupt others by
 their evil example and thereby expose
 them to the like destruction.

MOREOVER, it often happens, that
 good

good men are sharers in those *publick* SERM. judgments which God inflicts on societies X. for the provocations of the wicked. *Daniel*, and other holy men became captives with their sinful nation; and such endure troubles of several kinds, procured by the crimes of notorious transgressors.

ON such accounts as these it may be expected, that good men do not only endeavour the *reformation* of the wicked, but complain as troubled persons at what they are unable to redress. Such cries are familiar; *Wo is me, that I live in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar.*

1st *Infer.* FROM this last we may infer, the tempers of the godly and the wicked are extremely *contrary*. The wicked *mock* at the sins which the righteous bewail: those *boast* of what these lament, and are ashamed in their behalf, though themselves be innocent thereof. Those *despise* their own danger, whilst the righteous pity them, and strive to prevent it, by warnings, intreaties, example, prayers, and tears. The followers of Christ are willing to suffer for such things, the wicked think so evil, as to render them deserving the worst of deaths.

SURELY the *same* heaven or hell cannot be the abode of such opposites. Nor is that less than a new creation, which so changeth the godly from what he was by nature, as well as the worst offenders.

The

SERM. The principles and dispositions must be
 X. very contrary, which govern the *stated*
 ~~~~~ designs and course of men in such a general  
 opposition. Light and darknes, divine  
 and devilish, life and death, spirit and flesh,  
 rational and brutish, are but some of the  
 terms by which the Holy Ghost ex-  
 presseth this contrariety. Therefore let the  
 worst of you pray for convincing light,  
 to see this difference, and for that regener-  
 ating efficacy of the Spirit, which only  
 can make this great and needful alteration.

2d *Infer.* ACTIVE faints have no cause  
 to *wonder* at the troubles they meet with  
 from wicked men. This I infer from the  
 first head. It may appear strange to such  
 as consider only the *excellency* of a righ-  
 teous man. These are apt to think, how  
 is it possible such a person can meet with  
 contempt and hatred, when the image of  
 God upon him is so lovely? Who can be  
 so ill-natur'd as to persecute one whose  
 carriage is so harmless and winning?  
 What devils must they be, who can at-  
 tempt the hurt of one so useful to them-  
 selves and neighbourhood? often diverting  
 the temporal judgments they are pulling  
 on their own heads, and still heartily in-  
 tent to bring them to Christ, that they  
 also may obtain eternal salvation? Sure  
 this good man hath such a testimony in  
 their own consciences, that when they  
 attempt

attempt to injure him, it's with great regret. SERM.  
X.

BUT if on the other side you consider the *disposition* of the wicked, you'll change your mind, and not reckon that caution needless, *think it not strange concerning the fiery trial, as if some strange thing happen'd to you*: For it is a very common thing; and the spring of persecuting rage is no secret, but easily accounted for. Let us but examine the condition the wicked are in, as to their nature, conduct, and resentments, then our wonder must cease: for all that which pleads for the believer's security, is overcome by what is more powerful in the ungodly. In them,

(I.) A CARNAL nature prevails, which includes an antipathy against Christ and his people. Our Lord declares this, when he forewarns his members; *because you are not of this world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you*. Every age gives instances of this, *as then he that was born after the flesh, persecuted him that was born after the Spirit, so it is now*. The old enmity is propagated between the two seeds, as contrary natures: The holy cannot love the wicked, *as they are wicked*; nor the wicked love the holy, *as they are holy*. There is indeed great difference between these two, in expressing their hatred. When the godly man hates the wicked, tho' he

<sup>1</sup> Pet. iv.  
<sup>12.</sup>

John xv.  
<sup>18.</sup>

Gal. iv.  
<sup>29.</sup>

Pf. cxxxix.  
<sup>21.</sup>

SERM. he abhors sin, he loveth what of God's  
 X. image remaineth in them; tho' he de-  
 lights not in their company, he will  
 not injure their persons, nor on any pri-  
 vate account envy their welfare, but re-  
 joice in it: tho' he useth *just* means to re-  
 strain their sin and mischievousness, he  
 truly pitieth them, and endeavours their  
 conversion.

BUT the wicked's enmity hurrieth them  
 to the basest methods of injury, and to  
 implacable desires of the destruction of  
 godly men. It is with disgust they  
 behold any of them prosper; yea, often  
 the bonds of nature cannot prevail  
 to spare their next relations; and they  
 become cruel to their most beloved, as  
 soon as the grace of God appears.

(2.) BESIDES the power of malignant na-  
 ture, the *devil* has a great interest in wick-  
 ed men, which he employs to the same  
 persecuting designs. He excites their rage,  
 and makes use of them as instruments to  
 plague the godly: *Fear none of those things*  
 Rev. ii. *which thou shalt suffer; behold, the devil*  
 10. *shall cast some of you into prison: Not im-*  
 mediately, but by the hands of such pow-  
 erful ones as were under his influence. Our  
 blessed Redeemer, as head of the church,  
 is engaged in a stated *war* against Satan;  
 the righteous make up those armies which  
 Rev. xix. *follow Christ.* The wicked are listed on  
 14. the devil's side, tho' they know it not;  
 by



by the access he hath to their *imaginations*, he suggests both motives and occasions; and by the power of their own lusts, which he stirs up, he easily leads them to such outrages, as nature startles at in the beginning. With *Hazael* they'll perpetrate that which at first hearing made him say, *Is thy servant a dog?* Did persecutors know whose suggestions they obey (though taken for their own reasonings) they wou'd startle, and not yield themselves to be the devil's tools. But they see not their leader, because their own lusts encline them to approve his cause; and are so resolved in the quarrel under his conduct, that persecuting empires are called by his name, *dragon, satan, and devil.*

SERM.  
IX.

Rev. xii. 9.

3. THE righteous are a *torment* to evil men. These see their own wickedness *reproached* by the holy lives of pious men; in that brightness their crimes appear the blacker; and their *consciences* are often awakened to judge themselves criminals, because the remains of light in them approve the practices of saints, as more lawful, safe, and excellent. The *testimony* which the righteous give for God and holiness, gauls offenders, because it's a direct sentence against their temper and behaviour, as contrary to God, and unholy. The saints are obliged to *reprove* transgressors, whilst there's any hope of amendment. By such reproofs they are

SERM. disquieted, and their secure ease in ways  
 X. of sin being interrupted, they are filled  
 with rage, if resolute in holding on their  
 course. *John* must die, that *Herodias*  
 may be quietly incestuous. Lawful at-  
 tempts for reformation are the duty of all,  
 and good men heartily engage therein.  
 Now nothing more provokes the vile: the  
 very prospect of any success in church or  
 state vexeth their very soul; for reforma-  
 tion is a restraint on sin, which they love  
 most; and a promoting of godliness, which  
 they can least endure. This is the very  
 reason of their utmost endeavours to keep  
 all good men out of power in the state,  
 and place in the church.

Mark vi.  
 19, 28.

SET these three points together, and  
 you'll not wonder that much trouble comes  
 to the righteous; but be rather amazed  
 that one of them is any where secure, or  
 in any moment safe and easy. Ordinarily  
 they have power as well as inclination to  
 extirpate the church, which is too weak  
 to defend it self against such a number of  
 mighty ones, who scruple nothing. It  
 must therefore be the almighty arm to  
 which its defence is owing; and by a spe-  
 cial favour of providence that our tranquil-  
 lity is so great, when the *witnesses are in*  
*sackcloth for most ages*. Yet the present  
 case should not prevent your expectation  
 of troubles, perhaps the *unactive* may  
 escape them, as less observed; but the  
 eminent

Rev. xi. 3.

eminent active christian is foolish, if hardships surprize him, unprepared to bear them. Especially when, besides all you have heard, our Saviour tells us, *In the world you shall have tribulation.* SERM. X. John xvi. 33.

II<sup>d</sup>. *Observ.* DEATH will put an end to all those troubles which the godly suffer by wicked men. Then will those words be fulfilled in the highest manner, *They shall no more be a pricking briar, nor a grieving thorn.* Ezek. xviii 24. The release will be soon and perfect, and 'twill be thus secured.

I. THE wicked will then be *unable* to hurt the godly. The sore things they had inflicted, will be entirely removed. For their *reproaches* will be wiped off by the acquitting sentence of Christ their judge. All their *losses* be made up by immense treasures. A lost *life* shall be found in a more excellent manner, and abundantly more improved. The full rewards which they inherit, shall blot out the bitter remembrance of whatever they *felt* of man's severity. Mat. xix. 29. Luke ix. 24.

As to any *further* troubles, there's no hazard; for they will be far out of the reach of the wicked's power. Shou'd these rail, it's barking at the moon. Shou'd they hang out their naked carcasses, it's but exposing their own barbarity; for they feel nothing, and Christ will raise them in a glory *like his own*. Righteous men are lodged in chambers, where the persecutor Phil. iii. 21.

SERM. hath no access, his warrants cannot seize  
 X. them, his utmost force can have no effect.

He may by fretting, torment himself; but their welfare is not in the least to be interrupted or impaired.

2. THE godly man shall be so far of one mind with God, that the misery of the wicked shall cause in him no tormenting pity.

IN the future state, the sinner will be sinful and exquisitely miserable, and the saints shall know it; yet this shall not diminish the satisfaction of the blessed. For the vengeance inflicted by God shall so subdue his enemies, and vindicate his authority, that *their sins* can be no dishonour to God in the esteem of any observer; for they are but the desperate ravings of executed outlaws, past their state of trial. Tho' obedience is their duty (and ever will be so as creatures) yet it will not be accepted, no, nor is it demanded as a condition of any benefits to subjects of divine government. God's sentence hath taken place, and they express such a sense of what they feel, as will make his law honourable beyond the least blot by their malignity: for the sins they can commit, yield no pleasure to them, who have no fuel to any lust, except what their torments contribute.

NOR yet will the *extremest torments* of the wicked move any uneasy pity, because every

every faint will be convinced that these are the just effects of the irreclaimable obstinacy of men, fixed in their enmity against Christ, and in a chosen combination with devils to dethrone him, had they power; yea, willing to repeat their villanies, were they capable.

SERM.  
X.

THE actings of charity in our *present* state can scarce admit such a restraint of bowels; but the proceedings of Christ on his tribunal will assure us, the forest part of his sentence is so equal, that less wou'd not instance his justice, vindicate his honour, or secure the glory of his government: And we shall be so united to our lord in interest, light, love, will, and enjoyment, that we shall not only not regret at what makes for his glory, but approve of it, and rejoice therein.

• I SHALL *apply* this observation, (1.) To the wicked. (2.) To the godly.

(1.) THIS truth improved will induce your compliance with a two-fold exhortation. O wicked ones!

I. SEE your *folly* in persecuting the faints. Is it not madness to prepare fuel for your own destruction, by attempting what you cannot effect? You can accomplish your evil design neither against the righteous, nor against that for which you hate them. The image and interest of Christ will prevail, his testimony in their hands shall obtain; yea, and your selves

SERM. be forced to contribute to the honour  
 X. thereof, by suffering for your present op-  
 position. You'll see the truth of that text,  
 and might observe that it's self-evident;


Rev. xvii. *These shall make war with the lamb, and*  
 14. *the lamb shall overcome them: For he is*  
*King of kings, and Lord of lords; and they*  
*that are with him are called, and chosen,*  
*and faithful.*

As to what trouble you have put any  
 believers to, it was sanctified to them  
 whilst obnoxious; they are rewarded for  
 those very afflictions, and it's but a little  
 time and you shall be unable to touch them:  
 Nay, that morning (of the resurrection at  
 Psal. xlix. farthest) is hastening, *when the righteous*  
 14. *shall have dominion over the greatest of you.*

They who are gone, look down upon you  
 with contempt, and see the time of ven-  
 geance approaching. Be wise therefore,  
 and stop your vain attempts: *Why will*  
 Acts ix. 5. *you kick against the pricks?* They will  
 wound you, but you cannot hurt them.  
 You will acknowledge it folly to burn eter-  
 nally in hell, for the short satisfaction of  
 venting your enmity against the saints a  
 few days on earth. This is your case.

2. BE convinced of the wretchedness of  
 your future state, as it will be unpitied  
 by your nearest relations.

Pious friends and relatives now weep  
 over you, pray for you, and expose them-  
 selves to your scorn, by striving to pluck  
 you

you as *brands out of the burning*. But if SERM.  
 you proceed in your contempt of Christ, X.  
 and finally reject his calls; as you'll find   
 him an inexorable judge when he passeth  
 sentence, so your very parents, as well as  
 other saints, will witness against you;  
 they shall join with Christ in his sentence,  
 when *the saints do judge the world*. Even 1 Cor. vi.  
 they will press the charge, and plead the 2.  
 equity of your condemnation, as *Abra-*  
*ham* did against his own offspring, who is  
 represented to say, *Son, remember that thou* Luke xvi  
*in thy life-time receivedst thy good things,* 25.  
*and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now*  
*he is comforted, and thou art tormented.*  
 Nor shall they shed a tear for all thy weep-  
 ing, wailing, and gnashing thy teeth for  
 ever. Good *ministers*, who at present so  
 lay your case to heart, as to press you with  
 all importunity, and your obstinate re-  
 fusals force them to many groans and tears,  
 they shall then *triumph in Christ, as a* 2 Cor. ii.  
*sweet savour to God in you that perish,* 14, 15, 16.  
*tho' a savour of death unto death unto all*  
*such.* Must not you judge your wilful  
 malignity to be fixed and inveterate, and  
 your provocations high, that can extinguish  
 all pity towards you in persons when per-  
 fected in love; and prevent all compassions  
 even in those who wou'd once have died  
 to save you, and could not behold you in  
 the least distress without bitter sorrows?  
 O at last think with your selves, believe

SERM. what you shall find true, and tremble at  
 X. what's so awful, and is your own case  
 too! If by any means this misery may be  
 prevented, as it certainly may, if you  
 obey the call of Christ, which as yet is  
 backed with your friends concerned intrea-  
 ties. But pray remember, this season of  
 your hope, and their importunity, will  
 soon be at an end, and cease for ever.  
 When Christ delivers up his kingdom upon  
 the judgment-day, there can be no dispen-  
 sation to give you hope.

2d. *Exhort.* is directed to such of you  
 as are truly *godly*.

I. BE *reconciled* to sufferings, from a  
 joyful hope of being shortly beyond all  
 hurt by wicked men.


IT should make you patient who now  
 endure most; that it's but a little while  
 and they'll vex you no more. You'll be  
 freed from their insults, and separated from  
 their company, which you often desire in  
 that petition, *Gather not my soul with sin-  
 ners, nor my life with bloody men.* Their  
 arm shall fail, and their craft and power  
 be too mean to affect you. Despise their  
 reproaches, which *they* must be ashamed  
 of. Bear their opposition, for you'll soon  
 be at liberty to do the Lord's work with-  
 out danger, and proclaim his praises with-  
 out controul. Fret not at the injuries you  
 now endure; they are what you *need*  
 whilest imperfect, they *work for you a far*  
*more*

Psal. xxvi.  
 9.

2 Cor. iv.  
 17.



*more exceeding weight of glory.* Weak saints have patiently endured them, strong saints have rejoiced and gloried in them. By them your fidelity to Christ is stanced, and his interest maintained and promoted. Nor is it long before and all his persecuting instruments shall be bruised under your feet. And your exaltation be the object of their fretting envy.

SERM. X.  
  
 2 Cor. vii.  
 Rom. v. 3.  
 Rom. xvi.  
 20.

HAPPY *martyrs!* who move in an orb so much above their tyrannical persecutors! With what contempt do those look down on these oppressing huffs? for as they feel no smart by what they endured, and are safe from all fear of their returns, so they reap the greatest advantages by what these men intended for their hurt: And behold them vexing themselves to *hasten* their own woe, whilst they think to make the godly miserable.

TAKE up your cross with a ready, composed, and resolute mind. The worst can be done to you, will but translate you to share in the triumphs of all those, who *are dead in the Lord.* O may my lot be among the most oppressed saints, rather than the highest monarchs, whose hand is against the righteous.


2. WITH patience and pity *wait* for the conversion of the worst sinners, during this time of life.

SERM. THE greatest persecutors may obtain

X. grace, as St. Paul did, therefore *pray for them who despitefully use you*. Or if you are concerned with obstinate persons, who have long resisted the Spirit, and despised your reproofs, you should double your pains, and not conclude their case hopeless; for some come in at the *eleventh* hour. But, say you, they are judicially hardened; yet that's more than you know, and they may be so in part, and not *altogether*; and for a time, and yet not *finally*. Therefore as whilst God spares them, *his goodness leads them to repentance*; so you ought to concur with him by all just endeavours; and not indulge neglects by such excuses. Nor is it proper to object, that their day of grace is *over*; for it's never in this life so over with any, as that his true repentance shall not prove saving to him; or to exempt you from doing what you can to bring them to it. God's secret purpose not to give grace, is not your rule, for that's unknown; and he hath made it your duty, whilst life continues, to persist in prayer and other appointed means.

THEREFORE let not enthusiastick persuasions, sloth, passion, or despair, abate your industry, nor weaken prayer; which ought to grow *more* fervent, as the symptoms of the sinners appear more *dangerous*. Neither because your labours succeed not,

let

let your compassion abate, or your bowels SERM.  
of pity harden : For tho' in the *other* world, X.  
these will be extinguished by a zeal for God,   
yet in *this* world, by true christian charity  
and humanity, they must be cherished ; for  
now their wickedness is not so *consummate*,  
nor their case so *hopeless* as after death. And  
our love is to be exercised here according to  
the light, calls, occasions, and quality of  
objects in our present state. Our Saviour, ON Luke xix.  
earth, *wept over obdurate Jerusalem.* Paul <sup>41.</sup>  
often blames the unbelieving *Jews* as the  
worst of sinners, and yet for the most hard-  
ned of them, *he had great heaviness, and* Rom. ix.  
*continual sorrow in his heart, and could* <sup>2, 3.</sup>  
*even wish himself accursed.*

## S E C T. II.

III. *Observ.* THE best and most active  
faints may, in this life, be *weary*. Few  
go to heaven before they are weary ; all  
have cause to be so with respect to some  
burden or other ; and some are so tired,  
that they can scarce wait their appointed  
time. I shall reduce the causes of good  
mens weariness to two heads.

1. THEY are weary of their pain.

2. THEY are weary in their labours.

1. THEY are made weary by things  
*painful* or tormenting. How many sever-  
al ways are they afflicted ? and by each  
their pilgrimage becomes tedious. Some  
are

SERM. are visited with severe diseases and bodily  
 X. pains, under which they frequently cry  
 out, with *David, Heal me, for my bones*  
 Pſal. vi. *are vexed; I am weary with my groanings:*  
 2, 6. *All the night I water my couch with my*  
 Ifa. xxxviii *tears. And Hezekiah; I reckoned till morn-*  
 12, 14. *ing, that as a lion ſo he will break all my*  
*bones. I did mourn as a dove; O Lord, I*  
*am oppreſſed, undertake for me. Acute di-*  
 ſeaſes often return, and chronical ones often  
 continue long; ſo that their comforts are  
 diſreliſh'd, and their days are filled with  
 anguiſh. What do many endure by the  
 gout, ſtone, ſtrangury, &c? If the body is  
 in health, the plague of their own heart  
 puts them to cry, *O wretched man that I*  
 Rom. vii. *am, who ſhall deliver me from the body of*  
 24. *this death?* Remains of ſin, and the vio-  
 lent workings and ſad effects thereof, are  
*more grievous to a tender heart, than*  
 the ſoreſt maladies; nor can they be eaſy  
 under ſtrong temptations. How are they  
 pained when ſcorched by the *fiery darts* of  
 ſatan? They are not inſenſible of wants,  
 loſſes, unkindneſs of friends, death of re-  
 lations, and diſappointments; all which  
 make impreſſions on human nature.

THERE are other ſore evils which are  
 yet more afflictive to the righteous. Some  
 are preſs'd with doubts of their intereſt in  
 Chriſt, which they are moſt concerned to  
 ſecure; others, whiſt they bewail their diſ-  
 tractions in duties, and weakneſs of their  
 graces,

graces, they delight in the *light of God's countenance* above all the pleasures of sense; and yet this is not only *hid* from them, but (which puts them in the greatest agony) *his arrows stick fast in them, his hand presseth them sore; there's no soundness in their flesh, because of his anger: They roar because of the disquietness of their heart.* His frowns affright them, his displeasure is as the breaking of their *bones*, and makes the least affliction intolerable.

SERM.  
X.



Pf. xxxviii.  
2, 3, 8.

BUT besides the pain they are put to by their *personal* concerns, they suffer much on the account of others. No small torments seize their minds when they see their brethren persecuted, the ministry despised, the church of Christ declining in her interest, and her enemies prosperous on her ruins. How often is it, that grief embitters their souls, upon beholding the divisions, disorders, confusions, miscarriages, and follies among good men? Nor is it seldom that even by these men they meet with hardships. Under such painful exercises, faints have been *weary of their crying*. And though submissive as to any reprimands against God, yet that they faint not, is owing to fresh supports from above.

2. SAINTS are often weary in their *laborious* work. The work of every christian is laborious, and requires the utmost diligence, watchfulness, and industry. It's compared to exercises which are tiresome,  
and

SERM. and wherein strength is laid out to the utmost; as *running* a race for a prize, *wrestling, fighting*, 1 Cor. ix. Phil. iii. He who is remiss, lazy, and unactive in such matters, cannot succeed. Our Redeemer, with respect to this, assures us, that *the kingdom of heaven suffers violence, and the violent take it by force*. The attempt is high, the obstacles many, our indispositions great, the benefit in prospect glorious, unsuccessfulness destructive, and the things to be performed are supernatural. This general view may convince you, that *the righteous are scarcely saved*. And the most vigorous efforts are not needless; yea, the least relaxation is dangerous.

Matt. xi.  
12.

1 Pet. iv.  
18.

WHAT one part of a godly man's exercise is not laborious? The right performance of every duty tries his utmost strength. This you'll find in keeping up a holy *zeal* in prayer, especially when answer is delay'd: In heart-affecting meditation, especially when the thoughts are apt to wander: In subduing the appetite, if agreeable objects are presented. Are not the godly *exercised*, when mortifying the most *beloved* lust, forgiving enemies, redeeming time, directing their ends aright, judging and improving opportunities for service, and managing their thoughts regularly, and to the utmost profit, as occasions require? Do they find it easy to fill up common stations in proportion to their trust and talents?

talents? to live by faith, to regulate their affections, and in every thing *deny themselves*? These may seem easy to such as make no trial; but as all this is but *part* of the believer's duty, so every true believer is employed herein; and from his own experience can testify the work requires constant supplies from Christ, to keep him from sinking, and enable him to persevere therein.

THE *ministers of the gospel* (besides what is common to all the godly) stand obliged by their office to a heavier burden, and yet harder work than any sort of men. This the most eminently qualified apostle felt to be so weighty, as to exclaim, *Who is sufficient for these things?* Close study is *tiresome to the flesh*. It's hard work to know the extent and nature of their duty, and much harder so to perform it, as to *fulfil their ministry*. They have great *variety* of business, publick and private (besides what concerns the fitting themselves for it) every part whereof is difficult, because they must manage each in the greatest aptitude to the spiritual benefit of all, where yet the diversity of tempers and other circumstances are so very great. They meet with the *greatest* opposition from satan and wicked men, and are marked for censure in all they do. Upon many other accounts, he who best knew their toil, calleth them *labourers*, Luke x. 2. People need not make their

SERM.

X.



2 Cor. ii.

16.

Ecclef. xii.

12.

SERM. their work harder, nor their burden heavier;  
 X. for all the help God gives in, and the greatest  
 encouragement men afford, are little enough  
 to support them, especially when their people are unfruitful, slighty, and peevish; or when age and diseases impair their vivacity and strength.

Luke xxi. 19. *In Exhort.* TAKE heed of *fretting*, when pain is most grievous. At such times be watchful, *that in patience you possess your souls.* God expects not an *apathy*, when the body is tormented; yet then it is your duty to *sanctify God in your hearts*, and prevent repinings. The *body* must not direct your clamours, as if you had *no* soul to manage it, or that you had *lost* all power over your souls. Pains are what your frail constitution exposeth you to, and justly attend this sinning life. It's unreasonable to desire a long life, and yet repine that you taste the dregs of age: For these are natural, and also common, to the best men; must miracles exempt you?

AGAIN; Do not you find painful diseases *necessary*? Unmindfulness of death is a friend to spiritual sloth; this sloth is a great enemy to soul-improvements; and how hard is it for him to have a *lively* sense of death, who is never sick? Such indeed have cause to be thankful for so easy a pilgrimage; but to most men it is not safe. Many good men find reason to *blefs* God for violent pains, and dangerous distempers; these



these have been means to discover and subdue their sins; by these they have become weaned from this world, and prepared for a better. If you find this good effect (as you may do) why should you repine? The means, tho' painful, are far more than balanced by spiritual advantages. Therefore tho' the body groan, let your *soul be quiet*; and the rather, for by quietness of mind you'll be more capable to use your pains to spiritual benefit.

NOT to be grieved for our own *sins*, and those of others too, and afflicted for all spiritual judgments on ourselves, and for the distresses of the church, is wicked stupidity: Therefore such holy pain is ground of thankfulness (as it argues life) tho' the occasion is afflictive. Yet even in such cases you must justify God, adore his providence, composedly attend to his voice, and apply yourselves to proper means of redress; all which a disturbed frame of spirit will hinder.

2d *Exhort.* *Faint* not under the hardest labour. There is a weariness which is irksome, and yet *innocent*, because it's the effect of a labour beyond our strength. Such an indisposition from weakness, when the mind is *willing*, is not always faulty, tho' troublesome. But there is a weariness which is *sinful*, and often forbidden, as when it proceeds from a *dislike of duty*: *Ye said also what a weariness is it; and you*

Mal. i. 13.

SERM. *snuffed at it, saith the Lord of hosts; and ye*  
 X. *brought the blind, and the lame, and the*  
 ~~~~~ *sick. Or when it makes us intermit and*

Thess.
 iii. 13.

neglect duty; this we are warned of: Be
not weary in well doing. The former spoils
 our duty as to acceptance, because it's not
 our *best*, but is next to none; the latter
 very usually follows, for he that thro' con-
 tempt, long offers the *blind and lame* to
 God, will at last think him worthy of *no-*
thing. This weariness I call you to resolve
 and pray against; and you must by grace
 Gal. vi. 9. *be kept from it, or lose the reward: You*
shall reap if you faint not; which includes,
that if you thus faint, you shall not reap.
 Dreadful also is the account you shall give
 of your *talents*, if laziness hinder the em-
 ploying them in appointed service.

THEREFORE *omit* not any duty, tho'
 indisposed through weakness: And that
 you may not neglect it altogether, cherish
 such a *liking* of God's service, as shall make
 you always perform it in the best manner
 you are *able*. In all acts of *worship* let
 God have the utmost you can render; for
 this he deserves, demands, and will, thro'
 Christ, accept, tho' it be *small*. In all la-
 bours *for God*, see that conscience can tes-
 tify, I would do more, and all much bet-
 ter, if I were able. That none of you,
 but especially *ministers*, may be remiss,

(I.) OFTEN plead with yourselves the
nature of the work. It's of the highest
 kind;

kind; it's what God commands, what the Lord Jesus was employed in; his interest is served thereby; you'll review it with peace; it can't turn to your shame or loss; angels are not above it; the truest honour consists therein, and from this the richest benefits will accrue to others, as well as yourselves.

(2.) URGE on your hearts the just *claim* Christ hath to your best service. To him you owe your being, by him you were purchased when worse than nothing, (if the utmost misery can make you such:) *You are bought with a price, therefore glorify God with your body, and in your spirit, which are his.* Every christian is self-dedicated to him, and you, ministers, *doubly* so. He is daily beneficent to you, and still attendeth your great interest. Can you think any labour too great for him, who *once died, and now ever liveth to make intercession for you?*

(3.) FORGET not the *short* time you have to labour in this kind. Our Lord was moved by this consideration, *I must work the work of him that sent me, while it is day; for the night cometh, wherein no man can work.* Death (at farthest) will put at end to your *opportunities* of service in this world, (who will not then wish he had laboured more?) and death will release you from all that's *toilsome*; the nearness of

SERM. which rest should restore your spirits when
 X. flagging.

~~~~~ (4.) MEDITATE on the great *rewards* which will be given when your work is finished, *Dan. xii. 3.* Keep your eye on the *prize*, that you may be encouraged to labour with greater diligence, and to answer whatever is suggested to narrow or abate your service. Scruple not this argument which the Holy Ghost so often urgeth, nor think you are *mercenary* in having (with *Moses*) a *respect to the recompence of reward*. so that you own all is purchased by Christ, and bestowed as a reward of grace, and not of debt to any merits of yours: Then you may apply to yourselves, *1 Cor. xv. 58.* *Therefore be you stedfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as you know your labour is not in vain in the Lord.*

Heb. xi.  
26.

1sa. xlv.  
24.

(5.) IN all labours you undertake for Christ, act *faith* on him and his promises for assistance: *In him have we righteousness and strength.* It's his interest is concerned, you are no more than instruments he employeth, and therefore wait on him for *renewed* strength, as calls to service return.

Mat xxviii  
20.

He promised *to be with his ministers to the end of the world.* Yea, every believer, in the harass'd labour he is called to, may expect *proportionable* strength. When your spirits seem to fail, yet if you retain a hearty *willingness*, plead that word, and expect  
 the

the performance: *They that wait on the Lord shall renew their strength, they shall mount up with wings as eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint.* SERM. X. Ifa. xl. 31.  
 In hope of this, still renew your attempts when you appear to be most dispirited.

IV. *Observ.* THE weary faints when dead shall be at *rest*. The future happiness is called a *rest*; the rest which God provides, and one in part resembling his own, therefore called *his rest*. It comprehends all the glory and perfection of the heavenly state, but that's express'd by this word *rest*, with respect to the pains and labours of this present life. To sense this is a lively expression of happiness, as it is ease after torment, a quiet harbour after storms, fresh spirits after toil, a relaxation after intense endeavours, peace after war, and refreshing sleep after weary labour. Such an account of the righteous after death you find, *Isa. lvii. 2. He shall enter into peace, they shall rest in their beds.* And faints are said to fall asleep. The prospect is comfortable: Let all who are weary, apply it for consolation; your rest is near; you who are in pain, will shortly be at ease. For,

I. ALL pain will be superseded by the truest pleasures: *God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, sorrow, nor crying; neither* Rev. xxi. 4.

SERM. shall there be any more pain, for the former  
 X. things are passed away. This is most fully  
 accomplished in heaven, where the *body*  
 will be too spiritual and incorruptible to  
 admit diseases; there will be the perfect  
*eucrasia*, which prevents all sickness and  
 bodily pain, that are now so grievous.  
 You'll groan no more, but a placid hail  
 constitution shall always remain.

*Sin* can no longer afflict your mind; it  
 will be thoroughly purged away, *the plague*  
*of the heart* fully healed; no spawn of evil  
 thoughts, or irregular motion, in body or  
 mind; *for nothing which defiles shall enter*  
*there*. This is true of persons and things  
 too. Perfect knowledge and holiness shall  
 so form our whole temper, that had satan  
 room to assault, we shall be so refined by  
 the Spirit, that he should *find nothing in*  
*us*. Happy case! when there shall not be  
 in any saint, either *spot or wrinkle, or any*  
*such thing*. What pleasure will this create!

Rev. xxi.  
27.

Eph. v.  
27.

THERE will be no pain occasioned by  
 the weakness of *other saints*. That ful-  
 ness of light and love which they obtain,  
 will cause them to contribute to our greatest  
 solace and delight. No more shame or  
 grief can have place on their account; all  
 union and harmony rules among them who  
 were here divided; each will be loved as  
 ourselves, and we beloved by all as mem-  
 bers of the same body, wherein nothing  
 acteth but as acted by the Holy Ghost.

No fights are beheld, or news heard in those regions, which cause any tormenting *passions*; as anger, envy, fear, or sorrow; for every thing will minister to our cheerfulness and entire satisfaction. Our interest in Christ will be no longer *doubted*, the face of God no more *hid*, no *bitter* method necessary, or used, for our improvement: the cares, the watchings, repentings, hope, strivings, jealousy of our own hearts, self-examination, and exercises of faith, which are so necessary in our *present* condition, as probationers, will be too low and irksome for those heavenly mansions. The vision of God, with the full emanations of his love, will yield nothing below what suits *rewarded* conquerors; and in the *presence* of Christ not one thing necessary to yield fullest satisfaction can be wanting.

SERM.  
X.

AT God's right-hand shall flow those rivers of *pleasure* that make up that ocean of the joy of *our Lord*, into which we enter, and wherein we shall always swim, *Psal.* xvi. 11. *Matt.* xxv. 21. For pinching wants, there will be given bottomless treasure; for heart-breaking reproaches, a name of glory and renown; for an abject condition, we are made *kings and priests* unto God for ever and ever. *Readiness* of enjoyment, will hinder all painful pressure in our desires of further good.


SERM. 2. THE highest *employs* will be perfectly discharged without any weariness.

X. This point I shall divide.

(1.) THE heavenly state is not a state of *idleness*, nor of mean employments. Divine wisdom, that now allots work proportioned to all our lesser abilities, will not leave our higher abilities unemployed; we know that *angels* have their business. The *extent* of the work of glorified saints is a secret, but be sure it is great and noble. As they are not idle spectators, so their employment will be suitable to their perfected powers and active natures. *Innocent Adam* had work to do in his paradise below, and it was correspondent to that region wherein he was placed. Departed saints, in the

Isa. lvii. 2. paradise above, are said to *walk in their uprightness, or before God*; which notes a stated course of active performances; and all this as becomes men translated into the immediate presence of God (for *before him* are the words best render'd in agreeableness to the subject spoken of.) They shall be always doing; but nothing to be done is below the purity and dignity of the presence and station they are advanced to. By a believing view of him, they uprightly discharged the more *servile* work on earth, (which is his footstool) but now *standing before him* among his noblest servants, and blest with the vision of his glory, their employment is advanced to what belongs



to such as live in the *presence-chamber* of SERM.  
 this almighty king. By what is spoken of X.  
 glorified saints, it would seem, the exercise   
 of superintendency, with dominion over  
 inferiors, is committed to them; for they  
 are not only crowned as conquerors, but  
 called *kings*. *They have authority over ci-* Rev. v. 10.  
*ties*, some of more, others of fewer. *They* Luke xix.  
*sit on thrones, &c.* But be that as it will, 17, 19.  
 work they have; they are praising and ad-  
 miring God and his Christ; they pay him  
 constant homage, and whatever service he  
 allots them.

2. WHATSOEVER is the work of saints,  
 it will not be *laborious*, or any way tire-  
 some: *Blessed are the dead who die in the* Rev. xiv.  
*Lord, that they may rest from their labours,* 13.  
*and their works shall follow them.* Only  
 they who die *in the Lord* shall rest; it's by  
*death* these may so rest; and *all* these who  
 die united to Christ (tho' no martyrs) shall  
 rest from their labours; not only from suf-  
 ferings, but from all that's laborious or  
 toilsome; which may include, that all that  
 they shall perform, shall be easy to them:  
 but it may be, this is designed more ex-  
 pressly by the next words, *their works shall*  
*follow them.* I know it's a truth, that the  
 reward of the works of saints shall follow  
 them, or their works in order to that re-  
 ward. But the word ἀκολούθει is often used  
 to express also the promptness and easiness  
 in doing a thing. In this sense there's this  
 close

SERM. close connection ; tho' they shall rest from  
 X. all that's *laborious* or toilsome, especially  
 ~~~~~ bearing the cross, they shall not rest from  
 all works ; and tho' they shall *still* work,
 yet that shall in no wise abate their rest :
 for their works shall follow them as freely
 and easily, as what's most natural and agree-
 able, without any force, difficulty, or te-
 diouſness.

Rev. vii.
 15, 16.

INDEED how can the saints be weary
 in any performance, when the whole man
 will be mighty and ever vigorous ? so spi-
 ritualized and heavenly, that his spirits will
 never be exhausted, for his work is never
 intermitted : *They shall serve him day and
 night ; they shall not hunger nor thirst any
 more ;* for by their unabated vigour, they
 need no refreshments or intermission by
 food or sleep ; neither shall the sun light
 on them, or any heat, i. e. there will be
 nothing to incommode, or make them faint
 or listless in their service ; no opposition,
 disturbance, or difficulty from without,
 not the least indisposition or reluctancy
 from within. The highest accomplish-
 ments of such texts on earth, reserve a
 higher for the heavens ; and therefore ought
 to be used to express the felicity of this state,
 which far transcends what the church is
 ever capable of on earth.

As the saints will be like *angels*, in a free-
 dom from desire and affection to any, as re-
 lated in the flesh, so they shall be like them
 in

in abiding strength, vigour, chearfulness, and unweariedness in the greatest undertakings; as fresh and fit for the *next* work, as if we had done nothing before; and *finish* every thing with the same fervour and intenseness, as if just beginning it. The vital breath we always draw, the indwelling spirit, by which our very bodies are incorruptible and immortal, prevent decays by the greatest exercises, and all weariness in them. Souls perfected by grace, spiritualized bodies, and heavenly work in sight of the glory of Christ, will account for the greatest exercise not being *labour*, and the exceeding weight of glory being no burden. So far are the employments of heaven from being a toil, that they'll be a great share of the saints reward, and are for the most part represented as if singing *praises*, and *admiring* God, and the Lord our Redeemer, were the whole of their service; and *drinking the water of life*, and *walking in the light of heaven*, the sum of their business.

SERM.
X.



O BLESSED condition! wherein we shall be still knowing more, yet without any irksome study; perform the noblest acts, yet never be strained or tired; and with pleasure always behold that glory without dazzling, which now would overwhelm us! Happy change, that will render our faculties suited to things so amazing!

Rev. v. 9.
10, 13.

Rev. xxi.
6, 24.

SERM.
X.

APPLICATION.



MATTERS of this kind do so plainly and warmly suggest proper uses, that I hope all of you are applying them to your selves by such inferences and resolves as these.

1st, IT'S my highest *concern* to be sure I am a godly man. For it's such only who can hope to share in this rest: it's such as *Daniel* to whom God saith, *Thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days.* This rest after death is of that great consequence, that a mere *sceming to come short of it*, is ground of affecting *fear*; especially if you consider that failing of this, you shall endure such torments as the greatest in this world are but flea-bites, compared therewith: body and soul must fear the wrath of God to that degree, as shall glorify the power of it: *No rest night nor day in those flames.* Also how base and tiresome will your employment be in the unseen state; no way virtuous, pleasant, honourable, useful, religious, or diverting. By the account God gives, thy eternity will be chiefly spent in expressing thy enraged resentments of thy tormenting pains.

EXAMINE therefore your state by the gospel, for that's the lowest rule of judgment. If that condemns you as ungodly, the Lord your judge will by sentence declare

clare you to be such for whom he never purchased this rest ; but if the gospel pronounce you godly, this rest will be adjudged to you. Try then, are you regenerate, penitent, sound believers? Do the true frame of your hearts, and the course of a godly conversation, witness hereto? O rest not till this be beyond danger or doubt! If that be cleared, then it follows,

SERM.
X.

2dly, How *indebted* am I to Jesus Christ and free grace! How much indebted for what I have received, and for what greater things which I may assuredly expect? O from what misery shall I be delivered! to what happiness and honour am I to be admitted! I deserved the forest pains which I ever felt; the *curse* I was once under did bind upon me not only these, but the torments of hell too. My release from endless destruction I no ways merited; but this cost my Redeemer a bitter life, and a painful death after the greatest labours. He gave me some rest already, *when I was wearied*, Matt. xi. 28. under guilt. How often hath he supported me under pains, sweetned them to me by his love, as well as sanctified them by his power. These are effects of his abounding grace, but they yield greatest delight, as they are an *earnest* of that 2 Thess. i.] universal, perfect rest in glory. This he 7. is securing for me, and ripening me for. O that I could esteem, love, serve, and honour

SERM. honour my Lord, as becomes a poor sinner so vastly indebted to him.

3dly, WHAT a witness am I to the supplies of the Spirit of Christ? By these my decayed strength hath been renewed for service, and I continued labouring, tho' often weary. I have done but too little, yet this had been undone, if he had not quickned my soul, and restored my vigour. By these have I been kept resisting the tempter, who had almost foil'd me: I continued praying, though ready to cast it off as useless: I persevere in his ways so long beyond what I feared, and return to fill up my place far above my expectation. All may see in my assistances, that the influences of the Spirit are neither fancies, ineffectual, nor needless. How else could I stand who have been falling so often, and continue to this day faithful in his work, when some years since I was so faint, as almost to give it over? Happy, you faints above, all whose work is easy; yet glory to my Lord, that my *more* difficult work is so far performed. Sure his *strength is manifest in my weakness*, as well as in *their* perfection. O let me still *be strong in the power of thy might*; or I shall soon be overwhelmed: yet, assure me of repeated supplies, and I will, when most conscious of my own weakness, attempt the hardest service to which I am called; yea, what help I have

2 Cor. xii.

9.

have found (often to my surprize) shall make me attempt every plain present duty, when I am jealous that further supplies should be with-held.

SERM.
X.

4thly, *I would not live always*; I am not so fond of pain or weariness, as to be desirous of a longer life than God allots me; nor so *unnaturally* averse to rest, as to be unwilling to die, since that's a necessary means to obtain it. An aversion to death is implanted in human nature, as what's conducive to the continuance and government of mankind; for what man fearless of death would preserve himself when in trouble, or be restrained by laws from destroying others on the least provocation? Therefore a natural fear of death, as death, is allowable: *Paul* himself desired not to be *unclothed*. He had been glad of heaven in some other way than dying.

Job vii.
16.

2 Cor. v.
2.

BUT yet an *inordinate* fear of death, and love of life, must be suppressed, as ill becoming the faith of saints; for to love life for the sake of worldly enjoyments, or from an indifferency to heavenly privileges, is *carnal*. To love life merely from *fear* of death (as is our common case, tho' unperceived) is great *weakness* in any who have a good hope through grace, especially since Christ hath overcome it in his own person, and *destroyed by death the devil who had the power of death*; and un-

Heb. ii.
14.

stung

SERM. *stung* it by forgiveness of sin through his

X. blood *now* actually shed, and its acceptance manifested by his resurrection and

1 Cor. xv. glory; yea, *and brought life and immortality to light*: so that our resurrection in glory is assured, and the vail much removed from the heavenly state, *whereby*

2 Tim. i.
10.

death is said to be abolished.

CHRIST having done so much *to deliver you* from the fear of death, is it not unreasonable that you should be still

Heb. ii. 15 *subject to bondage through the fear of it.*

These things must be either faintly believed, or loosely considered, if the fear of death can longer chain you to a present life.

To a soul rightly affected, there is little to commend this life, except eminent service, and hope of greater assurance and meetness for heaven; therefore, as far as these do not influence the godly man, his longings for heaven reconcile him to death; and this present life, as it keeps him from that better life of glory, becomes daily less desirable. *Here*, tho' I like my Lord's work, yet I am weary of my own imperfections and littleness, which nothing short of death will remove. *There* I shall have higher work, and at no time burdensome or tedious: *There* what is now valuable will be completed; all I now principally desire shall be enjoyed. Ah! childish heart, what dost thou see, taste, or enjoy,

enjoy, which should keep thee from crying, *Come, Lord, come quickly*; nevertheless *I'll wait till my change come!* He who is Lord of my life shall fix my time, nor shall discontent at any troubles press me to hasten it. It's fit that he honour himself, and serve his own purpose on me by delaying that salvation, which I'll earnestly prepare and look for, whilst life must be prolonged.

5thly, I WILL be *comforted* in the death of my godly friends, tho' very dear to me. Shall I be so selfish as to grudge their release from the evils they felt, or wish them out of those delights and honours they now enjoy? Would I again hear their groans, and see their wearisome burdens return upon them? Should it not allay my grief to know that if they were to describe their present condition, they would tell me; Now I serve and enjoy my Lord as I desired, but could not while with you. I feel none of those pains I endured when with you. Death hath wholly cleans'd and freed me from whatever you heard me complain of. I now see plainly the great things which with you I did but guess at: I'm filled with all I hoped for, and find this state infinitely more glorious than the largest mind among you can comprehend. Your world hath no words to express it, all the images by which it is represented in holy writ are ex-

SERM. ceeding faint. You could not bear the sight
 X. of our glory, nor be content to live if
 you knew how we live here; *we are with*
 our beloved Jesus, *who will bring us with him*
 at the great day, when *we shall meet with*
 you, and all his other saints, and you be-
 come as happy as ourselves by *being ever*
 with the Lord; therefore sorrow not as do
 others. Grieve not for us, but see you be
 not slothful, but followers of us, who now
 inherit the promises. And let all your
 trouble on our account be only as our
 death is a judgment procured by your
 sins, or a public calamity, by the removal
 of instruments fitted for usefulness; or as
 our pain was *heightned* to make you willing
 to resign us.

1 Theff. iv.
 13, 14, 18.

THIS leads me to observe some things concerning our deceased brother, the reverend and aged Mr. *John Quick*. In him the whole of the text is exemplified: how sweet is the heavenly rest! what a friendly messenger was death to him! and how happy a change hath this made in his condition? He in former years was sorely persecuted: Among many other faithful ministers he was ejected for nonconformity in the year 62, when he had no more than *five pound* to subsist on. He justly apprehending that by his office he remained oblig'd to preach as opportunity did present, improved such occasions under severe trials. He was often indicted for preaching,

preaching, excommunicated, many months in the year 1663 imprisoned, and many more in the year 1665. He was driven out of *Plymouth*, and harrassed for a long time, having no abiding-place, until God provided him one in *London*: Nor was he unacquainted with the scorns, reproaches, and slanders of the wicked, which pierced his soul beyond his other hardships.

HIS bodily *pains* by the stone were frequent for six years, and scarce tolerable for the last three. O the piercing groans he continually utter'd under his torments, which almost daily returned! Nights spent without sleep, and in the day-time seldom any ease. His *labours* were abundant, sufficient to wear out the strongest: In the *west*, for many years, riding from place to place, often preaching ten times in a fortnight. Of later years, when he scarce got a wink of sleep in the night, through extremity of pain, yet preach'd the next day, sometimes in great agony; or sure to feel the sudden return of his torture. When he was in a state of health, he usually got into his well-furnished study at two a clock in the morning; and when distempers seized him, he spent the greatest part of the night in reading, meditation, and prayer.

By this short abstract you'll be convinc'd he was of the number of the *troubled* and *the weary*: A change by death

SERM. must be very sensibly refreshing, now that
 X. he is entred into his rest in the 70th year of
 his age, near *fifty* whereof were spent in
 the work of the gospel, and that in many
 afflictions and great difficulties.

THAT he is among those for whom this
 rest was prepared, he gave good evidence
 to others, had an assured hope in his own
 mind, which he strictly examined under
 the near views of eternity, and retained to
 the end unshaken, though sometimes
 assaulted.

GOD wrought a saving *change* on his
 heart in his youth; upon which he de-
 voted himself to Christ, and to his work
 in the ministry. By great temptations he
 was *confirmed*, the length of one of his
 exercises was tedious and sad; of which
 he writes his sense at that time; “ O this
 “ inundation of blasphemous thoughts
 “ came in the midst of prayer, one seem-
 “ ing roaring in his ears, there’s no God
 “ nor devil, no heaven nor hell, no life
 “ after death. These legions followed
 “ me from one ordinance to another, so
 “ that I was almost distracted, and they
 “ grew worse and worse under all my
 “ struggles. O, cried he to the eminent
 “ Mr. *Hughs*, I shall be undone ever-
 “ lastingly. Wherever I am, I am haunted,
 “ I am plagued with these atheistical
 “ thoughts. These hellish feinds do hurry
 “ me; I pray, I fast, and go mourning
 “ all

“ all the day, yet they are my insepara-
 “ ble companions: Ah I shall perish for-
 “ ever by the hands of these *Sauls*. But
 “ at the end of several weeks he found
 “ Mr. *Hugh's* words true: As these trou-
 “ blefome and vexatious thoughts intruded
 “ without your invitation, fo will they be
 “ gone without your obfervance; and
 “ you'll as much wonder how you come
 “ to be freed, as you are now astonifhed
 “ and terrified by them. But he followed
 “ his counfel too, *viz.* acting faith on
 “ Chrift, and perfifting in every duty,
 “ notwithstanding thefe difturbances.”

SERM.
X.



HE was faithful to his light; and tender
 and ftudious to know his duty. Upon de-
 liberate examination he was convinced that
conformity wou'd be a fin in him, there-
 fore he chofe contempt, poverty, and bonds,
 rather than comply: He refufed prefer-
 ments often offered to him fince; once
 300 *l. per annum*.

HE was zealoufly refolved in his work:
 When a whole bench of juftices offered
 to releafe him from prifon, if he'd pro-
 mife to forbear preaching, he told them,
 No, for I far more fear that woe from God
 if I preach not the Gofpel. The fudden-
 nefs and warmth of his temper made him
 generally the more active, though fome-
 times it eclips'd his worth, and was his
 bewailed burden.

SERM. THE blessing of God made his labours
 X. successful to the conversion of many in
 several places; his supports and consolations from heaven were very signal under his exercises; once to a justice, telling him to what remote prison he would send him, he replied, *I know not where you are sending me; but this I'm sure of, my heart is as full of comfort as it can hold.* His deliverances were often signally providential, and sometimes by warnings in his dreams, of which he recorded several instances.

THOUGH his temper was sudden, he was a very tender relation, exceeding compassionate to the distressed, and laid out his pains and estate too very largely, especially to the banish'd *French*; for which nation he had a peculiar respect, on the account of their sound doctrine, gospel-discipline, fixt adherence to Christ, and the kindness he had found among them in former times.

UNDER all his pains he justified God, often accusing himself as deserving more; crying out, *O my sins, my unfaithfulness, deserve hell it self! Lord, give me patience: And considering his constitution, it's a strange instance of grace, that in such agonies he utter'd no words that shew'd the least repinings against God.*

As himself was a *learned* minister, and well qualified, so he was earnestly concerned

cerned for a learned faithful ministry; and forward in encouraging hopeful young men to engage in the work, and to fulfil it. Indeed he had a special concern for all youth, as the hopes of the rising generation, tho' concerned for a due regard to aged ministers, as the pillars and witnesses of the present. But to conclude, He sent for me a short time before his death, opening to me the state of his soul, and desiring my impartial thoughts of the grounds of his hope. May I never forget the meltings of his heart for past imperfections, and his high admirings of Christ, on whose righteousness, as the only merit of life, he rested; and yet a sincere compliance with the gospel-way, of its application, he with solemnity declared, and made evident. Thus passed he to rest.

WERE he to speak to us ministers, he wou'd now say, Fear not your troubles, abate not your labours: O this rest abundantly answers for all. You that are pained, wait as I have done, I am eased of all, and feel heaven the sweeter by what I endured. Let me speak for him to you his people: See that his labours rise not against you; be watchful, that when you meet him at the last day, he may rejoice *in you*, as well as be approved for his own fidelity. In the mean time, let a remembrance of him help to keep you united, and dispose you to great benefit by the labours of that

SERMON. worthy brother who succeeds him; and
X. will not forget his dying charge.

~~~~~ As to his exemplary widow and child,  
do you excel in proportion to the helps  
you enjoy'd by his life, expect a return of  
his many prayers for you, walk worthy  
of his name, and let his release from the  
heavy groans you heard so often, and the  
blessed rest he now partakes of, prevent all  
immoderate sorrow for his death.







## A Thanksgiving-SERMON.

Preached *December 31. 1706.*

ISAIAH xii. 7.

*Sing unto the Lord, for he hath done excellent things, this is known in all the earth.*



THIS chapter is filled with SERM. the joyful praises of God, XI. and thanksgivings to him. In my text, 1. *All* are called to join in this work, they mutually excite each other; *Sing to the Lord*, q. d. let none neglect their part, let's help one another to do it more suitably to that sacred name, and to this great occasion.

2. THE reason of this charge; *He hath done excellent things*. The things wrought are excellent; it's this Lord who performed these things, and whoever are the instruments employ'd in all, or any of them,

SERM. them, they are his doings who gave abilities, and render'd them effectual.

XI.

3. THIS is further strengthened by the notoriety of these doings, *This is known in all the earth*; the advantage extends to many countries, the same resounds to all. The things are so illustrious, that they command an amazing regard; yea, the hand of God is so signally manifest therein, that none can disown him to be the author. Those who scarce confessed his being, they who denied his providential government, are forced to acknowledge that he produced these wonders, and none below him were capable of such glorious performances. Yea, *the enemies* who suffer by his wondrous appearances for his people, dare not refuse a confession, that these are the Lord's doings. All which greatly inforce the duty mentioned, *q. d.* Hath God done such excellent things, as bring the most stupid to reverence his name, and his enemies to confess his power; and shall not we, his *church*, who are more enlightned to discern, and more profited by what he hath wrought, as well as better affected to his glory, sing unto the Lord? The *earth* would testify against us as stupid and ungrateful, should we neglect or be heartless in this work of praise.

Doct. *When God hath done excellent things for his people, they ought to sing unto him.*

I shall, I. GIVE a general explication of this doctrine, and briefly prove it.

SERM.  
XI.

II. BRING our case to this truth, by a particular application.

THE first will require an answer to these two questions.

I. *Quest.* IN what respects are the works of God for his people call'd *excellent*?

I. *Answ.* *As they out-do all human works.* In this sense all the works of God are excellent; for, compared with the performances of men, yea, or of the highest angels, they are to be celebrated: as, *Among the gods there is none like unto thee,* Pf. lxxxvi. *O Lord, neither are there any works like* <sup>8.</sup> *unto thy works.* Who can equal the very least of his *creatures*? The work of *redemption*, and the application thereof by his Spirit, is incomprehensible by angels, *They desire to look into these things;* and will 1 Pet. i. 12. join with us in eternally admiring the grace and wisdom of God therein. The common acts of *providence* also do far surpass the best-laid designs of creatures. Such are their connection, vast reaches, and depths, that when God *chargeth his angels* Job. iv. 18 *with folly*, he chargeth them not with a fault; yet he declares how incompetent they are for the management of his providential kingdom; or to be trusted otherwise therein, than as ministers under his own direction.

2. *Answ.*

SERM. 2d Answ. *As they exceed the common operations of God's providence.* For though

XI. *all his works are perfect in their kind, yet some are said to excel, and that on sundry accounts; but principally, when God's perfections shine by them with extraordinary lustre; Thy right hand is become glorious in power, and in the greatness of thine excellency thou hast overthrown them that rose up against thee; thou sentest forth thy wrath, which consumed them as stubble.*

Exod. xv.  
6, 7.

It's thus, when the obstacles are unusually great, the dangers imminent, the instruments unlikely, the season critical, the benefits great and extensive, and a coincidence of many designs unexpectedly brought about. Deliverances, or other mercies, attended with such circumstances, are justly called excellent. And this is the usual method God takes in the accomplishment of eminent promises, and prophecies, concerning his church, as might be largely instanced; nor need we other than my *text*, if it point at the restoration of the Jews, the conversion of the Gentiles, and the eminent holiness and happiness of both in the *Messiah's* kingdom; which are prophesied of in the two foregoing chapters.

2 Q. WHAT is it to *sing* unto the Lord?

1 A. To record and *publish* the praises of God from a sense of his hand, and a conviction of his existence, and transcendent

dant perfection demonstrated in his works; SERM.  
*Sing ye unto the Lord, he hath triumphed* XI.  
*gloriously.* The extraordinariness of the  
 work leads the soul to acknowledge a su- Exod. xv.  
21.  
 preme being as the author; for none lower  
 could effect it. His perfections thus man-  
 ifested, impress the mind, and excite  
 our powers to *exalt his name, and make* Pf. lxxvi. 2.  
*his praise glorious.* A song of praise is de-  
 signed to commend God, and his works  
 (or rather God for his works) to the esteem  
 and admiration of others; and to perpetu-  
 ate the memory thereof among others,  
 as well as our selves. When God is said  
 to bless men, he *confers* some great bene-  
 fit; but when men bless God for his  
 greatest favours or appearances, it's no  
 more than affectionately *owning*, and pro-  
 claiming his happiness, who possesseth  
 those perfections which his works declare;  
 and is the communicative fountain of all  
 the benefits dispenced by those wonders.

2d A. *Thankfully* to acknowledge our  
 concern in, advantage and obligations by  
 those excellent works of his in our behalf.  
 It must be *a song of thanksgiving* to our Neh. xii.  
46.  
 God, as well as praise; the benefits de-  
 sign'd and bestow'd on us by his wonder-  
 ful operations, must so affect our hearts,  
 that a thankful mind becomes the spring  
 of our songs of praise; and this, as we  
 perceive it was on our behalf, and for our  
 own benefit, that he appear'd thus glo-  
 riously.

SERM. riously. The praises of one who hath  
 XI. done excellent things may be mentioned,  
 ~~~~~ but if those great things do not concern  
 us, we are more cool; and account our
 selves little obliged to any great returns to
 that person. But when we are deeply sen-
 sible that all was perform'd for our advan-
 tage, this endears him to us, and enclines
 us to study suitable returns of thanks; yea,
 we account our selves obliged to pay him
 all the just service of which we are capable.

3d *A.* GREATLY to *rejoice* in these
 praises and thanksgivings to God. We
 must not only rejoice in the benefit we
 receive by his works, but also in our praises
 and thanksgivings to God for them; *Make*
a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth;
make a loud noise, and rejoice and sing praise.
 Joy confined to our own benefit is too
 selfish; our delight and satisfaction should
 have higher regards. We ought to *glory*
in his praise, that he is so perfect and ex-
 cellent a being, that his perfections are thus
 manifested, and that his wonderful works
 do eminently subserve his own glory at
 present, and for future ages too. We must
 be glad that this God is thus concerned
 for us, and especially that he who is thus
 perfect and *excellent in working*, is our
 God in covenant. This makes his works
 most terrible to our enemies, *Our enemies*
were much cast down, for they perceived
that this work was wrought of our God.

This

Psa. xcvi.
 4.

1 Chron.
 xvi. 25.

Neh. vi.
 17.


This gives the most affecting weight in SERM.
 godly mens esteem: *This God is our God* XI.
for ever and ever. Without an interest in Pf. xlvi. 14.
 him, the greatest benefits are empty, and
 will be snares. His perfections carry terror
 in them as to our eternal concerns, wherein
 lies our chief interest. Nor can we be
 assured of any future appearances for our
 present weal; therefore as songs express
 joy, happy they who are come unto God
 by Christ into a league of amity, and can
 gladly triumph thus; *God, even our own* P. lxxvi.
God, shall bless us. Let's watch against a 6.
 mere carnal joy, and also against fullen-
 ness, and any frame wherein a chearful
 satisfaction is not expressed; *My lips shall* Pf. lxxi.
greatly rejoice, when I sing unto thee. 23.

I SHALL briefly prove, that when God
 doth excellent things for his people, they
 ought to sing unto him.

1st R. THIS is what God *requires* and
 expecteth; *Sing unto the Lord, for he hath* Jer. xxviii
deliver'd the soul of the poor from the hand of 13.
evil doers. As prayer is a homage paid to
 him as the only one who is able to supply
 our wants; so praises and thanks are a re-
 turn by which his goodness and greatness
 are recogniz'd, and our dependance on
 him is devoutly confessed; therefore God
 often reproves those as profane, who
 neglect his praises after benefits received.

2d R. THE *excellent works* of God must
 excite all well-disposed minds to sing unto
 him.

SERM. him. Such is the nature of them, that

XI. unless the heart be prejudiced by malignity,  unbelief, pride, or levity, it cannot fail to acknowledge God's praises for them; for they strike the mind with wonder, as they are great; they melt into kind affections, as instances of divine love; and excite gratitude in a heart sensible of its own unworthiness, as they are highly beneficial. We find God's people praying for such mercies, that they might be excited hereby to their songs of thanksgivings; *Save us, O Lord, our God, and gather us from among the heathen, to give thanks unto thy name, and to triumph in thy praise.* Those brighter views which saints have of God in his wondrous works, greatly strengthen their faith and love to him; which graces will proportionably stir up their joyful praises and thanksgivings, as these in exercise draw out their souls to exalt him to their utmost; and then to add, *Thou, Lord, art exalted above all blessing and praise: Who can shew forth all thy praise?*

3d R. GOD will accept this when sincerely managed. He accounts it a *sacrifice*; he records himself *glorified* thereby. This is a pledge of future mercies; and God often testifieth his being pleased therewith, by continuing to act for grateful persons; yea, in augmenting his wonders in their behalf. This, which will be a great part of our employ in heaven, is highly

highly regarded when offer'd in the name of Christ on earth. SERM.
XI.

4 R. THIS is a part of God's *design* in doing such excellent things. He displays his glory to awaken praise, and makes his goodness known, as a motive to thanksgiving. When God prophesied of the return of *Israel* by wonders, he issueth it in their songs of praise, by which his *redeemed* Jer. xxxiii. *should exalt his goodness.* Nor is this work ^{11.} of praise among his people, of small use as to others, for it is a fit means to bring them to know and love the blessed God, and excite them to trust and serve him, whose wonders are thus proclaimed by his saints.

II. I SHALL bring our *particular* case to this doctrine.

England is appointed by our gracious *Queen* this day to sing unto the Lord, and the ground of it is the same with my text; *for the Lord hath done excellent things; and this is known in all the earth.* All holy assemblies profess to be thus employ'd, and God observes with a jealous eye whether it be performed in a right manner.

I AM sure, if we acquit ourselves *worthy* of the occasion, our hearts will be enlarg'd in the *high praise* of our God; for he hath made this year remarkable to all future ages, by the excellent things which he hath wrought; not a few, but many; not what was in the compass of *human* wit and

SERM. power to do, but what only his own arm
 XI. was able to perform: Nor yet what his
 providence *ordinarily* effecteth, but such as
 are *wonderful*, and in some respects not to
 be parallel'd in former ages. If they come
 short in the *immediateness* of some of the
 appearances of God for *Israel*, they exceed
 in the extensiveness of the parties and places
 concerned: And *this is known in all the
 earth.*

THAT corner is barbarous which is
 wholly insensible; most habitable places
 will reap the benefit one way or other.
 The advantages are more visible as to all
Europe, for the least concerned parts there-
 of, had in time felt inconvenience by the
 uncontrouled power of the *French*, and
 our *popish allies* are deliver'd from his op-
 pressing encroachments; all his own ensla-
 ved *subjects* have a prospect of the sweets
 of *civil liberties*, as well as *Protestants*, of
 being saved from the inhuman cruelties so
 long inflicted by him, on no pretence, ex-
 cept that of religion. I need not add the
 benefit accruing to us, and our *Protestant*
 allies; unless popery, persecution, slavery,
 proud insults, poverty, and barbarous de-
 vastations, are accounted innocent things.

BUT what I chiefly regard, is this, the
 occurrences of this year are wonderful to
 that degree, that all sorts openly confess
 the hand of the almighty God therein, and
 ascribe the honour to his name: *When the
 Lord*

Lord buildeth up Sion, he shall appear in his glory. When God performs wondrous things, he is said to *shine forth*. So palpable are the displays of his perfections, that not only our renowned generals, but the private soldiers; not only the serious, but the profane, agree that these are the *Lord's doings*: The very atheists own a providence by sensible observation. It's too common for instruments to challenge the glory of great actions to themselves; but, I think, it is seldom known, that officers so unanimously agreed, as ours do, in solemnly declaring that God, and not man, brought us these victories. Nay, our fretting enemies amazedly ascribe our triumphs to the Lord's appearing for us; and because of it, are filled with terror. So that in the whole, by our present occasion, that place is exemplified, *And it shall be to me a name of joy, and an honour before all the nations of the earth, which shall bear all the good that I do unto them; and they shall fear and tremble for all the goodness, and for all the prosperity that I procure unto them.*

WE are beset with such heaps of wonders, that as we cannot number them, or pretend to know all the circumstances by which they are aggrandized, so its hard to range them into such order, that they should not jumble, and several lay claim to the same excellency that appears in any other. Therefore, in compliance with the straitness of

SERM. time, and the truest design of this solemnity,

XI. I shall reduce some of these great things under those divine *perfections* which therein are most eminently display'd, and also call you to acknowledge these in a right manner.

1. SING to the Lord with joyful praises and thanksgiving, for the excellent displays of his *perfections* in his works for *England* this year.

2. BE careful that your song be such as he requires, and will accept.

1. *Ex.* SING to the Lord with joyful praises and thanksgiving, for the excellent displays of his *perfections* in his works for *England*.

As all *benefits* are excellent to the degree of God's communications of himself therein, so all his *works* are excellent, as he manifests himself thereby; and the acknowledgment thereof should be the chief subject of right songs unto the Lord. If we perceive not his glory by his works, or record not our observations, and direct them to his glory, they are not songs of praise to *him*: Therefore attend to God's *perfections*, and lift up your hearts in extolling them, as they shine forth in the occurrences of this *marvellous* year.

Pfal. xxi.

13.

(1.) *Sing to the almighty power of God.* How can we refuse to *sing, and praise his power*? How irresistible is that arm, which scattered the mighty armies, and subdued a strength

a strength that seemed to themselves invincible. A great power besieged *Barcelona*; but tho' so ill fortified, the wasted enemy shamefully withdrew. It was not a weak force which he subdued at *Ramilles*, but a numerous army; it was not a small defeat, but a total one, which was given to the choicest troops of *France* and *Bavaria*; they flee in a confusion equal to that of the most undisciplin'd cowards. At his command many great cities open their gates, and vast provinces are reduced in less time than a small fortress hath surrendered heretofore.

AT *Turin* the *French* were in number twelve thousand above the allies, and under great advantages, yet are they assaulted by this lesser force, and that fatigued by tedious marches, and part of it long insulted; however, the multitude are forced to quit their entrenchments, and the besiegers, with the additional strength of the duke of *Orleans*, are entirely defeated. Upon this victory, whole countries are soon recovered, which, in the ordinary course, must, by parcels, and vast expence of blood and treasure, have been subdued. *Ascribe, Psa. lxxvii.*
you, strength to our God, whose influence is ³⁴
 also mighty on the *spirits of men*; for his power exerted itself, in striking a terror into the hearts of our enemies, and making them who were noted for valour, to become as *women*. This is obvious in most *Jer. li. 30.*

SERM. of the engagements; but it was acknowledged, by the Marshal *Marfin*, as the cause of their overthrow at *Turin*, when our forces were animated with uncommon vigour. You must be perverse, if you sing not, *that the Lord hath triumphed gloriously.*

Exod. xv. 2. Thus hath he done over *him*, who was well assured to give laws to *Europe*; who had accepted titles full of blasphemy; and in the beginning of this year insulted in *Italy*, and on the *Rhine*, as if all his former wounds were healed. Nor can I omit the impression of God on mens *hearts*, in preserving an alliance so long among persons of such different tempers and interests, and inclining *England* and *Holland*, on foreign security, to that great loan, without which our triumphs in *Italy* had been impossible.

2. Sing of the Lord's righteousness and terrible justice. His doings compel us to say, *He is without iniquity; just and right is he:* He hath pleaded our righteous cause against an usurping perfidious king, one who knows no limits by right, and thinks his claim just to whatever he can seize by force or craft; one, no treaty or oath binds longer than he is unable to violate them by strength, or basest methods. He now feels that *God is terrible out of his holy places;* his *perfidiousness* is a proclaimed reason against our treating with him, till his weakness incapacitate him to break his engagements: He hath swam in *blood* to satisfy his

Deut.
xxxii. 4.

Psal. lxxviii.
85.

his cruelty, or serve his own ambition; and now God gives his *soldiers* to the sword, and swept away many scores of thousands this very year. His *treasures* are consumed, by which men were bribed to unnatural villanies. What *haste* hath God made to reduce him, who used to finish a *campaign* before his enemies took the field? *Horrors* and *shame* have taken hold of him, who was the terror of *Europe*, and rival'd with God for glory. His spirit (tho' seemingly compos'd for a time) is, by a succession of humbling tidings, made to stoop, and amidst distractions to acknowledge, *the Most High ruleth among the children of men*. I often ventured to say, If a persecutor of his kind went out of the world unmark'd by divine vengeance, providence varied from its usual methods. And it gives me hope that God will finish his work, because his rebukes are begun in a manner so sudden and signal. Every thing seems designed to exasperate his mind; his confident hopes, and former successes, cause the sharper resentments of his defeats by one of the *Queen's* sex, and the *States*, whom he despis'd. He seem'd *lifted up*, to shew the *vileness* of human nature, and the *severity* of delay'd vengeance: *Thus is the Lord known by the judgments which he executes*. *My tongue shall talk of thy righteousness all the day long, for they are confounded that seek my burt*. This year affords so remarkable an

SERM. instance of God's displeasure at the *apostasy*

XI. of the king of *Poland*, that I dare not disregard so loud a warning. He, for a crown, denied his God, by turning *papist*; but had scarce enjoyed a quiet hour, till he was de-thron'd: nor did he a glorious thing, until he agreed to abdicate, and then obtain'd a famous victory.

3. *Sing of the unsearchable wisdom of*
 Job ix. 4. *God.* He is *wise in heart*, and *mighty in strength*. By secular interests he divided *popish* princes in this war, and that against the endeavours of their common *father*: And they whose union had been dangerous to the *protestant religion*, are brought to weaken him, who, by the *Jesuits* prediction, was to perfect the extirpation of the *northern heresy*. To render the *protestant* name considerable, the *powers* so denominated are the only agents in the glorious conquests in *Flanders*; yea, in *Italy*, as well as *Spain*, the attempts and success are chiefly owing to their influence. Our God defeated the well-adjusted measures of *France*; for by his storms he delay'd their fleet, that *Barcelona* should not be reduced before relief was possible; and lock'd up *ours* so long, that the besiegers strength might be wasted, with safety to that place. But when the *moment* came that it could no longer hold out, the winds bring our far *distant* squadrons together, and carry them to that city's most seasonable relief. It's probable

probable that God over-ruled that disaster of the enemy, as a motive to venture the battle at *Ramillies*, without which we had spent a whole season as fretting spectators of his fortified *lines*. And, if reports be true, he undertook and lost that battle by *falling into a pit*, which he had digg'd, and being deceived by a trick of his own framing. Wisdom pitch'd on the critical season for *Turin's* deliverance; for when God had amazingly spirited the besieged (with such loss to the *French*) to hold out, till they had scarce powder left to salute their restored prince: Then, then salvation came, which, if delay'd a day, must have prevented that battle, and the amazing changes which ensued. May not we also behold it as one reach of his wisdom, that the *Vaudois* had an opportunity, by their service, to convince the duke of *Savoy*, that they are necessary to him, and fit to be trusted; and that neither that country's interest, nor these mens characters, were justly apprehended in the times of their persecution. Many other ways of this perfection of our Creator, are obvious; but I shall mention no more, except this one in our kingdom: He suffer'd some dangerous attempts to proceed so far, as to awaken a remiss nation to elect a *good parliament*; which heartily encourag'd this war, both by sufficient grants, and countenancing the employment of persons whose hearts are in

SERM. the cause. *To this only wise God be glory.*

XI. Let us exalt him, who *made the counsel of the wise counsellors of Pharoah brutish* (tho' long fam'd for experience, craft, and policy.)

Rom. xvi.

27.

Ha. xix.

11.

4. *Sing to the Lord for his infinite goodness.* By this his other perfections were set on work for our benefit. All the defeats of *France* are propitious to us, as that oppressor is disabled to pursue his usurpations, and take revenge. I might enlarge on the many reasons we have for that acclamation, *How great is thy goodness!*

OUR misery had been *unutterable*, if he had not wonderfully appeared for us. His ordinary methods had not prevented *slavery* and *popery*, with the long *train* of mischiefs inseparable therefrom. The very calamities of the *French* Protestants are but a small part of what we might expect from a king so cruel to his own dispirited innocent subjects. These miseries were *unavoidable* to human view; great efforts had not succeeded to abate his prospect; nor need we a greater evidence of our danger, than his remaining strength, after such expence of blood and treasure. Review his loss of men but since the beginning of this war in several places, as *Blenheim*, *Veru*, *Barcelona*, *Ramilles*, *Turin*, (not to mention others, or any thing at sea, or in the many garrisons we have taken.)



COMPUTE also the *money* expended in bribes, magazines, pay, and other supports of his armies, of his lusts, and government, &c. and consider after all this, how his present influence on *Spain, Poland, Ottoman Court, Hungary, the Empire, Rome, and other parts*, continues, with his preparations for another *campaign*; and must we not, with *trembling*, adore the goodness of our God, that *we are not consumed*. To what a miracle of mercy to us, to all the protestant churches, and the other nations, must it be ascribed! that God fixed his *hook in his nostrils*, when he was just seizing on the prey, and after the first surprising shock to his hopes at *Blenheim*, pursued the blow, by defeating his strong attempts to retrieve his point. *Every* victory (tho' so multiplied and great) is a high instance of divine favour, because our danger was great, had we failed of *any*, even the last: *O praise the Lord for his goodness*. Psal. cvii. This hath exerted itself not only in success^s abroad, but by those has diminished and muzzled our unnatural enemies at home. Gospel-privileges, tho' repined at by some, are still enjoyed; our *Queen's health* continued, with a *mind* steady to the publick welfare; capable to bear, and well use the glory heaped on her royal *name*; and so moderate, as to engage all hearts averse to popery and slavery. Among our benefits, we may well recount the

SERM. the prolong'd life of her *royal consort*, the
 XI. mutual confidence between her *Majesty*
 ~~~~~ and *parliament*, with the harmony among  
 themselves, in pursuit of the common  
 good. How gracious is our God, that un-  
 der great losses, the nation is *able*, and the  
 body of it so *prudent*, as to desire the con-  
 tinuance of the war, notwithstanding its  
 expensiveness; and the secret endeavours  
 (by misrepresenting our counsellors, and  
 presaging improbable *dangers*) to exasperate  
 the unthinking.

RENDER thanksgiving for the safety of  
 our *glorious general*, tho' very often in dan-  
 ger; also that *England* is easy, when other  
 nations feel the distresses and terrors of  
 war. We possess as great a share of *civil*  
*liberty*, as a wise man can desire; whereas  
 most kingdoms dare scarce resent their fla-  
 very, and others boast of the mere appea-  
 rance of freedom. Justice runs down like  
 a stream, health sweetens our other com-  
 forts, and plenty subsisteth us in waiting  
 till God secure and enlarge our *trade*, by a  
 desirable *peace*; a peace so firm, as shall  
 not expose us to the same dangers, and  
 thereby the loss of all the blood and trea-  
 sure expended for our safety. Nor ought  
 our hopes of an union with *Scotland*, for  
 the common benefit, take the lowest place  
 in our acknowledgments.

AND yet the *goodness* of God is most  
 manifested in his conferring blessings, thus  
 great and numerous, on a people *unworthy*

of the least of his mercies. He is thus beneficent to men, whose returns are unfuitable to former benefits; and unwilling to reform, tho' our happiness is prolonged from age to age, by a series of astonishing deliverances, and especially from the attempts for restoring popery: But of this I lately discoursed at large. Let us all say, from our hearts, *We will mention the loving-kindness of the Lord, and the praises of the Lord, according to all that he hath bestowed on us, &c.* The great advantages rationally hoped from our success, might also be taken in; but I am forced to omit many which we actually enjoy.

SERM.  
XI.



Isa. lxiii.

7.

Pfal. xxx.

2.

Pfal. xcix.

1.

1 Sam. ii.

30.


5. *Sing to the Lord for his infallible truth.* He condescends, in making promises, to relieve and comfort us by the prospect of future good; and by sure performance of these, he magnifies his word above all his name. God is most jealous of our distrusting his word, therefore we may be sure he expects his faithfulness should be proclaimed when he accomplished his word. In respect of this perfection also, we have cause to sing of the mercies of the Lord, and with our mouth to make known his faithfulness. I shall mention three scriptures fulfilled before our eyes, in the stupendous works we are commemorating.

(1.) *Them that honour me, I will honour; and they that despise me, shall be lightly esteemed.* This is made good; and the lat-

ter

SERM. *ter* part, tho' a threatning, is in our case  
 XI. the performance of the *former*, to the glory  
 of the instruments by whom the threat is  
 executed. Our *excellent Queen* is concern-  
 ed to honour God, by defending the *Pro-*  
*testant* religion, rescuing the liberties and  
 rights of neighbours from his *claws*, who  
 made a *prey* of both, and was just devour-  
 ing what remained. And such at home  
 as desire to *live peaceable lives in all godli-*  
*ness and honesty*, she defends in so doing.  
 Whilst *her Majesty* is thus employed, God  
 hath clothed her with honour beyond any  
 prince alive: yea, who among the dead can  
 equal her in glorious successes, with so few  
 disappointments; honourable designs with-  
 out self-interest; extensive influence with-  
 out suspicion; and the affection and confi-  
 dence of her people, without the murmurs  
 or envy of any, except fools or enemies of  
 their country? He hath also put honour on  
 such as exposed themselves in the same  
 cause: What subject was ever honoured  
 abroad and at home as the duke of *Marl-*  
*borough*, that great instrument of most of  
 our glorious victories? Our armies and na-  
 vies are renowned among the most famous,  
 and reflect a glory upon *Great-Britain* and  
*Ireland*. I dare not omit, that God seems  
 tender of the honour of king *WILLIAM'S*  
*name*, in carrying on what he so happily  
 begun, and commending his measures by  
 our happy success in adhering to them.

BEHOLD

BEHOLD the reverse, in the *contempt* SERM.  
 God pours out on the *French* king, who XI.  
 usurp'd divine titles, and abused his power,   
 in opposing the interest of our Lord Jesus.  
 How great was he for might, success, and  
 counsel? He seem'd ambitious to transmit  
 a character by which all his ancestors should  
 be wholly eclips'd. But God hath pro-  
 longed his days, as if on purpose to *stain*  
*his glory*, and raze out the illustrious mo-  
 nument of his former acquisitions; his wise  
*counsels* are become unsettled and weak; his  
*conquests* in a great part lost, and more a  
 rescuing. He who boasted insolently of  
 giving *peace to Europe*, is forced to ask it,  
 and is denied. This *patron* of princes, and  
 arbiter of kingdoms, suffers his allies to be  
 deprived, and intreats the poor *Cantons* to  
 mediate for a *peace*: His great *marshals* are  
 discomfited, and flee: His *veteran* troops  
 (the tools of his oppression and cruelty) are  
 dispirited and slaughter'd: His vast *prepa-*  
*rations* become the spoil of his enemies.  
 God hath effectually spoken to him; as  
 in the prophet, *Come down from thy glory:* Jer. xlviii.  
*his arm is broken, he hath magnified him-* 18, 25, 26.  
*self against the Lord; he shall wallow in*  
*his vomit, and he shall be in derision.*

(2.) *The Lord thy God will put these curses* Deut. xxx. 7.  
*on them that hate thee, and which persecu-*  
*ted thee.* Many persecutors have groaned  
 out warnings to others by their miserable  
*end*: This man hath outdone all, if we  
 consider

SERM. consider the long continuance, several kinds  
 XI. of barbarities, number of sufferers, perfidiousness, and inexcusableness of his persecution. Had he any cause to fear a people, as reconciled to slavery, and as near adoring him as any papists? Mere hatred to religion, with the perjured rape of *Spain*, is all that could excite him to deprive himself of so great a part of his strength, of which he may be sensible. Now God hath heard the cry of martyrs blood, the groans of tortur'd prisoners and impoverished exiles: *He is making inquisition for blood, and remembreth them*: He gives him blood to drink, blasteth his excellency, diminisheth his treasures, and breaks his power. I am convinced, the chief of God's controversy with him, is the violence used to his servants, and glorying over Protestantism as extinct. This gave us the great advantage for such surprizing *hasty* conquests: for *their persecutors thou threwest into the deep, as a stone into the mighty waters*. And this affords the surest hope we have, that his attempts to retrieve his affairs, shall still be frustrated; for, according to an old maxim, if persecuting *Haman begin to fall before the seed of the Jews, he shall not prevail, but fall before him*; at least, that God will pursue him till the *protestant* religion is re-established by some *means* or other. But why should I *suspect* the means, when such guilt, dishonour, and ingratitude to God, must

Psal. ix.  
12.

Nch. ix.  
11.

Est. vi. 13.



must lie on those who are signally employ-  
 ed to avenge his quarrel, if they neglect to  
 settle the reformed religion in *France*. \*Sure  
 they should never expect the appearances of  
 God on their side, after such a forfeiture.  
 As the jealous God animadverts the *French*  
 persecutor, he forgets not the blood of the  
 Protestants in *Bohemia*, which was shed by  
 the duke of *Bavaria's* ancestors, but is pull-  
 ing down that *house*, which was much ad-  
 vanced upon the ruins of that people, and  
 their king.

SERM.  
 XI.

3. *Thou shalt call, and the Lord will an-  
 swer; thou shalt cry, and he shall answer,* 9.

Iſa. lviii.

*Here am I.* He is a God hearing prayers,  
 and will in all ages be known by this title.

We experience it; and our victories are  
 greater blessings when procured this way.

Before the opening of this campaign, her  
 Majesty appointed a publick fast, which

was strictly observed by many; and so fol-  
 lowed by continued prayers, as presaged

the blessings conferred on us. Our God  
 soon returned an answer by the battle at

*Ramillies*; the earliness whereof did not a  
 little conduce to our many acquisitions this

year, and vindicate the early thanksgivings  
 of the last. Must not this experience excite

us to address God in every enterprize, as  
 that whereon the greatest stress should be

laid? *Because he has enclined his ear unto  
 me, I will call upon him as long as I live.* 2.

Pſal. cxvi.

And the consideration of his fulfilling these

SERM. three promises, may well teach us to say,

X. *I will praise thee with the psaltery, even thy truth, O God.* Nor upon a review of all the divine perfections aforementioned, have we less reason thankfully to proclaim,

Deut. v. *God hath shewed his greatness and his glory.*

24.

II. I PROCEED to the second general head, *viz. Be careful that your song be such as God requires, and will accept.* If it be otherwise, we rob him of his due, we provoke him to blast our mercies, and forbear to perfect what he so wonderfully begun. Therefore let our songs be,

I. *With true devotion.* To which end let your minds be filled with *higher* thoughts of God, even such as impress you with a reverence of his sacred name. Praise him also with your whole heart; for if your souls are not employed, and deeply affected, external worship cannot please him, who is an *infinite Spirit*. Be watchful that this blessed One have no *rival* in your praises; but let the honour you ascribe to the most victorious be, that God employed and distinguished them as his instruments. So apprehend God's all-sufficiency, as to desire a saving interest in him above all temporal good; and whilst you rejoice in great things of this sort, be most *joyful in your king*; *i. e.* in his perfections, as he is your God in covenant. In your songs *prefer* gospel-privileges, as what fix the *chief* value on our success,

Pf. cxlix.

25.

success, without which they had been in hazard. See that God be more endeared to you; and let love to him sweeten his praises, and his works too. May our chief glorying be, that God is still among us; that these *his wonderful works declare that he is near*. Without such exercises true devotion is wanting in our solemnities.

SERM.  
X.



Pfal. lxxv.  
1.

2. *With suitable resolves*. Our praises are weak when we celebrate God's appearances, if they engage us not to holy purposes, purposes *becoming* the glory display'd in these his wonderful works. Therefore neglect not to bring your hearts to such resolutions as these: I'll place my hope in none below this *almighty* God, and steadfastly adhere to him, for I have seen his wonders: However tempted, I'll not provoke his wrath, whose vengeance on the *greatest* is thus sure and *terrible*: I'll yield myself to the conduct and disposal of this infinite *wisdom*: I'll be satisfied with, and *keep* myself in the *love* of a God of this infinite *goodness*, and forbear *abusing it*: I'll believe his *word* with firmer assurance; and tho' promises and prophecies seem never so difficult, I'll expect their accomplishment: and when the church is in great danger, I will not despond, for God is *faithful*: Should his persecuting enemies prosper long, I will quietly wait, for he is *righteous*, and will plead *his cause* in the proper season: In all my wants and straits,

SERM. prayer shall be my exercise, for he is a  
 XI. *God bearing prayer*: What benefits I receive by *honouring* him, I'll value as pledges of his truth, and employ faithfully in his service. These are vows suitable to the perfections manifested by God in those excellent works, and proper to be made when we profess to exalt his praise; but vow all with a dependance on Christ.

3. *With a holy solicitude that you fail not to execute these becoming resolutions.* If you came prepared for this duty of thanksgiving, you thought of such returns, and designed here to *bind* your souls to the performance of them: therefore in the midst of your joy, be concerned lest your hearts betray you by any secret reserve, or hypocrisy, in these your solemn transactions with God. Performance must discover the sincerity of your engagements; and without that, God will esteem your vows and songs to be but mockery. Suitable actions are the truest praises in his account, who is our *Lord* as well as our Saviour; and if present impressions easily wear off, we had need be cautious; for if *we keep not the covenant of our God, we forget his wonders.*

Pf. lxxviii.  
10, 11.

4. *With a humble sense of God's rebukes, and your necessary dependance on him for all future success and blessings,* we have reason to *sing of judgment and of mercy.* It's true, mercy in our *publick* affairs does so exceed, that all private sufferers have cause to be greatly thankful; but yet intermixed re-  
 bukes.

Pfal. cii. 1.

bukes must not be despis'd; especially such as are spiritual, or general; for both are testimonies of God's displeasure, and will rise to a greater height, if we repent not of those sins which cause them. *Spiritual* judgments are the forest, but unregarded by the profane, tho' they suffer most in their effects. It's no just cause of raillery, but of deepest anguish and grief, that the *ministry* is become so ineffectual, that the very *office* is insulted; divine *influences* are so with-held, that whilst giddiness, vices, and confusion invade us, true wisdom, and the power of religion, decline; and this in a nation filled with light and wonderful deliverances: Nor ought we to slight such *outward rebukes* as the unhappy stop to our promising affairs in *Spain*, spoils and wastes in some of our *plantations*, merchants losses by *sea*, to the ruin of many trading families, and thereby a diminution of *trade*, which is the main support of *England*. Such calamities I call *general*, because they affect the body of the nation, in their consequences at least; and therefore we ought to be sensible of God's anger, and humbled for our offences, as aggravated by the signal benefits we receive. I mention not the delay of our *descent* by contrary winds, because it's yet unseen whether divine wisdom directed that *most* to the common hurt or benefit.

BE also sensible, that the wonders you now joyfully commemorate, cannot set you

SERM. above the need of God's *continued* help ; his presence is as necessary to perfect, as to begin our salvation ; and if he forsake us, our baffled enemy will succeed in *following* encounters, and our *desolations* become more severe by our past success. It depends on God's sentence what shall be the final issue of this war ; and should we abuse the astonishing victories of this year, we may justly expect the next to be filled with humbling disappointment. Therefore re-

Psal. ii. 11. *joice with trembling* ; I mean not what will sour or dispirit, but what excites you to approve yourselves to God, as *the Lord of hosts* ; and effectually to watch against whatever may provoke him to depart from us, or weaken our dependance on him. He is ignorant of the *corruption* of human nature, who sees not that glorious successes are frequently made *occasions* of pride, vain-glory, security in profane courses, trust in the arm of flesh, unjust usurpations, and oft times of persecution. And they are as little acquainted with the *methods* of providence, who expect not severe judgments upon such abuses. The due consideration of both these, may well awaken a humble fear, lest we provoke God to change those wonderful blessings, for which we now rejoice, into plagues as wonderful. But happy nation, if our present songs dispose to that holy temper, as shall fit us for a lasting happy peace, and for such repeated victories, till a peace of that kind is obtained.

A Thankf-



A

# Thanksgiving-SERMON

Occasioned by the

UNION of *England* and *Scotland*.

Preached *May* 1. 1707.

ISAIAH XXVI. 15.

*Thou hast increased the nation, O  
Lord! thou hast increased the  
nation; thou art glorified.*



SOME expound these words SERM.  
as a judgment against *Israel*, XII.  
others thus apply them to *A-*  
*syria*: But the context di-  
rects us to take them for a  
 *blessing* acknowledged by *Israel*, upon the  
overthrow of the enemies of the church.  
I would not overlook this circumstance,  
for it adds to our joy, that God is increas-  
ing us, when he is *reducing France*, as a  
punish-

SERM. punishment of its barbarous attempts against  
 XII. the *reformed* interest.

IN the text you find,

I. A BENEFIT acknowledged, *viz. the increase of the nation.* As the diminishing of a people is a judgment, and oft threatened, so the multiplying of them is a promised blessing: *They shall increase.* Hereby a nation becomes stronger, wealthier, and more safe. All agree, that land and hands are the strength of a kingdom. It's recorded for a benefit, *He increased his people greatly, and made them stronger than their enemies.*

Zech. ix.  
8.

Psal. cv.  
14.

2. THIS benefit is ascribed to God as the author: *Thou, O Lord, hast increased the nation.* It was his work, and effected by his wonderful providence. The words are repeated, not only to express the certainty, but also the *wonderfulness* of this occurrence: it expresseth an admiring sense of the greatness of the mercy in its own nature, and that the methods of its accomplishment were amazing indications of the *band of God*; q. d. Thou, Lord, thou only hast done this; and that in such a signal manner, that all must ascribe it to thyself *alone.*

3. THE glory redounding to God by this benefit: *Thou art glorified.* By which two things are signified.

1<sup>st</sup>, THE glory of God appeared in the *greatness* of this work. His perfections did  
 shine



shine forth, and manifested themselves in effecting a thing so kind and difficult. This work *did praise him*; and upon it men have cause to *speake of his power, to make known his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.* How glorious is he who bowed minds, over-ruled measures, and succeeded means, that all issue in so great and publick a mercy? This proclaims his greatness, wisdom, and goodness. When I consider the present dispensations towards France and our nation, God seems to exalt his praise in the accomplishment of those words in *Ezek. xvii. 24. All shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, and exalted the low tree; have dried up the green tree, and made the dry tree to flourish. I the Lord have spoken, and I have done it.*

2dly, THE nation, as thus increased, would *subserve* the glory of God, and contribute to his honour. Things in certain prospect are often expres'd as *present*; and therefore it's no violence to these words, to apply them to what was afterwards to be accomplished, as an effect of this work: *Thou art glorified*; i. e. this increase of us in its nature tends to thy glory. Thy interest will be strengthened, thy worship and service promoted, thy glorious purposes effected, and thy kingdom be more enlarged. For we who are thus increased, are a people devoted to thee, bear thy name,

and

SERM.  
XII.Psal. cxlv.  
10, 11, 12.

SERM. and are embark'd in thy interest, and there-  
 XII. fore thou shalt be served by all this accef-  
 ~~~~~ sion to our strength and number.

THIS day is appointed by her *Majesty* to celebrate a mercy of the same kind. Our nation is increased by the *union of England and Scotland*, into one kingdom; and we are come to offer our *thanksgivings* to God for this mercy, that he may now be glorified as the wonderful author of it; and to present our *supplications*, that this union may be improved to his *glory*, according to the advantages given by it for that purpose.

THAT I may contribute my utmost in serving this so excellent design, I shall apply to the present occasion the text as explain'd; which I shall reduce to these heads:

I. OUR nation is increased by a great accession to its number and territory.

II. THIS increase is by an incorporating *union*, which should make us one in affection.

III. THIS incorporating union is upon essential conditions freely stipulated by two distinct independent parties, and therefore to be kept inviolable.

IV. THE *union* thus made, is in itself a great mercy; for which we must be thankful.

V. THE glory of God appears by this *union*, as it's his wonderful work; and therefore we should exalt him.

VI. THIS

VI. THIS *union* has a tendency to glorify God hereafter, and ought to be so improved.

SERM.

XII.



I. *Our nation is increased by a great accession to its number and territory.* This is true of *Scotland*, as will appear in the next head, but principally it must be said of *England*, into which *Scotland* is engrafted, and brings with it multitudes of people, and a great country. The addition is most properly made to *England*, in as much as its representatives in parliament are far more numerous, and the legislature is chiefly in our hands. All our peers retain their right to vote; nor are our commons diminished in number, or the way of election, or voters in such elections alter'd. We have the same rights, only some former peculiarities are now more common. *England* indeed quits its *name*, as too narrow for its present enlargement; and as less honourable, because of its far later date, compared with *Britain*: But it still enjoys, under this engrafture, all the expressions of true greatness, and obtains the chief determination of those many added hands and territories, for the ends of government, and general advantage of *Britain*.

II. *The increase is by an incorporating union.* The ways by which nations are increased, are various: Some are increased by

SERM. by conquest; but, blessed be our God, *Scotland* doth not augment us in that way, tho' too many wickedly desired it. A nation is increased by receiving many foreigners to be *denizens*; these become subject to the nation's laws without any compact on its part, or reserve on theirs. But this reacheth not our case, as to the manner of uniting; tho' wise men think *England* a loser by denying a general naturalization. A nation may increase by its own *fæcundity*; this is often mentioned as a blessing: *Their children multipliedst thou as the stars of heaven.* But this is too slow to reach our instance; nor would it add to our territories. People may be made one in some respects, by a *fæderal union* among distinct governments; but that's only to some certain purposes, and easily alter'd: But ours is far more, yea, it exceeds that union between these two kingdoms, as the same Princess ruled in both. For tho' we were join'd in the same common head, and enjoy'd mutually the benefit of natives in sundry matters, yet we remained two distinct kingdoms, independent on each other. We were two people under distinct *parliaments*, unaccountable for their respective actings, tho' sometimes mutually helpful by a good correspondence.

Neh. ix.
23.

BUT by this *incorporation*, we are become *one* people, one and the *same* kingdom: We have the *same parliament* as well

as the same prince; and he, as to both nations, sustains but *one* person. We have the same allies, the same friends and foes. In war and peace we are one party, and alike concerned. This union is fitly expressed: *They shall be one in my hand; I will make them one nation, and one king shall be king to them all.* May God prevent whatever can make the next words less applicable and predicting: *And they shall be no more two nations, neither shall they be divided into two kingdoms any more at all.*

SERM.
XII.

Ezek.
xxxvii. 19,
22.

THE union being thus identifying, *Scotland* may truly glory in the increase of its numbers; for being thus incorporated, they have just reason to say, We are a people more numerous, rich, and mighty: All that was call'd *England's*, is ours for our common defence, strength, renown, and counsel: It's become as our native country, and we are instated in its advantages, with no distinction from that people. We were one in *Japhet*, the promise to whom we both partake of, in being christians. We are one body by compact; either of which is more than being one originally in *Gathel*.

Inf. *How becoming and necessary is an union of hearts, with an impartial concern for each others welfare?*

THE nature of the union calls for this, to avoid the brand of *hypocrites*; the good purposes to be subserved by it, makes this temper

SERM. temper necessary, unless we'll be esteemed
 XII. such *fools* as to defeat them; the vile things
 ~~~~~ which are most likely to divide us, and excite  
 envy, are base *selfishness*, and horrid *bigotry*. But what pretension can any make to prudence or christianity, who dare indulge either of these evils, to the reproach of what they call union, and to the danger of what should be cultivated as such? I would call that envious selfishness only foolish, if it were not more than *devilish*; for you grudge the weal of a fellow-member, and fret at the advantage of your own country, seeing the wealth and honour of every single person, contributes to make *Britain* more rich and honourable; and every good-natur'd subject will find his account in the *common* good, while the envious, to his own damage, quarrels with God's beneficence, and his brother's right. As for *bigotry*, I have already called it *horrid*, because of its unreasonable grounds, and destructive effects. But if this can alienate the minds of our united nation, it must be an *irreligious* heat for what none but knaves or ideots will call *religion*. We are the *same* in the essentials of christianity, and of the protestant religion too. Men shall find that these contain all that can make them religious in *God's* account: When both the *established* national churches contain the grounds of all true christian love, other regards or dislikes must proceed

proceed from carnal interest, or base inclinations. If God will form mens spirits to answer the present providence, this incorporating union will put an end to prejudices, dispose to mutual forbearance, and inspire all with such generous and wise sentiments, as to regard the interests of *others*, as what the common weal is concerned in. We shall manage our selves worthy of this union, if we treat one another as *members* of the same body, *fellow-citizens* of the same commonwealth and country. Protestants greatly mistake the *popish* strength, if we think we are now become too considerable to pray for that blessing: *Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim; but they shall fly upon the shoulders of the Philistines, they shall spoil them of the east together.* Isa. xi. 13, 14

III. THIS incorporating union is *upon essential conditions, freely stipulated by two distinct independent parties*, and therefore to be kept inviolable. It's not my province to dispute how far the representatives of a people are empower'd to make some change in a constitution for an apparently common good; and thereby of procuring advantages so far beyond what they recede from, that the general consent of the people, must, after a little experience, follow. The matter of nearest consequence is plain. Here's

SERM. an original fundamental contract between  
 XII. the two nations, upon which they coalesce:

Both recede from some things, reserve some things, and grant some things, as *conditions* of the union. *England* and *Scotland* were *independent kingdoms*, and absolutely free to treat. No claim is pretended, upon which consent on either side should be forced to the overtures made; *each* was at liberty to accept or refuse, as they found themselves inclined by advantages or disadvantages.

THE *Queen* and the parliament of *England*, on the one part; and the *Queen* and the parliament of *Scotland*, on the other part, (for her Majesty sustained *two persons*) solemnly restipulate the conditions of the union for themselves, and their respective people. These conditions *de jure* are *inviolable*, and neither federating party has power over the other, to abate or alter them; yea, upon *reducing* the parliament of *Scotland*, which consisted of their *own Queen*, and the *full* representatives of that nation, the conditions engaged to them are not alterable by the parliament of *Great Britain*, without dissolving the union *found* thereon. For as to their possessing of the stipulated benefits, their *sixty-one* reserved members are guarantees, to see the conditions executed, and no way authorized to alter them. And the *English part* of the parliament has no more power over  
*Scotland,*



*Scotland*, than before the union, except on supposition, that those *conditions* are observed. *Scotland* may claim performance, or re-assume its constitution, in bar to the *English part* of the parliament, because it has no authority over them, but what was granted on the conditions of the contract; and the reason why their reserved *sixty-one* members have no power to alter those conditions, is this, They have no *right* to represent *Scotland*, or rule it in any thing, but by that contract wherein those conditions are established, *as such*, by the antient, supreme, entire legislative power of that kingdom, as well as by *England*. I grant, that saving those conditions, all that was *Scotland*, is subject to the *Queen* and parliament of *Great-Britain*. But none can imagine, that the *Queen* of *Scotland* put off that person, (for it's all one as if another Princess, distinct from her Majesty, had been queen) and about three hundred *lords and commons* had excluded themselves from a *stated* share in the legislature, on stipulated terms; and yet the *English* parliament, with *sixty-one* members from *Scotland*, shall alter those terms, without any legal *consent* of the former, yea, expressly *against* their consent, and the most solemn *precautions*. The case had greatly differed, if the *whole* parliament of *Scotland* had been continued, and joined to our *English* parliament: for if those by themselves, or not

SERM.  
XII.

SERM. *over-voted* by the *English*, had made alterations, the *Scots* subjects must acquiesce, notwithstanding the words, *fundamental* and *unalterable*; for the legislature had remained *entire*, and in this contract had not covenanted with their own subjects, but only *for* them.

INF. *They who repine at this union, from a concern for the safety of the church of Scotland, are highly blameable, unless they had ground for the hardest thoughts of the justice, truth, and wisdom of England.*

THAT church has as great security as man can give. Unjust *force* may violate the most sacred bonds; but without this, that constitution is out of danger; neither is there *equal* probability of violence, as in former times: For a *British* parliament must renounce the *revolution principle*, before they can connive at it. They must *expose the foundation* of all our civil rights, whenever they encourage it. Will any future prince, claiming by the *Act of Succession*, trample on subjects loyal from *principles*, only to enable *Jacobites* to dethrone him; or, for the gratifying of such, provoke so great a body, who are not his subjects if this contract is dissolved? If he should design *arbitrary government*, and restore prelates for the sake of their *votes* in the house of lords, can any man think, that *Scots* prelates will be admitted to vote  
in

in a *British* parliament, where so very few SERM.  
of their noble *peers* are allowed to sit? Or XI.  
what other service can be thought of, which  
shall compensate the dangerous effects of  
restoring prelacy, against the genius of that  
people, and the securities given them?  
Should some of their nobility and gentry  
fret under the restraints of *discipline*, or  
be *bribed* by secular advantages; yet a  
great number will not so despise their own  
*estates*, as to be pleased to find their *lands*  
again wasted, and tenants destroy'd, by  
struggles about *episcopacy*, and by the bar-  
barous insolencies which attended it here-  
tofore.

AGAIN; few true *Protestants* are such  
bigots, as to disregard the *sacredness* of a  
solemn treaty, or for disputable things, to  
set mens consciences free to defend their  
rights, when they know such as design a  
*popish* king, will excite them to it, after  
others in the *same* design had prompted  
governours to irritate them by the viola-  
tion of those rights.

THESE considerations may quiet well-  
meaning people, and guard them against  
those tormenting fears, which such as  
would impose on them studiously create.  
If the *Scottish* church keep on good terms  
with God, by abiding faithful, and exer-  
cise *due* wisdom and moderation towards  
all, the change of their constitution is in  
no great danger to be attempted; and if it

SERM. should, he who loveth justice, and abhors perfidiousness, *is judge of the whole earth.*

Pfal. xi. 5,

7.  
Ezek. xvii.  
16, 18.

IV. *The union thus made, is in itself a great mercy, for which 'tis our duty to be thankful.* General and great blessings require our thanks, tho' others should abuse them to cursed purposes. This union is in itself a blessing, both to *England* and *Scotland* jointly; 'tis so to each of them severally, and it has a far more general aspect.

I. IT'S a mercy to both lands *jointly*. Peace is hereby made our common and lasting blessing. Peace between two nations, who for ages wasted one another: *Rivers* of blood have been spilt in their wars, and such wars commenced on small occasions, and were multiplied among them by their *vicinity*. He that reads the histories of both nations, shall find too much of this in the time of the *Britains*, *Saxons*, *Danes*, and after the *Normans* possess'd our country. What fierce struggles! by innumerable battles and bloody fights, they still remained instruments of mutual misery and desolation. A review of those *calamities* must heighten our praises to the Almighty for this union. How vast are the *reaches* of providence, which laid the first stone of it, when king *Henry* the VIIth matched the *elder* daughter to *Scotland*, rather than *France*? This grew up into a  
temple

temple of peace, when King *James* the Ist SERM.  
 succeeded to the *English* crown, as heir by XII.  
 that marriage; but now is the *top-stone* laid  
 after no small *shake*, and when we were in  
 danger of the return of former mischief.  
 Who can overlook the *season* of this mercy?  
 Both kingdoms had lately an aspect, threat-  
 ning war upon the first occasion: *Scotland*  
 too loudly *prepared* for it, and *England*  
 was not too shy or backward. The wisest  
 could see no *medium* between wars and  
 union, and the last scarce possible to be  
 accomplished; yet *then* does God ap-  
 pear and grants us this amazing favour.  
 He prevents the *fatal* separation of the  
 kingdoms; he stops the war which had  
 brought with it inconceivable miseries, who-  
 ever obtain'd the victory: yea, above this,  
 he more nearly unites them, and makes  
 them incapable of future wars, unless the  
 one or the other becomes *infatuated*.

THE *protestant religion* (our common  
 concern) receives by this union an addition  
 of strength; and the *succession* of the crown,  
 as by law established in *England*, is secured  
 in all her Majesty's dominions, and received  
 into *Scotland* without those *fetters* on the  
 prince, which are inconsistent with a *mo-  
 narchy* as happily limited as the *English*  
 liberties require.

BOTH nations are safer from the at-  
 tempts of *foreign enemies*, and united *Brit-  
 tain* is greater in strength, and influence

SERM. abroad, by its *unsuspected* confidence in it-  
 XII. self. The *civil government, and the liber-*  
 ties of the *subjects*, find in this union a  
 more effectual preservative. *England* has  
 bid fair towards enslaving *Scotland*, in several  
 former reigns, and very effectually *accomplished*  
 it before the end of king *James* the last, even  
 to military execution, without any legal process.  
*Scotland*, when enslaved, was fitted to bring us  
 into the same bondage (tho' formerly saved by  
 them) two and twenty thousand soldiers were  
 at once appointed to march to what places the  
 king directed, *i. e.* to *England*, whose liberties  
 were doomed to the like insults, by princes  
 and *preachers* too, and prevented by a mere  
 series of miracles. The like danger must  
 return, whenever an *aspiring* prince govern'd  
 us as *separate* kingdoms. Oh! what thanks  
 are due to our God, that hereafter we must  
 keep and lose our civil rights, as *one* body,  
 and not be play'd as tools of slavery against  
 each other. With the liberty of the subject,  
 the *legal rights of the monarchs* are better  
 secured against republican *whims* (no unfit  
 character as *Britain is circumstantiated*) and  
 their *persons* more strongly defended against  
 all enemies, whilst they *destroy* not the legal  
 constitution: For its past doubt with all,  
 except the ignorant and malicious, that the  
 zeal of a *Scotch Presbyterian* for our  
*regulated monarchy*, is equal to that of the  
 most prelati- cal:

prelatical. Finally, this union enlarging the body by a greater number of *godly* persons, we may hope, from their joint prayers, to reap many national blessings. Further marks of the divine presence may be expected in *Britain united*, if not prevented by future *backslidings*. These, these are to be feared; nothing is so certain to make this signal blessing to issue in a *judgment* upon the whole island.

SERM.

XII.



2. THE union is a mercy to each nation *severally*. *England* has no reason to *despise* it, for it shuts a *back door*, at which foreigners enter'd to distress this land. Such oft prevailed also with the *Scots*, to divert us from great enterprizes abroad, and at other times forced us to *return* to defend ourselves, when our conquests were almost perfected. How often has *France*, by a *Scottish* invasion, prevented our triumphs, and at last become capable, not only to *recover* what she had lost to us, but to *wrest* from us the large provinces to which we had the justest title. This union in former ages, had prevented the *French* usurpation, and kept her monarchs innocent, who, for want of it, have been so terrible to *Europe*.

By this union our *dominions* are enlarged; and tho' *Scotland* share in the benefit, yet its strength is as an *appendage* to *England*; for as we have that great *superiority* in parliament, the disposal of men and treasure will be chiefly in our hands, and our

SERM. influence proportionable. *England* is ag-  
 XII. grandized by the ingrafture of a nation, so  
 famous for warriors and men of sense; and,  
 which is more, a people noted among fo-  
 reign churches, for *purity* of religion, emi-  
 nent for glorious *martyrs*, and for men en-  
 joying the most *intimate* communion with  
 God, and more of a *prophetick* spirit, than  
 is known elsewhere in these later ages.

*Scotland* is not without its benefit, and  
 will partake of the *fatness* of that tree in-  
 to which it is engrafted. It enjoys a free-  
 dom of trade in our *plantations*, a prospect  
 of *improving* the product of art and nature,  
 and *equal* right to all employs which had  
 been less a snare to the conscientious, and  
 safer to the church, had they exempted  
 themselves from that engine of profaneness,  
 the *sacramental test*; to which I give this  
 hard title, because multitudes owning their  
*unfitness*, yet rather than miss an employ,  
 will venture on the danger of receiving it.  
 Some I fear take it *against* their consci-  
 ences; and the greatest sticklers for it, de-  
 sign that the *profaneest* shall enjoy the places,  
 rather than men of *tender* consciences shall  
 be admitted. Moreover, *Scotland* is guarded  
 against some *intestine* divisions; the cloud  
 which hung over them about the *succession*  
 is scatter'd, and their *populace* hope to  
 share in the *English* liberties.

3. THIS mercy extends beyond this  
 island of *Great Britain*. *Ireland* is safer  
 from



from the bloody assaults of the popish natives. Our protestant brethren in remoter parts, will find us more able to defend them against papal combinations, and to relieve them from violence: Oh, may *France* meet with the first experiment! I hope practical godliness will gain among our plantations, and whatever greater things providence may design by his people, for the ruin of *antichrist*. Unity among the reformed, or spreading his gospel in the world, *Britain*, as united, is more fitted to subserve.

*Exhort.* BE thankful and rejoice with suitable apprehensions of this mercy. They are unfit to estimate blessings, who despise this as *small*; they are grossly ignorant, or enemies to their country and the protestant religion, who fret at it as *calamitous*. If you expound *Isa. ix. 3.* according to our translation, you'll find in other ages the envious resentments of such common blessings: *Thou hast multiplied the nation, and not encreas'd the joy.* Let us, by a cheerful gratitude, acquit ourselves from such base returns to God, to the Queen, and the instruments who contributed to it from honest motives. The good and great uses which it naturally tends to serve, demand our present joy, whatever ill purposes some men may pervert it to, and however base the springs of their activity have been.

SERM.

XII.




V. *God's glory appears in this union as his wonderful work, for which he is to be exalted.* The desirableness of it seemingly engaged many princes on this attempt, tho' I doubt it lay at the heart of very few before king *William* (a prince to whom these lands are indebted for the foundation of all that's valuable.) The effecting thereof God reserved for her *Majesty*, with other marks of his peculiar favour: But this enterprize was attended with too great difficulties to be removed by human might and wisdom. Many were the persons concerned, when *few* had the publick advantage so near them as their own. Separate interests, prejudices, and opposite parties, would omit no contrivance, either to baffle or to spoil it for continuance. Emulation, pride, jealousy, wrath, revenge, covetousness, and other lusts, in such a transaction, would be active. And the *weak* (tho' honestly minded) must entertain with some disorder a change so great and unexperienced; but divine providence breaks thro' all impediments, and serves its purposes by mens virtues and vices too. God restrained some men, and spirited others, and at last brought a sufficient number (from very different ends) to accomplish this great affair.

*Inf.* How *exalted* must God be in all our thoughts! Adoring apprehensions become

come this instance of his glory. Let us, with holy reverence, admire him as *the God of the spirits of all flesh; the governor among the nations. He sets the bounds of the people; and stills their tumults.* He is *wise* in counsel, and can dispose that to be the fittest means to effect the greatest affair, which to man appears the chiefest obstacle. What an hostile aspect had the *Scots Act of security*, yet that's the most apparent cause of this union. Sanctify him in your hearts, who *enlargeth the nations, and straightens them again.*

SERM.

XII.


 Numb.

xvi. 22.

Pfal. xxii.

28.

Deut.

xxxii. 8.

Pfal. lxxv.

7.

Job xii.

23.

VI. *This union has a tendency to glorify God hereafter, and ought to be so improved.* This affair is too great to fail of important consequences. God hereby affords great means to be improved for his glory, in a general reformation, and the increase of the power of religion. If these are neglected, he can soon dissolve our bonds. If this union be abused to wicked ends, he will vindicate his honour, by sending an *evil spirit* to divide the nation, *Judges ix. 23.* and make us irreconcilably pursue the destruction of each other.

*Inf.* WE see what *Britain* should pray for, and chiefly endeavour, *viz.* that *God be glorified by the use made of this union.* Let him be glorified as a *God of love*, by union in affection, notwithstanding tolerable differences in modes and sentiments. If  
this

SERM. this fail, divided exasperated hearts will  
 XII. render an external union useleſs and dan-  
 gerous. *Glorify God as a God of truth and*  
*justice*, by keeping covenant. A breach of  
 a treaty thus ſolemn, will brand the au-  
 thors for perfidiouſneſs, and bring down  
 the puniſhment of this, and whatever of  
 this kind is unrepented of.

GLORIFY God by *promoting his intereſt*.  
 This is the way to ſecure his ſpecial pre-  
 ſence, which is a kingdom's ſhield and  
 glory; whereas, if he depart, our united  
 ſtrength will render us neither more ſafe,  
 nor more conſiderable. The intereſt of  
 God among his churches, conſiſts in *purity*  
 of doctrine, worſhip, diſcipline, and con-  
 verſation. No man is a proteſtant, who  
 denies that the purity of each of theſe is in  
 proportion to its conformity to the rule of  
 the goſpel; for that's one of the *chief* prin-  
 ciples by which we are diſtinguiſhed from  
 Papiſts. If this intereſt of God be pro-  
 ſtituted or neglected, the glorifying him  
 is an *hypocritical* pretence, and we may  
 juſtly look to be abandoned by him after  
 all his wonders.

HAPPY *Britain*, as this purity increa-  
 ſeth: Miſery approacheth, as this abates.  
 What a plague will that part of the na-  
 tion be to the other! which ſhall infect it  
 by errors in doctrine, ſuperſtition in wor-  
 ſhip, remiſſneſs in diſcipline, or ſcandalous  
 offences in converſation? What a bleſſing  
 ſhall

shall that part be! which most succeeds in rendering the other more sound in the faith, and more conformable to the gospel rule in worship, discipline, and holiness of life. Herein the nation will find the ballance of its *greatest* loss or gain by this union.

SERM.  
XII.

I KNOW the corruption of human nature favoureth the worst attempts, and makes declensions from the rule to be far more probable. This will strongly plead for errors, pompous formality, and freedom from the yoke of Christ. When the factors for these are great and active; when the proposed bribes are honour, estates, and power; then to be determined by the naked authority of Christ, requires divine assistance; for flesh and blood will command indulgence beyond the utmost opposition of human power.

*Exhort.* THEREFORE pray earnestly for God's assistance, that you may be faithful and watchful in the defence and advancement of *the kingdom of his Son*. There's need of *prayer*, because discouragements will exceed your own power; though not the grace of Christ, which is all-sufficient. *Watchful* attention is necessary, that all opportunities of service may be taken, temptations to backslidings soon discerned, and apostasy may not *gradually* prevail, thro' a neglect of its first beginnings. A forward *activeness* for Christ is contained in our *baptismal* vow and dedication: The  
bonds

SERM. bonds are repeated in every approach to the  
 XII. Lord's table. This begun the *reformation*,  
 and continued it against those violent at-  
 tempts which threatned the extirpation of  
 it in most places. As the *spirit* of the  
 reformers declines (which too sadly appears  
 in all the churches) the enemies of true re-  
 ligion may hope to prevent its descending  
 to posterity, notwithstanding all God's ap-  
 pearance for it hitherto. *Great Britain*  
 will soon become little and miserable, if  
 besides those who sit down with their get-  
 tings by this union, many others become  
 so secure by it, as to grow indifferent about  
 the concern of Christ, as head of the  
 church.

WHEN any are tempted to this *Laodi-  
 cean* frame, they have reason to consider,  
 that satan and his agents will be always  
 restless to undermine religion, as their ab-  
 horrence. The Lord Jesus has committed  
 his interests as a trust to his people in every  
 age, both for trial of their *fidelity*, and to  
 put on them the *honour* of serving his glo-  
 rious designs in this world; yea, also to  
 make them meet for an eternal crown,  
 when he will be ashamed of every apos-  
 tate, and be a terror to them, as objects of  
 his sorest indignation. Must it not also  
 occur to the thoughts of many, if they  
 prove false to their redeemer, How can  
 we behold the faces of our faithful and  
 zealous *ancestors*? How can we account  
 to



to our own miserable *posterity*, whom we sink into blindness and irreligion, by not transmitting to them those advantages for salvation which we received? Moreover, God is still able, by external judgments, to mark those families who violate his bonds, and account his interest too despicable or dangerous for their concern. May these considerations awaken a zeal for the glorifying of God in such instances as he will account so, from his devoted servants.---- May this zeal be managed regularly, according to mens stations, under the direction of God's laws, and of man's too, as far as they are subordinate. May this zeal extend to all wherein the kingdom of our Redeemer consists, and not to trifles or things tolerable. This is the zeal I must cherish by a faithful warning, or be altogether silent.









## *Christian Sincerity:*

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### A FUNERAL-SERMON,

Occasioned by the DEATH of the

Rev. Mr. *Thomas Doolittle*, M. A.

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Preached *June 1. 1707.*

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2 C O R. i. 12.

*For our rejoicing is this, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in this world.*



WE are met to improve the death of your excellent *pastor*. You have often, heretofore, pray'd with success for his recovery, and praised God for it; but at last the *vessel* is broken, that contained the precious *treasure*, by which

SERM. XIII.

SERM. you were enriched for many years. I  
 XIII. could think of no subject more for your  
 benefit, than what this text presents, and  
 which is enforced by his example who was  
 your guide.

St. Paul, in these words, first acquaints  
 the *Corinthians* what his comfort was,  
 ver. 9. *when under the sentence of death, and in  
 the repeated dangers which he had escap'd,  
 and hoped to be delivered from, whilst his  
 life was necessary to the church; not that  
 he expected or desired to be always deliver-*  
 ed, for he *longed to be dissolved, and be with*  
 ver. 10. *Christ, as far better for himself.* What  
 Phil. i. had encouraged him under foreseen dan-  
 23. ger, and gave him hope of deliverance till  
 his work was *finished*, afforded him a tri-  
 umph over death, when he afterwards be-  
 held it unavoidable and nigh: *I have*  
 2 Tim. iv. *fought a good fight, I have finished my*  
 7, 8. *course, and kept the faith; henceforth there  
 is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.*  
 ver. 6. Thus he rejoiced when he tells you, *I  
 am ready to be offered, &c.*

2dly, HERE he assigns also a reason why  
 ver. 10. the saints ought to *thank* God for his pro-  
 longed life, and continue to pray for it.  
 For tho' their concern for him did not af-  
 ford him that great joy, which he recei-  
 ved from the testimony of his conscience;  
 yet being he was a person so upright and  
 useful, and had his conscience testifying it,  
 even in sight of death, and rejoiced in that  
 testimony

testimony above all worldly advantages; his life must needs be valuable, and his death be a loss fit to affect the church, and to be matter of sorrow, if not for a while prevented by their supplications. He further hints, that prayers for such a man were likely to be *accepted*, yea, and be successful for the time his ministry was designed for use.

I MIGHT improve this last head to excite people to *pray* for faithful ministers when their lives are in hazard, whether by persecutors, diseases, or otherwise; and to be as willing to offer hearty *thanksgivings to God*, when he preserves their lives. Nor were it improper to call ministers to be so useful and faithful, that people may be inclined to pray for them, and that with hope of success. But I proceed to the *text*, where St. *Paul*, speaking of himself, tho' in the plural number, gives us,

I. THE *character* of every true christian in his station, and more especially in that of the ministry.

II. THE way by which this becomes evident to one's self; this is by *the testimony of his own conscience*, especially when awaken'd by a serious prospect of *death*.

III. THE *joy* this, when evidenced, affords in the nearest prospect of death and dangers. This is *his rejoicing*.

SERM. I. *The character of every true christian*  
 XIII. *in his station, and more especially in that of*  
 ~~~~~ *the ministry.* What the apostle mentions  
 of himself, as witnessed by his conscience,
 is *essential* to all true and real christians in
 their respective places; and *profess'd* by all
 such, as well as by them who are dispensers
 of the gospel. But the sphere of a mi-
 nister's motion being larger, and more
 difficult, his fidelity is more tried; his
 work, temptations, opportunities, and dan-
 gers are far greater; he has not only the
 common duties of a *private* christian to
 discharge, but those also which are proper
 to his *office*. Therefore to have acquitted
 himself faithfully therein, is matter of
 greater joy, and this from the greater ha-
 zard of unfaithfulness, as well as from
 the hope of higher rewards, if his trust
 be uprightly discharged.

S E C T. I.

1st Obs. *To have a conversation in this world, not by fleshly wisdom, but in simplicity, godly sincerity, and by the grace of God, is the property of every real christian and godly minister.*

MY principal work under this head, will be to explain the character in the several parts of it. The *doctrine* expresseth the *necessity* of it, when I call it the property of every true christian; for this imports,
 he

he is not a real, but only a *nominal* christian, to whom it belongs not. That this truth needs explication, the behaviour of *most*, who wear a christian name, may convince you; for surely they have very *false* notions of it, or they could not so generally pretend to the christian *hope*, when so few lead this conversation; yea, when *most* *despise* it as a mean thing, and visibly *contradict* it by falshood, tricking, carnal selfishness, and the prostitution of sacred things to vile purposes, as openly as if they scorn'd a disguise, after any vile turn is served. A *heathen* would abhor that juggling and insincerity which is so commonly practised, as to *cease* to be a wonder. This evil I would detect and expose, by explaining a true christian conversation in *opposition* thereto; and shall treat of it, as what is the character of *every* christian as such; because it may be more extensively beneficial, and may be easily improved by *ministers* in what's peculiar to them: for they can be no *godly* ministers, who are not real christians; and if they are real christians, their sincerity will extend to the faithful discharge of their *special office*. The character to be insisted on, does not only oppose that of the *openly* profane, but the several excellencies of it far exceed what *mere nominal* christians do practise, or arrive at, yea, are opposite thereto as *contraries*. And I shall chuse to distinguish faithful believers

SERM. from *hypocrites*, rather than from men notoriously *wicked*, by the several parts of the character, which are four; one negative, and three positive.

1. THE true christian's conversation is not by fleshly wisdom.

2. HIS conversation is in simplicity and godly sincerity.

3. THE scope and tenor of his conversation in this world is so.

4. ALL this is by the grace of God.

I. *The true christian's conversation is not by fleshly wisdom.*

OTHER negatives are *implied* in the text, as double-mindedness, insincerity, partiality, inconstancy, morality *merely* natural; but he mentions only this of *fleshly wisdom*, because this is so reputable with the world, this is so commonly manifested, this includes much of the others, and is the most likely and general ground of all base hypocritical practices.

HYPOCRITES walk by fleshly wisdom, whatever pretence they make to the *Spirit*: This forms their temper, fixeth their ends, and directs their course and methods: this, and not *spiritual* wisdom; this, and not the *word* of God, is their light and rule. But the faithful christian walks not by fleshly wisdom, nay; he acteth contrary to it.

(1.) HE walks not *by* fleshly wisdom: He pursues not that interest as his *chief* good.

good, which the wisdom of the flesh prefers; nor guides his practice by the maxims of carnal politicks, however celebrated; he'll not do evil, that good may come of it; he gives honour to the great, but they shall not make his *creed*, nor direct his conscience; he wisheth well to the multitude, but runs not with them to do evil; he is diligent for a subsistence, but dares not sell his soul by wicked courses to gain the world; he *consults not flesh and blood*, whether he must perform his duty; no, nor suffers flesh to determine what is his duty. God's statutes are *set before him*, as the rule by which he is resolved to act, and justly, with *Paul*, accounts such injurious, who think of him *as if he walked according to the flesh*.

SERM.
XIII.

Rom. iii.
8.

Acts iv.
19.

Gal. i. 6.

Psal. xviii.
22.

2Cor. x. 2.

(2.) THE *real christian's* actings are contrary to the wisdom of the flesh.

THE world brands him for a *fool*, because he sacrificeth his secular interests to his fidelity to Christ, and postpones them to his heavenly hopes in his solicitous cares and labours. He, with *Moses*, *chooseth rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin; and esteems the reproaches of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt*. The wisdom of the flesh directs him to believe no more than he can *comprehend* by reason, but he will believe what God has revealed by *the word*, though *above his comprehension*.

Heb. xi.
25, 26.

Col. ii. 2.

SFERM. XIII. That wisdom *invents* modes of worship which are plausible and pompous, but he will abide by *Christ's institutions*, however plain or mean they appear to flesh: That wisdom decries all as *unnecessary* to religion, which exposeth to great labour, charge, or danger; but he abhors the maxims, which would abate the utmost pains, expence, or affliction, that attends the *power* of vital religion, which he knows to be contrary to the indulging of the flesh. The wisdom this good man is governed by, is of another sort, and repugnant to that of the flesh; even that which *is from above*, and described *James i. 8.* Under the conduct thereof, he despiseth the wisdom of the flesh, as *sensual* and *devilish*, yea, as what he is sure will be found at last to be consummate *folly*,

2. *The conversation of the true christian is in simplicity and godly sincerity.*

THIS part is most directly opposite to *hypocrisy*; and the life and frame of the false christian is the plain reverse of it in every particular; he is *double-minded* as to
 JAM. i. 8. God and man; he has a *heart that is double*, for he serves ambitious, covetous, voluptuous purposes, under spiritual pretences, and most friendly assurances. Instead of simplicity, which he abhors, he is doubling and deceitful. Dissimulation he is clothed with, sincerity he is a stranger to. Hold his *best* actions to the *sun*, and they will

will appear grossly faulty, tho' now under SERM. disguise; his *prayers* are without faith and XIII. fervour; his *charitable* works are without love. Were all secrets manifest, as they will be in the day of judgment, the hypocrite would be hateful to all; and the more so, for his *cloak* of godliness. How full of allow'd enmity, self-confidence, envy, pride, atheistical thoughts, aversion to duty, covetousness, are these painted *sepulchres*, as Christ Mat. xxiii. calls them. He who will judge the *secrets* 27. of men, can charge them with lying, cheating, mocking at sin, quarrelling with providence, contempt of serious religion, and gratifying one lust or other. Sometimes they are *perceived* by others to be in the Acts viii. gall of bitterness, and bonds of iniquity, to 21. which they contribute by their profane expressions of divine things, carnal compliances when tempted, and their final apostasy when tried by a great bribe, or severe persecution. But the conversation of a sound believer is,

(1.) *In simplicity*: ἐν ἀπλότητι; what he does is in *singleness of heart*; he is what he Eph. vi. 5. seems, he meaneth what he saith, his designs are honest, *his eye is single*, he may Luke xi. be trusted, for he will not deceive. He is 34. as *Jacob, a plain man*; he intends to be Gen. xxv. 27. what he professeth, and to do what he engageth to God and man; he is a *Nathanael, an Israelite indeed, in whom there is no guile* allowed; he instanceth simplicity, in

SERM. in his *chief end*, which is the glory of God ;
 XIII. in his *governing rule*, which is the alone
 word of God ; and in not having *regard to*
 any *iniquity in his heart*. He is candid and
 open, abhorring all unjust reservations and
 equivocations, when his prudence is most
 fully exercised. His charity is apt to make
 him too credulous, for he judging by him-
 self, hopeth the best of all men.

(2.) *In sincerity*. This word is of near
 alliance with the former : ἐν εὐακρίνεια ; in its
 derivation it signifies a thing that will bear
 the light of the sun-beams when examin'd,
 and not prove counterfeited or unvaluable :

1 Cor. v. 8. Its joined with truth : *Let us keep the feast*
with the unleavened bread of sincerity and
truth. We are instructed by this word,
 that the conversation of a *true* christian is
 so real, so just, so well-order'd, as will bear
 the search, and be approved upon strict ex-
 amination ; whence, in *gospel* acceptation,
 the upright man is called a *perfect man*.

Pf. xxxvii. His *mind is pure*, his graces are not coun-
 7. terfeits, but *realities*. He believes with the
 Job i. 1. *heart*, with a faith *unfeigned* ; he loves God
 1 Pet. iii. and Christ, and his brethren, in *truth* and
 1. in *deed*. There is that of *reality* in his
 Rom. x. 9. graces and obedience, as answers the *gospel*
 2 Tim. i. 5. rule, whereby it fixeth the *condition* of its
 1 John iii. saving benefits, though they reach not the
 18. extent of what is his duty by the *precepts*
 of the gospel.

THIS

THIS christian is so upright, that he desires God to search his inwards; he appeals to God as to the way he takes; O Lord, thou knowest. As he approves himself chiefly to God in what he undertakes, so, in many cases, he is forced, and may say, with St. Paul, God is my witness.

SERM. XIII.
Pf. cxxxix. 23.
Jer. xv. 15. 16.
1 Thest. ii. 5.

THE best man indeed is very short of legal perfection; were God strict to mark iniquities, and judged us by the law of works, no man could stand at the bar before him, nor be justified in any performance or attainment; his person, his best actions, and most improved graces, need forgiveness for their imperfections, and the merits of Christ to make them acceptable. He is sincere in his humble acknowledgments of this; his heart is truly broken in the sense of his guilt and many defects; he really admires the riches of grace, and from his soul esteems and relisheth spiritual blessings, as most agreeable to his desires, wants, and inclinations. Sincerity is that which he mindeth, as that without which all his seeming graces are nullities, and greatest performances vain. This the weakest faint is not without, for his prevailing judgment and choice are for God, as his chief end; for Christ, as his only Saviour; for heaven and covenant-blessings, as his chief good; and for gospel obedience and holiness, as the perfection of his nature, and the way to possess eternal blessings.

Pf. cxxx.

3.

SERM. HIS *principal* regards to God in his ac-
 XIII. tions, do further instance this sincerity; for
 he is awed by the *eye of God* when alone,
 as if observed by a multitude; as he makes
 conscience of his *secret* actions, yea, of his
 very *thoughts* as well as of publick actions,
 he approves himself to God, and is *satis-*
fied with his approbation wherein he is
 censured by men; and his principal care is
 to *please God*, whether men be pleased or
 no.

(3.) THIS simplicity and sincerity is *godly*;
 τὴν θεῶν; the simplicity and sincerity of *God*.
 If you take it for an *hebraism* (which this
 apostle often useth) it notes the *eminency*
 and excellency, as well as the reality of
 these; but if you take it in the common
 sense, it notes an integrity, of which God
 is the exemplar, appointer, author, and ap-
 prover. The christian, in his measure, is
 conformable to God, who is good and up-
 right. His perfect holiness, truth, righte-
 ousness, and goodness, include what is sim-
 plicity and sincerity in men. The blessed
 God hath commanded this, and by his
 Spirit creates it in the elect. The *new heart*
 which he gives, is a *clean* and honest mind,
 whence the power of upright ends, and an
 inclination to honest methods, proceed.
 Sincerity is what God highly *approves*;
 he loveth it as his own image, and there-
 by distinguisheth his peculiar servants in or-
 der to future rewards: *Gladness is sown*
for

for the upright in heart: They shall dwell in his presence; whereas the hypocrite is an abomination to him, and the hottest flames of hell will be his portion. The gospel, as a rule of judgment, determines the final state of professors, not merely as being *sinners*, for all are so; nor yet as *perfect* and sinless, for none are such; but who are sincere, who are *hypocritical* professors, by this shall they be discriminated. Much more might be added, to convince you that sincerity is no mean, dead, formal thing; but that it is of a divine nature, alliance, original, and tendency.

3. THE *scope* and tenor of a christian conversation in this world, is in simplicity and godly sincerity, &c. The *scope* and course of it is so, and not an occasional step; 'tis so, notwithstanding all the discouragements in *this world*, and for the *whole* time he abides in it.

THE *hypocrite's* religion and obedience is *limited*, *partial*, and *uneven*; he is devout, just, or good, but by the by; 'tis not his business, for that's to gratify his lusts. His goodness is by starts, 'tis not his *stated* walk; for his *conversation is in his lusts*, his walk is *after the flesh*: He is seemingly improved in *some* things, but hath not regard to *all* the parts of godliness: such calls to service he complies with, as are enforced by secular advantages; but without these, the plainest calls are *generally* disobeyed.

SERM.

XIII.

Pf. cxi. 13.

Tit. i. 16.

Mat. xxiv.

57.

Eph. ii. 3.

Rom. viii.

13.

SERM. disobeyed. He may be somewhat exact in
 XIII. *some* duties, but neglects the most material
 ~~~~~ in the *station* where God has placed him.

Towards some men, and in some company, he behaves himself well, but is disorderly with others. When he meets not with *temptations*, he seemeth reformed, but changeth his course when strongly assaulted, and seldom recovers; *His goodness is as the morning cloud*, it has no root, therefore dies before his life is finished.

Hof. xiii.

3.

BUT in the real christian, sincerity runs as a line throughout his *life*, and commands the *scope* of it upon all occasions. The words are, ἀναστρέφμεν ἐν τῷ κοσμίῳ; we conversed, lived, and behaved, in a continued stated manner, in our passage through the world, in godly sincerity. This is an eminent part of the character of a real christian, and amounts to these six things:

(1.) HIS great business is to keep a *good*  
 Acts xxiv. conscience: *Herein I exercise myself to have*  
 16. *always a conscience void of offence towards God, and towards men.* This he resolveth, and studies how to do it; this he *earnestly* intends, by striving against what may hinder it, and taking hold of whatever is helpful to maintain religion towards God, and righteousness towards men; he is at pains to have conscience well *informed*, and tender; and is careful to secure his peace, by avoiding what it justly condemns; 'tis his  
 purpose

purpose to be able to say, *My heart shall not reproach me so long as I live.* SERM. XIII.

(2.) HE endeavoureth to perform every duty, as well as some; he faithfully sets himself to be holy in all manner of conversation. No grace nor measure of it would he neglect, nor live in the omission of any known duty; he accounts himself obliged to keep his heart, as well as outward actions; to forgive his enemies, as well as to requite his friends. The duties of his general and particular calling, he will be employed in, as one walking in all the commandments and ordinances of the Lord blameless. A sincere veneration of each is witnessed by his rejecting of none; he allows not himself by sloth to fall into any error against the faith, nor to violate the law by disregard to any of its precepts, but keeps an ear open to all God's commands, tho' hard and chargeable service be appointed. Is he a minister? He declares the whole counsel of God, whoever is displeased; he corrupts not the word of God to serve a base turn; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God, speaketh he in Christ; by rule he behaveth himself in the house of God. The same does the private christian in all relations, and hides his face from no part of his duty. Job xxvii. 6. 1 Pet. i. 15. Prov. iv. 23. Luke i. Acts xx. 27. 2 Cor. ii. 17. 1 Tim. iii. 15.

(3.) THE scope and tenor of his behaviour is sincere. As Enoch he walks with God, and labours to be in the fear of the Lord Gen. v. 22.

all

SERM. *all the day long*; his zeal is consistent with  
 XIII. love, and charity does not extinguish his  
 ~~~~~ zeal; his religion is not by fits, but steady;  
 Heb. xiii. sincerity is his way of living; *Pray for us,*
 18. *for we trust we have a good conscience in all things, willing to live honestly.* His way is uniform, and righteousness is his *custom*; if he turn aside, he bemoaneth it, and is restless till he *return*; he prays that God would heal his backslidings, and restore him. His religion is not left in the *church*, but carried with him to his house, to his closet, to his shop, to every place; his godliness ends not with the *sabbath*, but takes hold on him thro' the week; he is good in health, as well as in sickness; and he acteth sincerely *with all men*, as well as with some men; his guard is as strict in *wicked* company, as if the holiest men were present; he'll not offend his *weak brother*, but deny himself in much of his liberty, rather than be a snare to him. *Power* gives him no leave to oppress; he withholds not what's right from the *worst* man, no not from his *enemies*; he dare not impose on the *ignorant*, but deals as justly with such, as if they were persons of the deepest understanding.

Pf. xli. 4.
Hof. xiv. 2.

Pf. xxxix.
x.

1 Cor. viii.
12, 13.

Object. How then comes the apostle to say, in this text, *That his conversation was in sincerity more abundantly toward the Corinthians?*

Answer.

Ans. HE laboured abundantly among this people in the work of the gospel, and yet was so far from any *mercenary* design, that he supported himself by the work of his hands, when he had a right to a supply from them: So that they, of all men, had least reason to question his integrity.

5. HE will act with sincerity under the *greatest temptations and disadvantages*.

THIS *world* is full of snares and allurements; its company, its business, its amusements, are not without hazard. This is a place where religion is generally abhorred, and men persecuted for the profession of it; the helps to piety are very few, and a *plain* man is generally scorn'd, and made a prey of. This *world* is so full of sharpers, that honest methods will not always give a livelihood; and men of all callings so *false* and undermining, that a man of integrity cannot defend himself. Yet as *bad* as this world is, and as *ill* treatment as the man of simplicity meets with, the apostle saith, *My conversation is in simplicity and godly sincerity, and not by fleshly wisdom, even in this world.* Every real christian follows his example, in prospect of the comfort it ministers through the usefulness of it to the commonweal, and God's approbation of it by his commands, example, and rewards.

THEREFORE the sincere man labours to keep himself *unspotted from the world*;

SERM. when the wicked entice him, he disdains
 XIII. the bribes, and watches against the allure-
 ments of sin: With *Lot* he keeps clean in a
 filthy place, and is *vexed* with the abomi-
 nations he would reform, but cannot. He
 is content to be *gazed* at as a monster among
 the bewitched crowd, and to pass thro' the
 world as a *stranger*, who wears a garb,
 speaks a language, walks by a law, is ac-
 customed to such manners, pursues such
 designs, and seeks a home, which the world
 despises and abhors.

SINCERITY inclines him to the *crucify-
 ing himself to the world*, and thereby to deny
 such gratifications of the flesh as would
 pollute him, and to bear what's most un-
 grateful to it, rather than seem to be sham'd
 of Christ in his truth, interest, or members.
 When reproaches, frowns, loss of goods,
 prisons, yea, death come in his way, he
 has reckon'd on them, and counts them no
 strange thing; he is at a point, the *Lamb
 he will follow*, his covenant he must keep.
 He endeavoureth to get, and use prudence,
 and to avoid all real indiscretion, that he
 may prevent such mischiefs as ill men de-
 sign against him, and are more probable to
 effect, because they scruple nothing. In
 this case, where *innocent* prudence will not
 preserve him, he commits himself to God
 for shelter and support, as seems good in
 his eyes. Finally, he is *diligent* in his
 calling, but reckons that God thinks that
 enough

2 Pet. ii. 7.

Rev. xiv.
 4.

enough for him, which is gotten honestly, and that more would be dangerous. He is thankful for so much esteem and interest as may render him greatly useful; but he will use no unjust or sordid methods to obtain or continue it. And if God permits men of baser tempers to undermine him by whispers, surmises, or viler arts, he refers himself to the providence of God, as knowing he will vindicate him as far as the service designed by him requires, and carry on his work by other instruments, accepting the upright desire and behaviour of the blasted, instead of service.

SERM.
XIII.

(6.) HE maintains his sincere conversation to the *last*.

He is faithful unto death. Whilst he is in this world, he continues his integrity, and holds on his way; a prolong'd life gives him no release, for his covenant-dedication was unto his last moments. During his present state he adheres to God, abides in Christ, submits to his rule, and desireth to serve his purposes. The real christian is persuaded, that beginning well without perseverance, will aggravate his woe, and that all who shall be saved, must endure to the end; therefore he is firmly resolved, in the strength of Christ, to finish well, and die in the Lord. His race being for life, he runs, and faints not; his warfare not being decided before death, he fights so as to overcome at last. His earnest prayer and

Rev. ii.
10.
Mat. xxiv.
13.

SERM. hope is to *be sincere, and without offence,*
 XIII. *till the day of Christ.* He is not without
 a holy fear till he hath *worked out his sal-*
 vation. He is watchful till his time of
 probation is finish'd, that his *heart* depart
 not from God, that he be not entangled
 in the *pollutions* of the world; that he turn
 not from the *holy commandment*, nor desert
 the *profession of faith*. He is careful to
 leave this world, prepared and ripened for
 a better country; and therefore thinks it
 not enough to be kept from apostasy, but
 endeavoureth by *added grace to grace*, to
 make his election *sure*; and so to have a
 certain and an abundant *entrance into the*
everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savi-
our Jesus Christ.

THE *fourth* part of the character of the
 real christian and godly minister, is, That
 his conversation is *by the grace of God.*

THE grace of God is taken chiefly for
 his *special favour*: He help'd them much
 who had believed *through grace*: Also for
 the peculiar gifts and effects of God's spe-
 cial favour, 2 *Pet.* iii. 18. *Grow in grace.*
 We have received *grace for grace*. All
 saving endowments are called grace, be-
 cause they are free gifts flowing from God's
 undeserved favour, and are evidences of our
 interest in his special favour. Sometimes
 this word *grace* is designed at once to ex-
 press both the kindness of God and the
 effects; *He resisteth the proud, but giveth*
grace

Phil. i. 10.
 Phil. ii.
 12.

2 *Pet.* ii.
 20, 21.
 Heb. x.
 23.

2 *Pet.* i.
 5—10.

Acts xviii.
 27.

1 *John* i.
 16.

grace to the humble. 'Tis also taken for the *gospel*. These are the principal senses of the grace of God, and what the apostle intendeth. As for *extraordinary gifts*, and the *common* effects of grace for degrees of reformation, which are short of a regenerating work; they are stil'd grace, but reach not the apostle's sense in my text; whereas, 1. God's special favour; 2. Inherent grace; and, 3. The gospel, must be intended.



SERM. XIII.

THIS part consummates the distinction between the sincere christian, and the hypocrite. What the christian is, what he attains and performs, is by the *grace* of God; he is more than a mere *moral* man, as to temper and state, and acteth beyond him, and with another respect to supplies of grace; of which hereafter.

THE *hypocrite's* devoutest and best actions spring from nature, or at best from common grace: nor is he an *object* of God's special kindness, or is God's favour what he *most* desires. His graces or virtues are called so but *equivocally*: when he performs what's most excellent, 'tis not from a vital principle; the Holy Spirit gives no such *special* assistance, as he does to saints. His heart is unchanged, his spirit unrenewed; he derives not strength from Christ by *dependance* on him, as a vital head; nor acteth by communications from him, as an *united* member. As God has no delight in him, so he

SERM. takes not his highest satisfaction in God ;
 XIII. but his *chief good* is what gratifies his carnal self, which is his chief and ultimate end. And thus, it's evident, he doth not live, nor behave (so the word for conversing, in my text, is often render'd) by the grace of God.

BUT the real christian hath his conversation by the grace of God,

I. *By the special favour of God.*

Note, THAT God is of infinite power to change, convert, establish, and assist, &c. This power is exerted in such spiritual operations ; as, *We believe by this power ; we are kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation.* But if you ask, How the power of God comes to be exerted to such purposes ? I answer, It is from his special favour in Christ ; and this is the way all comes to be ascribed to his grace or favour. * This puts his arm to work, and opens those treasures, whence the faint is supplied and furnished for a godly conversation. The christian liveth by this special favour of God,

(1.) *As this acteth in him.* It's this which works those holy inclinations, and divine qualities, whereby the christian is inwardly renewed, and disposed to walk with God. This mortifies the flesh, and dethrones those lusts which had dominion in him, and would soon recover it but for his grace. This gives us necessary assistance for resist-
 ing

²Theff. 1.

31, 12.

ing temptations to alter our course, and for performing those duties wherein our walk consisteth. All the christian's graces are derived hence, and by this excited and maintained. When he is hard put to, the *grace of God is sufficient for him, and his strength made perfect in weakness.* ^{2 Cor. xii. 9.} Is the christian strong? it's in this grace that is *in Christ.* SERM. XIII.

HAD God never visited us with his favour, this faint had continued dead in his sins, and *without strength.* Did his favour cease to act, he would soon faint, be overcome, and again wallow in the mire. It's ^{2 Pet. ii. 20.} this grace by which he stands; this, by its blessing, succeeds all means of perseverance.

(2.) HE liveth by this special favour of God, *as it acteth for him.*

THIS chaineth the tempter, who else would soon deceive and overwhelm us. This grace moderates our trials, shortens our exercises, proportions our burdens, suits our conditions and circumstances, as may be safest and most helpful to our souls. This provides the means of grace; this ^{Rom. viii. 23.} finds seasonable helpers for counsel and encouragement, and dispenseth afflictions and mercies, as our frame makes awakening warnings or encouragements most proper for our edification.

(3.) HE lives by this grace, *as it is affectingly manifested to him.*

SERM. GOD is pleased to *shed his love* abroad
 XIII. in the heart, to a believer's feeling. This
 sweetens the bitterest steps. *The consolations* of Christ abounding, support the soul
 Rom. v. 5. under persecutions. When he grows re-
 2 Cor. i. 5. mifs, a sense of what kindness God has ex-
 pressed towards him, does awaken him to
 avoid what is offensive and dishonourable
 to the blessed God, and constrains him to
 be active and faithful.

HE cannot behold what wonders *have been produced* by the favour of God, without a blush, that he makes no better returns. Has my God bestow'd his Son, and has *Christ* died for me when I was an enemy? Has he, by his Spirit, raised me from a *dead* state, and found me out when I was running farther from him? Has he pardon'd such a world of sins? Has he united me to the Lord Jesus, and adopted me among his sons, &c. and can I forsake him? God forbid. I am ashamed that my zeal is so cold, and that I cannot walk more worthy of him. A believing prospect of the great things which *grace has provided* for him hereafter, does enlarge his heart, and establish his goings. These are things too glorious for the *eye* to behold, too great for *tongue* to utter, or the vastest imagination to *conceive*: *We know not what we shall be*; that *we shall be like Christ, and see him as he is*, contains all we can desire, or are capable of. Some glimpses
 and

and foretastes of these things repair the christian's strength, and invigorates his resolutions. He answers temptations with this thought; The flesh can offer no such benefits as these which I *hope* for; no, nor as those which I already *enjoy*: the light of God's countenance, the communion I have with Christ, surpass all this, world can give: How then can I depart from this blessed One, when *I have tasted he is thus gracious*; and also when he is so good as to pardon my many infirmities, accept such imperfect service, and grant a free access to his throne of grace, *for grace and mercy to help in every time of need?* Surely these must incline and encourage me to follow his steps, and persist in his ways.

SERM.
XIII.

1 Pet. ii. 3.

Heb. iv.
16.

2. THE christian conversation is by *inherent grace*, flowing from that special love of God.

THE christian's conversation is not by fleshly wisdom, but it is in sincerity, by that grace which is *subjectively* in the true believer.

(1.) THIS *inherent grace* constitutes a great part of the christian's conversation, especially Godwards. The prevalency of a *spiritual life*, to the exclusion of the dominion of the flesh, is what denominates a sincere person: he is not *in the flesh*, which every unconverted person is. The truth and reality of regeneration (whence this life begins) is instanced in the *true* fear of God,

Rom. vii.

5.

SERM. God, in a *sincere* faith in Christ, and a
 XIII. *prevalent* love to God. These graces in
 truth, are not only necessary to our be-
 having well to men, but as it regards the
 frame and bent of the heart; the internal
 exercise of these are a part of the divine
 life and conversation.

IT'S not a conversation which leaves out
 the pulse, the bent, the cravings and mo-
 tions of the heart Godward; for it is with
 him we have most to transact and do.
 Every act of grace towards God, makes
 up our living to him; yea, the habitual dis-
 position is what he looks at, as much as at
 our exercise: *My son, give me thy heart.*

Prov. xxiii.
 26.

(2.) A HEART renewed by grace, *de-
 pends on Christ* for all supplies necessary to
 a christian conversation.

WHERE grace is implanted, the soul
 is sensible of its own insufficiency to make
 any progress in God's ways. Whatever
 confidence the hypocrite has in his own
 stock, the real christians own, *Not that we
 are sufficient, as of ourselves, to think a
 good thought,* much less to resist strong
 temptations, bear heavy sufferings, or per-
 form spiritual duties in a right manner.
 He heartily assents to what Christ declares,
Without me you can do nothing. Therefore
 as he is solicitous to acquit himself a true
 disciple of Christ, so his eye is directed to
 him, to instruct and enable him to do so.
 He depends on him, and seeks to him for
 continual

2 Cor. iii.
 5.

John xv.
 5.

continual assistances and supports. He concludes he shall manage his ways aright in proportion to what supplies are communicated; *He can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth him.* SERM. XIII. Phil. iv. 13.

(3.) BY the exercise of *inherent grace*, the *external conversation* of a christian is managed and maintained in sincerity.

As outward duties are dead and empty things, wherein no grace is in act, so a godly conversation were impracticable, were not all graces in exercise. The influences of the Spirit, in order to practice, are *immediately* on the heart, for the exciting and strengthening the *graces* he had there produced; and those excited and strengthened, do enable to godly and upright actings. *Faith* represents God's majesty and authority to the mind, which begets that reverence for his commands, as renders us *obedient* against all the threatenings of men, and the reluctancy of our hearts.

Faith realizeth an invisible world, whereby we are animated to endure all sufferings which attend our profession, awakened to avoid what leads to hell, and fixed in the way which, by divine ordination, brings us to glory. By faith we rely on Christ, and derive virtue from him, whereby we are enabled to forsake what he came to *destroy*, and perform his demands, expressive of our fidelity to him, and obedience to the Father. 2 Cor. iv. 18.

Love,

SERM. *Love*, in exercise, enlargeth our hearts in
 XIII. designs for the glory of God, and in fear
 of offending him; this makes his *yoke easy*,
 and all his commands desirable, and not
grievous. By *humility* we stoop to the
 meanest duties, by *patience* we are kept
 from repining at what we endure in our
 christian course, and by *fortitude* the diffi-
 culties and dangers attending us are mas-
 tered.

THE *hope* of glory guards us against as-
 faults, and so fills us with a contempt of
 this world, that its offers cannot entice us
 to turn out of our way. *Godly fear* checks
 our vanity, inconsiderateness, and security,
 that they betray us not to sensuality and
 sloth: And by *repentance* we recover from
 our falls, and are made more cautious of
 offending. None of the graces of the Spirit
 are useless, all of them are active and in-
 fluential to render our conversation sincere
 and persevering.

4. A HEART principled with the graces
 of the Spirit, *takes its greatest satisfaction*
in God, as the most agreeable good.

PL lxiii. 3. *His loving-kindness is better than life*, in
 the esteem of every gracious soul. He bles-
 seth himself in what he enjoys of God, and
pants for more. A man thus disposed,
 must be careful so to order his ways, as to
keep in his love, and be afraid of all sin,
 lest he forfeit the favour of God, or inter-
 mit the discoveries of it.

A CHRISTIAN finds that usually he enjoys more or less of God, as his conversation is managed: when this is *ordered aright*, God *sheweth him his salvation*. He communicates of it what we need or can bear at present, and grants such discoveries of what is reserved, as fills the soul with joy. A man admiring and affected with these delights, is not only afraid to lose them by sin, but feels himself constrained to appear for God with zeal, and abound in the fruits of holiness. But, on the other hand, he finds when he sinneth *presumptuously*, his bones are *broken*, joy removed, the face of God is *hid*, the visits of the *Spirit* more rare, and his operations more faint, whereby his soul becomes weakned as to grace, and almost overwhelmed as to comfort.

THE experiences of these things contribute greatly to a faithful walk. They cannot do otherwise with a gracious person; for nothing can please him, whilst he suspects his interest in God who is his portion; and this not only by a wise *choice*, but as the *bent* and *inclination* of his heart is fixed on God; for in him it finds true *rest* as in its centre; in him it glorieth, whatever it can want or suffer. And from a well-pleasing sense of God's love, it must act with vigor and caution too.

3. THE christian's conversation is in sincerity by the *gospel*, which is the word of
of

SERM. of *God's grace* : it's so called, *Acts* xiv. 3. XIII. and justly, for it's a wonderful gift and effect of divine favour ; yea, it's term'd *the grace of God*. The gospel contributes many ways to our having our conversation in simplicity and godly sincerity.

(I.) As the gospel contains the *rule* of this conversation. Our Lord Jesus hath taken into the christian dispensation all the laws by which his sincere followers are to fashion their hearts and lives. The godly man conforms himself to these : he rests not with any attainments as *graces*, except they be what the gospel describes to be such *graces* ; what comes short of, or exceeds its definitions, he rejects as counterfeits. He avoids nothing as *sin*, but what the word forbids ; nor accounts that a *duty*, which it does not some way or other enjoin. But he is as concerned to keep both to their *full* extent, that so no part of duty may be refused, nor sin of any kind, or in any degree, allowed.

HE rejects all *false* rules and enthusiastick opinions, however plausible, and admits not that as part of the *law of nature*, which contradicts the gospel rule ; by this he tries all *prudent* maxims, however celebrated ; the counsel and *customs* of men, whatever reputation they have ; and the laws of the *church*, and of *magistrates*, whatever be their sanction. By examining all by this rule, and yielding a sincere obedience



dience to it, he avoids what contradicts, and performs what's requisite to a conversation in simplicity and godly sincerity.

(2.) As the gospel includes the proper *motives* to a sincere conversation.

THE christian needs arguments to persuade him to embrace and abide in a course that is contrary to the flesh, and that exposes him to labour and sufferings. He finds in the gospel such arguments as are suited to this purpose, and by them he is often made willing to cross the flesh; and stirred up to persevering endeavours after *eminent* holiness, as what is justifiable and beneficial. The motives are not *carnal* or impure, but chiefly spiritual and *divine*, whereby they are agreeable to a *renewed* nature, and apt to promote *holy* resolutions.

HERE you find arguments from God's nature, perfections, providence, and authority; from Christ's love, sufferings, and intercession; from his designs, assistances, and his final judgment. *By the gospel, life and immortality are brought to light.* 2 Tim. i. 10. All this display'd glory strongly excites; all the promised blessings for time and eternity, are so many topicks, whence enforcing motives are deduced. The christian knowing the inviolable *connexion* between a godly conversation and these blessings, feels a power in these as motives to lead to that conversation; neither are gospel-*threatenings* unapt to this end.

(3.) As

SERM. (3.) As the gospel *discovers things help-*
 XIII. *ful* to this conversation, and what are *im-*
 pediments to it.

HERE we are directed how to pray, hear, approach the Lord's table, meditate, examine ourselves, and offer thanks to God; all which are *means* which the christian improves for quickning and establishment in his walk. We have the experiences and behaviour of saints recorded, that we may follow their steps. The perfect example of our Lord Jesus is set before us, for the fashioning of our hearts, and the ordering of our lives. Let the *same mind* be in you which was in Christ: *Looking to Jesus, who, for the joy that was set before him, endured the cross, despised the shame. Learn of me, for I am meek.* The christian *armour* is fully described, *Ephes. vi. 11.* Many other helps might be mentioned, which upright souls are acquainted with, and have used successfully.

THE *impediments* of a sincere conversation, are to be seen in the recover'd *falls* of saints, the *apostasy* of professors, and in scripture-warnings and *cautions*. By these we are taught to beware of self-confidence, trifling, idleness, neglect of duty, rashness, letting down our watch, not avoiding occasions of sin, loving the world, fear of man, disregarding the first degrees of backslidings, evil company, and hypocrisy of heart. The account you also have of *sa-*
tan's



tan's violent and wily methods, is a great help to prevent his polluting our conversation.

(4.) *As the Spirit of Christ communicates his gracious influences by the gospel.*

WE should soon be entangled, faint, and turn aside to crooked paths, if left to our *own abilities*. The gospel-discoveries and directions, are of themselves *insufficient* to cleanse and establish our hearts and ways; but the *efficacy* of the gospel to these holy ends, is by the Spirit's *concurrence*; and its glory is, that the blessed Spirit, as the Spirit of Christ, communicates life, light, and power thereby; it's the *ministration of this Spirit*; by this it becomes *the power of God unto salvation*. The upright often feels a surprizing energy in the word, which has made him strong to resist temptations, when probable to overcome him; and supported him under such suffering as he thought he could never endure. It is to the Holy Spirit working by the truth of the gospel, such things must be ascribed; he conveyeth light by *gospel-discoveries*; he makes the *precepts* mighty in the conscience; the *promises* and motives of the gospel take hold on the soul, insinuate into it, and inspire it with fixed resolutions, and virtue to pursue them. The Spirit excites and improves those gracious dispositions by the word, which are most suitable to our present duty; he brings *seasonable truths* to

2 Cor. iii.

8.
Rom. i.

16.

SERM. remembrance, pleads them, darteth light
 XIII. upon them, holds them as close and long
 ~~~~~ to the eye of the mind, as is necessary to  
 shew us our present work, and carry us  
 through all the difficulties of it. Being  
 Gal. v. thus led by the Spirit in the word, and  
 16, 18. walking in him by obedience to his conduct,  
 we come to have our conversation in godly  
 sincerity, and fulfil not the lusts of the flesh.

THUS I have explained how the christian conversation is led by the grace of God, viz. by his special favour, by inherent grace, and by the gospel of grace, not by one without the other; for without the special favour of God, inherent grace and the gospel were insufficient, nay, we had not enjoy'd either; did not inherent grace concur, this conversation were not our walk, nor be made up of our actings. And if it were not by the gospel, we had wanted a certain rule for our duty and hope, which is necessary to subjects of moral government, and been enthusiasts, or treated as mere stocks. But that the best man's actings by this rule may not detract from the glory of divine grace, we see that all the influence of the gospel upon our graces, and the efficacy of those graces to our walking sincerely, depend on the operations of the Spirit, as well as they are the blessings merited by Christ, which are obtained by such a conversation.

## S E C T. II.

2d Obf. *The way whereby a christian conversation becomes evident to oneſelf, is by the testimony of his conſcience.* SERM. XIII.

THE mind, upon ſerious reflections, and impartially comparing our actings with the rule, paſſeth ſentence; which ſentence is what's call'd its *teſtimony*, as it refers to any unjuſt challenge. The real chriſtian approveth himſelf to God, as the ſupreme judge; *He that judgeth me is the Lord.* He appeals to *men*, as far as his outward actings can manifeſt his integrity; and he appeals to his own *conſcience*, and is approved by it, as far as he knows his own heart; and this he pleads againſt his own groundleſs ſuſpicions, and the unjuſt cenſures of others. 1 Cor. iv.

FOR explication of this, conſider,

I. THE juſt *teſtimony* of the conſcience is neceſſary to a right hope concerning the ſtate of a chriſtian.

THE *teſtimony* is *juſt*, when 'tis according to the goſpel, as a rule of judgment; *i. e.* when upon enquiry that's found in us, and done by us, to which the goſpel promiſeth ſalvation; and we are acquitted of that againſt which it pronounceth eternal death. The goſpel way of comfort is to clear your intereſt in its *privileges*, by the conſcience witneſſing to your *faith and obedience.*

SERM. *dience*. None have a satisfying *reason of*  
 XIII. *their hope*, but such as *have a good con-*  
 science as to their conversation in Christ.

1 Pet. iii.

15, 16.

1 John iii.

21.

Our hearts must not condemn us, or we can have no confidence towards God.

Rom. iii.

16.

2. THE *joint-witness* of the Spirit with the conscience, gives a satisfying comforting power to the testimony of the conscience: *The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirits, that we are the sons of God.* This privilege here witnessed, supposeth a witnessing to all that, without which this must be inevident. Therefore the Spirit jointly witnesseth to the *truth* of the gospel, as to Christ's satisfaction, and to those promises founded thereon which relax the conditions of adoption. He witnesseth to our performing of those conditions, by his working them *in us*, which is *his sealing us to the day of redemption*. This shall not disappoint; but yet it is not properly that joint-witnessing with the *conscience* to the in-being of the terms of adoption; for the conscience does not witness thereto in such doubting saints as prevailingly suspect it. But the Spirit *jointly* witnesseth with *our* spirit, when both issue in this result; "you have the gospel infallible marks of the sons of God."

Eph. iv.

30.

SATAN's suggestions, a consciousness of the deceit of our hearts, fear of what powers of corruption may be hid; a sense of what restraints, or mere common grace may

may effect, what apostates have attained and done, &c. are sufficient to weaken the testimony of conscience when single, and obstruct our comfortable hope; therefore the witness of the *Spirit* is necessary to be joined with our spirits to prevent our doubts, quiet our minds, and assure us of his saving work upon us. It is by his light shining on our graces, that *our consciences bear witness thereto in the Holy Ghost*. And his manifestations and power joined to this testimony of conscience, do produce a satisfaction in our souls, that we have the signs, and consequently to us belong the privileges of the sons of God.

SERM.  
XIII.

Rom. ix.

1.

3. THE matter attested by the conscience is not legal perfection, but *sincerity of grace and obedience*.

IT would bear false witness, if it testified that we are innocent or perfect; for, *If we say, we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us*. A conversation by the grace of God in simplicity and godly sincerity, is the height of what *Paul* pretends to, who elsewhere declares concerning himself, *Not as though I had already attained, or were already perfect*. No, this is not the state or season when *that which is perfect is come*, but the conscience witnesseth to sincerity, to an heart *really* bent for God, though not so firmly as the christian would find it. It *truly* believes, tho' he is forced to cry, *Lord,*

1 John i. 3.

1 Cor. xiii.  
10.

SERM. *help my unbelief.* It's irreconcilable to *sin*,  
 XIII. tho' he often complains of its violent mo-  
 tions and out-breakings; it really likes and  
 approves of perfection, and reckons that  
 to be a *heaven* indeed, where he hopes to  
 obtain it, tho', to his sorrow, he finds much  
 imperfection in all his graces, and all his  
 actions. You may easily then collect, that  
 this sincerity principally consisteth in the  
*reality* and *truth* in what graces we pre-  
 tend, and the very *heart* being engaged in  
 what good we perform; and therefore it  
 expresseth itself more in fervent *desire*, than  
 attainments; more in *faithful endeavours*,  
 than performances; and often more in the  
*agrecableness* of spiritual blessings, than in  
 a joyful assurance that they belong to us.

3d Obs. *The just testimony of conscience  
 to a christian sincerity, is his rejoicing in  
 the approaches of death.*

*This is our rejoicing*: *καίχρησις* notes joy-  
 ful glorying. I shall, 1. Explain in what  
 sense 'tis a christian's rejoicing. 2. Evi-  
 dence that this is a sufficient ground of re-  
 joicing in the greatest danger, and nearest  
 views of death.

*Quest.* IN what sense is the testimony of  
 conscience to a christian's sincerity, his re-  
 joicing?

*Ans.* I. *Negatively.* Not that sincerity  
 is any *atonement* for sin, or any *merit* of  
 gospel-blessedness, or any way to be set  
 in the room of Christ.


THERE are too many faults in the best men, to admit their justification by the law of innocency; and having *once* sinned, all just pretence of merit is excluded. The work of satisfaction for sin, and of meriting impetration of blessings, are proper to Christ: This he has discharg'd *alone*, according to his Father's appointment, and that's supposed in all gospel-offers; for had not he procured peace, pardon, adoption, and glory, he would not invite us to him for obtaining them, nor by them enforce his call to sinners. The exactest conversation would be abominable to God, and useles to the most excellent persons, if pleaded in *rivalship* with Christ. A real convert knows both Christ and himself too well, to *glory over* Christ, to whom he ascribes his entire redemption, humbly acknowledging his best duties cannot atone for their *own* crimes, and when he has done all, he is an *unprofitable servant*. As to expiation and purchase, *all* our rejoicing is in Christ Jesus, who is also our intercessor, and author of all our graces and abilities, as well as privileges.

2d *Ans.* *Affirmatively.* The christian rejoiceth in the evidence of sincerity, as *this answers to the gospel-promises of that blessedness which Christ hath merited.* These he knows describes the persons to whom the promised salvation belongs, and discriminates them from all such who shall

SERM. not obtain it. *And he brought them to his*  
 XIII. *house, and rejoiced, believing in God.* This  
 jailor, under convictions, had asked our  
 apostle, *What shall I do to be saved? Paul*  
 answereth, *Believe in the Lord Jesus, and*  
*thou shalt be saved.* The jailor sincerely be-  
 lieved; that put him into a state of salva-  
 tion, tho' he had not known it: But he  
 had the testimony of his conscience, that  
 he did believe in sincerity before he could  
 rejoice. As the promise gave him no  
 ground of joy in this salvation, as belong-  
 ing to him, unless he truly believed in  
 Christ; so whilst his faith was not evident  
 to himself, his interest in that salvation was  
 not evident to him, and consequently he  
 could not rejoice, but continue trembling.  
 But his interest in Christ and salvation be-  
 ing cleared, by his conscience witnessing  
 that he believed in Christ in sincerity, *he*  
*rejoiced*; he rejoiced in Christ, and he re-  
 joiced in his sincere faith too; he was glad  
 of a Saviour, and salvation by him; he was  
 glad he was a sincere believer, because such  
 believers only could obtain salvation by  
 Christ; and all *insincere* believers or hypo-  
 crites were excluded. It was faith *unfeigned*,  
 it was faith which *worketh by love*, that  
*Paul* called him to; it was such a faith he  
 rejoiced in; and it's observable, that it's said,  
*he washed their wounds, brought them to his*  
*house, and set meat before them*; and then it  
 is added, *he rejoiced.*

Acts xvi.  
36.



THERE'S no *inconsistency* between re-SERM. joicing *in Christ*, and rejoicing in the *sin-*XIII. *cerity* of our graces and actions; otherwise  the apostle in my text greatly offended. I add further, no man can, upon gospel-grounds, rejoice in *one*, unless he rejoice in the *other* too. How can we rejoice in our sincerity, if we rejoice not in Christ as our Saviour, who expiated our sins, made reconciliation between God and us, purchased our salvation, works all in all by his Spirit, justifieth us by his blood, and makes us and our graces accepted? Can we joy in our sincerity, and not in Christ, when our greatest sincerity can do none of those things; and if Christ had not performed them, we had been eternally miserable, notwithstanding our sincerest works or graces? On the other hand, How can we rejoice in Christ, if we rejoice not in our sincerity? For are not all hypocrites sure to *perish*, notwithstanding the all-sufficiency of Christ, and that because they are hypocrites? Christ's righteousness will not Mat. xxiii. save him, whose *faith is dead*. Must we 14. not rejoice that we are not hypocrites, un-Jam. ii. believers, and apostates? yet this we can-24, 26. not do, without rejoicing in our sincerity, whereby we are not such. Moreover, Christ is not *ours*, nor his saving benefits ours, without sincerity; for these are promised to sincere believers, and to none else. We must therefore despise these blessings,  
or

SERM. or doubt God's promise, otherwise we must  
 XIII. rejoice in our sincerity, which distinguisheth us from such as the promises belong not to. Finally, can we love Christ, and not rejoice in our sincerity, as his gift and resemblance? though our joy in the sincerity of our graces and ways, is not so much for its intrinsic goodness, as for the place Christ has assigned to it in the gospel *constitution*.

*Secondly*, I SHALL evidence that this is a sufficient *ground* of rejoicing in the greatest dangers, and nearest views of death.

I. NOTHING can justly *prevent* the joy of a sincere christian. All just doubts must be from a suspicion of our integrity; when this matter is cleared, we disbelieve the very scope of the gospel revelation, if we rejoice not in the certainty of final happiness: For *the Lord will give grace and glory, and no good thing will be withhold from them that walk uprightly.*

Pf. lxxxiv.  
11.

IF you object the *imperfections of your graces, though true*, I answer,

Eph. vi.  
24.

*First*, HAPPINESS is, by the gospel, expressly promised to the *sincerity* of our graces, and not to the legal perfection of them. *Grace*, i. e. the special favour of God, including true felicity, *even* the christian's perfected happiness is so called, 1 *Pet.* i. 13. *Hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you, at the revelation of Jesus*

*Jesus Christ.* Upon whom does the Spirit SERM. pronounce this grace? He tells you, *on all* XIII. *them that love the Lord Jesus in sincerity*; not in full perfection. The like is intended in the promises made to other graces; as, he that *believes hath everlasting life*: Is this perfected faith? No; the Spirit calls it *faith unfeigned*. There is a hearty reality in those graces and works, and so they are above what is a dead image, or a counterfeit of what's commanded: But yet they come short of that perfection which the *precept* enjoins. 1Tim.i.5.

*Secondly,* It's not *unbecoming Christ* to promise happiness to the *sincere christian*, though imperfect. When God dealt immediately with perfect man by a law suited to his condition, it was fit that the promised reward should be to *perfect* obedience, as the condition; for remunerative *justice* had so adjusted the duty and reward, that the last was to be *of debt*, and to deprive him of life whilst obedient, had been incongruous. Rom. iv. Moreover, the promised benefit was to be procured by his own obedience, and not purchased by another for him. But under the gospel God deals with us by a *mediator*, who has answer'd the demands of essential *justice* so fully, that if sinners were delivered without a change, it would not be impeached. This mediator has all saving blessings in his hand, as *purchased* by himself, and power to dispense them.

SERM. them. If he made an offer of them to  
 XIII. all sinners, he must make all partakers of  
 ~~~~~ them; or fix some *conditions* in his offers,  
 especially if he will *judge* men by the offer
 he makes. If he appoint conditions, they
 will be such as become him to ordain, both
 with respect to himself, and with respect to
 the sinner: and therefore they will be *really*
good, and of a kind improveable to that
 perfection he designed them hereafter;
 otherwise he would not appear holy, nor
 pursue the *end* of his coming, which was
 to *restore* God's image and government, as
 well as to obtain man's impunity. They
 must give some *meetness* to receive and re-
 lish his blessings, else these would be despi-
 sed to his dishonour, and man's damage,
 who could not feel a *happiness* in them, nor
 incentives to the love and service of this
 blessed Redeemer. *Sincerity* of grace agrees
 to all these, and whatever is *short* of it,
 would palpably fail to do so. But further,
 the conditions would not be what exceeded
 the *power* he found, or *gave* to men, at
 the time he designed to invest them in the
 respective blessings; for that must render
 the offer *vain to all*, to the impeachment
 of his wisdom and integrity. Nor is it
 likely they should be so *perfect*, as to ex-
 ceed his design in appointing them, which
 is not to expiate or merit, nor set men
 above a constant humble dependance on
 himself, for the pardon of their defects,
 and

and to render them acceptable on this side that perfection of heaven, for which he is but preparing them in this life.

SERM.
XIII.

Thirdly, WE find the *imperfection* of their graces is still supposed in those whom the promises entitle to, and invest in, its saving blessings.

BESIDES the recorded *weaknesses* and faults of the most eminent saints, whom God owned for his reconciled servants, and who were *assured* of salvation, as *Abraham, Peter, &c.* we find other reasons which demonstrate, that sincerity was accepted, and *imperfection* supposed to be consistent with it. I shall note only a few: All God's adopted, justified people, are commanded to *grow in grace*; they are declared to have *true grace*, and a call to add to growth connotes it; but there would be no need nor room to *grow in holiness*, if the graces included in sanctification were perfect. Again; the most improved saints on earth, are to pray for *forgiveness* of sin; this our Redeemer appoints in the Lord's prayer. Furthermore, all the *approved sons of God* meet with *chastisements* at God's hand, to make *them partakers of his holiness, and of the fruit of righteousness*. Not to mention the apostle *John's* three ranks of real converts, *little children, young men, and fathers*; nor *Paul's babes* in Christ, and the more *perfect*, yet both united to him.

2 Pet. iii.
18.
2 Pet. i. 5.

Heb. xii.
10, 11.
1 John ii.

SERM. IF we put these together, they will evidence, that such as God approved for real

XIII. *saints*, and truly gracious, attained to no higher than sincerity; and tho' their graces and actings were *not* perfect, they were really *heirs* of the promises, and invested in saving blessings as sincere persons, notwithstanding imperfection. Yea, many of them the Holy Spirit celebrates as *eminent* for their faith, love, fear of him, &c. and yet not perfect in *any* of these graces.

I AM larger in answering this objection, because it's the most common challenge to a christian's joy; and this being removed, the rest will admit a briefer solution.

WHAT can hinder the rejoicing of that man, who knows he is sincere? You may rejoice, notwithstanding the exactness of the law, for you are *redeemed from the curse of it*: nor will this be the law by which you shall be *judged*. The *justice* of God can be no terror to you, for that is satisfied; yea, through Christ, it is on your side; for it is written, *That he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus*. Past *sins*, however great and many, must not affright you, for they are *washed away by the blood of Christ*, they shall not be imputed. Grieve for sin as the worst evil, but your sealed pardon is ground of joy, when the crime is most hateful and bemoaned.

Remains

Remains of corruption are burdensome, yet being consistent with integrity, they ought not to prevent your thankfully rejoicing; for you are near a *release*, and they shall not *condemn you*. Neither is there any reason that the *devil* should molest your comforts, for you have conquered him in the *war*, by abiding faithful to the end; and shortly he who baffled you in many *skirmishes*, shall be *trodden under your feet*. SERM. XIII.

Death is the last enemy, but where covenant-sincerity is evident, you may not only rejoice, but you may *glory* over it; for pardon has removed its *sting*, and it's become friendly, notwithstanding your natural aversion to it. Look beyond it, whence its greatest terrors came, and you'll find it leads you to regions of light and joy, so that you may, with the apostle, triumph over it; *O death, Where is thy sting?* Rom. xvi. 20.
O grave, Where is thy victory? 1 Cor. xv. 55, 57.
Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. Is there cause for fear or sadness, that this vile *body*, which is the chief seat of sin, is *sown* to rise a *spiritual glorious body*; and, in the mean time, your Jesus, the *Lord* of the other world, will *receive* your spirits, freed from all defilement, and lodge them among *the spirits of just men made perfect*.

Thus you find that the joy which sincerity affords, is not to be prevented by imperfection of graces, the law of works, the

SERM. the justice of God, past sins, remains of
 XIII. corruption, nor the terrors of death. But
 if I have not enumerated all, you'll find
 the apostle leaves out no hindrance of your
 Rom. viii. joy unremoved: *Neither death, nor life,*
 33—39. *nor angels, nor powers, things present, nor*
things to come, shall be able to separate us
from the love of God which is in Christ
Jesus.

2. THIS testimony witnesseth to our
interest in all those things which minister
 the truest joy to a rectify'd soul.

A REVIEW of a christian conversation,
 is a pleasure, not only as it prevents horror
 and danger, and is in itself delightful, as
 well as useful to others; but the principal
 comfort of it is, that it affords a prospect
 of all that's necessary to our *final consum-*
mate happiness: For it assures us of our
union with Christ, who is Lord of the
 unseen world, and that he is to be our
 judge. We behold all his *merits* pleading
 for us, and all those incomprehensible
 things which he prayed for in *John xvii.*
 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 26. belong to us, and
 shall be in us fulfilled. We shall be fully
 sanctify'd, made one in the Father and
 Son, as the Father is in the Son; possess
 that glory which Christ received, be with
 Christ to behold his glory; and that love
 be in us, wherewith he was loved of the
 Father. *Faith in an unseen Jesus, now yields*
a joy unspeakable, and full of glory, by re-
ceiving

ceiving the fore-tastes of *salvation*. And well it may, when we read that prayer of our Lord foretelling our happiness.

SERM.
XIII.
~~~~~

NEED I subjoin, that assurance is given us, that Christ will *receive* our spirits, to present them as *glorious* and *unspotted* as is Eph. v. befitting his *spouse*, and the members of his *body*. Our souls shall be perfected in light and love, and our bodies made like his *glorious* body, which shined with such a lustre in his *transfiguration*. This is a testimony, that our names are written in the *book of life*, that the unfading *crown of glory* shall eternally rest on our heads, and we shall be admitted to *drink of those* Psal. xvi. *rivers of pleasures which are at God's right-* <sup>11.</sup> *band*. Who can forbear rejoicing in dying pangs and pains, when he beholds himself so near a full deliverance from all that grieved him, and the full and endless enjoyment of all his desires; yea, his *enlarged* faculties being filled with all that's agreeable to a mind divinely *refined*?

3. THE interest of every sincere christian in all this, is *abundantly secured*, and *infallibly sure*.

THE least uncertainty about things so dear to us, would shake our comfort, and diminish our joy. The concern is of such moment, that our minds can't be at full rest, unless our joy be sustained by uncommon supports, especially when just going into eternity. Our gracious Father con-

SERM. dered our frame, and provided *that we*  
 XIII. *might have strong consolation, and firm and*  
 ~~~~~  
 Heb. vi. *stedfast ground for our hope*; therefore, be-
 17, 19, 20. *sides his word, in which it is impossible for*
 him to lie, he confirmed it with an oath;
 yea, he shews us *within the veil*, the Jesus
 our *forerunner entered for us*, i. e. as our
 head, to take possession, and *prepare a*
 John xiv. *place for us*, and be the *first fruits* and
 3. *pledge of our entring into that glorious*
 state. What a foundation of triumph is
 this!

HE has also added *seals* to his covenant
 for greater confirmation, and given us his
 Son for a *surety* of it, even that Son who so
 Heb. vii. *loved us*, as to die in our stead, and has a
 22. *concern of great glory in our salvation*.
 Besides the assurance given us by the *gospel*
 covenant, he hath revealed so much of his
covenant of redemption with our Mediator,
 as to let us see the certainty of our *being*
justified by the knowledge (or faith) of Christ;
 and that his sufferings are imputed to us as
 our *pleadable security*. These things, with
 Isa. liii. *the shedding of his love in our hearts*, and
 11. *the experience we already have of his truth*
 and love, strengthen our joy by the *impos-*
sibility of a disappointment.

4. HE will find that *nothing* without
 this will afford joy in a dying hour, or in
 eternity. When you behold your *riches*
 vain, your *friends* useless, and all the *world*
 emptiness itself, it will be a solid comfort,
 that



that you have *bread* to eat which the world knows not; you have what do support and refresh you, even lively hopes in a dying hour, and all above and within at peace, upon the evidence of sincerity; whereas your *profession* without sincerity, your greatest *performances* without sincerity, your *gospel-enjoyments* and *gifts* without sincerity, must appear too insignificant and weak to bear up your souls. What joy must it be, that God has made you upright! and that he approves your appeal to him; that the graces you had, tho' small, were yet sincere; and your walk was in integrity, tho' full of imperfections. Moreover, in eternity you'll see, that not only profession, and hopes, but *Christ* himself, will be of no saving use to hypocrites. How then may your hearts rejoice, that the Spirit of Christ fashioned your hearts *aright*, that the fruits of the Spirit in you were *all in truth*; and so he prevented that Eph. v. 9. hypocrisy, by which the *foolish* virgins, and the man without the *wedding-garment*, do perish eternally.

Exhort. I. BE all *persuaded* to take this course for your rejoicing under the sentence of death. See that *conscience* can give you this testimony, that your conversation has not been with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, in simplicity and godly sincerity. It's not long before *death* will certainly arrest you, *now* is the time of prepar-

SERM. ring for the reviews of conscience, and it
 XIII. will give *some* testimony, whether you will
 or no. Self-love will awaken it to speak
 upon the approaches of eternity, unless by
stupidness you carry the plainest mark of
 your damnation.

IT will judge with *another* light, close-
 ness, and power, than at present. For
 the awful views of God's bar, of heaven
 and hell, when so *near* you, will try the
 testimony which conscience now giveth, at
 another rate than you can imagine in health.
 Many will find conscience blast their former
peace, and to revoke its *own* flattering sen-
 tence which it gave when asleep by spiri-
 tual sloth, or bribed by lust.

IT will judge, then, not by mens *opi-*
nion, but by the *gospel rule*. It will ar-
 raise not a *few* particular acts, but the
 Prov. xx. *scope* of your lives. It will *search your very*
 27. *inwards*, the frame of your hearts; your
 prevailing *ends* in what good you performed,
 and not sentence only by *external* actions.
 It will take cognizance of your *private*
 works, and remember much that you now
 forget; yea, mark many things for *faults*,
 which you accounted innocent. It will
 baffle many of those *excuses*, which it now
 allows; and despise many things, by which
 you think your crimes extenuated.

ON such accounts, you'll find need of
 utmost care in so ordering your conversa-
 tion, as to find the testimony of your con-
 sciences

sciences affording you ground of joy in a dying hour. But if it justly pass sentence against you, death will be a king of terrors. If it brand you as hypocrites, *How much more will God condemn you, who is greater than your conscience?* greater in light and purity, to find matter of accusation; and greater in power, to fasten conviction on the mind, and to enflame it with the sense of guilt and danger.

Exhort 2. Frequently examine your state in health, and do it also when you soon expect to die. If you often examine yourselves in health, it will tend to your eternal safety; for if you perceive your danger, you will be awakened to prevent it, by improving the *proper* seasons. Nor will it be a small help to your rejoicing in the testimony which conscience gives on a death-bed, that it is what has been often examined, and at leisure. Whereas it is a sign that man's condition is not good, who never tries it; for this declares him too stupid and careless about his salvation, to be a *living* saint. And if you begin this self-trial on a death-bed, you'll find a state so long neglected, can scarce yield good grounds for a comfortable sentence; and the conscience will be unfit to pass any just sentence, because unaccustomed, and unskilful in trying and judging of your condition. Often, then, *try your own selves*; you will find on a sick-bed there was use and need of

SERM.
XIII.

John iii.
20.

2 Cor. xiii.

SERM. doing it *often*. One time may rectify the mistakes of another, at least what past a frequent enquiry will be more confirmed. Neglect not to examine it over again on a *death-bed*; take the advantage of its awakening views, and of the nearer approaches God usually makes to the soul, when half separated from the body. If a rejoicing testimony will bear the sight of God's bar at hand, your comfort will be established. If it should prove false, there's more hope in applying to Christ for your conversion on a sick-bed, (however suspicious it be) than after death.

Exhort. 3. BE careful that the testimony of your conscience be *true and just*.

IT may be, yea, too often is, false. The hypocrite's *ungrounded* hopes are founded in a lying conscience; and the *unjust* fears of a sincere christian proceed from a mistaken conscience. The hypocrite is hereby secure in a bad state, which he neglects to alter in his day of grace; and thereby his eternal misery is more grievous, as he is disappointed, and also ashamed of his folly; because the grounds of his hopes were so easily discernable to be weak and false, had he been true to himself.

THE *doubting* christian's mistakes shall not hazard his salvation, because its the sentence of Christ which is *decisive*; and that will be according to the truth of every man's case, and not the *mistaken* opinion of men.

men. But yet his doubts abate his rejoicing, as long as they prevail. They often hinder his *growth*, by causing him to spend that time in useleſs complaints, which ought to be employed in growing in grace, whereby it would become more viſible. He discourageth *weak* faints, and too often proves a ſtumbling-block to the wicked.

I CALL each of you to be ſolicitous that conſcience give a right testimony, ſeeing error in this affair is ſo fatal. To help you in this, take theſe *directions*. Be ſolemn and *impartial* in your ſearch; *pray* the Spirit to witneſs with your ſpirits, and ſtrictly avoid whatever *provokes* him to withhold his testimony. The hypocrite needs this for his effectual *conviction*; the believer needs it for his *comfort*. Again; be ſure the *rule* you try, be juſt and ſufficient to decide your caſe, when ſentence paſſeth. Nothing below the goſpel is the true rule; and therefore conclude, you muſt be free from all that againſt which the goſpel pronounceth *death*; and what this promiſeth *life* to, be and do in *truth*. That which is moſt obvious and ſure to give in as *evidence*, is my text as before explained; for inward *habits* are not ſo plain; and without a ſincere converſation, they are in vain pretended; nor can they be wanting where this is maintained to the end.

THE *text*, as I have explained it, will give you three cautions, which are uſeful

SERM. to prevent a false sentence in favour of hy-
XIII. pocrify.




1. SEE that what you do esteem to be godly acts, be performed by the *grace* of God.

2. THAT the *scope* of your *whole* conversation be directed with a *sincere* respect to God, and to his will, and not by fleshly wisdom..

3. THAT what faults you are chargeable with, be not *inconsistent* with godly sincerity. You are to mourn for, and faithfully endeavour to reform, all faults; but let those that seem, by their power and interest in your hearts, to be a challenge to sincerity, strike deep in your concern to mortify them, that you be not deceived.

Exhort. 4. WHAT just testimony your conscience gives, *receive* it, and be suitably affected. If it be true and plain *against* you, as a hypocrite, cast away your false *hopes*, apply to thyself the *threatnings* of the gospel, betake you to *Christ* for healing; lie, with humility, in the way of the Spirit, duly attending on the *means* of grace; and be much in *prayer* for his regenerating grace, longing to receive it, and ready to improve all that tends thereto.

BUT if the testimony be *for* you, be thankful to God, be enlarged in his ways, and account it your duty to *rejoice*. Maintain this joy against all challenges, by fresh applications to Christ; yea, quit it not, unless

less you prove such backsliders, as to have SERM.
 reason to question your *integrity*. This XIII.
 testimony, when just, is recorded above, 
 and of that use, that no temptation should
 hinder your saying with him, *I will not* Job xxvii.
remove my integrity from me; my righteous- 5, 6.
ness I hold fast, I will not let it go.

THE character in the text belonged as much, and was exemplified as plainly, in our worthy *brother* deceased, as in most. He well understood, that his joy in a dying hour must (in subordination to Christ) depend on the practice of it. That he might bind his soul the faster, and with more freedom derive strength from Christ to perform it, he solemnly subscribed a *covenant* with his God. For the stricter observing his conversation, he kept a *diary*, that by a review he might gain experience, and rectify mistakes: But this, I fear, is destroyed.

HE entred betimes into heaven's way, and held it to the last, not repenting his choice, tho' often bewailing his imperfections. How may this encourage young converts to persevere! What a *crown of glory is it to the hoary head, to be thus found in the ways of righteousness*. Your pastor was aged seventy-seven years, and, with old *Policarp*, declared, that tho' I have long served him, I have always found him a good master, and therefore I cannot forsake him. Undeiled religion was his business;

SERM. finess; to his utmost he promoted this in
 XIII. others; to express the power of it, he ap-
 plied himself, both as a christian, and as a
 minister.

As a christian, his conversation was of a piece, regulated by the word of God, which he professed to set always before him; and this appear'd in his private behaviour, his walk in his house, and the discharge of relative duties: he refused not the burden he bound on others, and confirmed his doctrine by his practice. *Fleshly wisdom* was not his guide, but so far from *tricking*, that he was rather too blunt and plain.

NONE more importunate in pressing holy *diligence*, and few express'd a more humble *dependance* on the grace of Christ, which he knew how to make consistent in his practice and doctrine too. His *crosses*, which were neither few nor small, he endured with submissive patience. He too much affected privacy; I say, too much, because his publick usefulness was thereby lessen'd, as to some instances: For this he apologiz'd (when blam'd) by his unfitness to walk, with some other reasons. Yet he made his advantage of it, by closer converses with his own heart, and better preparations for his publick labours. But what past between God and his own soul, he studiously concealed, from an humble modesty, or we had known more of what watered

watered and warmed that root, which brought forth such affectionate, lively, and abundant fruit in his ministry, which could not be veiled. SERM.
XIII.

THIS leads me to speak of him as a *minister of the gospel*. He was *skilful* in his work, being greatly fitted to divide the word aright, and to common edification. He was *sound in the faith*, except men will call him heterodox for avoiding extremes, or for more aptly expressing truths than men less accurate, or less honest, chuse to do; or for holding such positions as are necessary to make his preaching consistent with itself, and conducive to the ends of its institution. He managed his ministerial work with *christian sincerity*.

IT was not after the flesh he *preached*; for tho' his learning was great, it was not with the *wisdom of man's words* that he dispensed the truth of the gospel, well knowing that such affectation was not likely to be attended with the divine blessing; and that such words, in themselves, are unapt to edify the greater part of our auditors, if any. He preached as one *believing* what he said, one fearing the awful account he was to give, and sensible that the consequences of his ministrations were too great to be trifled about. *The weapons of his warfare were not carnal, but spiritual; mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strong holds.* Scripture-revelation in
scripture

SERM. scripture language, framed the substance
 XIII. of his discourses; though he neglected not
 ~~~~~ to *reason* strongly on subjects determinable  
 by the light of nature.

*Carnal advantages* had no power over the dictates of his conscience. He chose to be ejected out of his parish, *Alphage*, without any prospect of a subsistence for his poor family, rather than conform against his light. Fidelity to his God made him prefer reproaches, contempt, poverty, and persecution, before honour and plenty, in a way he apprehended sinful. The same temper discovered itself in his avoiding all *carnal shifts* to enrich himself, when a nonconformist. He neither courted nor flattered the *rich*, undermined not his brethren, preached not *smooth things*. He urged gospel precepts, when no preaching would please many, if it insisted on any duty. He preached *privileges* in a right season and fit manner, as motives to sinners to close with Christ, but not as *pillows* to make them secure, by neglecting to tell them, they belonged not to them whilst unconverted. He preached them as an encouragement to saints for *obedience and growth*; but he called them to clear their interest by scripture signs, and taught them the *duties*, which benefits were inducements to perform. He preached Christ in *all* his offices; and tho' he explained what Christ had suffer'd, yet he did not preach

as if Christ's expiatory work were *unfinish'd*, or that his dying would save sinners in their impenitency; or, as if Christ were still in his *humble* state, without a throne, whence he gave forth his *commands*; and without a kingdom, wherein he ruled by *laws* and power; and without a tribunal, before which all men, good and bad, must stand and be *judged*: No, he preached the gospel of the *cross*, and of the *kingdom* too.

SERM.  
XIII.



HE preached as one *knowing* both God and man; as knowing God, and thence shunned not to declare his *whole counsel*; what he declares, and what he requires; conditional promises to grace, and the absolute promises of grace. As knowing *men*, and therefore impressed their *hope* and *fear* in his calls to them, conformable to the ministry of Christ, and all his faithful messengers, who back'd the gospel-call with promises and threatnings. One reason why this excellent person was a *Boanarges*, oft setting before men God's *threatnings*, was, that where the gospel is historically believ'd, unregenerated men are apt to be *secure hypocrites*; for they believe that Christ died for our sins, and God is ready to forgive them, and will forgive all who believe. These men being baptized, wearing the christian name, and taking an historical temporary faith for saving faith, they flatter themselves, that all the privileges of the gospel, and salvation, belong to them. This

caused

SERM. caused him to *pluck men as brands out of*  
 XIII. *the burning*, and to *persuade them, as know-*  
 ~~~~~ *ing the terrors of the Lord*; that their blood  
 might not lie at his door, by not *warning*
 them of their *danger*.

HIS sincerity, by the grace of God, made his *labours abundant*, breathing forth a *zeal* for God in each. He *trained up* several young men (among whom his worthy son is one) for the ministry, most of whom shine as eminent lights in the church. His pains in *catechising* were great; to which he urged ministers, for the propagating of knowledge, establishment in the truth, and preparing persons for saving advantage by the ministry. He printed many *books* for common benefit, and with great acceptance, as the many editions of that of the *sacrament* manifest. Who preached more sermons, or with equal fervor, in the midst of weakness? Yea, pains must quite disable him, or they could not keep him out of the pulpit; a life prolong'd to unusefulness, was a burden he deprecated, as the greatest trial.

God favoured his zealous diligence and sincerity; he prevented his fear of out-living his usefulness; *fifty-three* years he served Christ in the gospel, yet he remained capable of service to his *last* week. The very *sabbath* before his death, he preached and catechised with great vigor. His zeal carried him to build the *first* meeting-house

in *London*, and thereby opened the way for many ministers, with more freedom, to enter upon greater service. This faithful servant of Christ, is the *last* of the *London* ministers ejected by that sad *Act of uniformity*; few of whom had more *zeals* to their ministry, tho' all of them were too useful to be silenc'd for uninstituted inventions, without such guilt as requires repentance, before *England* be secure. His laborious life is come to an *end*, but then signal kindness did not forsake him; he had often, among other things, desired that he might be able to say at death, *his peace was made with God*: his request was answered in that as well as in the rest; for being desir'd, when *speechless*, to signify his satisfaction, as to his eternal state, by lifting up his hand, he readily lifted up his hand: *Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright, for the end of that man is peace.*

You, his people, have acquitted yourselves to your pastor with great affection and esteem, when the ministerial office is generally despis'd: You have kept stedfast in a giddy age, and lived in peace amidst too many broken churches; yet seriously remember, you have many helps to account for, and must persevere, unless you have begun in vain. It's ground of thankfulness that his recoveries were so frequent, and that God respited his precious life so long. Nevertheless, to be bereaved of him,

whilst

SERM. whilst he remained so useful, is a rebuke,
 XIII. and must be a cause of grief to you, who
 ~~~~~ have lost, in him, an experienced guide;  
 one who was acquainted with the state of  
 your souls, able to resolve your doubts, and  
 obviate your temptations. He is departed  
 who was a *father* to many of you, and af-  
 fectionately loved you as his children. You  
 have lost one who prayed for you; his  
 many prayers are on record for your wel-  
 fare, which always lay near his heart. You  
 will hear no more his importunate calls to  
 awaken you when drowsy and remiss. You  
 will see him no more, till you meet him in  
 the other world; to prepare you for which,  
 his labours were so abundant, and well fit-  
 ted. To that world you are hastning after  
 him; death is not far from any of you;  
 look all to it, that he be not found a wit-  
 nefs against any of you for your unprofita-  
 bleness; which he must be, if you be found  
 graceless *hypocrites*, notwithstanding a *name*  
*to live*. But how great will your mutual  
 satisfaction prove in the great day, when  
 you are found to be his *rejoicing and his*  
*crown!*

SUCH of you as were *nearly related to*  
*him, as a father in the flesh*, are highly  
 obliged to honour his name by a christian  
 walk. Remember his *dedication* of you,  
 by performing your vow. Answer his care  
 in your education, by a sound judgment  
 and holiness of life: be also solicitous that  
 the



the unfeigned religion which descended to you, be industriously propagated to your off-spring.

SERM.  
XIII.  
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I HEARTILY pray, that we surviving *ministers* may have a supply of that Spirit, by which he with the other ejected ministers, were such common blessings, in their solid judgment, truly profitable labours, serious self-denying spirits, and a sincere conversation.

MAY all you his people, his relations, and we ministers, *remember to follow him in faith and sincerity, considering the end of his conversation; Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to day, and for ever, tho' this, with other of his ministers, are fallen asleep.*



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A

FUNERAL-SERMON,

Occasioned by the DEATH of

Mrs. Mary Gravener.

Preached *November 30. 1707.*

EZEKIEL XXIV. 16.

*Son of man, behold, I take away
from thee the desire of thine eyes
with a stroke; yet neither shalt
thou mourn nor weep, &c.*



WE are met together upon an SERM.
occasion, which *exemplifies* XIV.
most of my text in fact; and speaks aloud to all of
us, as well as to them who
most feel the sharpness of
this providence; the wise and blessed God
has executed, on a *gospel-prophet*, that sud-
den breach which he here denounceth be-
tween *Ezekiel* and his wife.

S E C T. I.

SERM.
XIV.

WE have in this verse,


I. A PREFACE, *Son of man, behold.*

II. THE providence whereby he is exercised; *I take away the desire of thine eyes with a stroke.*

III. A CHARGE as to his behaviour under it; *yet shalt thou neither mourn nor weep.* Which, tho' peculiar to the prophet, as to its extent, yet prescribes to all of us moderation in the like trials.

I. A PREFACE, *Son of man, behold:* Where I shall consider, both, 1. *Son of man*; and, 2. The import of the word, *behold.* This *son of man* falls under a two-fold consideration.

I. SON of man, as a mere designation of the holy prophet Ezekiel; q. d. "Ezekiel, my prophet, whom I have called by office to transact in my name with this people, towards thee I'll exert my sovereignty; and tho' thou art faithful, yet, for my people's instruction, I'll take away thy wife with a stroke; that by this breach, and thy behaviour under it, they may be convinced, that I'll not spare them in what they account most desirable; but my judgments shall make haste, and fill them with such amazement,

ment, as shall prevent the outward to- SERM.
 kens of sorrow, yea, overwhelm them XIV.
 in a confused stupefaction." You find 
 it so applied and explained, *ver.* 21, 22,
 23. *Behold, I will profane my sanctuary,*
the excellency of your strength, the desire of
your eyes, and that which your soul pityeth;
and your sons and your daughters shall fall
by the sword, and you shall not mourn or
weep, but you shall pine away for your ini-
quities.

1st *Observ.* NEITHER *sacred offices,*
 nor *real holiness,* exempt men from the
 loss of those outward comforts which they
 most esteem.

HERE *Ezekiel,* a holy prophet, is be-
 reaved of the desire of his eyes. *Abraham*
 burieth *Sarah,* and *Aaron* beholds his sons Lev. x. 2.
 removed by a surprizing stroke. *David*
 cannot preserve his over-valued *Absalom,* nor
Job his children, tho' he offered sacrifices Job i. 5,
 for them day by day. Calamities in this 19.
 life are not peculiar to the wicked, nor are
 saints exempted from poverty, reproach,
 sickness, widowhood, or dying childless.
 Their grace secures not riches, credit,
 health, wife, or children; they hold *greater*
 things by a *more* certain tenure, than they
 can pretend to temporals: Yet these are
 not removed without a reason. For,

1st *R.* THE best may *forfeit* their com-
 forts.

SERM.

XIV.


1 Sam. iii.
13.

Eli, by sinful indulgence, lost his *sons*; and God remark'd his folly by their death, to warn others from the like *connivance* at children's faults. What has God taken away, which was not abused before-hand as an occasion of sin, or not fruitfully us'd by due improvement? There are in the holiest ministers such remains of corruption, as may betray them into such forfeitures as *God* beholds, and their *own conscience*, in time, shall charge them with, tho' others do not perceive them. Who then must not grant, that they who are capable of forfeiting their choicest enjoyments, may well account them loseable, and *find* them so?

Pfal. cxix.
75.

2d R. THE best may *need* the removal of their dearest comforts. When the case is so, the *better* a man is, the more certain is the loss; for his interest in God's covenant assures him of what is necessary to bring him safe to heaven. On this account *David* saith, *In very faithfulness thou hast afflicted me.*

THIS necessity becomes more manifest, when our enjoyments have proved a snare to us. Even wife and children often prove thus, by alienating our affections from God, or abating our bountiful disposition to the poor, or rendring our minds distracted in God's worship, and apter to neglect it; or making us more covetous, or backward to leave this world, or less forward to expose

pose ourselves for the cause of Christ. SERM.
Other blessings become an occasion of *sin* XIV.
 to us; as riches, health, and honour, *when* 
 we grow proud, vain, secure, too much
 pleased with things *sensible*, and forgetful
 of death, and eternal things. When this
 is the fruit of our comforts, if *depriving* us
 of them be the aptest means (as commonly
 it is so) of healing our distempers, and re-
 covering us to a better frame; the loss of
 them is a beneficial *mercy*, and their conti-
 nuance would be a judgment.

THESE may be *equal* need that a com-
 fort should be removed, tho' we shall not ful-
 ly perceive it, perhaps before it's discovered
 by the light of another world. So it is
 when God *prevents* that evil which he
 foresaw would attend the continuance of
 what we desired, or *prepares* us by the loss
 of it, for some future eminent service, great
 suffering, or singular benefit. Herein God's
 infallible foresight provides against our
 wants, before we are sensible of them.

3d R. THE relations of the holiest per-
 sons are *fading* and *mortal*: *All flesh is* Iſa. xl. 6,
grass, and withereth away as the flower 8.
thereof. Departed relations were not only
 under the *ſentence* of death, which would
 force them to die in time, but they have
 often in them the seeds of an early death. Heb. ix.
 When it's so, their days cannot be pro- 27.
 long'd to old age without a *miracle*; and
 has the greatest saint a right to expect mi-

SERM. racles, or the faith which was proper to
 XIV. them? The promise is, that God will
 with-hold no good thing from him who
 walketh uprightly: But not that the same
 thing is alway good, or that it shall be al-
 way continued, when it is transitory in its
 nature.

Ps. lxxxiv.
 11.

4th R. THE inhabitants of *this world*, however good, are liable to share in some calamities; by which God witnesseth against the *apostasy* of mankind.

ALL are the race of fallen man, and as
 Job xiv. 1. such, *are of few days, and full of trouble*. The holy God has left some marks of dislike upon the very earth, the brute, and all mankind. Tho' believers are pardon'd as to *destructive* punishments, yet remains of sin, death, uncertain enjoyment of present good things, want of solid satisfaction therein, and many other afflictions, are some of the *troubles* they are as naturally
 Job v. 7. *born to, as a spark flies upwards*; and the best not exempted whilst they are pilgrims. This stage of *sin* shall not be totally free from *sorrow*, nor that appear a *heaven*, before a conflagration, which join'd with *hell* in a rebellious revolt. The must assured faint, must be removed to heavenly places, before *all tears shall be wiped away from his eyes*.

Inf. I. WE ought to censure none as *wicked*, because bereaved of the most desirable *common* blessings.

WHAT

WHAT a graceless man may enjoy with SERM. God's hatred, another may lose, and yet XIV. abide in God's favour. Yea, that may be taken away from a good man in *mercy*, which is continued to another man in *judgment*. Job was rather tried than punished, and yet was stripp'd of all his estate, children, and health; nevertheless, his friends are blamed, as greatly *ensorious*, for suspecting his integrity, because so remarkably distressed; yea, though his anguish extorted many indecent complaints. Job xlii.

SOMETIMES God's punishments upon a man, are in such *bright* characters, that we consider *not his doings wisely*, if we read that man's *offence*. But they rashly pretend to stand in God's cabinet, who, by outward calamities, judge of any man's state. Such *Cynicks* would be more cruel to poor *Lazarus*, than the dogs who licked his sores; and if they know any faults by themselves, I would have them consider, that the *least sin* is a surer sign, than the *greatest affliction*, that any man is *wicked*. Psal. lxxiv. 7, 9.

Inf. 2. THE *best* men should so prepare for outward troubles, that the greatest may not *surprize* them. As you have spiritual enemies, that call you always to be *armed*, so you are obnoxious to many worldly troubles, any of which will be apt to sink you, if you provide not before hand to bear it. I exhort you not to anticipate afflictions for *needleless torment*, but so to reckon on your common

SERM. common lot, as to be *weaned* from what
 XIV. you over-value, to be more entirely *re-*
 ~~~~~ *signed* to God's will, to live more by faith  
*on Christ*, and things above; to be *better*  
 stock'd with faith, humility, self-denial,  
 and patience, and with such gospel-consi-  
 derations, as contribute to a fixed *sedate-*  
*ness and serenity of mind*. What the gospel-  
 covenant does not *preserve* you from, it's  
 christian prudence to be fitted to endure;  
 and what it promiseth not to continue, a  
 preparedness to *quit it* will make the loss  
 more easy.

2d *Obj.* God's ministers often suffer for  
 the *peoples* instruction: *ver.* 24. we read,  
*Ezekiel is unto you a sign*: He endured  
 this sore loss for *their* warning. God has  
 a sovereign *right* to use his creatures for  
 his purposes, as far as is compensated by  
 the being he gave them, and continues;  
 (he is too good and just to exceed this, ex-  
 cept as a *judge* against delinquents) in that  
 sense *all are his servants*, for he is univer-  
 sal proprietor.

Psal. cxix.  
 91.

HIS peculiar people, by antecedent and  
 promised benefits, are still more obliged to  
*devote* themselves to him; and should they  
 murmur at his disposals, they bring the  
 sincerity of their *dedication* under doubt,  
 and express a contempt of the super-abun-  
 dant blessings which they expect, or else  
 would unjustly hope for them.

*Ministers*

*Ministers* are chosen by God in a special manner; and in *accepting* the office to which he calls them, they consent that he should serve himself of them, by warning and directing others as he appoints, and delivering his mind, whatever it may *expose* them to. And as they are to suffer persecution *from men*, for publishing his truth, so, upon the same reason, they must consent to bear such afflictions by *God's hand*, as he knows will enforce his truth, and make them most effectual to those among whom they are employed. Moreover, what of that kind is inflicted on his ministers, is the likelier warning to *many*, because they are more noted as *publick* persons; and the more convincing, both because they ought to be more *innocent*, and being consecrated to God in a *special* manner, what he lays on them, is a greater signification of his *purposes* concerning those whom God appoints them to transact with and represent.

*Exhort. I.* LET *people* learn to profit by the afflictive providences of God towards their *ministers*.

THEIR *sickness*, their *signal loss* of relations, &c. are designed for your benefit, as well as their doctrine. *Israel* had prevented the severer strokes of God upon themselves, if they had received instruction by the calamity on *Ezekiel*, in this death of his wife. As God gave in *St. Paul* a pattern

SERM. a pattern of *his long-suffering*, to encourage all that should believe; so he gives, XIV. in all his afflicted ministers, an example to awaken all that provoke him by their transgressions. Judgments often *begin* with his prophets, to inforce their ministry. May you be excited to reform by God's taking away *your minister's* wife with a stroke, lest he remove what's most desirable in your eyes, and smite you in what will be most afflictive. God, by trials and temptations, fitteth us to preach; so by them you should be more inclined to benefit by hearing.

2. BUT the term, *son of man*, besides a designation of *Ezekiel's* person, may be intended as an expression to *keep him humble* under his eminent revelations. As no prophets had so many and remarkable visions as he, so no prophet is so oft spoken to under this title, *son of man*.

*Obs.* 3. GOD is pleased to use fit methods to keep his *privileged* servants humble.

Is *Ezekiel* favoured with more abundant visions than others? The wife God minds him of his *low* original, calling him, *son of man* so frequently; I think scarce a chapter without that appellation: *q. d.*  
 “ Tho’ I am thus familiar with thee, be  
 “ not high-minded, for thou art not of  
 “ a sublimer nature, or better *descent* than  
 “ thy fellow-creatures, who are not so entrusted. Thou art made of earth, thou  
 “ wer’t born in sin, and must shortly die  
 “ as

“ as well as others. It’s my condescen- SERM.  
 “ sion, not thy merit, that thou art thus XIV.  
 “ privileged. Thou art but that *worm*  
 “ man, tho’ thus conversant with *angels*; <sup>Job xxv.</sup>  
 “ therefore be not elated in thy opinion of  
 “ *thyself*, nor unthankful for this undeser-  
 “ ved privilege, nor despise thou others.”

SHALL *Jacob prevail in his wrestlings* Gen. xxxii.  
 with God! He must go *lame by a touch* <sup>25, 26.</sup>  
*that disjoins his thigh*, lest he should ascribe  
 it to his greater strength. And a *thorn in* <sup>2 Cor. xii.</sup>  
*the flesh*, the messenger of satan, is given to  
 buffet *Paul*, lest he should be *exalted above*  
*measure, through the abundance of revela-*  
*tions.*

*Exb.* IMPROVE all the methods God  
 takes to keep you *humble*, under your ad-  
 vantages. God *considers our frame*, and  
 therefore as he with-holds not such gifts  
 and encouragements as are proportioned  
 to our employs and difficulties, so he *bides* <sup>Job xxxiii.</sup>  
*pride from man*, and takes care to prevent <sup>17.</sup>  
 our being puffed up by our advantages.  
 Peculiarly eminent favours, gifts, or suc-  
 cesses, are very usual *forerunners* of some  
 sharp exercises. God, who sees our incli-  
 nations to pride, takes such humbling ways  
 to obviate our abuse of his talents. Nor  
 should it be thought needless as to *us*, when  
 God saw those ways meet to be taken with  
 such eminent saints, as *Jacob*, *Ezekiel*, and  
*Paul*. In them we see that neither strong  
 graces, nor the holiest offices, set men be-  
 yond

SERM. yond the usefulness of humbling cautions ;  
 XIV. therefore let not us esteem them useles,  
 nor make them so, but quietly submit,  
 and carefully answer God's end, by sub-  
 duing all proud thoughts, keeping lowly  
 and humble, under all our attainments,  
 and suspicious of ourselves, lest these be-  
 come a snare.

2. I GO on to the second part of the  
 preface, *behold* ; son of man, *behold* ; i. e.  
 attend and consider what I say, and what I  
 perform ; it deserves attention ; for it's cer-  
 tain, it's fit, tho' it's also strange : *Mark*.  
*Ezek. xliv.* 5. *well, and lay it to heart.*

I SHALL not further enlarge on this, than  
 to mind you, that to disregard the word or  
 works of God, is a *contempt* of his sacred  
 majesty ; and to *despise* his chastisements, is  
 the way to bring us under severer distresses,  
 as well as to render those which we feel *un-*  
*profitable*. Moreover, we are especially to  
 take notice *of that* in every providence,  
 which *most* tends to excite our compliance  
 with the design and voice of God therein,  
*viz.* whatever in the providence is fittest to  
 alarm, strikes deepest, and abides longest ;  
 as the surprising *suddenness* of a relation's  
 death, or the like ; for by such things God  
 puts an *accent* on his instructions, and a pe-  
 netrating edge to his rebukes. Neverthe-  
 less, we may observe, that we are naturally  
 so *unattentive*, so apt to mistake, so back-  
 ward to learn and comply, that God sees  
 reason

reason to cry to a holy prophet, under this most awakening providence, *behold*; son of man, *behold*. How much more cause have we to take heed, that we be not regardless and unattentive to God's warnings and dispensations. This leads me to the second general head.

SÉRM.  
XIV.

II. THE providence whereby *Ezekiel* is exercised: *I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke*. It is, 1. A dark dispensation. 2. A very awful dispensation.

1. A VERY *dark* dispensation till God unriddled it. The prophet might ask, as the people did, *ver. 19. Wilt thou not tell us, what these things are to us, that thou doest so?* "Such a breach on thy servant, who is faithfully discharging his trust, and doing thy work; such a wound made in the most tender part, and yet all marks of sorrow forbidden. My wife to be taken away by a *plague*, and I not mourn!" It was a perplexing matter at first view, but God explains the whole, *ver. 21—27*. and then it was very consistent, and easily accounted for. It's a *prophetick emblem* to enforce that message; for the success of which, *Ezekiel* was, by office, to do and bear the utmost; and who, from his *love to Israel*, was willing to have them reclaimed, tho' by a method so *afflictive* to himself.

*Observ.*

SERM. *Observ. 4.* THE darkest dispensation in  
 XIV. due time *will appear* to be wise and just,  
 yea, and gracious towards all who are up-  
 right.

Pfal. xcvi. 2. AT present, *Clouds and darknes* are round  
 about our God, yet still *righteousness and*  
*judgment are the habitation of his throne.*  
 This faints believe, when God's dealings  
 are most obscure, and they least able to  
 solve their difficulties. The providences of  
 God were such, as *Jeremiab* thought he  
 might plead with God about their irrecon-  
 cileableness with, and seeming contradic-  
 tion to, his justice; yet before he will be-  
 gin his plea, he fixeth on this conclusion,


Jer. xii. 1. *Righteous art thou, O Lord.*

OFTEN, in *this* world, good men come  
 to perceive, that what for some time stag-  
 gered them, was very amiable, and best  
 contrived for happy fruits; and they have  
 blessed God for that as a great *mercy*, which  
 they long complained of as the forest *judg-*

Gen. xlii. 46. *ment.* Poor *Jacob* lived to see that his  
*Joseph*, whom he lamented as dead, was  
 only sent to keep his whole family alive;  
 and those *all things which were against him*,  
 were but preparatory to the embraces of that  
 best-beloved son. *David* was so confounded  
 at the wicked's *prosperity*, when himself  
 was *plagued and chastened every morning*,  
 that he *almost* judg'd religion and inno-  
 cence made his case rather *worse* than bet-  
 ter; but he lived to see such wisdom,

equity,



equity, and kindness in those methods of SERM.  
 providence, as to attest, *Truly God is good* XIV.  
*to Israel, to such as are of a clean heart;*   
 and to confess, I was as a *beast* before thee  
 for ever questioning it, and much more for  
 aspersing God's dealings, when he might  
 have sooner understood the reason of them.

*Exhort.* BE assured God orders all things  
*well*, and that you shall *understand how* it  
 is so, in what now appears *least* probable.

You ought now to conclude so concern-  
 ing what's most severe or intricate; how  
 can you do otherwise without *denying* a  
 providence, or *aspersing* the perfections of  
 God, who is the arbiter of it? But tho'  
 you acquiesce now in his steering the helm  
 in his dark retirements, let Christ's answer  
 to *Peter* add to your satisfaction, *What I* John xiii.  
*do, thou knowest not now, but thou shalt*  
*know hereafter* in *this* world, as far as ne-  
 cessary, but be sure *fully* in the other world.  
 What seemed *here* most hideous, terrible,  
 and unaccountable, will *there* afford mat-  
 ter of the highest praise and affecting ad-  
 miration.

2. IT was a very *awful* dispensation; *I*  
*take away the desire of thine eyes with a*  
*stroke.*

I SHALL represent it in a short *para-*  
*phrase* upon the several parts, which are  
 placed as *steps* of aggravation.

(1.) *I, I* THY God, whose favour thou  
 most valuest, whose anger thou most dread-

SERM. est, whose power is irresistible; I, from  
 XIV. whom thou lookest for kind dealings, re-  
 ~~~~~ lieft on for all benefits, and from whom  
 alone thou expectest relief in all troubles,
 upon thy addressees to me: yet, O *Ezekiel*,
 it's *I* who pronounce and execute this hard
 sentence.

(2.) *Take away from thee.* I remove her
 not at a little distance, but as far as one
 world is from the other. I take her away
 not for a short while, but till time shall
 be no more; so as never more to be en-
 joyed *here*. I do not wound, but *kill* her,
 and lodge her among departed souls. It's
 not a limb, but her life, her soul that I
 take away, which will make a carcass
 odious.

(3.) *The desire of thine eyes.* Not a re-
 mote relation, or one of thy children, but
 the *wife* of thy bosom, thy second *self*:
 Not a grievous, provoking, unpleasing,
 contemptible, or ungodly wife, but one
 who was *fit* to be the desire of thy eyes,
 who art a wise man, and a holy prophet.
 Not one that was pleasing for sometimes,
 but is since *alter'd*: no, it is a wife, who
 is now the desire of thy eyes; now so, and
 like to be still *growing* more amiable and
 pleasing. I take her away in the midst of
 your mutual satisfaction, and pleasing so-
 ciety, when you reckoned on a long and
 happy life together, as mutual comforts in
 your pilgrimage, and helps for heaven.

Then,

Then, then, I make such a separation between you, as to put an end to your refreshing *expectations*, as well as to past and present enjoyments. O *Ezekiel*, her person, her cares, her love, her gifts, her graces, are no longer helpful, except by reviews, which will as much heighten as allay thy grief. It's *her* I take to a place whence she can't be recall'd by all thy wants, complaints, or prayers: It's *her* whose place will be always empty, wherever thou didst expect to find her with greatest satisfaction.

(4.) *With a stroke.* Which notes both, 1. The suddenness of her death: and, 2. The severity of the stroke. 1. The *suddenness* of her death: Neither thou nor she shall have any *leisure*. She shall have no warning to secure heaven, if she hitherto neglected it; nor thou further time to wean thyself, or be furnished with more patience to bear her departure. The dispatch is quick, *ver.* 18. (*So I spake to the people in the morning, and at even my wife died;*) thou shalt be about my work in the *morning*, and find a dead wife by the *evening*. 2. The *severity* of the stroke: It was but *one* stroke, but that is a killing one. He smote so, as not to need to smite the *second time*. Husband and wife, body and soul, are separated by this *one* blow of God's giving. It killed as certainly, and more speedily than the *plague*, as the *Hebrew* word signifies. I

SERM.
XIV.



1 Sam.
xxvi. 8.

SERM. shall from this paraphrase collect some observations.

XIV.

Obs. 5. *Afflictive* losses are under God's power and management. He has a right to take away our comforts, and his hand removes them, whenever they are taken away. He saith to *Ezekiel*, *I take away the desire of thine eyes.* He may do so without controul, or cause of complaint, for he alienated not his own property in what he granted us the use of for a time, and that under certain regulations. It's our mercy, that none below him can spoil us of any thing without his permission. The devil could not take away a *sheep*, much less the children of *Job*, till God permitted it, and allowed his wind to subserve their death for his own wise and just ends. On which account *Job* saith, *God has taken away*; tho' it's the devil was the great mover, by soliciting God's permission, inclining the *Sabeans* and *Chaldeans*, and making use of fire and wind, as the means of *Job's* calamities. Instruments are guilty as far as they violate rules of justice or mercy; but tho' God abhors their gratifying their own lusts, which is all they design by the injuries they resolve to act; yet he over-rules their thoughts and agency, by determining them to one object, time, and means, rather than another, as may best subserve his holy purposes, whether for the trial or punishment of him who suffers. So that whether devils

Job i. 21.

or men be instruments, or that we are be-
reaved by his more *immediate* hand, God
is to be acknowledged; and as to every
other sort of rebuke, we are sure, *there is*
no evil in the city which the Lord has not
done.

SERM.
XIV.

Amos iii.
6.

Inf. I. THEY who are impatient under
losses, fret against the *hand of God*. There
our quarrels terminate, tho' we excuse our-
selves, because second causes are more *di-*
stinctly present to our minds. But tho' it
may seem too foolish and horrid to impeach
God *directly* of weakness, injustice, cruelty,
or folly, yet we really do so in our fretful
complaints; and still more *directly* so, as
God's hand is more immediate in the afflic-
tion. *Jonah* pettishly wished in himself to
die, and said, *It's better for me to die than*
live; and grew angry. What was the rea-
son? *Nineveh* was spared, and that *gourd*
wither'd, of which he had been exceeding
glad, when a shadow over him. Against
whom was *Jonah* angry in this roile? It
was against God, who spared the city, and
prepared the *worm* by which that gourd had
withered, which had somewhat allay'd his
grief, under the dreaded reproach of a false
prophet. It was *with God* he was angry.

Jonah iv.
1, 3, 8, 9.

So it is with us, when our relations
(pleasing *gourds*) are taken away by sick-
ness, and we are impatient at it. For as
this impatience is *anger*, so it is directed
against God—against him for *sending* the

SERM. disease, or *not* preventing it, or *not* healing
 XIV. it. If it be not against God that we are
 angry, against whom is it? Could any one
 hinder God's sending the disease, or prevent
 or heal it without him, however it came?
 If you think you are angry only at your-
 selves for this or that omission of means,
 for the recovery of the deceased; or for
 your otherwise *provoking* God to take them
 away: I answer, As far as that omission
 was *voluntary*, it was your fault; but if it
 was not voluntary, and that you acted to
 the *best* of your knowledge, you are unjust
 to be angry with yourself. But suppose it
 was voluntary, and so a *fault*, and that
 you, by *other* sins, provoked God to re-
 move your relation; yet generally the im-
 patient, by what they call anger at them-
 selves for these sins, do but frame an excuse
 to cover their being angry against God.
 They are not so displeas'd with them-
 selves for *other* sins, tho' *greater*; they oft
 fret at their *loss*, when they think not of
 their *sin* with any remorse; and much
 sooner *forget* their sin than their lost friend;
 nor does the hope of the *pardon* of their
 sin quiet them, when they remember their
 departed relation. Restrain therefore your
 impatience, lest you be found fretting against
 your just, good, and faithful God.

Inf. 2. THEY who profit not by afflic-
 tive losses, *bear not the voice of God's rod.*

OUR God is infinite in wisdom and good-
 ness; therefore he has a good *end* in every rebuke. That end is his people's *profit*; and that *kind* of rebuke in every circumstance, is the *fittest* means to effect this profitable end. He is a God of *love*, and therefore *does not willingly afflict*, nor chastise for his *pleasure*. No, it is to make us *partakers of his holiness*, by mortifying our sins, renewing our minds, exciting our graces, weaning us from sensible things, and *fitting* us for greater service and enjoyments. When you answer not these purposes, you refuse to *hear the rod, and him who appointed it*; i. e. the *affliction*, in the *kind* and *nature* of it, teacheth some things; and God, who appoints it, calls you thereby to all which you have need to learn. But if you profit not, you hear neither the voice of the rod, tho' enforced by God's *appointing* it; nor that which God *further* speaketh to you, when prepared by the rod to hearken.

OH what obstinacy and folly do they shew, who improve not by afflictions! *obstinacy*, in not yielding, when the Almighty is, by sharp methods, forcing them to submit; *folly*, in not only losing their comforts without any benefit, but by increased guilt exposing themselves to *sooner* breaches, or to be left to themselves as ir-reclaimable. This last is the most terrible to all, except very obdurate wretches; for

SERM. when God once saith, *Let them alone*, it is next to that sentence, *Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire.*

Hof. iv.

17. *Obs.* 6. DEATH takes away persons from all things in *this lower world*: I take away the desire of thine eyes.

WE say of our dead friends, they are taken away, and they are departed. Death is thus expressed in the scriptures: The

Isa. lvii. 1.

2 Tim. iv.

Luke ii.

29.

righteous is taken away from the evil to come; the time of my departure is at hand; now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.

The reason of such expressions is evident; for when persons die, they leave estates and dwellings; these know them no more; they quit their present work, and the business of this present life; their honourable places are empty; the figure they made is become a cypher.

DEATH separates the soul from the body till the resurrection; when God shall bring out of his *repositories* that of our present body, which shall be sufficient to make it *our former individual body risen again*; tho' made incorruptible, spiritual, glorious, and immortal, by the indwelling Spirit. When men die, they leave this earth with its concernments, and are removed to another region, which has its proper objects, society, and employs. *David* may be judg'd to look beyond his bodily health, and to be desirous to enter into the unseen world in the *best* frame of spirit, and afraid to quit
this

this under backslidings, when he crieth, O SERM.
spare me, that I may recover strength before XIV.
I go hence, and be no more. But whether Pf. xxxix.
 body or soul, or both, be intended, he 13.
 reckons that by death *he went* from this
 world, and was no more to continue an
inhabitant of it.

Inf. 1. HE is *foolish*, in the worst sense,
 who takes his *portion in the things of this*
world.

THERE needs no other reason to de-
 monstrate it besides this; he must *leave*
 all these things behind, when himself must
 live for ever in another place. He will be
 taken away, and *carrieth nothing with him* Pfal. xlix.
when he dieth; his glory shall not descend 17.
after him. It's the character of wicked
 men, *they have their portion in this life:* Pfal. xvii.
 By God's just *judgment* they have nothing 14.
 but misery after this life, which limiteth
 their portion to a short compass: By their
 own *carnality* and *folly*, they take their
 portion in the *things* of life. So that the
 character declares them both miserable and
 vile men, wretched in their *end*, and for-
 did and sottish in their *temper*, who can
 place their happiness in what's so far *below*
 themselves in worth and duration; so far
 from the end of their creation, and the true
 good whereof they are capable, and which
 they forfeit for the sake of these *trifles*, that
 so inordinately gratify them no otherwise,
 than as they are agreeable to their brutish
 and

SERM. and devilish lustings, which *war against*
 XIV. *their souls.*

IN what confusion will a man in this
 1 Pet. ii. state be, when he shall hear that surpris-
 11. ing challenge from an irresistible God?

Luke xii. *Thou fool, this night shall thy soul be requi-*
 20. *red of thee: And then, Whose shall those*
things be which thou hast provided? Who-
 Luke xvi. *soever shall enjoy them, the dead fool has*
 24. *so lost his propriety in, and benefit by*
them, that the rich man cannot procure a
little water to cool his tongue.

THEREFORE pray for wisdom, that you may be effectually convinced of the vanity of riches, friends, honour, and all the things of this world, so as to moderate your love to, pursuits after, and delight in them. Rebuke all *trust* in them, and apply to this, before your *season* of providing a better portion is past; for the emptiness you will then experience, will only aggravate your tormenting *disappointment*, and that for ever.

Inf. 2. MENS greatest concern, is to what place *they are carried*, when taken away from hence.

YOU are not annihilated, but removed. When you go out of *this* world, you go into another, of which we know certainly no more than is told us by *divine revelation*. But by the word of God we are assured, that when you are taken away,

Luke xvi. you will be *carried into Abraham's bosom,*
 22. or



or imprisoned in a state of a lesser misery, expecting a full destruction in hell. What care and concern becomes us in a state of *trial*, when the issues are so extremely different, as compleated happiness and misery? Oh, unbelieving soul, these are realities; and all things compared therewith, will soon appear scarce worth a thought. Ought you not then, with solicitousness, often ask, Whither am I going? *where* must I for ever be?

SAINTS esteem themselves here to be *pilgrims*, because they look for a *better coun-* Heb. xi.
try: Whereas the sensual eat, drink, and ^{13, 16.} pass their time away, but dare not think of any state beyond the present. *Heaven* they cannot hope for, so as to make any serious enquiry into the grounds of their hopes, for they know they are false and vain. Think of hell they dare not, lest the pleasures of sin (on which they resolve) should be embittered by *anticipated* terrors.

CONSIDER where this must end: you are going towards another world, and draw nearer to it day by day; as a present life runs out, the world *to come* approacheth. Dare you leave it to an uncertain adventure, how it shall be with you, whether heaven or hell receive you? Can the unprepared be safe? or he that never thinks or provides for a future state, be prepared for it? Or can he be prepared *at all*, who is condemned by the gospel, which is the
lowest


SERM. *lowest rule* of judgment? The decisive sentence will not be arbitrary, but by rule, and that *without respect of persons*. If that rule were the law of innocence, none could escape; but tho' the gospel rule does admit the salvation of all penitent believers, yet *it* as truly condemns all impenitent unbelievers; and the Lord Jesus will, as *judge*, pronounce no other sentence. By that he will decide the case of all men who lived under the gospel; he will do it *infallibly*, for he knoweth all mens hearts and ways: He will execute that sentence *effectually*, for he is almighty; and it's as impossible to resist him, as to deceive him.

THEREFORE be importunate for the assistance of the *Holy Spirit*, that you may know your state, and impartially *examine yourselves*: *Prove your own selves*: Know you not, that *Christ is in you*, except you be *reprobates*? He must be received by faith as an *entire Saviour*, to secure you, and to reign in your hearts; yea, your temper must be framed in a conformity to his image, or you'll be *cast-aways*, unfit to be admitted into the heavenly mansions. Omit no longer to ask yourselves, Where in the unseen state shall I be lodged, when I depart? There my misery or happiness will be real, endless, perfect, and unmixed; which of these will be my lot? Let all the unconverted pray and labour *now* for sincere grace and holiness; delay not this a moment; for

when

ROM. ii.
11, 16.

2 COR. xiii.
5.

when you go out of *this* world, you are SERM. taken away from *all* the means of grace, XIV. from *all* the helps and hopes of a saving  change. *What thy hand findeth to do, do it* Eccl. ix. *with all thy might; for there's no work, nor* 10. *device, nor knowledge, nor wisdom in the grave, (the state of the dead) whither thou art going.* All thy convictions, contrivances, and labour there, will be unavailable to obtain that *wisdom* which is accompanied with *salvation*.

Obs. 7. THE young and healthy may be *suddenly* surprized by death.

I TAKE away the desire of thine eyes *with a stroke*; one sudden blow dispatches her. All die not by chronical lingering diseases; so frail are men, *that we are crushed* Job iv. 19. *before the moth*; sooner and more easily kill'd, than a moth is crushed. You know not how soon you may be that *one who dieth* Job xxi. *in his full strength, being wholly at ease and* 23. *quiet.* God needs not lay a long siege, but can, in a moment, storm this tabernacle of *clay*, and blow out that lamp of life, which he wonderfully preserveth every moment; it's he who *boldeth our soul in life*, that it Pfal. lxxvi. expires not with every breath; if he *with-* 9. *holds* his Spirit, we die. We have more instances of sudden deaths than usual; you may become the *next*, and will be so, if God direct the fatal arrow to you. He is no more engaged to give you an hour's warning, than to those who had less notice.

SERM. tice. Nor are you more able than they to
 XIV. lengthen life one minute, if he arrest you
 by death, without a moment's summons.

Inf. IT'S our wisdom to be *always ready* to die.

OUR Redeemer's caution belongs to us
 Mat. xxiv. in this case, *Be ye also ready; for in such*
 44+ *an hour as ye think not, the Son of Man*
cometh. Death will seize and carry you
 hence, and you may have *no* notice of its
 approach, but be surprized when likeliest
 to live long, or doing some *vile* thing that
 must increase its terror. Would you die
 prepared, then be never unprepared; for
 you may be struck in the *moment* of the
 greatest unfitness. Many that resolve to be
 good in *old age*, are taken away in their
youth. Too many reserve repentance to a
sick-bed, but are kill'd by a sudden acci-
 dent. The most watchful find dying a
great work, from the sense of a strict tri-
 bunal, and an awful eternity. What may
 the heedless find it, yea, and must, if con-
 science is not seared by infidelity. Each
 of you are either in a state of sin, or in a
 state of grace; its needful that *both* make
 ready.

I. You that are in a *state of sin*, be al-
 way ready, by getting into Christ.

Heb. iv.7. *Whilst it is to day, bear his voice, and*
harden not your hearts. He invites you, he
 pleads with you to repent and believe in
 him. As long as you reject him, by dis-
 obedience

obedience to his gospel-call, you are not ready for death; for *if you repent not, you shall perish*; if you believe not, you shall die in your sins. Death will be found a king of terrors, for it brings you into a state, where you shall feel the pain and loss contained in the *curse of the law*, and the *softer* threatnings of the gospel. At present your condition is miserable; should you die now, you are undone for ever. There's no safety but in flying to Christ for refuge, as the gospel directs; as yet he waits, to-morrow your day of grace may end; yea, *this night* your soul may be required. Trifle not: *Because there is wrath, beware, lest he take thee away with a stroke; then a great ransom cannot deliver thee.*

SERM.
XIV.Luke xiii.
3.John viii.
21.Heb. x.
29.Job xxxvi.
18.

2. You who are in a *state of grace*, be always ready, by abiding in Christ, walking worthy of him, and keeping in a good frame.

PERSEVERANCE is as necessary as conversion; *For if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him.* This is God's caution to prevent apostasy; and the *connection* is true between apostasy and ruin, tho' eventually neither happen.

Heb. x.
38.

Untrimmed lamps also will disquiet, (tho' there be oil) when a *midnight-cry* surpriseth. Decays, doubts, and a remiss temper, unfit a man for death; so do neglects, unfruitfulness, and every particular fall *unrepented* of. Matters are not wisely managed,

Mat. xxv.
6.

SERM. naged, if you allow yourselves a moment
 XIV. in a practice or frame, in which you would
 be loth to be found when death arrests you ;
 for in that moment you may be surprized.
 But you shew christian wisdom, when you
 think, are, and do that *every* hour, as if it
 were to be your last. Therefore avoid what-
 ever nourisheth your doubts, mortify your
 remaining corruptions, dispatch all present
 duty, fill up your places, keep a heavenly
 frame, employ your talents faithfully for
 God, strengthen just hopes, converse much
 with heaven, keep up intimate communion
 with God, and, by christian growth, *add*
grace to grace, as to sorts, degrees, and ex-
 ercise. This is the method to be always
 ready : *So an entrance shall be ministred*
 unto you abundantly, into the everlasting
 kingdom of our Lord and Saviour Jesus
 Christ. Let death then arrest one never
 so suddenly, yet *blessed is that servant whom*
his Lord, when he cometh, shall find so do-
ing. Thus work therefore whilst it's day,
 for the night cometh, wherein no man can
 work.

2 Pet. i. 5,
 11.

John ix. 4.

Obs. 8. THE *wife* ought to be the *de-*
sire of the husband's eyes.

THIS is the epithet and description of
Ezekiel's wife, which argued a great gift
 from God, a wise choice in *Ezekiel*, and a
 good and agreeable temper and behaviour
 in the *wife*. All men ought to make
 choice of such as are likely to be so, and
 not

not rashly, or from covetousness, or other mean considerations, take a foolish, graceless, froward, or unagreeable person, into this relation. On the other hand, *wives* should so behave themselves, as to be pleasing in the sight of the husband; for their mutual usefulness, safety, and comfort, are concerned herein. *Husbands* also should account their own wives desirable, and so carry it, as to encline them to become acceptable, and encourage them when such. An husband is allowed, yea, commanded, to *rejoice in his wife, and be ravished with her love.*

SERM.
XIV.

Prov. v.
18, 19.

THO' I enlarged no further in this sermon on this observation, yet I think it not unuseful to add some things I had occasion to mention in another place, from this part of the text, *the desire of thine eyes.*

S E C T. II.

I. PEOPLE, designing marriage, should make choice of such persons as are likely to be *desirable*, and pleasing to them. So far *Sampson* was in the right, when he said, *Get her for me, for she pleaseth me well.* It's a great *snare* to marry such whose person, temper, or behaviour, are alienating, or unlikely to endear: For it's hard to *esteem* a yoke-fellow, where there's nothing *valuable*, or delight where there is nothing lovely. It's dangerous, or at least uncom-

Judg. xiv.
3.

SERM. fortable, to be forced always to reason and
 XIV. plead one's self to a due behaviour to wife
 or husband. Wisdom would direct people
 to be *sure* of that in a yoke-fellow, which
 will draw forth love, cherish affection, and
 deserve esteem. But it's the height of folly,
 not to avoid every one, where you find
 that which is sure to breed dislike, procure
 contempt, and cause a coldness and weariness
 of each other. Here's no likelihood
 to find the desire of the eyes.

Quest. WHAT are those things which
 are likely to *hinder* husband and wife from
 being the *desire of the eyes* to each other?

Answer. IN the general, those things
 which cause a *great unsuitableness* between
 them. But there is such variety in people,
 that it's hard to instance any things, which
 will have the like effect on all persons; for
 that's agreeable to one, which is not so to
 another. However I will hint some particu-
 lars.

I. ANY outward *defect* or *deformity*,
 to which you still feel an unsubdued aver-
 sion, before marriage is consummated. Some
 can cheerfully bear with that face,
 figure, or behaviour, which another loaths.
 He that can take delight in a person, not-
 withstanding a blemish, or defect, runs no
 great risque; but such as cannot, do lay a
 net for satan to use with advantage. *Leah's*
tender eyes lessened her always in *Jacob's*
 affection.

Gen. xxix.
 17, 30.

2. *Violent*

2. *Violent passion, frowardness, or ill-nature*, unless you are sure your prudence and patience can render these easy to yourselves, and safe to your family. The continual *droppings* of a contentious wife (or husband) will hardly encrease love; nor one be much pleased, when forced to the *corner of a house-top*, to avoid the brawls of a scolding wife. Such a husband will be as uneasy to a wife. Never disregard a good nature, or at least an agreeable temper, in the person you take into this near relation.

SERM.
XIV.

Prov. xix.
13.

Prov. xxv.
24.

3. *Great weakness of understanding*, if your temper leads you to delight in *ingenious* persons, and to despise all others. If that be your *genius*, scarce any thing will put you more to it, than to keep up an esteem of husband or wife, when their folly is at every turn discovered. *Prudence* is a great ingredient in that wife, who is a blessing from the Lord; and much more in a husband: but either will be apt to think themselves exposed by the other's dulness and indiscretion.

Prov. xix.
3.

14.

4. *Ungodliness*, if you are truly pious. If you are graceless, your *like* may please you above a better person. Whilst you are spiritually dead, the want of a spiritual life in a yoke-fellow, will be little minded. Two *dead* carcasses can be together without offence; but a graceless husband or wife, will be a grievous burden

SERM. to a *renewed* mind, and a plague to their
 XIV. offspring. When God converted a *Corin-*
thian husband, how uneasy did an *unbe-*
lieving wife prove? And as uneasy was the
unbelieving husband to the *converted* wife.
 Be sure they would not have chosen such,
 had they been christians before marriage.

1 Cor. vii.
 13, 15.

THEREFORE be afraid to match with a
wicked person. Their vices ought to deter
 your listening to the greatest inducements;
 for what a *torment* will it prove, to think
 your own flesh hates God, and is abhorred
 by him. Will you long *esteem* the devil's
 image, or be *safe* or *easy* where he ruleth?
 What a *loss* and *grief* will it be, to want
 that help and excitement which a gracious
 yoke-fellow would afford, by prayer, edi-
 fying discourse, and good example; much
 more to be solicited to *curse* God, as *Job*
 was by his wife? It will be *afflictive*, to be
 denied the advantage (in so near a relation)
 of uttering the moans of your own souls,
 and imparting your experiences and com-
 forts.

Job ii. 9.

GODLINESS often renders the wife hate-
 ful to the ungodly man, and the husband
 to the ungodly woman. What disputes and
 brawls must arise between such, when dif-
 ferent *opinions* abate the quiet, and dimi-
 nish love, where both are *godly*. But above
 all, the very *soul* of the better relative (as
 well as their offspring) is in danger to be-
 come worse, if not *wicked*, by ill example,
 discou-

discouragements, temptations, and a desire to please. *Solomon's* wives turned his heart from God. Infection is more easily communicated than health. The bad is not so easily reformed, as the good corrupted, because sin has much to befriend it in all of us; the power whereof is daily seen, in many hopeful persons becoming irreligious by bad husbands and wives. *Parents*, and single persons in treaties of marriage, would shew less *unbelief*, and more of the power of godliness, if, *In the Lord*, were justly the poſy of the wedding-ring, and chiefly regarded in matrimony.

SERM.
XIV.



1 Cor. vii.
39.

5. *Great inequality in age*, unless you are very certain of answerable temperance. *Satan* often gets advantage hereby, and the conjugal affection of one or both is frequently lost. Therefore if you marry one much younger than yourself, you had need to be well assured of the sobriety of *their* temper; if one much older, be assured of your *own*.

I HAVE set before you what you should ward against before you marry. If you venture on these, you must vainly hope to find the *pleasure of your eyes* in a married state. Many miserable matches may warn you from suffering covetousness to bribe you, or ambition to tempt you, or importunity to force you, or fancy to bewitch you, to a disregard of these cautions. But if loud warnings avail not, dear-bought

SERM. experience will convince, that neither
 XIV. estates, titles, nor the gratification of a
 ~~~~~ vain fancy, will long maintain affection,  
 or prevent mischiefs, when you betray  
 yourselves into these hazards.

AND yet how many parents sell the health, the comfort, the peace, yea, the *souls* of their children, for a little pelf, when they dispose of them in wedlock? and too few children are advised by such parents as would direct more religiously and prudently.

2. *Married* folk ought to esteem, delight in, and desire each other. The wife should be the desire of the *husband's* eyes, and the husband the same in the *wife's* eyes. When it's thus, you enjoy the great blessing of a married state. On many accounts that state needs this blessing, and without this, its bitter and dangerous. Disagreement and dislikes will embitter all other comforts. You are commanded to rejoice in each other; but this is impossible, if *love* be altogether wanting; for that's the strong excitement, *Live joyfully with the wife whom thou lovest.*

Prov. v.

18.

Eccl. ix. 9.

3. MARRIED persons should be wise, and careful so to contrive and order things, that they *may be desirable* in each other's eyes. Neglects in this will disappoint you of that blessing you had well prepared for in a *right* choice. A due observation of it may prevent the expected mischiefs of an  
*ill*

*ill* choice, and so far rectify it. This direction has two parts. SERM.  
XIV.

(1.) So manage things, as to be desirable *to your yoke-fellow.*

AVOID every thing that may offend or nauseate. Beware of what may expose you to contempt or dislike. Order your tongue, behaviour, and all your ways, as may best create love, and procure esteem? Would you be *loved*? strive to be *lovely*. Would you be *esteemed*? see that you be, and do what's *valuable*. If you are a *Nabal*, <sup>1 Sam. xxv.</sup> will *Abigail* honour you? If you bid *Job* <sup>25.</sup> *curse* God, he'll say, You talk as a *foolish woman*. Let the wife in all lawful things, therefore, approve herself to her husband's liking, and solicitously *care to please him*. <sup>1 Cor. vii. 34, 35.</sup> The same is the husband's duty; and not to be *bitter*, insolent, vexatious, or foolish, <sup>Col. iii. 19.</sup> but *dwell with his wife according to knowledge*. <sup>1 Pet. iii. 7.</sup> Many of both sexes forfeit respect by debasing themselves; and must not you bare the blame, if you are less desired, when you render yourselves undesirable? Folly and imperiousness will bring *contempt and wrath*. <sup>Eth. i. 18.</sup> Be and do what's proper to your place and relation, and it's probable you shall be esteemed and loved; if not, the fault's not *your's*, and you'll find *favour* with God, and peace *within*.

(2.) WATCH your *own minds*, and do your utmost to make your yoke-fellow *desirable* to you.

SERM. Do not strictly observe each other's  
 XIV. weaknesſes, unleſs they be removeable, and  
 with a concern to redreſs them; inſtead of  
 ruminating on their *faults*, often think of  
 what's valuable and praiſe-worthy. Has  
 he or ſhe true grace? let that cover the  
 want of beauty, for it's far more excellent;  
 and if ſuch as have it be deſpis'd, it's a con-  
 tempt of *Chriſt* in one of his members. Is  
 there good-nature and affection? that muſt  
 cover the defect of *wit* and brighter parts.  
 Should husband or wife be ſo unhappy, as  
 to be poſſeſs'd of none of theſe, yet conſi-  
 der it's *my* husband, this is *my* wife; even  
 this puts the conſcience under bonds to a  
*good carriage*, and to as much *love* as is  
 poſſible to be raiſed by prayer, prudence,  
 conſideration, and confinement of conjugal  
 affection from *all others*. It's *my own fleſh*  
 by God's ordinance; and being ſuch, it muſt  
 be *loved and cheriſhed*. Who neglects his  
 own arm becauſe it's weak, withered, or  
 wounded?

Eph. v.  
 28.

THEY are the perſons you received in-  
 to this near relation. If they have been un-  
 agreeable *before* marriage, as to perſon, hu-  
 mour, or parts, bear it now with the more  
 contentedneſs, becauſe it's the natural *fruit*  
 of your indiſcreet choice. If by any *provi-  
 dence* they are *ſince* become leſs ſuitable;  
 to be diſcontented, is to quarrel with the  
*band of God*, and add to the calamity of the  
*innocent*. If their *graceleſs* ſtate be your  
 grievance,



grievance, endure it with the greater submission, as it is the punishment of your sinful choice, if you were *then* a convert: And if you were converted since, let the sense of God's distinguished grace induce you to pity and a tender carriage. But be it before or since, it's your duty and interest to do your utmost for their recovery, and avoid whatever you know in yourself a hindrance to it. If you succeed, you'll have the comfort of *living as heirs together of the grace of God*, to your own benefit, and that of posterity. If you succeed not, their dying miserable will cost you *sorrow* for them, but no piercing reflections on your own sinful neglects.

SERM.  
XIV.



1 Pet. iii.  
7.

I HOPE some readers may improve, and none misinterpret this inserted digression, tho' less proper for a funeral discourse.

*Obs. 9.* HUSBAND and wife, however desirable, must certainly *be separated by death*, and it may be suddenly.

THE band between them holds till then, but death dissolves it, notwithstanding the strongest desires to continue together. Great affection makes a separation to be felt like a tearing limb from limb; but a wise providence indulgeth not creatures fond desires, but fixeth the *bounds* of our satisfaction by rules more sure and fit than we would prescribe. He knows *how long* it's safe to yield comfort by one channel; and when  
it

SERM. it becomes dangerous to continue the same  
 XIV. way, lest by *inordinate* affection we might  
 be ensnared; or to *prevent* a disappointment, which he foresaw by a change of disposition or behaviour. Therefore when the reason for separation is become *ripe*, he spares no longer, however entreated, and often so surprizeth by a *quick* dispatch, that there's scarce room for prayer.

*Inf.* HUSBANDS and wives should live together, as they who *may soon be separated*.

THIS is wisdom, and will be so accounted by the thoughtful, when a separation is made; for this will reduce your roving minds, and shew the folly of taking such a satisfaction in each other, as if you must never part. This will convince you of the sin of all that undue behaviour which is much cherished, by not foreseeing those reviews that cannot be avoided. Therefore so moderate your affections, that the *survivor* may neither become unuseful or scandalous by excessive sorrow; nor be tormented with self-accusations, that their *excessive* love procured the death of the deceased. And neglect not such a circumstance of behaviour, as to avoid any thing that must give bitter thoughts, whether you be the dying or surviving persons, for both will be forced to reflect on your miscarriages, the one when dying, the other afterwards.

MUST you part so soon! then improve each other for heaven, with a diligence becoming the short and uncertain time of doing this, and the vanity of wishing you had done *more* after death has made a separation: Nor will it be always unseasonable to mind each other, that a time of parting will come; for this will excite *diligence* in your mutual duties. And if you have *children*, you'll be more intent to train them up for God, to whose care the dying must commit them. Nor will such discourses be unuseful to a better preparedness to bear the loss, when one shall be removed. This leads me to the third general head.

III. GOD'S charge to the prophet, as to his behaviour upon the death of his wife: *Yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, nor thy tears run down.*

ALL the changes of life have their *proper* duties, and in such duties we ought to exercise ourselves; for those *changes* are opportunities for, and calls to such duties. One part of the duty upon this occasion, if the prophet's case had been left common with others, was to mourn in a godly sort. The tokens of sorrow are allowed the *priest* for near relations, tho' not for others: Lev. xxi. there is *a time to weep*; but when is it seasonable, if not at the death of a desirable wife? Sorrow at such a time is necessary from the innocent instincts of nature; it disposeth

SERMON. disposeth to hear and obey God's voice by  
 XII. the stroke; and not to mourn, would be  
 ❧ to *despise the chastisement of the Lord.*

THEREFORE either *Ezekiel* was forbidden only the *outward* marks of sorrow, or it was a positive *extraordinary* precept, with *supernatural* assistance, enabling him to observe it: And so it was enjoined on him as a *prophetick sign* to serve a peculiar purpose, and not to be a rule to *others*.

BUT tho' we are not obliged to forbear *all* mourning as he was; yet what God said to *Ezekiel* suggests to us a *moderation* in our grief, and prohibits *excessive* mourning under the loss of the best of wives. Due limits are prescribed to all men, but especially to *ministers*, because they are by their *example* to confirm the truth of the doctrine of *submission to God's hand*, and not tempt people to think it's impracticable by *any*; and that therefore either it's no command of God, or none can feel that power in religion as to comply with it.

*Obs.* 10. *Excessive* sorrow must be avoided, tho' the *dearest* relations are taken away.

SORROW is allowed in proportion to the loss, but religion and reason set the bounds which ought not to be exceeded: *Let him*  
 1 Cor. vii.  
 30. *who weeps, be as if he wept not; for the fashion of this world passeth away.* Mourn with the indifference becoming dying men, for dying things under God's disposal.

Quest. *When is sorrow excessive?*

*Ans.*

*Ans.* SORROW is excessive, when attended with *fretting* thoughts against God ; when it hinders a thankful *sense* of remaining mercies ; when it indisposeth to all *delight* in God, and his covenant- blessings ; when it unfits for the *worship* of God, or the duties of one's place ; when it so disorders the mind, that it cannot *attend* to God's voice by the rod, and the considerations which should relieve us under it ; when it impairs the reason or the *body*, by its intenseness, or too long continuance. No benefit we received by our relations, no need we can have of them hereafter, no circumstance in their death, will justify such excess.

SERM.

XIV.

Prov. xix.

3.

1 Chron.

vii 22, 23.

2 Cor. ii.

7.

Gen.

xxxvii. 35.

Job xvii.

7.

SORROW must be esteemed *immoderate*, when it produceth such effects ; for this exceeds the rule God prescribes, and is so *provoking* in his sight, that for a punishment thereof, he often with-holds his support, adds *sooner* afflictions, and permits *satan* to take advantage by mens excessive sorrow, to tempt them to atheism, self-murder, and other evils.

*Repr.* THIS may well *reprove* excessive grief for dead relations. Tho' inordinate sorrow for dead friends passeth with most for a small sin, if not innocent, yea, applauded and indulged as a good-natured and kind thing ; nevertheless it shews great weakness of soul, and includes a world of sin ; for excessive sorrow is *impatience* to a high

SERM. high degree. It proceeds from inordinate  
 XIV. *self-love*, and an extreme affection to crea-  
 ~~~~~ tures, and the things of *this world*. It ar-  
 gues either a *disbelief* of a providence, or a
 great *dislike* of its methods, as foolish, un-
 just, and cruel. There's a mixture of foolish
 softness and pride in him who is guilty, for
 he cannot bear what's common to men, but
 thinks he deserves to be exempted from the
 common lot, and yet can seem to relieve
 himself by *useless* complaints, tho' he knows
 he is past hope of recovering what he has
 lost. In proportion to the excess of sorrow,
 God is less loved as the *supreme* good, he is
distrusted as unable to repair or sanctify the
 loss, and unthankfully slighted, as shewing
 no kindness in benefits still enjoyed, and to
 have done his worst, in taking away that
one which is removed. Ought not a serious
 christian dread what's so sinful and near to
 madness? Must not the guilty blame them-
 selves, and fear the issue?

Exh. YOU the relations of the deceased,
 set *christian bounds* to your sorrow.

I CONFESS, that stroke which took her
 away, gives a deep wound to *many*. The
husband is deprived of a desirable *wife*,
 whom he greatly affected as such, and still
 found growing reason for it.

THE godly parents have lost a lovely
 daughter, who commended their pious
 education and example by her religious
 course, as well as dutiful behaviour; up-
 on

on account whereof they loved her *more and more*, as her life was lengthned.

SERM.
XIV.

Brothers and sisters are separated from a delightful useful sister, with whom they lived in cordial amity, to their mutual comfort and advantage.

A POOR *infant* is the greater loser, because so young as not to know her fitness and concern to promote his godly education; nor further benefited by her as to his chief interests, than as her own covenant-title, her sincere dedication of him, and her many recorded prayers for him, are available.

SORROW is unavoidable, and a duty, where a *just* sense of this rebuke prevails; nor can it be confined to relations, wherein all of her intimate acquaintance are sharers.

BUT it's not so necessary to justify your *moderate* sorrow, as to warn you against *excess*; allow not that, suffer it not insensibly to steal upon you. God has smitten, who cannot injure you: He intends your spiritual *good*, which you will not fail to experience, if you are teachable. You may by this surprize be helped to live and die *better*, and God come to possess that of your affection, which it may be exceeded towards her, or at least that of it which she is now above receiving.

WHEN you weep, let the *saltest* tears be spent for every fault, that upon present enquiries you find to have *provoked* God to remove

SERM. remove this valuable comfort; *lose not* this
 XIV. afflictive season, by neglecting that search
 at present, for you may better discover such
 provocations *now*, than when she was plea-
 santly enjoy'd; and a *godly* sorrow for what
 2 Cor. vii. you become convinced of, worketh *not*
 10. *death, but a repentance unto life.*

OVERLOOK not the comfort which God
 by her dispensed to you whilst she lived.
 Many have enjoyed less in a far longer life
 than her's, which exceeded not more years
 than twenty-five. Yea, how many in that
 short compass have dishonoured religion,
 and broke the hearts of some of their best
 relations.

WATCH, especially, that you *sorrow not*
 as *without hope*; for though her death was
sudden (well at noon, and dead in the even-
 ing) yet she long expected and prepared for
 it. It's true, she is *taken away*, but she
 continued the desire of your *eyes* to the *last*,
 and Christ has taken her to *himself*, and will
 ver. 14. at his glorious appearance *bring her with*
him, to reunite the body in a meetness for
 heavenly places, where she (and you, if
 ver. 17, 18. faithful) shall *be ever with the Lord*. *Com-*
fort one another with these words.

YOU who were most intimate with her,
 are fully persuaded of this: And must not
 that restrain sorrow within christian bounds?
 unless you indulge that *self-love* which re-
 grets her present happiness; for by death a
 believer is immediately cleansed from all *sin*,
 released

released from *sorrow*, highly improved in the divine image (that truest loveliness) and advanced to those sights, employs, and enjoyments *above*, of which the best are *incapable* in our present state. Nor is your hope concerning her, without a satisfying *reason*, when her abhorrence of being thought better than she was, the honesty and plainness of her temper, cause her intimates proverbially to say, *That they who knew her, were sure to know the worst of her.*

SERM.
XIV.

SHE renounced and despised the *world*, (that common rival with God) and took God, Christ, and heaven, for her *portion*; here her *end* and *heart* were fixed. And as a means of greater safety and improvement therein, she preferred a godly *minister* for a husband, before any other person, with far greater advantages as to *this* world. Nor was she disappointed, for both grace and spiritual comfort did grow exceedingly.

IN that *relation* she was faithful and affectionate, forward to receive good advice, delighted in conversing with her husband about *divine* matters, whereby both were improved, and their endearment increased, in proportion to what they saw of God in each other: yea, she was a spur to his diligence, as well as a refreshment in his labours. She was ever *ready* to be inform'd in all things wherein duty and conscience

SERM. were concerned, and as stedfastly *resolved*
 XIV. in following what was *right*. The habita-
 ~~~~~ tion of *God's house* was her delight. On all  
 the ordinances there administred, she at-  
 tended with great solemnity and care to  
*profit*.

BEFORE her admission to the *Lord's*  
*supper*, she (to the great joy of her hus-  
 band) gave an affecting account of the state  
 of her soul, and made most satisfying dis-  
 coveries of her *repentance* from the heart ;  
 a *faith* in Christ, resolved upon any thing  
 for the enjoyment of *him* ; a consent to the  
*whole* of the gospel-covenant, with a sur-  
 render of herself and all to God in Christ.  
 Whereupon, with mutual tears of tender-  
 ness and joy, they afresh resolved to walk  
 together to heaven, and watch over one  
 another in whatever related thereto. This  
 she fulfilled, by being a faithful monitor of  
 whatever was amiss in him, a patient suf-  
 ferer under great pain, and a sincere obser-  
 ver of God's precepts. The *last* sacrament  
 she was very earnestly desirous to receive,  
 because, as she said, *It may be the last that*  
*I may ever receive*.

HER value for *baptism* was such, that  
 she *presented* her former child, and intended  
 to do the same on *this* very day for her last  
 child. The reason she gave for presenting  
 the child with her *own* hands at that ordi-  
 nance, was, that thereby she laid claim to  
 her *own* share in the covenant-favour, and  
 should

should more sensibly *bind* herself to his christian education. But instead of publicly dedicating her child, she, with the foretastes of heaven, solemnly surrendered her *own* soul to God thro' Christ Jesus, in whom she *trusted*, and is gone to that happy place, where her husband and she usually agreed to *meet*, when they were *parting* for any time.

SERM.  
XIV.  
~

HER death was sudden, yet it was long expected, and of late her apprehensions of its nighness were more remarkable, and observed by many. These thoughts of its near approach abated not her *cheerfulness*, tho' they quicken'd her preparation, saying, *There was nothing in death so much to be feared as unpreparedness; and it was the height of madness to have any thing to do at that time, when mere dying was work enough.*

BEING, the night before her death, discoursed with of the *more* blessed society above, than that for which alone of all worldly things she could become willing to *stay here*; with a mixture of smiles and tears, acknowledg'd, that *where evidences for heaven were clear, and some true foretastes of it, it rather required some patience and submission to tarry out of heaven so long; and all that's lovely or desirable in any creature, comes from, and is to be found in the God we go to, infinitely beyond what it can be in any creature.*

SERM. THE communion she enjoyed with God  
 XIV. (as her chief good) in this lower world,  
 was so vitally *relished*, as to create a long-  
 ing for its full enjoyment, tho' by a sepa-  
 ration from a *husband*, in whom she de-  
 lighted to the *utmost* bounds of lawfulness.  
 She was taken away not by force, but with  
 a *full* consent, her desires being strongly  
 raised to the *mansions* prepared by her best  
 beloved *Jesus*, and *mortified* to the honours,  
 pleasures, riches, and all the vain gaieties of  
 this *lower world*. Yea, she often desired,  
 that the apparel prepared for her marriage,  
 were well wore out, that she might show  
 the difference between her own choice and  
 compliance with custom.

DEATH found her on the wing for the  
*higher* regions; and tho' seemingly appre-  
 hensive of some *respite*, yet still dropping  
 directions about her *funeral*, as impressed  
 with a persuasion that it could be at no  
*great distance*. And so it proved; for tho'  
 she joined with her husband in family-  
 prayer, and eat a breakfast with him, who  
 went from her to the publick worship, un-  
 apprehensive of *any danger*; yea, after two  
 hours rest, she was chearful, and so well as  
 to get up; yet no sooner sat in her chair,  
 than she received the *stroke*, by which, in  
 five hours, she was taken away; taken  
 from a world of sin, imperfection, and  
 sorrow too, however sweeten'd by kind  
 and tender relations. O happy *sabbath!*

not

not only to be rid of all that's *grievous*, but to be received into the *assembly of the souls of just men made perfect*, to join in their solemnities, and share in their exalted privileges, with faculties improved to a due *meetness* for both.

THE *use* all of us should make of this providence, is to endeavour, by the grace of Christ, to be so safe and prepared for *eternity*, that the most *sudden* death may neither endanger, nor disturb us. To promote this, I shall recommend two passages uttered by our deceased *sister*: One is, that *she was willing to know the utmost of her duty, and the worst of her condition*. The other is, that discoursing of the near approach of the time of her delivery, she said to a near relation, *I fear no bodily pains; one pang of the horror of conscience, is more intolerable than all the pangs of child-bearing*.

A BELIEVING soul acting always under the power of these, may cheerfully converse with death, and bear its sudden arrests in *peace*; for *faith* is best evidenced by *universal* obedience: And that *hope* is least likely to disappoint, when all that seems to make it suspicious, is *impartially* examined; and none will be so watchful, to avoid all that disturbs our inward peace, (which all presumptuous sin will do) as they who fear the *pangs* of conscience above the forest pains. Such a one can hardly be

SERM. bribed or affrighted to transgress. Our  
 XIV. sister's dread of an *accusing* conscience, was  
 a great help to her *walking* circumspectly,  
 and *dying* with such *peace* and *comfort*.  
 For this guarded and fortify'd her against  
*temptation*; and whenever she *offended*, ex-  
 cited her *repentance*, and hasten'd her ap-  
 plication to the *blood of Christ* for *remission*  
 and healing.

BELIEVE it all of you, a vain mind, a  
 feared conscience, presumptuous hopes, and  
 the allowance of yourselves in any wilful  
 omissions or offences, will fill you with  
 horror in a *dying* hour, unless you are so  
 harden'd by *infidelity*, that nothing short of  
*hell* can force you to consider. But if you  
 Phil. iv. 7. have due regard to conscience, *that peace of*  
*God which passeth all understanding*, shall  
 keep your hearts and minds through *Christ*  
*Jesus*.



An Enquiry into the present  
Duty of PROTESTANT  
DISSENTERS.

Preached Jan. 22. 1711-12.

MARK X. 29, 30.

*And Jesus answered, and said, Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's; but he shall receive an hundred-fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecution; and in the world to come eternal life.*



YOUR blessed Saviour having detected the hypocrisy of the ruler, who seemed very intent to obtain eternal life, he condescends to answer St. Peter's demand, by the words of the text: where you find,

SERM.  
XV.

SERM.

I. THE *cause* wherein the sincere fol-

XV.



lowers of Christ are engaged. Here he expresses it, *For my sake and the gospel's*. In *Matt. x. 29.* it's *for my name's sake*; in *Luke xviii. 29.* it's *for the kingdom of God's sake*. By espousing, adhering to, and acting pursuant to these, the christian proposes to himself the obtaining eternal life. Christ Jesus is the head of the gospel-kingdom; the gospel is the rule and law of it; persons devoted to Christ are the subjects of it: his authority, rights, truths, interests, and honour, they are to maintain and promote by all just means.

2. THE *sufferings* to which they are exposed by their faithfulness to Christ and his interests: *They leave houses, &c. i. e.* we must renounce the most desirable things which oppose our closing with, and acceptance of him, as our Lord and chief good. This is called, *selling all for the pearl of price*. His subjects must also refuse the greatest advantages which would bribe them to be disloyal to him, or treacherous in what concerns his interests and honour; and they must willingly consent to suffer the loss of all their worldly enjoyments, which they cannot possess without renouncing his truth, violating his rules, injuring his rights, or neglecting what's incumbent on them, for the defence and advancement of any of these.

Mat. xiii.  
46.

OUR Lord here enumerates many things, of which nature is fond, as dear relations and estate,



estate. Elsewhere he adds reputation, liberty, ease, and life itself, *Mark* viii. 39. All that makes up the idol of a carnal mind, must be parted with; and the contrary exercises, which are most ungrateful to sense, must be endured, whenever our christian profession requires it. He is no true disciple of Christ, who does not, from the heart, resolve and engage to do this, if called to it; he is no persevering saint, nor an heir of glory, who suffers not imprisonment, poverty, loss of relations, torments, yea, death itself, rather than forsake Christ and his cause.

3. THE believer's *advantage* by his greatest sufferings for Christ: *In this time an hundred-fold, and in the world to come eternal life.* A point not easily believed, therefore our Lord does solemnly attest it, *Verily, I say unto you, &c.* Lest any should think the benefit was designed only for the apostles, or some eminent saints, he extends it to every one that suffers what's necessary to express his sincere devotedness and adherence to the Lord Jesus and his cause: *There's no man that has left houses, &c.*

*Obser.* THEY who leave most for Christ and his gospel, shall be abundant gainers by it.

I HAVE in *three sermons* treated of this observation in the method following.

1. I HAVE explained when persons may be said to *leave* these things for Christ and his gospel.

2. As

SERM.

2. As also *whence* it is, that men, by ad-

XV. hering to Christ, should be exposed to such

hardships. Under which head, I also gave you a large account of the great purposes our Lord subserves, in erecting, maintaining, and advancing his kingdom by these fore trials of his followers.

3. I HAVE proved fully, that they who lose and suffer most for Christ, are great gainers even in *this* world, by being not only free from the present horror and plagues of apostates, but also by the divine comforts, spiritual supports, and profit, from what they endure; as also by a great blessing on what external benefits are continued; which I demonstrated to be in themselves, and in the judgment of the most wise, and experienced, exceedingly better than all the temporal good they can lose for the sake of Christ. 2. In the world *to come*, the advantage is inconceivable, as appeared by comparing the positive good of eternal life, with all the good we can lose by our fidelity; and comparing the endless misery thereby prevented, with the greatest evils it can expose us to in time.

BUT these things, with that part of the application I made in the former discourses, I pass over, and shall now proceed to a fourth *inference*.

*Inf.* 4. IT is true *wisdom* to be well and rightly instructed, in what concerns the honour and interest of the Lord Jesus in

our

our day and place, and to be always ready to quit and lose all for the sake thereof.

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THIS is justly inferred as to both the parts: For,

1. IF, when we suffer, we should take that to be the interest of Christ, which is not so, we shall reap *no* advantage by what we lose or endure, because it's not for Christ, but for our own delusion and mistake that we suffer; which is folly. On the other hand, if we are tried on any point, wherein the interest of Christ really consisteth, but *we, by mistake*, deny it to be so, and refuse to suffer for the profession of it, when called to adhere thereto; in that case we foolishly *refuse* that benefit which our Lord promiseth to his martyrs and confessors, and expose ourselves to the punishments denounced against such as desert his cause. To say, I was mistaken, will not excuse, when by prayer and faithful searches, we might have known the will of Christ, and escaped that error: for the truth and reality of any part of the cause of Christ, depends not on man's judgment. *Paul* was a culpable opposer of Christ, tho' he *verily thought he might do many things against his name.* Acts xxvi. 9.

2. IT is also justly inferr'd, that we should be always *ready* to quit all for Christ and his interest.

FOR it's very common to be convinced, that this or that point is the truth or concern

SERM. cern of our Lord, for which we ought to  
 XV. sacrifice our *all*, and yet refuse to do it,  
 because we have neglected to fix our resolu-  
 tions, and prepare ourselves to part with  
 whatever our adherence to Christ must  
 cost us. Souls thus unprovided of suitable  
 graces, are easily surprized to make ship-  
 wreck of faith and a good conscience, and  
 thereby come short of the advantages which  
 they might reap by enduring tribulations  
 and losses on Christ's account; he having  
 fixed this rule for his distributions, *If we*  
*suffer with him, we shall also reign with*  
*him; if we deny him, he will also deny us.*

2 Tim. ii.

12.

UPON the whole, if it be true wisdom  
 to pursue our highest advantage, (which I  
 have, in the former discourses, proved to  
 consist in leaving all for Christ and his  
 cause) it must be true wisdom to know  
 the cause of Christ, and be prepared to  
 leave all for it, seeing that both are abso-  
 lutely necessary to our obtaining that ad-  
 vantage.

THESE two things being of such im-  
 portance, I shall, in the name of our Lord  
 Jesus, require all of you to comply with  
 these following exhortations.

I. LABOUR to become rightly *instructed*  
 in what concerns the rights and interest of  
 the Lord Jesus.

THIS *needs most care* and sincerity, be-  
 cause it's often intricate; we are too apt  
 to mistake, and many forward to seduce

us;

us; and their suggestions which tend to avoid sufferings, have a great advantage in our present state.

SERM.  
XV.

THIS matter is *worthy of all our diligence and labour*; for it's a great blessing to understand what God would have us espouse, abet, and be zealous for. It's no small honour and privilege to be possessed of the cause of Christ, and be of the number of those who *have the testimony of Jesus, and keep his commandments*: for then we are led by his Spirit, we keep in his way, we are on his side against Satan, in that war which is waged between them; of which we are informed by those words of our Saviour, *He that is not for me, is against me*. Again; when we have the cause of Christ in our hands, we may expect his assistance, and shall be inwardly satisfied that we are pleasing him, to whom we are indebted, and on whose favour we depend for all happiness. We are also carrying on his designs in our day, which must appear glorious, and in due time prevail. Such things will give us peace and courage under all the hardships to which we can be exposed; saying, with the apostle, *According to my earnest expectation and my hope, that in nothing I shall be ashamed; but that with all boldness, as always, so now also, Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death; for to me to live is Christ*.

Rev. xii.  
17.

Mat. xii.  
30.

Phil. i.  
20, 21.

THAT

SERM. THAT I may assist you in discovering  
 XV. the rights and interest of our Lord, so that  
 you may not mistake in what ought to direct your practice, I shall,

I. SET down seven propositions as preliminaries.

II. I SHALL apply them to a question now depending, and of great consequence to us *Dissenting Protestants*.

## S E C T. I.

I. I SHALL set down seven *propositions* as preliminaries to the determination of the intended question.

Prop. I. *The Lord Jesus hath a cause in this earth.*

IT is so, whether many understand it or not; it's so, tho' it lies near the hearts of few. This ought to have place in the prayers of saints in all ages; as *Psal. lxxiv. 22. Plead the cause, which is thine own.*

OUR Lord having laid down his life for the redemption of mankind, according to that covenant, which adjusted the terms of the impetration of saving benefits, has *all*  
 Mat. xxviii  
 18. *power given him.* He sets up a kingdom more visibly *mediatorial* than before; and a gospel-state, with many institutions, bearing a peculiar respect to his authority and  
 Eph. i. 22. purposes as God-man Mediator: *He is head over all things to his church,* for the gathering,  
 ing,

ing, managing, ruling, preserving, and improving the church, as his inheritance and reward. Of him is that spoken, *He shall build the temple of the Lord, even he; and he shall bear the glory, and shall sit upon his throne, and be a priest upon his throne.* His authority is incontestible, and his claim to honour and observance inviolable, in whatever beareth his royal stamp, or is appropriated to him in opposition to his rivals; or is any part of his intended conquest over the devil, the world, and the flesh.

SERM.  
XV.  
Zech. vi.  
12, 13.

THEREFORE, whatever truth he commands men to believe, what laws he enacts to be observed, whatever discipline, ordinance, and office, he institutes, and what he reveals to be his purpose to effect by these, are his cause and interest on earth, whoever do oppose them. It's the concern of his dominion and honour, that these prevail; and before he delivers up his kingdom, *he will put down whatever is contrary* hereto.

1 Cor. xv.  
24, 28.

Prop. 2. *Every degree of reformation is so far the cause of Christ; and this is abetted by all those who promote it in a proper way.*

WHEN our Lord had asserted his authority, he requires his apostles to go *and teach all nations, to observe all things whatsoever he commanded them.* He has appointed the rule, (the nature and perfection of it I shall speak of hereafter) an exact conformity to it

Mat. xxviii  
20.

SERM. it is required; every deviation from it is a  
 XV. fault; the enacting any thing opposite to  
 any part of this rule, is a challenge to the  
 authority of Christ who appointed it, and  
 a diminution of his honour. Therefore  
 when attempts to reduce things to this true  
 standard succeed; then his interest prevails;  
 and they who use due means to effect this,  
 their endeavours are laid out for what the  
 Lord will acknowledge to be his own cause.

2 Chron.  
 xix. 4.

As it's said of *Jehoshaphat*, when he re-  
 stored the worship of God, and took away  
 the idolatrous groves, *he brought the people  
 back unto the Lord*; so when the gospel in-  
 stitutions are corrupted in any degree, they  
 who recover men from such defiling usages,  
 do truly bring them back to the Lord. It's  
 the same as to reformation in morals; for  
 one great design of Christ is, *to turn away  
 every man from his iniquity*, and make them  
*zealous of all good works*.

Acts iii.  
 26.

Tit. ii. 14.

Prop. 3. *The interest of Christ is con-  
 tained, sometimes in greater and plainer  
 things, sometimes in lesser and more obscure  
 things.*

WHEN the apostle is erecting the king-  
 dom of Christ among the pagan Gentiles,  
 he first attempteth to bring them to know  
 and worship the one living and true God,  
 and to turn from idols, *Acts xvii. 23—30*.  
 But he proceeds from what was revealed  
 by natural light, to that which was revealed  
 by inspiration, *ver. 31*. The like you find,  
*1 Thes. i. 9, 10*.

AMONG



AMONG the *Jews*, who worshipped the true God, the first efforts of our Redeemer's kingdom, consisted in bringing men to acknowledge him to be the *Messias*; this was the grand point debated among them; and the apostles apply themselves to the proof of this, as the great fundamental on which other things depended. When the *Jews* and others came to believe and receive this, the interest of our Lord prevailed as to this great fundamental.

BUT did the apostles think the cause of Christ extended no lower or farther, when this great article was gained? No, no; they zealously assert that Christ had an interest in matters of less moment, even in institutions opposite to the *Mosaick* rituals and oeconomy; and that it was as truly his cause, that these last should be laid aside, as that they should believe him to be the *Messias*; for when the judaizing christians were resolved to retain circumcision, the apostle tells them, *If you be circumcised, Christ shall profit you nothing*; q. d. your believing him to be the Christ, will not avail you to salvation, if you refuse that liberty from the *Mosaick* yoke, which the christian institutions introduce.

THE same apostle shews, that other usages and Jewish rites, as those about *meats, new-moons, &c.* were contrary to the interest of Christ, *Col. ii. 16, 17, 20.* yea, all *vain deceits after the traditions of*

SERM. *men, and rudiments of the world, and com-*  
 XV. *mandments of men, are alike prejudicial to*  
 his cause, and the welfare of souls, *Col.*  
 xvi. 8, 18, 22, 23. The black mark laid  
 on them is, they are *not after Christ*; they  
 are not according to his rule, and bear not  
 the stamp of his authority; they correspond  
 not with his designs, and serve not his pur-  
 poses; they are unlike his spiritual institu-  
 tions, and suit not his kingdom. Can any  
 man imagine that the interest of Christ is  
 not concerned in opposing these lesser things,  
 when we see them thus branded by the  
 Holy Ghost?

WHEN matters are comparatively small,  
 they do not thereby cease to have a place in  
 what our Lord now reckons to be his inter-  
 est, any more than the removal of the  
 less faulty groves and high places in *Judah*,  
 ceased to be his concern. In some groves  
 and high places *idols* were worshipped.  
 There were also high places wherein the  
 people *sacrificed unto the Lord God only.*  
 These latter were far more innocent than  
 the former; and yet were so offensive to  
 God, that *Asa*, *Jehoshaphat*, and many  
 good kings who destroyed the idolatrous  
 high places, are stigmatized with this de-  
 fect, that they took not away those other  
 high places; and *Hezekiah* and *Josiah*  
 commended, as reformers more pleasing,  
 faithful, and zealous for God, because they  
 destroyed these as well as the others.

Prop. 4. *The servants of Christ are obliged to adhere to his interest in those very things which may appear small in their own nature.* SERM. XV.

THEIR character and duty it is to follow the lamb where-ever he goes. They must, with Caleb, follow him fully, and wholly. Whatever he adopts to be a part of his cause, is sufficiently great for them to espouse, and of too great moment to be neglected by them. Nothing of the concerns of the Redeemer should be despised as small, because his authority is great, all his affairs are wisely adjusted, and the least, conducive to great ends. Every pin in his temple is necessary, and designed for its proper use. Rev. xiv. 4.  
Num. xiv. 24.  
ch. xxxii. 12.

WE may not know (nor is it fit we should) what use he will make, or the high purposes he intends to serve, by what seems to us of small account in itself. But we may easily judge, that adhering firmly to the *least* point, which Christ is advancing, is a means to prevent the opposite corruption, and will (if it be his time) proceed to further steps in what promotes his kingdom.

AGAIN; a faithful opposition to a lesser corruption, is the way to prevent *greater* defilements; whereas complying to admit of the least, is opening the way for greater, and for more in number. St. Paul judged it his duty to contend earnestly with St. Pe-

SERM. *ter*, and others, when they forbear to eat  
 XV. *with the Gentiles*, and thereby encouraged  
 the judaizing christians in their separation  
 from the Gentile converts, *Gal. ii. 11, 13.*  
 Yea, he declares this liberty he strove for,  
 to be the *truth of the gospel*; and however  
 inconsiderable a point it seemed, he would  
*not give place, no not for an hour*, to such  
 as would abridge him or others of any part  
 of it, *ver. 4, 5, 14.*

ANTICHRISTIAN *popery* began in a violation of the laws and rights of our Lord in what appeared *small* and inconsiderable in their own nature. These being neglected, gradually introduced abominable idolatries and usurpations, which polluted and enslaved the far greater part of the christian church. This had not been, if men had discharged their duty, by cleaving to the cause of Christ in those first encroachments.

MOREOVER, our Lord may fix on the smallest matters, as a *trial* of our obedience and sincerity towards him; nor can we be free from much guilt, if we are disloyal and unfaithful to him in the least matters. God denounced great punishments against his people *Israel*, if they disobeyed or departed from those ceremonial injunctions, which had nothing in their own nature to commend them, or dissuade from them. But God took care to vindicate his own authority, for with him  
*rebellion*

rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft; though SERM.  
*Saul* thought the goods consecrated to a XV.  
 holy purpose, and that they would have  
 been waited, if he had observed God's com-  
 mand, 1 *Sam.* xv. 23. Our redeemer puts  
 his cause into the hands of his followers, he  
 trusteth them whom he calls to be *witnesses*  
 to him: he that will be false to Christ in a  
 small matter, will betray his interest in a  
 greater point, if tried. He that against his  
 conscience will comply with *superstition*,  
 will in great danger yield to *idolatry*; for  
 his deserting the testimony of Christ in the  
 one, argues that want of love, zeal, and  
 devotedness to Christ, which will suffer  
 him to deal treacherously in the other: and  
 denying the authority of Christ, by offend-  
 ing in the lesser matter, he is so virtually  
*guilty of all*, as to be easily induced to com-  
 mit the greater, *Jam.* ii. 10.

Prop. 5. *When, and where, any part of  
 the cause of Christ becomes publickly con-  
 tended against, and is attended with great  
 consequences, that becomes the point by which  
 he will have the fidelity of his servants tried  
 in that time and place.*

THE Lord Jesus, in his contests with  
 satan, conquers by degrees, and is conti-  
 nually managing the war stated between  
 both their kingdoms, by proceeding to take  
 away more refined defilements and defects,  
 after he has removed such as are more no-  
 toriously enormous. In like manner, after

SERM. he has made considerable advances in the  
 XV. greater and more manifest affairs of his  
 kingdom, he introduceth what is further  
 compleating, and perfecting of that purity  
 and order which his rules appoint.

ON the other hand, the devil (with his  
 acted auxiliaries) maintains the opposition  
 as long as he can, is active to retrieve what  
 he has lost; with vigor and craft attempt-  
 ing to overthrow what Christ has built up,  
 or at least to obstruct those further advances  
 of truth and purity, which are nearest to  
 a full conformity to the laws of the Re-  
 deemer. And as his subtil suggestions, and  
 what gratifies the various lusts of men, give  
 him a great advantage; so he neglects not  
 to use it, in disputing every inch of ground,  
 in those several ways, as he thinks most ac-  
 commodated to his purpose in every age and  
 place.

A WISE observer of past times, may  
 easily trace this *serpent's* attempts, some-  
 times by *errors*, and these often from one  
 extreme to another; or descending to such  
 as were less dangerous, when the greater  
 doctrines prevailed; or new vamping such  
 old errors as were exploded.

SOMETIMES he has taken occasion from  
 the *ignorant* devotedness of good people,  
 or the wanton fancies of men less serious,  
 to corrupt the worship of God by human  
 inventions; or by the ambition of the pow-  
 erful, further to usurp the rights and royal-  
 ties

ties of our blessed Lord, by imposing such things; and no wonder if by the blind zeal of such proud and carnal persons, he soon raised persecutions, silenced those faithful ministers who resisted such invasions on the prerogatives of Christ, to the ruin of his discipline, destruction of love, and the true christian oeconomy.

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YOU may easily infer, that there is in various times and places, *a present truth*; that is, a truth which Christ is then propagating in a special manner, and satan opposing by the contrary error. In like manner, there are present corruptions, from which the faithful should be especial careful to *keep their garments undefiled, as those few in Sardis did*: So in various times and places, the Lord Jesus has several points of reformation to advance, and parts of his testimony to be attested.

2Pet. i. 12.

Rev. iii. 4.

WHEN any one of these is openly staged, generally, or by many, warmly contended, and attended with great consequences, to the great advantage or detriment of the church, as to its spiritual worship, peace, and the power of godliness; you may be then assured, that providence has fixed that matter, as the present point whereby the servants of Christ shall be tried. And however inconsiderable the matter is in itself, the *right side* of it is his cause, to which they must adhere as their great duty at present, whether it consist in promoting his

SERM. attempts of further reformation, or oppo-  
 XV. sing Satan's efforts to overthrow what Christ  
 has gained. Nor will other uncontested  
 matters, tho' greater in their own nature,  
 give equal evidence of any man's loyal sub-  
 jection to the Lord Jesus.

Prop. 6. *The way to know what is truly  
 the cause and interest of Christ, is a diligent  
 study of his word, fervent prayer, and a  
 wise observation of providence.*

THE apostasy made that change in our  
 state, that the light of nature is not fit to  
 direct sinners, in what concerns the wor-  
 ship of God, man's recovery, and the Me-  
 diator's interests; therefore God, by inspi-  
 red revelation, or other supernatural ways,  
 has prescribed what worship he will accept,  
 and what means he will bless to spiritual  
 purposes. He thus, before the law, ap-  
 pointed sacrifices, circumcision, and a priest-  
 hood. When he erected in *Israel* a church,  
 he gave them laws and ordinances concern-  
 ing the most minute matters which referred  
 to his worship and service, requiring an ex-  
 act observation of his will in every parti-  
 cular, forbidding them *to add or diminish  
 any thing*. The very tabernacle must be  
 made after the *pattern which God gave  
 Moses*. And of all utensils, priests gar-  
 ments, &c. it's often repeated, *they made  
 them as God commanded Moses*. In like  
 manner, all after-changes, as to the tem-  
 ple and worship therein, were under God's  
 immediate


Deut. xii.  
32.

Exod. xxv  
8, 9.

Exod.  
xxviii.  
4, 5.



immediate directions to *David* and *Solomon*, SERM.  
 1 *Chron.* xxviii. 11, 12. and 2 *Chron.* viii. XV.

14. And when *Hezekiah*, *Josiah*, and  others, set on the work of reformation, it was by the word of the Lord; and they bring things back to his pattern, 2 *Chron.* xxix. 17. and xxx. 16. 2 *Kings* xxiii. 3, 21, 24.

IN the *christian* state there is equal need of supernatural revelations, as to the laws and ordinances relating to it; yea, there's more necessity, because the rights, claims, and ways of communicating benefits by the Mediator, as such, are more remote from the light of nature, and less fit to be adjusted by human skill. Our Lord Jesus has personally on earth, and more fully by his inspired apostles, recorded so much as, with what was written before, is sufficient to declare his will concerning these things, and that so amply, as to be profitable for doctrine, <sup>2Tim. iii.</sup> for reproof, for correction, for instruction in <sup>16, 17.</sup> righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works.

HEREIN he declared what are the laws and institutions of his house, the terms of communion of saints, the manner and matter of worship, the nature, power, and qualifications of gospel-officers; what service he will accept, what means he will bless to saving ends; what are the articles of our faith, the nature of his kingdom, &c. and gave particular precepts concerning them.

THERE

SERM. THERE are indeed some general rules, as  
 XV. *that all be done to the glory of God*; which  
 requires our aiming at his glory in all acts  
 of obedience, and regulating all our common and indifferent actions with the greatest tendency to his glory, upon an impartial weighing of all circumstances. But this rule does by no means allow men to invent, of their own heads, any part of divine worship, or make any additions or alterations, that argue an imperfection in those particular rules which direct the matters that refer thereto; because this is so far from being to the glory of our Lord, that it highly reflects on his wisdom and goodness; on his *wisdom*, as if he knew not how to accommodate his rules perfectly to the glory of God, and the necessities and benefit of his church; on his *goodness*, that in matters so nearly relating to the edification and peace of his church, he could have made full provision, but would not. Moreover, it is dishonourable to him, as it equals mens authority with the authority of Christ, in that they make laws about the same matters, and to the same spiritual purposes, which his own laws are sufficient for. And their doing thus, in things about which he has forbidden all additions and changes, is not only to *set their posts by his posts*, but far above them.

ANOTHER general rule you find, 1 Cor. xiv. 40. *Let all things be done decently, and in*

*in order.* This is to prevent shameful disorders and confusions in the prophets exercise of their gifts in the church, and can require in other cases no more than that we perform all things with that comeliness and order, as that our doing otherwise would, by the light of nature, or warrantable custom, be judged unseemly and disorderly.

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BUT this general rule must be sadly wrested by those who, to please their fancy, make orders, by which the institutions of our Saviour must be better regulated, more adorned, and more pompous; and thereby so insult the particular rules he has enacted about the administration of his ordinances, that whosoever administers or attends them exactly by those rules, he does it *indecently*, and in a *disorderly* manner. This is a bold impeachment also against Christ and his apostles, as acting unseemly and disorderly in the examples they give us; for their practice in these matters we take as a part of the rule, by which we act in these sacred affairs.

IT must be yet stranger, that any should, by this rule of *doing all things decently and in order*, be warranted to require ridiculous, unseemly, light usages, attended with *confusion*; and this in divine worship, which ought to be grave, sedate, solemn, spiritual, expressive of the exercise of inward graces, and a disposition for communion with the living God,

OUR

SERM.

OUR Lord Jesus was as *faithful in his*XV. *house as Moses*; which may assure us, that


Heb. iii.

3, 5.

he has given *sufficient* directions about his worship, sacraments, the qualifications of ministers, communion of saints, &c. by the particular rules contained in the precepts and examples recorded in the scriptures, or by clear consequences deduced thence.

Therefore search and study those, pray  
2Tim.ii.7. that *the Lord will give you understanding*

*in all things* which concern you, as directed by these: *To the law and to the testimony appeal* in all these cases, *Isa. viii. 20.* for you can do no more in *faith*, or as obediential acts in sacred matters, than as you rest on the word for light. When the church arrives to the height of these rules, it will be perfectly reformed; as far as it comes short, it is defective. Whatever is

*contrary* to these, is rebellion; and when wise men dare teach the *fear* (or worship) of God by the *doctrines of men*, he threatens *their wisdom shall perish*.

Isa. xxix.

13, 14.

To *add* to these rules, is an usurpation of the rights of our Lord, and such additions are profane and polluting; they make not worship acceptable, but provoking; they are so far from rendring it more available, that Christ saith, *In vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men*. Whereas in following the rules of Christ, we may expect a blessing to spiritual benefit, and acceptance with him.

Mat. xv.

9.

him. In adhering to these, when contended, we are faithful to *his* cause, who is too jealous about sacred things, to leave to mens determination more than external circumstances, necessary and common to other natural actions; and not this neither, without such limits as make these subservient to the conveniency, and consist with the edification of such as worship him.

I MENTIONED *a wise observation of providence* as a help to know the interest of Christ. As to this, my time will allow me to say no more, than that it will be of use to us in this matter, to observe what providence appears to design effecting, what prophecies it is accomplishing, how it has influenced the minds of the most eminent saints as to the things disputed, how it has owned such, when they faithfully adhered to what they judged to be his interest; what effect one or other of these, or of things of the like nature, has had heretofore upon the *vitals* of religion, and what these are like to have for the future, &c.

Prop. 7. *When espousing and adhering to the present contended interest of Christ, is attended with sufferings, the best men have reason to be jealous, lest their judgment be prejudiced or biassed.*

THERE'S naturally in all men an aversion to suffering, which prompts them to wish they were not obliged to endure hardships, especially if severe. The *flesh* is altogether

SERM. together an enemy to tribulation, and strives  
 XV. to weaken the force of all those reasons  
 ~~~~~ which urge the necessity of losing honour,  
 estates, places, ease, liberty, or life. It
 will find a thousand excuses, and offer
 numberless arguments against quitting such
 desirable things; such as, that the matter
 is too small to lay such a stress on it, it's an
 indifferent thing with many, all good men
 are not agreed in it; were it denying the
 Lord Jesus to be the Messias, or worship-
 ing an idol, it would require the loss of
 these things; but at most it's but comply-
 ing with what's a little less pure, a little
 more distant from the rule of the gospel,
 &c.

As far as the flesh prevails, such reason-
 ings will much affect, and appear stronger
 than plainer arguments on the other side,
 especially if God permit satan to manage
 them by his suggestions. There being
 remains of flesh in the holiest of you, it's
 meet that you be jealous of yourselves, and
 make allowance for the advantage which
 the corrupt part has to blind and deceive
 you.

THEREFORE pray earnestly, that God
 would direct and determine your judgment;
 Gal. i. 16. *Consult not with flesh and blood*; consider
 impartially the *word of God*, and by that
 decide concerning your duty. Judge as se-
 dately as the importance of the matter re-
 quires; judge as impartially, as if you were
 judging

judging for another man: see that you are SERM.
upright in heart, for *integrity* will go far XV.
to guide you; whereas a false heart will Prov. xi.
 easily deny that to be the cause of Christ, 3.
 which exposeth to suffering.

FINALLY, when you are enquiring whether it be the cause of Christ, and that you are now called to suffer for it, have it on your mind, and decide it, when you are in the most heavenly frame, when grace is in the liveliest exercise, when your communion with Christ is nearest and most affecting, and your hearts relishing the hopes of eternal life, to a just contempt of this present world.

S E C T. II.

II. I SHALL *apply* some of these propositions to a question now depending, and of great consequence to Dissenting Protestants. The question is,

Whether the members of Protestant Dissenting churches lawfully may altogether statelyly desert our publick assemblies for worship, as a qualification to hold their present offices?

THE question might be farther extended, and determine concerning many others, besides the members of our churches.

BEFORE I fully state and explain the question, I shall consider the *subject* of it,
viz.

SERM. *viz.* the *members* of Protestant Dissenting
 XV. churches. Their present relation to these
 churches, is a publick signification that
 they are convinced and persuaded in their
 consciences, upon what they think just
 grounds, that the points in difference be-
 tween us and the legally established church,
 are such, and so circumstantiated, as therein
 we are, on the side of the interest of Christ,
 and his cause is in our hands; and being
 so long and publickly debated, and now at-
 tended with such consequences, they be-
 come the present trial of their fidelity to
 Christ and his interest; though the points
 in their own nature are not so essential as are
 many other points in religion.

WHEN they by their practice declare
 this to be their settled judgment, they yet
 acknowledge the great piety and worth of
 many who differ from them in these mat-
 ters, as thinking them too inconsiderable to
 bear that stress which we put on them.
 Nor do we think the faults, which we de-
 sire to be rectified, to be such, as to exclude
 those from being churches of Christ, who
 retain them; yea, we approve that our own
 members should testify their charity, by oc-
 casional communion with them.

IT would be censorious to doubt, whe-
 ther pious good men, who are members
 of dissenting churches, are so upon princi-
 ple of conscience? Many have testified, by
 their sufferings, that they are convinced the
 grounds

grounds of their dissent are just, and that it's the cause of our blessed Lord to which they adhere. I shall very briefly represent what they generally apprehend of these things. (1.) As to the nature of them. (2.) The circumstances and consequences of them as they fall under the former propositions.

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(1.) As to the *nature* of them. They believe, according to *Prop.* 6. the sufficiency of the scriptures as a rule of faith and practice, and that Christ has given *particular rules* as to sacraments, with other acts of worship, the terms of communion of saints, the sorts, qualifications, and work of the officers of his church, and the discipline thereof.

HE has authorized no man to alter, take away, or add hereto, without divine revelation; there being the same or more reason to forbid such alterations in these, as in the statutes given to *Israel* about matters of the same nature, *Deut.* xii. 32. And what power Christ has given to any, as to such things, it is for *edification* therein by scripture-rule, *and not to destruction.* ^{2 Cor. xiii.} But notwithstanding this, men assume to alter and add to these things, in derogation of Christ's authority and wisdom. ^{10.}

WHAT we insist on is, that those things be conformed to scripture-rule, which are capable of being directed by that rule, and were designed by Christ to be so. We ac-

SERM. count the changes and additions to be such,
 XV. that upon the same grounds as these are
 imposed, (though called *indifferent*) all ministers qualified as Christ appoints, may be incapable to be ministers, or act as such; and all saints qualified for communion of saints, to the full of what Christ requires, may be made incapable of communion of saints: for many things of the same kind may be added, as warrantably as a few; and what are enjoined, minister such ground of scruple, as may very possibly be generally scrupled by others, as well as by us.

I SHALL hint only at a few: Some ceremonies (as the *cross*) are made so significant and akin to sacraments, that they who deny them to be sacraments, have no good reason to deny it, but that Christ did not institute them, tho' used to the same spiritual purposes. Again; such persons as are neither the parents nor proprietors of the *infants*, are required to dedicate them to God, personate them in the baptismal vows, and to claim the covenant blessings for them; whereas it's only the believing parent or proprietor, to whom God has assured such blessings for their infants, or given a right to dedicate or put them under the obligation of such vows.

IN addition to the hint above concerning ceremonies, it's observable, that several ceremonies of the *same* sacred significance were observed in the church of *Israel*, but
 God

God entrusted none of them to man's direction. Our Lord removed those, and made a freedom from them a part of that christian liberty, wherein we are commanded *to stand fast*. Have we not reason to infer, that if Christ had thought such ceremonies suited to the spiritual and rational nature of his kingdom, he would not have abrogated those which were of divine original, to make room for such as are invented by men? Or is it probable, that if Christ had judged *rites* of the same sort fit for the christian church, he had not himself appointed them, and not left them to the judgment and choice of fallible men, naturally apt, and often tempted to mistake, to exceed, and to be more zealous for their own inventions, than the institutions of our blessed Lord?

IF those things mentioned, *Col. ii. 16, 27.* about *days, new moons, sabbaths, meats, &c.* are the *Mosaic* institutions, and *shadows* of gospel-mysteries, (as many think) they are forbidden, because *the body is of Christ*; i. e. he introduced, possesseth, and dispenseth the substance opposed to these shadows; the very same is as strong an argument against the like shadows after his coming as before; for the *body is of him* now in greater evidence.

IF (as others think) those shadows were such as the *Jews*; or (as others think) they who were *christians*, invented of their own

SERM. heads, that text does expressly condemn
 XV. them, and all such representing inventions.

As to a *godly discipline*, the want of it in the church is still acknowledged in the *liturgy*, and owned as what is *much to be wished*.

Ministers, as a qualification for their office, are enjoined to *swear* and subscribe what the most conscientious persons, who submit thereto, are forced, for the quiet of their consciences, to interpret contrary to the *literal sense*.

MANY things might be added, but my design is only to hint at a few of those, which Dissenters cannot think so indifferent, as not to believe that they serve the interest of Christ by dissenting from them, as *Prop. 1, 2, 3*.

Is not his authority, honour, the purity of his worship, and the spiritual benefit of his church, what we labour and bear our testimony for herein? Had the church from the apostles days kept to the scripture-rule in such matters, many mischiefs had been prevented, especially the rise of the papal *man of sin*. Nor are these things the less, but the more culpable, by his *abuse* of them, and their conduciveness to the return of his dominion in any place. But we have this comfort, that upon his ruin the temple shall be measured, and all such corruptions shall cease by our Lord's (the true *head of the church*) bringing all things
 in

in his church to his *own pattern*, which is predicted in the eight last chapters of *Ezekiel*, and *chap. xx. xxi. of the Revelations*; then, as *Ezra xlv. 24. they shall keep my laws and statutes in all my assemblies.* SERM. XV.

(2.) THE Dissenters apprehend these things to be so publickly and long continued, and attended with such great *consequences*, that they both *scruple* them on that account, and reckon a dissent from them to be their *adherence* to the cause of Christ in that point, wherein he at present trieth their fidelity to him, as *Prop. 4, 5.*

A FULL conformity to all the laws of Christ, is at all times a duty, and the least deviation a fault; but the same stress is not at all times to be laid on every point of duty, as it stands in opposing what contradicts his rules, or promoting of a compliance with them. For it has not always the same subserviency to that design, which Christ is effecting; the same degree of light about it, is not darted into the minds of his servants; the evil opposed is not always alike dangerous, and struggled for; or more essential matters are to be almost wholly attended to; as when far greater abuses are removing, and some very essential part of the christian constitution to be set up. In such cases, things more minute and doubtful, are not so discriminating; nor are the contraries that part of the interest of the Redeemer, which is at that

SERM. time to be prosecuted with the same zeal,
 XV. as the greater matters then depending.

WE find the apostles overlooked the jewish rites, while the point at present contested with the *Jews* was, whether Jesus our Redeemer was the *Messiah*? But when that truth was received by them, and the judaizing christians contended for those rites as necessary, and to be imposed on the Gentile christians, the apostle *Paul* engageth with zeal against them, and contends for their removal, as a sacred part of the cause of our Lord Jesus Christ.

IN like manner, at the beginning of the Reformation, the viler and *idolatrous* corruptions of popery were the great subject of trial; and these lesser matters debated by few, (tho' by some of the best men even in king *Edward's* days.) They esteemed it a great mercy to introduce what was contrary to those horrid papal abominations, and as much as they thought possible to gain at that time among a clergy and people so very corrupt and superstitious. But it was soon found, those churches were most happy, who most fully reformed at first; for they, whom God spiriteth for the work of reformation, are too oft followed by others, much apter to relapse, than to proceed in what is well begun.

IN queen *Elizabeth's* reign, conformity was disapproved by great numbers, but not urged for many years, nor attended with
 the

the same evil effects as after 1588. Many bishops, a house of commons, a convocation, and several prime statesmen, interposed for the ease of Dissenters; but by a fondness of pomp and *forms* above a *preaching* ministry, all their attempts proved unsuccessful. Those impositions and severities increased still more in the two following reigns.

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~~~~~

ALL men know what designs were laid in the reign of king *Charles II.* and how much a further heap of impositions were conducive to bring about those unhappy purposes, (if popery and slavery by profaneness deserve that epithet.) But tho' these were, by a signal providence, restrained in that reign, and by a miracle defeated (as we thought) when just upon accomplishment, in the reign of king *James II.* yet no endeavours of the glorious instrument of our deliverance, no methods adjusted by wise and moderate bishops, no calamities attending a tedious war, (when union is so necessary) no danger of *popery*, however great, are able to this day to abate these human impositions.

THUS for near *two hundred* years they have divided the nation, and caused warm and publick contests. The consequences of these impositions are to be lamented; for many thousands of faithful ministers have been silenced from time to time; love among christians destroyed by mutual cen-

SERM. sure; many violent persecutions against  
 XV. multitudes, for no pretended crime except  
 ~~~~~ nonconformity; foundations shaken; civil  
 rights hazarded; much time and pains employed about the defence of these inventions, which had otherwise been laid out to the real benefit of souls. From these our popish enemies have been oft (and still are) encouraged to attempt, and hope the restoration of popery. It's too notoricus, that very many place the most of their religion, and hopes of eternal life, in their observance of these, tho' they remain ignorant and regardless of the essentials of christianity. By these the most wicked and profane come to be necessitated to receive the sacrament, and obtain opportunity, and gain a handle to asperse and abuse men who appear truly godly, yea, holiness itself so far, that the most godly persons of their own communion are by them branded with the name of *Presbyterians*, (a title with them more odious than that of *Papists*.) How many persons fit to serve the government, are render'd useles and incapable? These are some of the fruits of our impositions; and yet the *imposers* acknowledge, that they are but small things, *indifferent* matters, no part of worship, not necessary to salvation, and what the church may alter: Whereas *we*, on the other side, can't without *sinning* against the dictates of our consciences, comply with or declare for
 them;

them; and are persuaded we cannot be faithful to the interest of Christ Jesus, unless we in our stations endeavour a reformation of such *terms* of the gospel-ministry and communion of saints, as he never appointed, and both are and will be still attended with such pernicious consequences, and yet are so unapt and unnecessary to any better purposes; that a *christian church* upon fewer such experiments should be possessed of *charity* enough to remove them long since, tho' our scruples had been but the *infirmities of weak brethren*. Nay, was it ever known, that even civil governments, only to shew their power to impose, continued what they found so long useless and hurtful?

SERM.

XV.

Rom. xv.

1.

How useful our *dissent* has been to keep up the power of religion, and excite diligence even in the publick ministry, I leave to the judgment of wise observers. Nor is it necessary to spend words to prove, that such of our people as are convinced that we ministers are pleading the cause of Christ Jesus, ought not to desert us, but to support our testimony in what concerneth *ministerial* as well as *lay* conformity.

I HAD not treated at all of these matters, if the following case could have been resolved, without supposing that the members of dissenting churches are persuaded, that a reformation of the matters in debate at present, when attended with such consequences,

SERM. sequences, is the cause of Christ, and
 XV. what is implied in their relation to separate
 ~~~~~ churches.

II. I PROCEED to state the question,

1. *Negatively.* 'Tis not, 1. Whether Dissenters may have occasional communion with the established church? This I grant, though its more doubtful than heretofore. Nor, 2. Whether Dissenters may do much service in offices of trust, and should not without just reasons quit that capacity for usefulness? This I affirm, and wish all offices were filled with men best qualified, of whatever denomination.

2. *Affirmatively.* The question is, whether the members of Protestant Dissenting churches in office, may altogether *statedly* forsake our publick assemblies for worship, to become qualified to continue in their offices?

THIS I deny, and am fully persuaded it's the will of Christ they should quit their offices, and adhere to our publick assemblies where they have opportunity.

I SHALL offer some *reasons*, why they may not *statedly* absent from our publick assemblies, to become qualified to keep their offices.

R. 1. *It's against the nature of that christian profession which the word of God injoineth.*

WE are not only to hold fast the faith in our hearts, but we must *hold fast the profession of faith without wavering, i. e.* We must do nothing that appears a *disowning* of any article of faith, or of any thing by which an unfeigned faith is to be instanced. And we must also openly *avow* these, when we have a just call and fit opportunity to do so. What is opposite to either of these, is a disowning the faith, and rejecting the profession of it. As it is a wickedness to deny Christ, so he reckons it an abomination *to be ashamed of him and his words, i. e.* so as not to avow them.

SERM.  
XV.  
Heb. x. 23.

Luke ix.  
26.

*Obj.* WE shall profess the *same* faith, and words of Christ, tho' we forsake the dissenting assemblies.

*Sol.* YOU will profess them *in part*, but not to the full extent. You'll profess them in what's not contended, but you'll disown them in Christ's *present* contended point. For if the word of our blessed Lord require our dissent, his interest then is concerned in our assemblies; and you cannot profess an adherence to that part of his interest, if you forsake our assemblies. For the apostle declares the desertion of their assemblies to be inconsistent with a right profession; and that their presence in those assemblies, was to be an instance of their profession, *Hold fast the profession of faith, &c. not forsaking the assembling* Heb. x. 23, 24.  
of

SERM. of your selves together, as the manner of  
 XV. some is. Now can any imagine, that the  
 private meeting of *nine* must not be a very  
 defective profession, in a place where pub-  
 lick assemblies are held? (But of this here-  
 after.) Such a practice (as far as evident)  
 is a professing that Christ has not an inter-  
 est in such deserted congregations, to which  
 you stand related.

WHEN *Darius* signed a decree, that  
 whosoever shall ask any petition of any  
 god or man, save of himself, should be cast  
 into the den of lions; *Daniel* did not shut  
 his windows, or alter his custom; but thought  
 it a matter of conscience, to venture office  
 and life too, rather than let his enemies  
 want evidence, that no decree should re-  
 strain him from daily praying to his God,  
*Dan. vi. 7, 9, 10.*

R. 2. *It's a deserting of those persons,*  
*whom God requireth you to own and ad-*  
*here to.*

<sup>2</sup> Tim. i.  
8.

WE find it expressly charged, *Be not a-*  
*shamed of the testimony of Christ, nor of me*  
*his prisoner.* Which informs us, that when  
 some are eminently exposed for the testi-  
 mony of Christ, it's a fault in others to  
 carry towards them, as if ashamed to own  
 them. It's the character of persevering believ-  
 ers, *They were companions of such as endur-*  
*ed reproach, and were a gazing-stock for the*  
*truth.* And *Onesiphorus* is highly praised

Heb. x. 33.

<sup>2</sup> Tim. i.  
16.

for this, *He was not ashamed of my chain;*  
 but

but on the contrary, *Demas* is condemned SERM.  
 for *forsaking of St. Paul, from a love of* XV.  
*this present world.* And they of *Asia* fell 2 Tim. iv.  
 under dangerous guilt, by *not standing by* 10.  
*him* in his trial, *ver. 16.*

To apply this to our case. Such of you as shall now forsake our publick assemblies, do refuse to share in the *reproach* of our incapacity for publick offices; for you desert them to continue your publick employment, in a time when none who are present in them, are allowed to be in any office. Must you not appear to disown us, as not assembling to maintain and promote the cause of Christ at this time; or else as unworthy to bear any office; or at best you declare, that if all we Dissenters were in office, then all these publick assemblies must cease, and be reduced to the number of nine persons at most, (besides the family.) For why may not all such do the same as well as you? But as the last would make all our assemblies for worship contemptible, and unfit to answer many of the purposes for which Christian assemblies were instituted; so to disown us as incapacitated for offices by our being Dissenters, and yet continuing in our publick assemblies, is to disown us as having the cause of Christ in our hands, and as suffering for it too; which cause you have long professed to be the sentiments of your conscience, yea, may not  
 I say

SERM. I say, you can't always oppose, or easily  
 XV. renounce those sentiments, whilst you act  
 from principle, and not from secular interests. Moreover, by absenting from our assemblies, you withhold from them, whatever reputation, safety, strength and assistance your presence would afford. It concerns you to ponder how this will be accounted for, which in the country is like to be destructive to most of their meetings.

R. 3. *Your desertion is directly contrary to the rules, by which our Lord Jesus has appointed his churches to walk.*

IT'S the appointment of Christ, that all the members of the church meet together in one place, rich and poor, 1 Cor. xi. 18, 32. An *Erastus* is not exempted (tho' he was *chamberlain of Corinth*, Rom. xvi. 23.) So 1 Cor. xiv. 23. *If the whole church come together in one place. The whole church assembled with one accord.*

A<sup>cts</sup> xv.  
22, 25.

*Object.* SOME of us will keep dissenting chaplains, or meet together to the number of nine, besides those of the family.

*Sol. 1.* THIS will reach to very few. They are not many who are able to keep chaplains; and how is it possible in country-places, and small corporations, to provide ministers for these several small meetings, when in most places they can scarce furnish a minister for the publick meeting?

*Sol. 2.*

Sol. 2. THIS might be better urged in a time of such *persecution*, as when there were no opportunities for the church to meet in a more publick assembly. But, SERM.  
XV.

Sol. 3: THAT's not the case at present, for there are places, where the churches, of which you are members, are allowed, and do *meet* together; and therefore you must altogether separate from the church in all its publick ordinances, or relinquish your office. As you are members of the church, you are by the rule of the Gospel obliged to *meet in one place with the church*, as you have opportunity; there you are to partake of the Lord's-Supper, and other publick ordinances. To neglect this is a plain breach of gospel-order, and must bring every church into confusion. To pretend communion in *affection only* with a church to which you stand related, and omit *local* communion when you have opportunity for it, is an hypocritical pretext, and a vain plea for that *separation*, which is a great evil, unless cause be given for it on the part of the church to which you belong. This one reason is sufficient, were there no other, to determine the case as to church members.

R. 4. *It's an approbation of what reflects on the communion of saints, which ought to be regarded as a great article of the Christian faith.*

SERM. XV. IF you retain your offices upon the present terms, you declare against communion with all of us in any of our assemblies. You must have no communion with the *French*, or *Dutch* churches among us, who use not the national *liturgy*. Is it in vain for them and us to say, We are *reformed* churches as to faith and worship, and yet you renounce communion with us, as if we were *heretical* and *idolatrous*, and justly branded as incapable, not only of publick trust, but of your Christian fellowship in all publick ordinances?

IT is indeed strange, that *Pagans* allowed those men to be in offices, who acted according to their consciences, tho' very contrary to the national establish'd worship, and usages. *Daniel* was chief of the *presidents*; *Nebemiah*, *Mordecai*, and others were great officers at *court*; *Cornelius* and others were officers in the *army*; *Erastus* the chamberlain of the *city of Corinth*; and yet among protestants, we must be made incapable of any of those offices, tho' we subscribe the same articles of the Christian faith, and differ in nothing truly protestant.

BUT it will be yet stranger, that any Dissenting protestants, especially such as have found the *presence* of God with us, and are *seals* to our ministry, that these, I say, by retaining their offices on the enacted terms, shou'd comply to renounce communion



communion with us, and so far approve of such narrow inclosures, as leave so reproachful a mark on the most reformed churches; if the scriptures be allowed the standard. Lord! where will this end? Is this the unity, charity, and fellowship so oft recommended by the Spirit of God, *Eph. iv. 2, 3, 4, &c.*

R. 5. *It condemns all who suffered for the Dissenting cause, and for keeping up their assemblies in times of persecution.*

THE apostle blames them as faulty, *who added afflictions to his bonds.* If your owning this cause which you have so long professed, and if your peaceable enjoyment of these assemblies be not worth laying down an office; you declare them *fools*, who to transmit the first, and procure the last, endured fines, imprisonment, reproach, and spoiling of goods, ruining of their families, loss of profitable places and preferments, yea, and some their lives too. But I must tell you, they gloried in what they suffered, they had joy and peace of conscience in their dying hours, and thankfully acknowledged the grace of God, whereby they were supported to endure all their hardships for what they esteem'd so good a cause. Nor have we any reason to esteem this cause of Christ the worse, because deserted in a time of *degeneracy*, and decay of the power of religion; yea, I am sure, it will revive, as holy tender-

SERM.  
XV.  
~

Phil. i. i6.

SERM. nefs and vital religion recover in these na-  
 XV. tions, and the true interest of the Redeemer  
 gaineth place in the hearts of men. In the  
 mean time, what guilt and ground of fu-  
 ture terror do the degenerate offspring of  
 these faithful sufferers contract, who to  
 prevent suspicion, despise their ancestors,  
 and exceed the vilest in malignity?

R. 6. *This can't be without giving great  
 offence and scandal.*

THE word of God plainly forbids this,  
 I Cor. X. *Give none offence, neither to Jews, nor to  
 32. the Gentiles, nor to the church of God.* It  
 is offence given, for it's doing what's not  
 your duty, by either precept or approved  
 example in the word, and you can't but  
 foresee it will lead many to sin. Some  
 are likely to imitate your example against  
 the dictates of their consciences. Many  
 in the country, who cannot find ways for  
 those seperate meetings of *nine*, (by which  
 you palliate the matter) will be led by your  
 compliance to cast off all that seems any  
 adherence to his interest; it will fortify the  
 charge of *hypocrisy*, which the censorious  
 wickedly imputed to you heretofore. These  
 called you hypocrites, because you *occasio-  
 nally* communicated, as they said, only for  
 a place. To this you *justly* pleaded, it  
 was not so, for you only put in practice a  
 principle received and practised by the most  
 eminent Dissenters, before the sacramental  
 test was enacted; and you being of the  
 same

same judgment, had no reason to refuse to act according to your known judgment, when it made you capable to serve your country.

SERM.  
XV.

BUT now you will have no such pleas: Can you pretend, that it was ever the principle of any Dissenter, that men may *statedly* forsake the publick assemblies of Dissenters to keep an office? Or did any besides deserters ever do so? Therefore you tempt them to fix the charge of hypocrisy on you, though they know not your hearts.

IT's well if they be not further tempted to make *political* tests, which may keep out of office all such as seem to favour Dissenters in their hearts, (though for the sake of civil liberties;) for seeing this is not sufficient to keep out all those as would still appear Dissenters, (whom many resolve to exclude one way or other) such will be apt to endeavour another test. Nay, I wish they be not tempted to revive old severities against our publick meetings; for when they see leading Dissenters desert them to get or keep a place, they'll be apt to think, that their severities were unsuccessful formerly, because there was more religious strictness among us; but that they may now succeed, when Dissenters are become so lukewarm and indifferent in the matters of God, and interests of our Lord Jesus. Again, will not your forsaking our assemblies encourage many of our people to set

SERM. up private separate meetings, though they  
 XV. have no offices, when they see you keep  
 your meetings, if it be without publick  
 reproof.

I WILL pass by the *grief* it may cause to your ministers and fellow members, when thus despised and deserted; though this should make some impression on men of charity and tenderness.

IT'S worthy our notice, though I will not pretend to draw a positive reason from what's so obscure, as is the surprizing uncommon *way*, by which this trial comes upon Dissenters in office. A dismission from all places of publick trust is unanimously given, by *both* parties, (whatever different views they had) nor can I doubt, that the first springs of this affair *at present* were moved by better purposes, than the nature of it imports, and not from such ill designs against us, as many may suggest. However that be, I can't but think so uncommon a providence has some answerable *purpose* to serve by it, and loudly speaks to us as a discriminated body. Without any doubt, it calls us to be humbled, try our ways, and to repent of whatever may forfeit or unfit us for publick trust in God's account; it compels us also to be wiser and more united, and requires our charitable assistance to such, as shall by the loss of their places become unable to subsist their families.

I DARE not pretend to any positiveness as to the farther reaches of this providence. It may be for our *safety*; it may be God intends for some time to confine our activity more to what concerns the improvement of our liberty to *spiritual* purposes, waiting for farther light in accomplishment of *Zech. xiv. 7. At evening-time it shall be light.* I remember the voice in *Jerusalem (go to Pella)* was obeyed by the christians, and proved the means of their security, when they in the city fought against each other, as soon as the *Romans* intermitted their assaults. And the apostle has respect to the desolations, that came upon that people by the *Roman* armies, in *Heb. x. 25. Not forsaking the assembling yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhorting one another, and so much the more, as you see the day approaching.* Whence you may infer pertinently to the question before us, that upon the approaches of publick calamities, professors, instead of forsaking the assemblies and edifying conversation of their brethren, ought to attend them *more and more.*

FINALLY, men may be *outcasts*, with a promise of much good, instead of incurring any damage: *Hear the word of the Lord, ye that tremble at his word: your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for my name's sake, said, Let God be glorified; but he shall appear to your joy, and*

SERM.  
XV.



*Isa. lxvi.  
5, 7, 8, 9.*

SERM. *they shall be ashamed, &c.* The following XV. verses tell you, it's as signally and suddenly, as if a nation *were born at once.*

*Obj.* IF we resign our office, we lose an opportunity for *service.*

*Sol.* 1. GOD may fill up your places *another way.*

2. HOWEVER, God requires no service from you, nor will accept, nor usually succeed it, when undertaken on *sinful terms*; and he forbids you *to do evil, that good may come of it.*

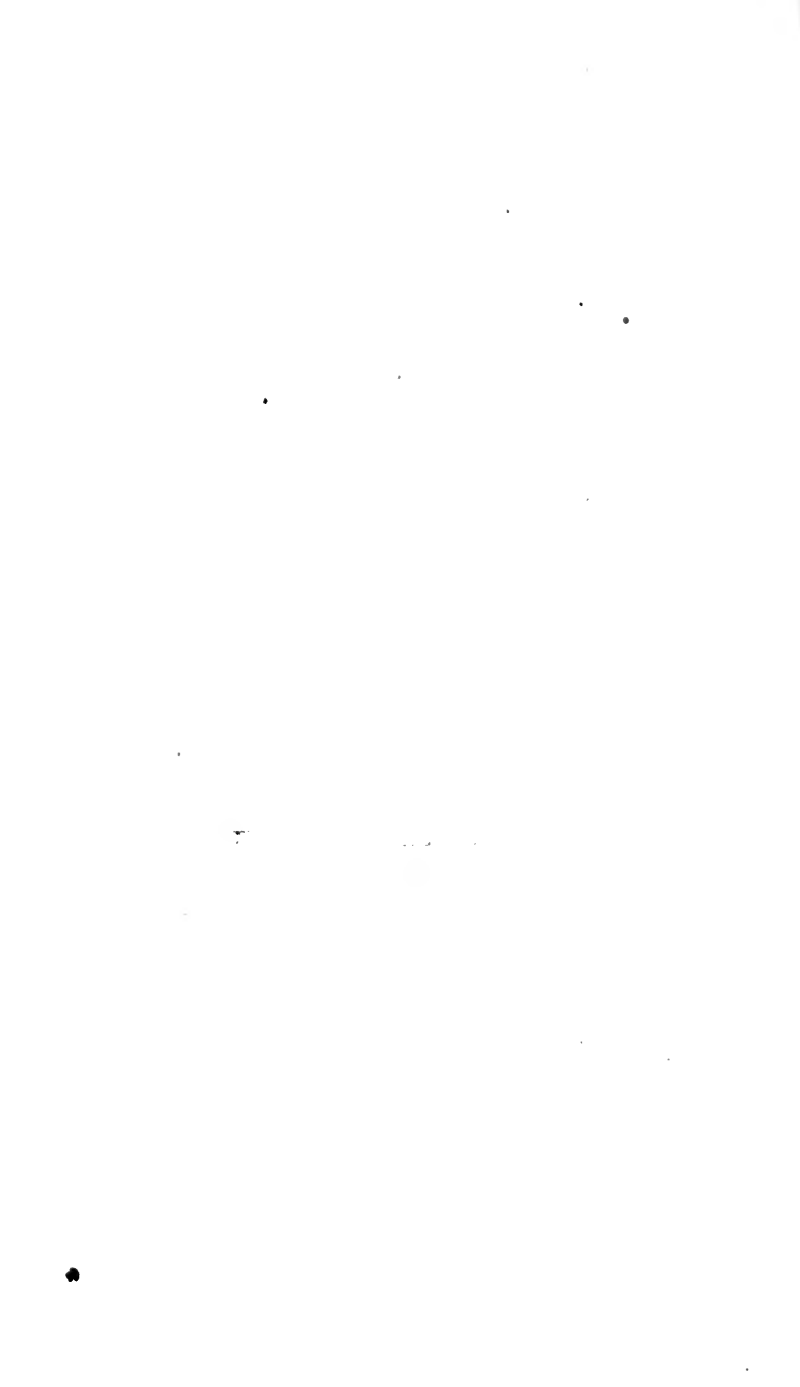
3. I APPEAL to every unbiaffed awakened *conscience*, whether you are obliged to continue the little service you can perform in your office, when it must be by renouncing your profession, deserting those who are subserving the interest of Christ, violating the gospel-rule, (whereby church-members are to assemble together with the church *in one place*) approving what's destructive to the communion of saints, condemning all those who suffered for the Dissenting cause and assemblies, giving an occasion of offence to many, and disregarding the voice of the present surprizing providence, which may intend your safety and benefit. I am persuaded no man's service among us can be justified against the force of these reasons.

*Obj.* WE came into our office by a *special providence.*

*Sol.*

*Sol.* THAT was not to *continue* in it SERM.  
 upon these terms, but to shew your fide- XV.  
 lity to Christ by laying it down. This un-  
 godly age reckons all religion to be a trick  
 or mere fancy, and all pretenders to it to  
 be designing, and so selfish, that they will  
 suffer nor lose nothing for it. It concerns  
 all pious men not to confirm any in these  
 atheistical notions; God oft confuted them  
 by his people voluntarily chusing to suffer,  
 rather than desert his cause, and violate  
 their consciences. Such an occasion has  
 this signal providence set before you; the  
 Lord grant you may not abuse it by un-  
 faithfulness.

I HAVE delivered my own soul: And  
 since it was necessary that some or other of  
 us should guard our people against the pre-  
 sent temptation, I was the more willing to  
 undertake it, because it's known that my  
 subsistence is no way concerned in any men's  
 forsaking or abiding with us; and there-  
 fore I can have no regard to any secular  
 interest, when I declare my judgment.







A

FUNERAL-SERMON

Upon occasion of the

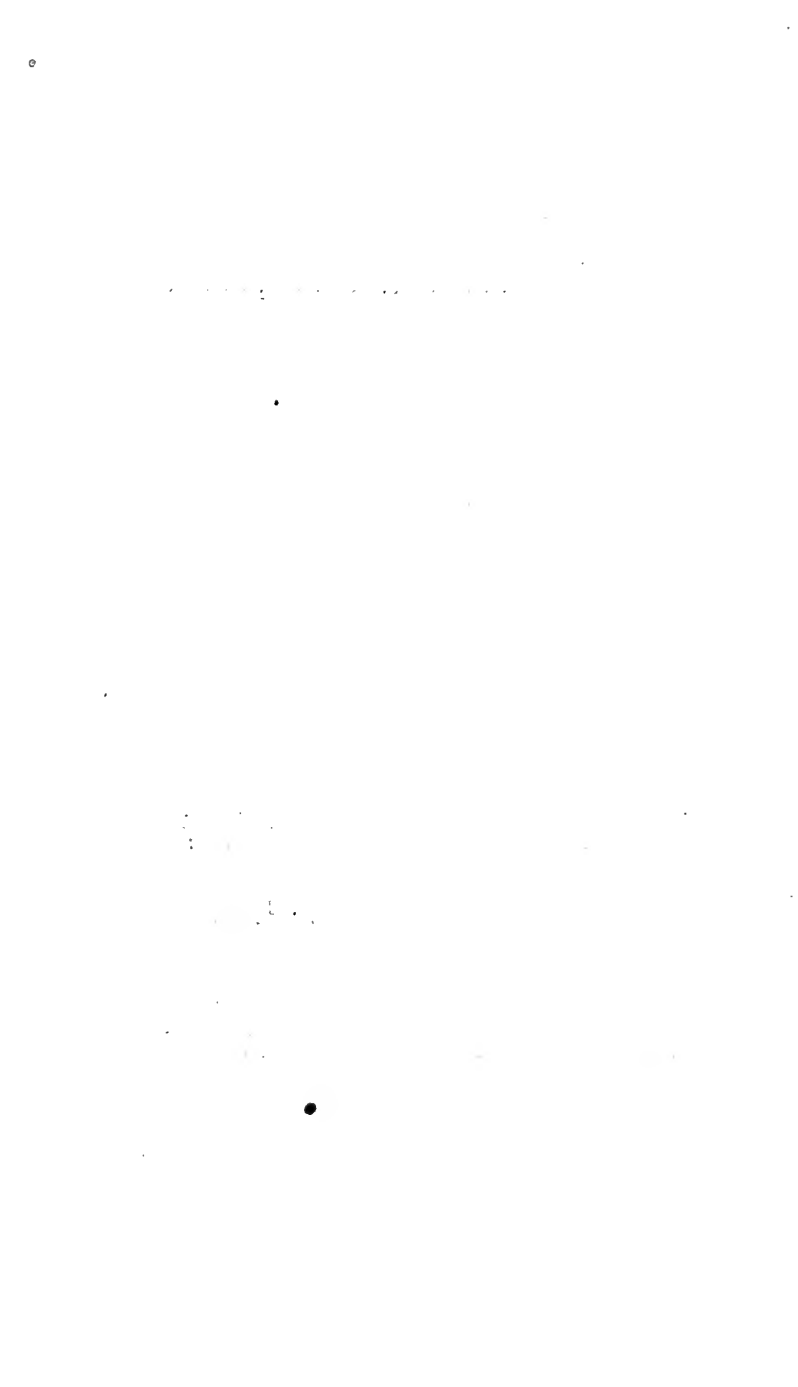
DEATH

Of the REVEREND

*Mr.* MATTHEW HENRY.

Preach'd at *Hackney*, June 27. 1714.







T O

Mrs. H E N R Y,

Late W I F E of the Reverend

Mr. H E N R Y.

M A D A M,

*A* *T* the desire of your relations I submitted to make known to you the sad and unexpected news of the death of your late husband. The surprize of that afflictive stroke made this to me a very difficult undertaking.

On the following day you were pleased, by several worthy gentlemen of Hackney, to request that I would preach there a funeral sermon on the next day; the honour I had for the Dead, and for you his Relict, conquered my backwardness to such a performance upon one day's warning. Your circumstances not admitting you to appear so soon in publick, I was willing to send you what I had delivered, with some additions of what I formerly preached on the same text. I heartily wish, that what I have  
said

*said of the Deceased, may contribute to your comfort and conduct too. What I have collected from the text, will shew you not only your duty, but that the happiness of saints is secure under all the occurrences of life and death: The surest mercies are dispensed in both. You have a great charge upon you, viz. the education of many of the children of a father so near to God. But you have also much to encourage your endeavours; they are dedicated to God. The pains taken with the capable have well succeeded, the rest are hopeful; many prayers for them are recorded in heaven; they are children of the covenant, and of one well-beloved by God and good men. He has left many printed instructions for your assistance, which they will be apt to regard; and above all, you may, you ought, in all your good attempts, and, in every pressing difficulty, to look to and depend upon the Almighty God, as the husband of the widow, and father of the fatherless. May you find constant tokens of his fulness, truth, and favour, and from him receive comforts by all your remaining mercies! I am*

Your sympathizing brother,

and faithful servant,

*Daniel Williams.*



## R O M A N S   X I V .   8 .

*For whether we live, we live to the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.*



THE scope of this chapter is to maintain peace, and urge moderation among christians, notwithstanding their different sentiments and practices in rituals and other matters, wherein the essentials of faith and godliness were unconcerned. The *text* assigneth a convincing reason, why a charitable opinion of each other should obtain, altho' such differences remained; *q. d.* both parties are the Lord's in life and death, both parties live and die unto the Lord, and therefore they should neither despise nor censure one another; *i. e.* they are subject to the dominion and judgment of the Lord as their sole *proprietor*; they are also received and accepted by him as devoted saints, and as such they serve him according to their *different* sentiments.

SERM.  
XVI.



SERM. timents. It must then be unjust usurpation,  
 XVI. and dangerous uncharitableness, to condemn  
 such, because of some inequality in their  
 degrees of light. But more of this after-  
 wards.

## S E C T. I.

Observ. I. *Sincere believers are the Lord's in life and in death.*

JESUS CHRIST is the Lord; for *ver. 9.* it immediately follows, *For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.* Life here expresseth man's present state, and connotes all the time, endowments, abilities, interest, opportunities for improvements and service, with every talent possessed by us in this life. Death puts a period to this present life by a separation of the soul from the body. Upon death the immortal soul passeth safely into the unseen state; which state is also referred to, because the interest of Christ in his saints is not interrupted by death, and his dominion is over the inhabitants of that world of spirits.

CHRIST is indeed Lord of all men, as truly as of believers: *All being created for him, and by him*; they owe to him obedience in life, and must abide his judgment after death: *All must appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.* But sincere christians are the Lord's in a more peculiar sense;

sense; for they were assigned to him by SERM.  
 the FATHER, *Thine they were, and thou* XIV.  
*gavest them me.* They are his by *special*  
 redemption. He also *apprehended* them by Phil. iii.  
 effectual calling, whereby they dedicated 12.  
 themselves to CHRIST, and by mutual  
*covenant* they farther became his own; *They* Ezek. xvi.  
*are for him and not for another.* Upon 8.  
 such accounts it's justly said to all believ-  
 ers, *You are Christ's*; nor is it a small part 1 Cor. iii.  
 of their privilege, that they can say, *I am* 23.  
*my beloved's, and my beloved is mine.* Can. vii. 3.

*Quest.* WHAT'S intended by a Christi-  
 an's *being the Lord's* in life.

*Ans.* I. HE alone has authority to *rule*  
 them, especially in what concerns religion.  
 His will ought to be a rule to them;  
 whatever power others can claim over  
 them must be subordinate to his, and by  
 delegation from him. He is head of the  
 church, to govern as well as influence his  
 members. His propriety is of that sort Eph. v.  
 to be a foundation of such an absolute do- 23.  
 minion, as admits no challenge or excuse.  
 All his laws bind the conscience immedi-  
 ately; nor can any person dispence with,  
 or authority controul them. Our Lord  
 has reserved to himself to appoint officers  
 in his church, sacraments, qualifications of  
 ministers, and terms of communion, &c.  
 To add to these, is to usurp his rights; to  
 alter or refuse these, is rebellion against his  
 crown and dignity.

*Ans.* 2.

SERM. *Ans.* 2. THEY are his to *use* and dispose  
 XVI. of them whilst they live. Shall not he do  
 ~~~~~ *what he will with his own?* His justice  
 and wisdom will preserve the rules of e-
 quity in disposing of them, and yet he is
 so true to his own rights, as to claim the
 disposal of all our circumstances and the
 appointing how our time and talents shall
 be employed. It's an unjust denial of his
 propriety to murmur at the *work* he or-
 dains, be it never so mean or difficult.
 His title to his people is such as to serve
 his purposes by their health or sickness,
 prosperous or low estate, higher or lower
 station; they are not to chuse or dispute.
 The interest of our LORD in us authoris-
 eth him to effect his own ends by us, and
 by all that's ours, as his wisdom shall di-
 rect. Nor is this to be in some cases, but
 in all; or at some certain times, but as long
 as life endureth.

Ans. 3. THE LORD is sure to be con-
 cerned for their *good* in all the occurrences
 of life.

THE vicissitudes, wants and dangers in
 this present life are many. The LORD's
 people are exposed, in this world, to more
 distresses than others, because of their fide-
 lity to him; but as their being his, brings
 on them the hatred of the wicked, so the
 same thing is their security and relief un-
 der all their troubles. He oft, on this ac-
 count, restrains their enemies, saying, *Touch*

not my anointed, and do my prophets no harm. They find cause to say, we who live are delivered unto death for Jesus's sake, *That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal bodies.* He who saith he is worse than an infidel, who provides not for *his* own, cannot neglect to provide for his own, the care of whom he has undertaken when they become his. They are not sent to war at their own charges. His eye guides them in the way he orders them to go; by *his strength* they are enabled to perform what he enjoins. *His consolations* abound with their troubles. When weak, he *carrieth his lambs in his arms.* When they go astray, he brings them back as his own sheep; and will say, *of them whom thou hast given me, I have lost none.* Their whole life shall evidence the truth of that place; *He will be our guide, even unto death.*

SERM.
XVI.

2 Cor. iv.
11

1 Cor. ix.
10.

Isa. xl. 11.

Joh. xviii.
9.

Pf. xviii.
14.

Quest. II. WHAT is it to be the LORD'S in death, or dying?

Ans. I. THE *time*, and the *manner* of a believer's death, are in his hand.

HE *has the keys of hell and death.* His saints shall not die when their enemies please, but when he thinks it most for his glory, best for his servants, and in the fittest time. The weakest shall live as long as he has work for them; and commonly they who have been very useful, are taken away before a longer life shall prove dis-

SERM. honourable, useless, or intolerable to them.

XVI. It belongs also to him to prescribe, whether the death of his servants shall be sudden or slow, easy or painful, natural or violent, in youth or age, by what disease, and by what means they shall die. He has ends worthy of himself in all its variety; and what's so equal, as that those ends should be subserved by such as are his own? Peter had no cause of repining, when Christ signified to him by what death he should glorify God, though it was to be a violent death: And he asserts his right to determine of such matters; when Peter asked, LORD, what shall this man do? i. e. Shall John, thy beloved, die as I must? Christ replies, *If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.*

John xxi.
19, 22.

Ans. 2. WHEN believers die, they are to appear before the judgment-seat of Christ.

Rom. xiv.
10.

HE alone has a right to judge them.

Rom. iii.
16.

By his sentence their state will be determined, and not by the censures of men; or their own mistaken opinion of themselves. His own Gospel will be the rule of judgment; the great and convincing witness, will be his omniscient mind, to which the greatest secrets of their hearts were known; viz. their good desires, resolves, contrivances, affections, and governing aims, these are better than what appeared oft in their actions and attainments. It's the same all-seeing

seeing eye which observed those *prayers, fasts, and charitable works*, which they concealed from the world to avoid ostentation, and to approve themselves to him as satisfied with his sole approbation.

SERM.
XVI.

Mat. vi.
4, 5, 18.

Ans. 3. PRECIOUS in the sight of the LORD, is the death of his saints.

Psal. cvi.
15.

HE who bottles their tears, cannot be prodigal of their *blood*, for it's *precious in his sight*; it shall not be spilled but for valuable ends; as to attest his truth, and be the seed of his church; and they shall pay dear who are guilty of shedding the least drop of it. So the cry of this brought utter ruin upon *Rome Pagan*; and, in revenge, shall *Rome Papal* have *blood to drink*, because she was *drunk with the blood of the saints*. She may shortly boast those wounds are healed, which she received by the word of Christ's mouth; but she will, after a short triumph, find her plagues *shall come in one day, and she be utterly burnt with fire; for strong is the Lord God who judgeth her*, tho' the Protestants will be too much reduced to effect it.

Pf. lxxii.
14.

Rev. xvi.
6.

Rev. xviii.
7, 8.

Ans. 4. WHEN dying, and when dead, he will deal with them as his own.

THE *sting* of death he will take away by an assured pardon, and full absolution. He sets them above its *terrors*, by a firm persuasion that he overcame death, to deliver them from the fear of it; and by

1 Cor. xv.
55.

Heb. ii.
14, 15.

SERM. some foresight and foretastes of that good
 XVI. which follows their release. To render
 them *meet* for the upper world, their souls
 shall be set free from all that's carnal and
 earthly, by their separation from the body,
 and the divine principle alone shall reign in
 all its faculties; his angels shall guide and
 defend the departed souls through the upper
 regions, till they arrive to the place of the
 blessed, where Christ will receive them to
 himself, to possess the *mansions* he has pre-
 pared, and enjoy that perfect light, love,
 life, glory, and delights, which he pur-
 chased for, and becomes the *members* of
 such a head. *Them he will bring to appear*
with him in his glory, when he comes to
 judge the world. Their *bodies* shall his
 Spirit raise, as the bond of union betwixt
 him and them, which death could not
 dissolve; those bodies he will frame to that
 spirituality, as shall suit the heavenly re-
 gions, and the employment of exalted souls.
 These bodies will not only be freed from
 all blemishes, pains, weakness, listlessness,
 and weariness, but made like unto Christ's
 glorious body; then their whole persons
 are solemnly absolved and vindicated, *and*
Christ is glorified and admired in them;
 upon which they ascend, and will *be ever*
with the Lord, to be perfectly happy in a
 full conformity to Christ, and in the beati-
 fick vision.

EXHORTATION.

SERM.
XVI.

BE all of you persuaded to *become* the Lord's, by a sincere dedication of yourselves to him.

ACKNOWLEDGE that right he has to each of you. At the judgment-seat of Christ, *every tongue shall confess to God*; Rom. xiv. 10, 11. *i. e.* to Christ, who is God, unless *Isa. xlv. 23.* be spoke of some others besides the true God. If you are among those who are devoted to Christ, you will confess as they, *ver. 24, 25. In the Lord we have righteousness and strength, in him we glory*; but if unbelievers, you shall be *ashamed* that you were so *incensed* against him, as to deny to come and yield up yourselves to him: this you shall confess to be injustice towards him, and destructive to yourselves. He now puts in his claim, that by your consent you may become his for your own benefit. *What have we to do with thee,* Mat. viii. *Jesus, thou Son of God?* was what better ^{29.} became the *devils* to say, than you; for he invites you; your salvation depends on him entirely, and it's possible to be obtained for his sake; nay, it's certain to all who will yield up themselves to their blessed Lord.

1st Motive. *For this end he died, and rose* Rom. xiv. *again, and revived, that he might be Lord^{9.} of the dead and living.*

SERM. HE has not only a claim to you as your
 XVI. *Creator*, but as your *Redeemer* too. You
 are bought with a price, and that no less
 than his precious blood; to offer up your
 selves to him, is your reasonable service:
 He might well expect, when bleeding on
 the cross, that he *should draw all men to*
him; for what enemies could be so uncon-
 quered by his love, as rather die by their
 wounds, than come to him to be healed?
 He merited a propriety in you by his death;
 he is *risen*, and entereth his claim; he is
alive, to observe how it's received, and has
all power in heaven and earth, to avenge
 himself on such as reject him, as well as
 to confer all blessings on those who accept
 his offer, by dedicating themselves to him.
 O bethink you whose are you, if you be
 not the Lord's; it's an usurper, even the
 devil, who possesseth you.

2d Motive. *You comply not with the chief
 design of the gospel, unless you become the
 Lord's.*

THE gospel is an invitation of sinners
 to Christ; and all that's recorded therein
 tends to incline men to be the Lord's.
 What's historically declared of Christ, the
 account given of the Spirit's operations,
 the promises and threatnings, all concur
 to prevail with men to yield up themselves
 to him. What is mentioned of the evil
 of sin, the misery of sinners, the dangers,
 weakness, and emptiness of self, the vanity
 of

of the world, the wiles and cruelty of devils; all this is to bring us to *renounce* these, as competitors with Christ for our affections and choice. SERM. XVI.

No minister can think his labours are effectual, till he can say, *I have espoused you to one husband, that I may present you a chaste virgin to Christ.* All the authority of the gospel, all its directions, all its allurements, encouragements and helps, are not only *in vain* to such as refuse to be the Lord's, but they will *aggravate* their condemnation, and expose them to the *forer* punishments. This Jesus *will come in flaming fire, to take vengeance on them who obey not the gospel.* Flatter not yourselves by any impressions the word has made upon you, or by the hopes you have gathered from it; for unless it has prevailed with you to give your hearty consent to be the Lord's, it has had no saving effects upon you. That is its chief intention, for that it is adapted, and its design is not fully answered, till every *thought and imagination be brought to obedience to Christ.* 2 Cor. xi. 2. 2 Thes. i. 8. 2 Cor. x.


3d Motive. *To be the Lord's, includes the highest honour and felicity.*

THE godly are pleased with the title of being his *servants*, and oft mention it as their honour. But if you will be the Lord's, you shall not only be his servants, but his *peculiar people, his friends and favourites,* Rom. viii.

SERM. his brethren, joint-heirs with him, his temple, his spouse, the members of his body, and his heritage. Our Lord Jesus declares all these concerning every true believer: He fills up every relation to the extent of it; and must you not admire his condescending goodness, in inviting such as you into such relations? What honour, what safety, what power, what riches, what happiness, must any *one* of these contain? What then must all of them together include? To be his, that is, to be his in all these respects, connotes a happiness not to be expressed by fewer terms. Look back to what I have said of the Lord's concern for his in life; how precious their death is to him, and how he deals with them dying and dead; and will you not find *cords* fit to draw you to him, or enough to convince you what enemies you must be to yourselves, as well as to him, as long as it's your resolve, *we will not come unto thee*. I reserve another exhortation, as proper to the next head as well as to this.

Observ. II. *All true believers evidence their being the Lord's, by living and dying to him.*

THIS is the *duty* of every man, but it's the peculiar *character* of saints, they live and die to the Lord; it's the best and most undoubted evidence of their being the Lord's that they can give; nor will it be proved

proved by any thing without this. All SERM. saving acts suppose our being the Lord's, XVI. and are comprehended in *living and dying*  *to him.*

SELF is excluded in both, *ver. 7. None of us liveth to himself, no man dieth to himself.* Self is the great rival with Christ, and therefore to *deny ourselves*, is made Mat. xvi. one of the first conditions of men's be-²⁴ coming the disciples of Christ. Man by his apostacy set up carnal self as his chief end, and supreme ruler; his own humour, yea, *his belly are to him his God.* Therefore Phil. iii. till self be renounced, we cannot become ¹⁹ the Lord's, nor live or die to him.

Quest. I. WHEREIN do believers live unto the Lord?

Ans. IN general they live to the Lord, when throughout their lives they *act* for Christ and towards him, as they who *are his in life.* The course and tenor of their lives must express a true acknowledgement of his propriety in their persons and all their endowments; and this not by starts, but as the scope of their lives: not for a short time at first, but as long as life shall continue. St. Paul sums it up in these words, *To me to live is Christ.* More particularly,

I. THEY live and act in *subjection* to his authority as their Lord. You heard that the Lord has the supreme right to govern them; this believers confess by their obediential regards to him; they walk as he commandeth

SERM. eth them; and *put away none of his sta-*
 XIV. *tutes from them.* What he prohibits, they

~
 Psa. xviii.
 22.

forbear; what he enjoineth, they account themselves obliged to perform, and to exercise sincere repentance, when they fail in either of these. Their solicitous enquiry is,

Acts xx. 6. *Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?* This they impartially study, with a sincere purpose to observe it against all the motions of their lusts, and without respect to their secular interests. His word they esteem a sufficient warrant, tho' many censure them; nor can the greatest powers make them forbear to do what the Lord enjoins, or comply with usages he has not warranted them to impose; for they are at a point, whether they shall obey the Almighty God, or feeble mortals. If men assume to prescribe rules in matters the Lord hath reserved to himself, they dare not follow them; but from a loyal regard to him, they reject all human inventions in the worship of God, and sacred ministrations of his house.

Acts v. 29.

2. THEY live to his *glory*, as their great end.

1 Cor. viii.
 39.

THE glory of Christ is their *governing end*; this they propose in their undertakings; they contrive and pursue the best means to exalt his name, and carefully avoid what would be a dishonour to him. So he be glorify'd by what they do, they are contented to want the praise of it, yea, to be despised; and therefore are most solicitous

licitous after considerable performances, to observe whether Christ is exalted thereby, and not how they are applauded. As the Lord is greatest in their eye, so they contribute what they can to render him excellent in the esteem of others, and are grieved when any treat his name, his word, or his image, with contempt.

To him they ascribe the praise of all their gifts and graces, and of all their benefits and blessings: whenever they find any good effect of their labours, they humbly confess, that herein *Christ has wrought with me; and glory thro' Christ Jesus, in those things which pertain to God.* Believers strive to be what they account the highest character a man is capable of, *viz. The glory of Christ.* Not that they think they can make him more glorious in *himself*, but they desire his own glory may shine forth in more illustrious instances; and that they may discern it as far as he is pleased to manifest it, and may discover it to others in all the ways he has appointed for that purpose; and among the rest, that his perfections may, as in a mirror, shine forth in their christian temper, labours, and behaviour. What pleasure was it to the apostle to be assured, *Christ shall be magnified in my body, whether it be by life or by death.*

3. THEY serve his *interest* with faithfulness and diligence, as the chief business of

SERM.
XVI.

Rom. xv.
17, 18.

2Cor. viii.
22.

Phil. i. 20.

SERM. of life. They impartially desire to know
 XVI. it; they heartily espouse it as a *trust* com-
 mitted to them; it's just and honourable in
 their judgment, even when despised and
 condemned by the great and learned. This
 lies near their heart, as their great concern,
 whoever are unconcerned: they dare not
 deny or betray it, whatever hardships they
 are exposed to by their faithful adherence;
 nor will they neglect it even when the de-
 fence and propagation of it require the
 greatest application of mind, the hardest
 labours, the largest expence, the severest
 self-denial, and very manifest peril of both
 losing the best friends, and undergoing the
 wrath of the most powerful enemies.

SUCH as are his, owe him all service:
 Acts xxvii. The *angel of God, whose I am, and whom*
 23. *I serve, stood by me.* Not to serve him at
 all times, and in all things, directly or in-
 directly, is defrauding him of his right:
 But tho' in all acts of obedience in every
 station, and doing what prepares us for
 his service, we *are serving the Lord*, and
 especially in all acts of religious worship;
 nevertheless an eminent part of this service
 consists in being witnesses and agents for
 him in the world. If we neglect this, we
 live not to him, but to ourselves.

Col. iii.
 24.
 1 Thess.
 xix.

THE interest of our Lord is too glorious
 to make us ashamed, afraid, or backward
 to promote it to our utmost; for the de-
 sign he is carrying on, and the purposes to
 be



be served by us, are what become his wisdom, holiness, and goodness; and they are conducive to the good of men, as well as glorious to himself. If you ask, What of this kind is it wherein you must be active? I answer, you must resist *sin*, and destroy the works of the *devil*, as far as your station admits; with all your might *promote* reformation of manners, the welfare of mankind, the purity of worship, a godly discipline, the conversion of sinners, the edification and comfort of saints, and peace among all such as call on the name of the Lord. Again; *propagate* the gospel for the knowledge of Christ, and the salvation of sinners, and defend the faith of the gospel against popery and all damnable errors. In a word, enlarge and advance the kingdom of our dear Lord to the extent of your ability.

4. THEY *approve* themselves to him, and study to please him from day to day. They are under the influence of that rule, *Whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men.* They appeal to him for their sincerity when censured; they are satisfied with his approbation of what they perform, and are not free from doubts of the truth of their graces, till they can appeal to him, as *St. Peter, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.*

Col. iii.

24.

John xxi.

17.

SERM. THE same care they take to walk worthy
 XVI. of the Lord, unto all pleasing, they take to
 ~~~~~ avoid what may grieve his Holy Spirit;  
 Col. i. 10. who is their only comforter. They are  
 ready to communicate to his necessitous  
 Phil. iv. ministers, and relieve his poor; for *with*  
 18. *such sacrifices God is well pleased.* Every  
 duty and good work they endeavour to  
 Heb. xiii. perform *acceptably to God*, and to stand on  
 16. good terms with him, whoever are dis-  
 pleased; as knowing, if *they please men*;  
 Heb. xii. *they should not be the servants of Christ*;  
 18. for he justly claimeth, that our doctrine  
 Gal. i. 10. and actions should not be directed to be  
 acceptable to men, further than as they  
 please him, by a conformity to his decla-  
 red will. And this is wisdom for ourselves,  
 for he hath the disposal of all that concerns  
 our welfare in both worlds.

5. THEY are well contented with his  
*disposal* of all the circumstances of life.

THEY refer themselves to him to chuse  
 their lot, and acquiesce fully in his deter-  
 mination, as persuaded he knows what is  
 best for *them*; and most conducive to his  
 own blessed purposes; to subserve which  
 they are devoted, and every way obliged.  
 Phil. iv. They *have learnt in every state to be con-*  
 12. *tent.* What condition, work, and station,  
 he appoints, they submit to without repi-  
 ning, and labour to accommodate them-  
 selves to it, so as to answer the ends of  
 God in that disposition of their affairs. It  
 is

is their care to improve the advantages, watch against the temptations, perform the duties, and exercise the graces proper and peculiar to that condition wherein they are placed. They dare not attempt a change of their station, but under his conduct; and are more solicitous to acquit themselves well in a present mean condition, than to get it alter'd. If sickness, poverty, afflictive relations, or reproach, be their trial, by the hand of an *unoffended God*, every word of his supports them. If they are culpable accessories, they submissively accept their *punishment*, and rest not till a pardon frees them from guilt, which is the bitterest part of their exercise.

BUT the worst things they endure for the Lord's *sake*, they can *glory* and *re-joyce* in, as what will work for their good in this life, and add an *exceeding weight of glory* in the life to come.

Rom. viii.  
26.  
2 Cor. iv.  
17.

6. THEY labour to clear their interest in him, and to grow up into him, as the greatest *end* of life next to the glory of God.

ALL believers have a covenant-interest in Christ, but many of them doubt about it. They who have some good hope, want a full assurance; they who have this, enjoy it not always. The most blessed comfort, next to a saving interest in Christ, is an uninterrupted full assurance of it. This they, who live to the Lord, strive to obtain,

SERM. tain, by an exact walk, eminent service,  
 XVI. willingly suffering for the cause of Christ,  
 ~~~~~ constant, intimate communion with God,  
 growth in grace, and by the lively actings
 of Love to Christ, and of faith in him, and
 in the gospel constitution and promises.

Phil. iii.
 7, 8.

This is what *Paul* was so intent upon, *to be found in Christ, and to win Christ*. He had an interest in him, he had accounted *all as loss for him*; yea, he had attained assurance, *for he rejoiced in him*. What then he was still intent upon, and pursued, is either a constant assurance well established, and more strengthened; or a farther growth into Christ, with a fuller conformity to him, or *both*.

Col. i. 27.

ALL believers are *in Christ*; *Christ in them, by his Spirit and image, is the hope of glory*. They are all *new creatures*, but some are weak, others stronger; all have some degree of conformity to Christ; but some have less of his image, Spirit, life, and power; others have more. But they who have *most* of these, are still pressing

Phil. iii.
 15.

after further degrees: *They forget the things that are behind, and reach forth to those things that are before*. They would grow up into him in *all things* which is the head, even Christ; they propose no less than to

Eph. iv.
 13, 15.

come to a *perfect man*, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. For this they pray, and go from one ordinance to another. They endeavour to derive
 more

more virtue from Christ; they desire the most transforming sight of him, that they may be *changed from glory to glory*. They thirst for such communications, as that they may find *all* of Christ's image in the *whole* of them.

SERM.
XVI.
2 Cor. iii.
18.

THUS I have shewn what it is to live to the Lord: all believers do live thus in some measure; to come up to the full of it, is our duty, and happiest are they who come nearest to this description.

Quest. 2. IN what respect do believers *die* to the Lord?

Ans. 1. THEY are *resigned* to him as to the time and way of dying. They will *wait till their change come*, how bitter so-
ever their lives may be; and with *Simeon*,
receive God's *dismission* and *release* before
they die: But when he sends the message
of death, they receive it, whatever age
they are of, and dare not fret at the man-
ner or means by which God will have
them die. How composedly does *St. Peter*
speak of his approaching death, *Know-*
ing that shortly I must put off my taber-
nacle, even as the Lord Jesus has shewed
me. Was this to be by an easy or natural
death? no: Christ had shewed him, that
he should be *bound*, and forced to *die on*
a cross, which was a shameful, painful
death.

Job xiv.
14.
Luke ii,
29.
1 Pet. i,
14.
John xxi.
18.

SERM. *Ans.* 2. THEY willingly die for the
 XVI. Lord's name and cause, when he calls
 them to it.

EVERY believer is a *martyr* in purpose and resolution. The Lord is pleased to call some out to resist unto blood, and sacrifice their lives in the honour of his name: Such *loved not their lives unto the death*. Innumerable are the witnesses, whose blood was shed by heathen and popish idolaters; and still there remain many, who say, in the strength of Christ, *Neither bonds, nor afflictions, move me, neither count I my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my course with joy*. A life is justly and profitably laid out by dying for Christ.


Rev. xii.
11.

Acts xx.
24.

Ans. 3. THEY apply themselves to him as their *judge*, upon the approach of death.

WHEN we see death before our eyes, we know we are near the judgment-seat of Christ (or what's equivalent) and the sentence we must expect from his mouth, which will determine our state for ever, for he is to be our judge. The favourable opinion, or rash censures of men, signify nothing; nay, our own apprehensions and sentence will not be decisive in this important case, but *he that judgeth me is the Lord*. Believers apply to him, that he would prepare them, that he would undertake their cause as their advocate, as well as judge; and that he would so work in them, and so assist them to *finish their course*,

2 Cor. iv.
3, 4.

course, that they may, by the testimony of his Spirit, have ground to say, *Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day.* SERM. XVI.  2 Tim. i. 8.

Ans. 4. THEY long for death, that they may go to him, and be for ever with him.

IT is not love to the world, nor a mere natural aversion to death, nor a fondness of a present life, that most hinder any true christian from saying; with *Paul, I desire to depart, and to be with Christ, which is far better.* Phil. i. 23. No, it's a suspicion of their state, the awfulness of judgment and eternity, and the weakness of their faith, which do represent death as undesirable. If the Spirit of God set them right in all these things, death must appear amiable, for it opens the prison doors, and sets them in the way to behold the glory of their Lord, to whom they are so obliged; and enjoy him without interruption, to whom their hearts cleave with ardent love. As terrible as death is to nature, they can't but embrace it, as it lets them into the full possession of all their Lord has purchased for them; the very hopes whereof yielded them more joy than all this world could give. Such things make them judge, *that to die is gain,* Phil. i. 21. and therefore to be coveted by them.

Ans. 5. THEY leave a good testimony for him, when their death is near.

SERM. THEY are far from repenting of any
 XVI. service done to him; they wish it had been
 greater. They regret not the heaviest suffering they had endured, but are thankful that they were enabled to bear it, esteeming it a *benefit that was given them* to suffer for him. They have such experiments of his conduct and assistance in distresses, they have found such constant instances of his faithfulness and power, that they can, without anxiety, pass into the endless state:

Phil. i. 29. *I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed to him against that day.* Paul knew the importance of what he deposited in the hands of Christ, a soul capable of the greatest happiness or misery, and this to be determined in the day of death, and published at the judgment day: Nevertheless he was cheerful, and his mind at quiet, on the very borders of eternity. But that none might accuse him of indiscretion, he tells you, the ground of his confidence was the acquaintance he had with Christ, by experiments, wherein any one besides this Lord had failed him; and so leaves it upon record, that the Lord had manifested his kindness, faithfulness, and truth to him, in the whole course of his warfare. He had so discharged the trust he had committed to him from his first conversion, that he is not ashamed of his labours or sufferings, and has no doubt concerning him, as to what

2 Tim. i.

12.

what concerned his perseverance in death, and his welfare in the proceedings at judgment. I might instance in *Polycarp*, and many others, who left a glorious testimony for Christ as a good master, and fit to commend his service to all survivors.

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XVI.

6. THEY believingly *commit* their departing souls to him for their final happiness. *They stoned Stephen, calling upon God, and saying, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit.* He knew his intelligent rational part must subsist after death: this was the *man*, and though of dignity far superior to the body, yet it was incapable to conduct, defend, or adapt itself to that world of spirits, upon which he was entering. He therefore puts himself into the hands of Jesus Christ, not doubting his willingness to receive him, or his fitness to discharge his undertaking. He was persuaded, that if he received it, he would wash it from all its filth, supply all its wants, make up all its defects, answer for all its faults, secure it against all its enemies, enlarge all its capacities, and replenish them to their utmost extent. Happy souls thus lodged with him, who fully know that state, of which we are so ignorant, and who has the entire disposal of all that good which can make us happy there! *He saves to the uttermost.*

Acts vii.
59.

Eph. vi.
27.

Heb. vii.

Exhort. RESOLVE to live to the Lord, and see that you maintain and exercise that resolution.

SERM. THIS is your duty and your interest too :

XVI. A life thus spent will yield comfortable reflections upon a death-bed : *This is our rejoicing, the testimony of our conscience, that in simplicity, and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom, but by the grace of God, we have had our conversation in this world.* But see that your purpose extend to all the six particulars, in which I have described wherein believers live to the Lord.

2 Cor. i.
12.

BUT I must consider this duty with some special respect to the *context*. There you will find, that the Holy Ghost calleth you to live to the Lord ; more particularly,

1. IN a strict adherence to his rules in the matters of religion.

2. IN a christian behaviour towards his servants who differ from you in lesser matters. Therefore,

1. LIVE to the Lord by a strict *adherence* to his rules in the matters of religion. It's his prerogative to appoint rules in this ; for none but he knows what he will accept as worship, or what he will use as means, which shall be blessed by him to spiritual benefit ; and he is most jealous in things of this kind.

WE find in this chapter the following directions about this matter :

(1.) PLACE not religion in things *indifferent*, ver. 17. *The kingdom of God is not meat and drink ; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.* Men by not obeying

obeying this rule, abridge themselves as to their spiritual liberty; they are tormented with scruples, spend their time and zeal about trifles which profit not, and neglect to mind what is accepted with God, and conducive to salvation. They who are hot for ceremonies, seldom mind the substance of religion.

SERM.
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(2.) SINCERELY endeavour to get thy conscience rightly *instructed* in the mind of God; pray, and study his word, to find out what he enjoins, and forbids, and what he allows as indifferent; *ver. 14. I am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself.*

(3.) ADMIT no man to *prescribe* to thee in matters of religion, farther than they shew God's warrant. In this the Lord is thy only *master*, and thou art his servant only, and not the servant of any one on earth. Therefore, *If thou keep a day, keep it to the Lord; and if thou keep it not, let thy forbearance be, because he has not appointed thee to keep it, ver. 4, 6.*

(4.) BE well *persuaded* in thy own mind as to every thing thou accountest to be sin or duty; that thou apprehendest it to be so by divine direction; *ver. 1. One believeth that he may eat all things, another eateth herbs. And, ver. 5. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind; i. e. of the lawfulness of it by God's word.*

SERM. (5.) BE true to thy conscience, and do
 XVI. nothing doubtingly for the sake of any
 man; *ver. 22, 23. He that doubteth, is
 damned if he eat, because he eateth not of
 faith; for what is not of faith, is sin.*

THESE comprehend much of that rule by which the apostle declares that he and others *lived to the Lord*. It's incumbent on you to follow their steps, for he is *your Lord* as well as theirs, and he will be your *judge*. In this, therefore, be faithful; and what matter is it who condemns you? for he is sure to justify you, and approve of your practice. Men may reproach, imprison, take away your estates, and lives too, for not obeying them, against this his declared will; but obedience to him will give you inward peace, and your Lord is sure to reward your fidelity with a *hundred fold more in this life, than you can lose by it, and in the world to come eternal life*. Loyalty to Christ, will be found more gainful than all the preferments you can get by will-worship, and compliances with human inventions.

Mark x.
 29, 30.

A DAY is near, when this Lord, whom you serve, will publicly applaud you. He will say, *Well done, good and faithful servants*, who would not violate my laws, nor act against conscience to please the greatest, or to gain the pomp, the riches, or power, which your base compliance might have procured. It was to me you, my *ministers*,
 did

did live, when you refused such conditions of your ministry as I appointed not: To me you lived, in executing your office when rulers forbad you: I'll ratify your administrations, which the profane accused as nullities. To all the faithful *members* of his churches, he will say, To me you lived, when you adhered to my ministers, who were rejected because they durst not submit to sinful terms; well done you, who concurr'd with them in attempts for reformation, and kept your *garments clean* in a time of common degeneracy and revolt. It was for me you became subject to calumnies, and branded as incapable of civil offices; for it was my cause you espoused, when you adhered to a pure worship, and refused to acknowledge that men had right to impose any terms of the communion of saints, which I had not appointed. His commendations may well encourage you to persevere, for they will be attended with a *crown of glory*, and ravishing *pleasures* for evermore.

2. LIVE to the Lord, by a christian *behaviour* towards the servants of Christ who differ from you in lesser matters. The apostle distinguisheth christians here as strong and weak: The *strong* (elsewhere called 1 Cor. ii. ἰσχυροὶ) were such as understood their liberty⁶ by the gospel, from the *Mosaick* ceremonies and rites: These were free to *eat* any wholesome food, and to omit the Jewish festivals,

SERM. festivals, *ver. 2, 5.* The *weak* were such
 XVI. as scrupled to eat flesh upon the principles
 of *Pythagoras*, or did forbear meats offered
 to idols. Many also of the *Jews* apprehended that *Moses's laws*, which prohibited some meats, and enjoined the observation of certain *days* and *months*, were not abrogated. The strong *despised* the weak as ignorant, the weak *judged* the strong as profane and ungodly; both quarrelled, and would force him, who differed, to comply with his own usages, and do as himself practised.

1 Cor. viii.
7.

Col. ii.
16, 23.

You find here many directions as to our behaviour in this case.

(1.) OWN such to be *his* servants, as appear so in the judgment of charity. He is *thy brother*, *ver. 10.* *God has received him* whom you judge, *yea, he shall be holden up*, *ver. 4.*

(2.) NEITHER *despise* nor *judge* those that differ in such matters, *ver. 3.*

(3.) DO not *offend* or grieve them, much less impose on them a compliance with you against their consciences, *ver. 13.* *But judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling-block, or an occasion to fall, in his brother's way*, *ver. 15.* *If thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably; destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.* If we must forbear the use
 2 Cor. viii. of our liberty in lawful things, lest the
 good

good opinion they have of our goodness, or better judgment, induce them to act against their consciences, and so destroy themselves; surely the argument is much stronger against *compelling* them to do so by any penalties; as loss of place, or privileges, times, &c.

SERM.

XVI.

THE arguments are strong by which these directions are enforced, *viz.* Christ is our *only* Lord, and so allows no man to possess his throne, either to impose on conscience, or to judge men's state. *To him* they and you are accountable, *ver.* 4, 11. Again; it's from a dutiful regard *to the Lord*, that they are scrupulous, and act by their light, *ver.* 6. yea, the Lord may serve very good purposes by their different light and practice in those lower matters.

(4.) *Follow the things that make for peace, and things wherewith we may edify one another,* *ver.* 19. This would both restrain from hurting each other, and tend to common benefit. He is wiser than the apostle, that, under our present imperfections, expects an *uniformity*, by another rule than that, *viz.* *Whereto we have attained, let us* Phil. iii: 15, 16. *walk by the same rule; and if in any thing ye be otherwise minded, God shall reveal even this to you.*



S E C T. II.

I SHALL, from the connection of the words, and to apply what I have said of dying in the Lord, observe,

Observ. III. THEY who *live* to the Lord, shall *die* in the Lord, and be found to be his for their endless felicity.

THOUGH, in the former observations, I began with the last clause, *viz. living and dying we are the Lord's*; yet the conjunction may import, that *because* we live and die to the Lord, we shall be the Lord's living and dying; and as we shall be his both living and dying, so as we live to him, (which is what death depends on) we shall also die to him, as far as that expresseth our comfort and benefit by death. Of which I have spoken at large.

Exhort. I. BE the Lord's *in life*, if you would be his *at death*. The state of men at death, is what it was at the end of life; accept therefore of his offers at present, for *now is the accepted time*, now he invites and pleads; this is the time of espousals. If you reject him whilst this life continues, it's in vain to think you can ever be joined to the Lord. There will be no further overtures made, death will

will seal you up under an eternal separation from the Lord, other than as he will be thy judge, and an avenger of thy contemptuous refusals of him. SERM. XVI.

Exhort. 2. LIVE to the Lord, if you desire to die to the Lord, for your eternal advantage.

ALL of you must die, *it is appointed.* Heb. ix. 27.
 You shall die when, and where, and how the Lord pleaseth, whether you consent or not. But would you find death unstung and friendly? would you have Christ receive your departing souls, to fit them for, and admit them into, the heavenly mansions? would you find it a release from all that is grievous, and to be a *joyful entrance into the everlasting kingdom of your Saviour?* 2 Pet. i. 11. then *live* unto the Lord. These are inseparably joined by the gospel constitution. O ask, then, to *whom* do you live, Is it to God or the devil? After what do you *walk*, Is it after the flesh or the Spirit? This is your seed-time: *If you sow to the Spirit, you shall reap life everlasting: If you sow to the flesh, you shall of the flesh reap corruption.* It's high time the youngest of you should begin to live to the Lord, for you may die in youth. It is truest wisdom in any of you, who have begun, to hold on to the end; for a life spent to the Lord, will, at death, end in happiness to yourselves, and great comfort to your godly friends. THIS

SERM. THIS may afford some allay to our
 XVI. grief, when we reflect on the very afflic-
 ~~~~~ tive occasion of our present meeting, *viz.*

The death of the reverend, laborious, and useful Mr. *Matthew Henry*. I could not have chosen a fitter text, for it was eminently exemplified in him: Few ministers so acknowledged Christ's propriety in them, much fewer arrived to an equal degree of activity in the Lord's service.

HE was the son of two eminent saints, who were the *glory of Christ* in their day; and their character as eminently survived in his life and temper, as in the account of their lives, which he published. As they took more than ordinary pains in his education when young, so they received the highest pleasure in his probity and usefulness in their aged years. Nor did God give a testimony to their pious care in making it successful to him alone, but gave them the comfort of seeing all their grown children walking in their integrity.

GOD, to whom *all his works are known from the beginning*, often lays a foundation for the service he designs, by fitting persons from the womb, as to constitution and genius in great variety, as we see in *St. Paul, Luther, Melancton, &c.* In like manner, having determined to do great things by our deceased brother, gave him a very strong body, without which his  
 labours

labours had wasted him in his youth. He also framed the organs of speech to the advantage of his publick performances; his fancy was lively, his memory retentive, and his judgment solid.

SERM.  
XVI.

SUCH a natural capacity rendred him capable of uncommon improvements; and being cultivated at home, and at the reverend Mr. *Doolittle's*, he soon signaliz'd himself in all the useful parts of learning proper to his designed imployment, which was the ministry. Having finished those preparatory studies, and apprehending that the knowledge of the *laws* might contribute to more distinct conceptions of some subjects and terms in theology, he applied himself for some time to that study, and made use of that knowledge in several of his composures.

AFTER he had attained what he proposed to himself in the *inns of court*, he set himself towards entring upon the ministerial work, tho' in a time of persecution! He preferred this to all other employs, because (as himself often suggested) the work was more pleasant, the subject which still employed the mind more helpful to promote an heavenly life, and the power of religion in his own heart; it gave the best opportunity of serving Christ in his greatest designs on earth, and of benefiting mankind in what most concerned them, *viz.* the salvation of their souls.

IN

SERM. IN order to his undertaking this work,  
 XVI. he impartially studied the controversy between the *Established Church* and the *Dissenters*, and, upon the maturest thoughts, he chose to be a *Presbyterian* minister; being fully persuaded the cause of Christ, in the matters debated, was in their hands; and for this, resolved to embark with them, notwithstanding the reproach and hardships to which he might be exposed: for it was not earth, but heaven, to which he directed his course. Yet, with his nonconformity, he highly esteemed all pious conformists, and kept up a christian charity towards such as differed from him.

UPON the evidence of his eminent gifts and graces, with a strong propension to discharge the duties, and promote the blessed ends of that sacred office, he was regularly invested in it by fasting and prayer, and the imposition of the hands of presbyters.

HE always accounted the work of the ministry the most honourable employment, and was to his death a singular honour to it, by his unwearied diligence, and exemplary conversation. From his first undertaking the service of Christ in this function, the *business* of his life was, both to improve in meetness for it, and to *fulfil the ministry he had received of the Lord*. His *profiting appeared to all*, by being able, on the sudden,



den, to perform so well upon any subject; and thereby he commended the close study of the scriptures; for the whole *bible* being fixed in his head (as well as heart) facilitated his work on all occasions. Can the most invidious point to the man alive, of whom it can be more justly said, He *laboured much in the Lord*. If you consider how often he preached, you must wonder how he could write so much: But if you reckon how many books he printed, could you imagine he preached so frequently? What time must be laid out in the five volumes on the *bible*, besides many other valuable books and printed sermons?

WHILST he continued pastor in *Chester*, which was two and twenty years, he filled up that station with service on Lord's-days and week-days. Besides this, he laid out himself in the adjacent counties, as one who had upon him the care of all the churches. How frequently did he preach seven or eight times a week!

SINCE his transplanting to this place, he spent himself here, and in the city, as if his strength were miraculously supplied to do much, upon a foresight that his time was short. And of this he seemed to have some *presages*, when he assigned it as an apology to a godly person, who cautioned him against over-doing; and truly some such impulse, was the best reason he had to give.

SERM. GREAT was his acceptance, tho' his  
 XVI. lot was to be in an age wherein the office  
 is so despised, that the same qualifications  
 which commend all others, can scarce pre-  
 serve a minister from contempt. But pro-  
 vidence peculiarly smiled on our brother in  
 this respect, though he neither courted ap-  
 plause, nor sought his worldly interest by  
 flattery, or other unbecoming methods.  
 What gave him esteem, were his integrity,  
 affableness, the triumph of grace over his  
 passions, forwardness to speak well of all,  
 and evil of none, favourable discourses readily  
 fitted to all occasions, useful and unwearied  
 labours, and a readiness to serve all, with  
 a pleasant acknowledgment of what en-  
 dowments or success any others were blef-  
 sed with. By these means the places were  
 full where he was employed: persons of  
 all denominations greatly affected him, and  
 his surprising death is the subject of uni-  
 versal mourning.

ALL must acknowledge the aptitude of  
 his performances to common benefit; thus  
 he studied, and accommodated his labours  
 to persons of all ages; *young* ones he cate-  
 chised in a way that exceedingly conduced  
 to give light, and beget an affection for  
 gospel-truths. Early religion he warmly  
 pressed, and meltingly invited youth to  
 close with Christ Jesus. Such as were  
*converted*, he laboured to improve to  
 higher

higher degrees of grace, and an exacter walking. For this end he published tracts, wherein most of the heads of practical religion are treated off with that judgment, as shews his acquaintance with the power of godliness, and the hearts of men. His words were *decent*, though *familiar*, and his proverbial sentences were contrived to affect, and retain in the memory some important truth. If it be objected, that he often made use of scripture phrases allusively, rather than in their *proper* sense; yet it must be granted, some *pious* things were ever gravely expressed by those words; and, I think, that from his being so very conversant in scripture words, they first presented themselves to his mind, when the matter he treated of would be aptly expressed thereby.

WHETHER he prayed or preached, it was with such a *fervour*, as declared his heart was in it, and that he was employed therein from the vigorous actings of his faith and love.

As he earnestly implored the presence of God for success, so, thro' his blessing, he found it granted in a signal manner. Many, very many, were converted and edified by his ministerial labours. These are now his crown.

THIS is the person whom God *has taken away with a stroke, and so suddenly*, as not

SERM. to allow us time to pray for his life. You  
 XVI. can hear him no more, nor see him any  
 more, till the general assembly. He is cut  
 off (at the age of fifty-two) when ripest  
 for service.

NEED I call you to *lament* this loss? A loss so great, that I can't aggravate it; so extensive, that I scarce know where to begin or end. A tender *wife* has lost a faithful affectionate husband, filling up that relation to all good purposes; hopeful *children* deprived of the kindest of fathers; one concerned to see *Christ formed in them*, and fitted to promote their welfare in every respect. You, *his people*, are bereaved of a faithful, profitable pastor, whose place is not easily filled up. *We ministers* have lost a bright example, an affectionate brother, a general assistant as occasion offer'd; a man, whose excessive pains must put the slothful to many blushes. The loss is *publick*, we have one fewer to promote the kingdom of our Lord, and stand in the gap to avert impending judgments; yea, I fear we may lament the fall of such a pillar in the church, as *taken away from the evil to come*.

WE are stupid, if we weep not *for our selves*, but as for his part, his sudden death has no terror attending it; for his Lord found him employed as the wise and faithful servants, whom he declared  
*blessed*

*bleſſed.* He had preached twice on the Lord's-day; he preached alſo on *monday*, and had appointed to do the ſame on *tueſday*, but died that morning: God, by death, releaſed him from his labours. Submiſſion to the divine will only, could have reconciled his active ſoul, long to ſurvive his work: this trial God prevented, by not ſuffering him to live one day beyond his labours. But the *reſt* in heaven, after death, was what he longed for; and, it ſeems, that by ſome preſage, he apprehended he was not far from this; for the laſt head, in the laſt book he publiſhed, is this; *Let us long for the perfection of thoſe ſpiritual pleaſures in the kingdom of glory.* And adds, *Our love to God, in this world, is a love in motion; in heaven, it will be a love at reſt: O when ſhall that ſabbatiſm come, &c.*

SERM.  
XVI.

Luke xii

43.

HIS preſent *happineſs* yields ſome allay to our ſorrow; but yet it is a greater relief under all loſſes, that our Lord is the king *eternal*, his word endureth for *ever*; with him is the reſidue of the Spirit; he has wiſe ends in this ſore diſpenſation, and can make it work for *good*.

1 Tim. i.

17.  
1 Pet. i.

25.

THAT this end may be attained, be all of you attentive to the voice of God by this rebuke, and comply therewith. Let each impartially enquire, whether you have not a hand in removing this mercy, by your forfeiture. The death of very uſeful

SERM. ministers (especially when much needed)  
 XVI. is generally a punishment for some sins of  
 those who were most concerned in them.

Wherein conscience points to any guilt, neglect not repentance; and apply to the blood of Christ by faith, lest even a worse thing come unto you. Again; see you act as becomes christians under this providence.

LET the afflicted *widow* trust in God, as able to fill up the place of the deceased, and the *children* walk worthy of his name, and not depart from such a father's ways, as too many have done in this degenerate age. How solemnly would he have laid this charge, if he had seen them about him in his dying agonies? O may they find the return of his many recorded prayers!

YOU who here attended on his ministry, see you live the truths he dispensed, for you are accountable for great advantages. Christ will not account them *good* servants, who gained but *two* talents when they received *five*. Nor is it proper for you to overlook it; that since the death of the eminent Dr. BATES, you have lost two such worthy men, as Mr. BILLIO, and Mr. HENRY, in the midst of their days, and the greatest capacity for service.

MANY observe you, and your influence on our publick interest, as Dissenters, is very considerable. Therefore it's your concern, unanimously to get a well qualified pastor:

pastor: But regard sincerely the real benefit of your *souls*, in the choice you make; for if lower matters govern your inclinations, it discovers *carnality* of mind, and will grow more so, if indulged in this instance.

WE *ministers* are hereby called to double our care in serving the designs of our LORD; we have fewer hands, and may soon meet with harder work. The aspect of things warns us to apply ourselves to get more wisdom, faith, and fortitude; that we may neither mistake our duty, or treacherously desert it in the greatest trials.

FINALLY, It's incumbent on all to lay to heart the *suddenness* of your pastor's death. When he left you, he was likelier to live than many of us, and no symptom of any danger till within a very few hours before his dissolution. We must be stupid, unless it excite us to pray, *Lord, teach us to know how frail we are!* and to endeavour so to know the frailty of your state, as to be always *ready*. O get oil in your lamps, and those lamps trimmed. He that may die without warning, has reason to see that he delay not repentance, nor trifle in what eternity depends on. He *who applies his heart to wisdom*, must so number his days, as to finish the proper business of every day in its day; for the morrow is not ours; and if it come, its own work is assigned with it.

Pf. xxxix.  
4.

Mat. xxiv.  
44.

Pfal. xc.  
12.

SERM. IT will be vain to wish we could recal  
 XVI. past time, when conscience represents the  
 many abuses and neglects of a past life now  
 ending. The summons may be so hasty,  
 that you may not have many moments to  
 set heart or house in order.

THEREFORE take care that your pur-  
 suits of this world be not excessive, lest  
 Luke xii. you be arrested by that voice, *Thou fool,*  
 20. *this night thy soul shall be required of thee.*  
 When you are tempted, remember you  
 may be cut off in the very act of sin, as  
 Num. xxv. *Zimri* was. Entertain every call to duty,  
 14. and opportunity for service and spiritual  
 Eccl. ix. benefit, with this thought, There is *no*  
 10. *working* in the grave, where I must soon  
 John ix. be; the night cometh, wherein no man  
 4. *can work.*

You must all confess, that you can't die  
 Acts xiii. *safely*, unless you have served your genera-  
 36. tion, are real converts, and in temper of  
 spirit meet for heaven: Nor can you die  
*comfortably*, unless your graces flourish,  
 your fruit abound, and have at least a  
 grounded hope of your interest in Christ  
 with a vital sense of his favour. These are  
 too great, too necessary, and too difficult  
 to be postponed, or negligently applied to  
 Job iv. by men, who are *crushed before the moth.*  
 19. The greatest haste, and the utmost dili-  
 gence, are scarce enough to quiet us, when  
 we realize how much depends upon a life  
 subject



subject to be cut off in a moment; by a thousand accidents. Happiest he, who *soonest* enters into wisdom's paths, passeth the whole time of his sojourning here, with the *most* solicitous care in discharging all present duty, and improving all present helps. This is the way to finish well.

SERM.  
XVI.  
1 Pet. iv.  
17.

THIS *finishing well*, was a sentence oft made use of by my deceased brother, and therefore I conclude, with an importunate desire, that we may have a solemn regard thereto in all our sacred and civil transactions.



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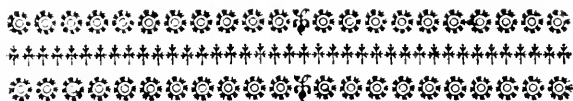
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PREFACE to Mr. SAMUEL  
CLARK'S *Ordination Sermon at*  
St. Albans, Sept. 17. 1712. *shew-*  
*ing the Method and Solemnity of*  
*Presbyterian Ordination.*

To the impartial READER.

HEN mistakes contribute to our unchristian heats and prejudices, they ought to be rectified by such as are desirous that peace and moderation may prevail by all just methods. Nor can a true account displease any, except they have some evil turn to serve, by misrepresenting those who differ from them.

They who are most zealous for the ceremonies of the Established Church, call most of the Dissenters Presbyterians; whereas, at the same time, several parties among Dissenters, oppose and brand those as Presbyterians to whom that name is most proper, on account of their different principles and practices in sundry points, and particularly in what concerns the ministerial office and ordination. It will be no just cause of offence to either side, that I give a narrative how we Presbyterians admit and ordain men to the order of presbyters.

*Several*

*Several among us (notwithstanding past discouragements) being desirous to subservie the interest of the christian religion, have designed one or more of their most hopeful sons, to be preachers of the everlasting gospel. To effect which good purpose, they carefully seek and chuse what they esteem the best and safest helps, for their education in all such learning as tends to qualify them for that sacred office.*

*The course of their studies being finished, and their behaviour promising, they are, at a fit age, presented before such of our pastors as are appointed to examine candidates for the ministry.*

*These ministers give the proposed person some controverted theological question in Latin, upon which he frames an exegetis; this he delivers, and sustains the orthodox side of the question, in the same language, against all opposers. Some time after this disputation, he preacheth in English, before the ministers, on some practical text, which they had given him. In this part of his exercise, after he has prayed, he analizeth the text, raiseth proper observations, proves what he asserts by scripture and reason, and then applies his subject in order to practice, with motives and directions.*

*When this is finished, he is strictly examined as to his skill in the Greek and Hebrew text of scripture, and also in philosophy and scripture chronology; and all present are at liberty to propose such questions as they think fit, concerning*

cerning any difficult texts of scripture, and any points in doctrinal and casuistical divinity : To all which questions he is obliged to answer.

After which examination, he is desired to withdraw, and the judgment of the ministers concerning his seriousness, and the sufficiency of all his performances, is asked. If they approve not of the same, he is called in, and gravely informed of his defects, and advised to apply himself to study with more diligence ; for they are obliged to delay his admission, till he is better qualified.

But if they declare a full satisfaction, then, upon sufficient testimonials of his sober and godly conversation, he is licensed to preach as a probationer for some time. When thus licensed, he becomes a chaplain in some good family, or supplieth, occasionally, where there's need, or assisteth some pastor, that by exercise, study, and experience, he may be both prepared for a more extensive stated charge, and the ordainers and himself may be more assured of his capacity, and the fixedness of his purpose to discharge the office which he is designed to undertake.

Except in necessary cases he remaineth a probationer, until he is called to a stated charge, by a congregation to whom his occasional preaching was acceptable. The peoples desire being signified to the senior pastors when they meet, they enquire if the call be regular, and demand good proof of the candidate's sober and prudent behaviour since he was licensed to preach.

*preach. Having received satisfaction in these and the like matters, they consent to his being ordained, and that it be performed in the following manner :*

*The day of ordination is observed as a Fast. The ordainers are senior Pastors, who were ordained presbyters. When they come together into the congregation, some of them pray suitably to the occasion, adding fervent petitions for the catholic church, these nations, the Queen's majesty, the Protestant succession in the house of Hanover, &c. and read a proper portion of scripture.*

*One of them preacheth a sermon relating to the ministerial office, as to its institution, duties, and privileges. Then one of the most aged pastors, with great seriousness, appoints the candidate to make a publick confession of his faith, which he performs: (having composed it himself before-hand.) If this be esteemed orthodox, the pastor proceeds to ask him, What are the governing and principal ends for which he desireth this order? Then he proposeth the more essential duties incumbent on a gospel minister, and demands his promise to perform each of them: This he engageth with the greatest solemnity.*

*After the answers are approved, the said pastor asketh, whether he dedicateth himself to the Lord Jesus, to serve him in the work of the ministry? To which he publicly declares his consent, as in the presence of God and the whole assembly.*

*If*



*If he who is to be set apart, is invited to be a pastor of a particular church, the call from the people is mentioned, and the foresaid minister enquireth of such as elected him, whether they abide by that call, and accept of him to be their pastor; and also promise to submit to him, and encourage him, by performing what the Lord Jesus appointed to be done by a people to their pastor. To those, one of them, in the name of the rest, expresseth their consent.*

*Then turning to him who is to be ordained, he demandeth if he accepteth of this call from that people, and promiseth to discharge the office of a pastor, as under special relation to that particular church, although he is to be ordained a minister in the catholick visible church? To which he declareth his consent.*

*Satisfaction being given as to each of these matters, all the presbyters present come together, and the candidate kneeling in the midst of them, the pastor who proposed the questions, prayeth over him, imploring the divine presence, praising God for instituting this office, qualifying men for it from age to age, and rendring it successful to the salvation of many. Then also prays for the pardon of their own offences, and sinful defects, and of the past sins of the person to be ordained; and joining their thanksgivings to the God of all grace, for the gifts and graces of his Spirit conferred on this his servant, they all lay their hands upon his head, and set him apart, in the name of the Lord Jesus, to the office and work of the gospel*

**VOL. II.**                      **K k**                      *ministry,*

*ministry, with authority to preach the gospel, administer the sacraments and discipline of Christ, and to perform all other things which, by divine institution, belong to the order of a presbyter; and then, with petitions suited to the case of one invested with the ministerial office, they commit him to the grace of God through Christ Jesus.*

*When this prayer is ended, all the ministers give him the right hand of fellowship as a brother.*

*Immediately the same, or another pastor, addresseth himself to this ordained brother, solemnly charging him to fulfil his ministry, adding directions and encouragements to the faithful discharge of his duty, whatever difficulties or danger attend it.*

*This solemn work is concluded with prayers for the ordained, and his people; and singing a proper psalm, the assembly is dismissed with the blessing.*

*This is a true specimen of our method in ordaining our ministers; which is published without a design of reflecting on the different way of any others, who act by rules they judge more agreeable to divine institution: But my purpose is to vindicate ourselves from such aspersions as represent us careless of the honour of the ministry, by a disregard of the qualifications of such as we allow to be preachers among us.*

*In this account I have confined myself to the ordination of a person licensed upon passing trials,*

trials, and being examined by us; yet I must inform you, that we sometimes have ordained persons, upon testimonials of their being duly licensed by other ministers, and therefore we omitted the repetition of their trials; but we now see need of much caution herein, for we have been imposed on by some persons, who are since received by others, but had been rejected by us, if their lives and abilities had been examined by our ministers about this city.

If any object, that we want the concurrence of a diocesan prelate, I answer, we cannot obtain that, except we submit to such terms as we judge to be sinful: Nor can we think such a bishop essential to ordination, being sure that, in scripture, presbyters are called bishops, and all the qualifications, duties, trust, power, privileges, and honour of both, are the same. Neither did any, except the apostles and evangelists, in the first ages of the christian church, pretend to a pastoral superiority over such presbyters as stately administered the Lord's-supper to fixed distinct congregations; but bishops were no others than pastors of particular churches, capable of communicating in one place, having some presbyters to assist them. That the bishops then, were no other than the present rectors of a parish, who have assistants, is fully proved by many; as the learned Mr. Jemison, in three books\*, and the author of, The clear account of the ancient episcopacy.

\* Cyprianus Ipotimus. Nazian. Querelæ, &c.

*The identity of the order of bishops and presbyters, was the unanimous judgment of our reformers, and it's but lately that any Protestants pretended to say more against Presbyterian ordinations, than that they were uncanonical, by human laws, where bishops are established.*

*What a change must there be in the prospect of those, who arrive to that height, as to nullify the baptism of all such as are baptised by presbyters, if they are not ordained by diocesan bishops? And I hear some are so infatuated as to rebaptise them.*

*I think this case may be left to any impartial person, who will consider, 1. Whom they call laymen. 2. What some of the things are which respect these, who call that a lay-baptism which we administer. 3. What are the natural effects and consequences of their wild uncharitable opinion.*

*1. Whom do they call laymen?*

*You see they are those of our ministers, who were designed and educated for the ministry; they were examined by capable judges, and found qualified for that trust. (Yea, some refused by us as insufficient, have been entertained by others.) Moreover, they are under the ministerial vow, self-dedicated to serve Christ in the work of the ministry; elected by the church, and solemnly ordained thereto, by fasting and prayer, and imposition of the hands of the presbytery. The ordainers are senior pastors of particular churches. Many of them*  
*have*

have assistants, and therefore come nearest to the primitive bishops; and they were either ordained by diocesan bishops, or by such as were so ordained. This I mention, not as if I thought the canonical succession of these bishops ab origine, can be proved by the Romish church, or any other.

Are our ministers justly esteemed laymen after all this, and after God has owned the labours of many of them by his special presence and blessing? When these baptise any persons with water, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, may those be accounted persons that are not baptized at all? Are those still undedicated, and without any seal of the covenant?

2. Consider some few things with respect to those who call ours lay-baptism.

They agree, that mere presbyters are to lay on hands with the bishop in ordination. They would be thought to tread exactly in the steps of their predecessors; whereas, till the time of King James I. the midwives were allowed to baptise in case of necessity. They think baptism necessary to salvation; and as sins of the church, they esteem it a great sin to be rebaptised; they are obliged to admit those who are baptised by us, to the Lord's-supper, unless excommunicated. They call them brethren at the grave, and declare they had good hope of their salvation. The church would not appoint them to do such things to persons baptised by us, unless they judged them

visible

visible christians, and sealed by a baptism which is not a nullity ; for it allows not such charitable prayers to be said over the infants of their own communion, if they die unbaptised. Or can these men forget, that the canons require, and that our people were not long since punishable, if they refused to communicate several times in a year ?

Is it not strange these uncharitable novelists call themselves the only true sons of that church ? But I the less wonder at this, when I consider the profane silliness of such of them as espouse the sentiments of a late man of very great learning, and as weak judgment ; for on the one hand, they encourage those to sin boldly, who, by deserting us, are become their great supporters ; for they say their souls are mortal, because they were baptised by us : And, on the other hand, their own most furious zealots are in great danger, to murmur and repent, that they were baptised by such as are episcopally ordained, as being thereby made to be immortal : For the behaviour of most of them, testifies they would gladly part with all their hopes of heaven, to become freed from all their danger and fears of eternal torment.

3. Consider the natural effects and consequences of this wild and uncharitable opinion.

Were not many of the conformist ministers baptised by such as were not ordained by bishops ? Those ministers are not visible christians, if their baptism was a nullity ; and consequently they who were not christians, consecrated

crated the Lord's-supper and baptised, when all these administrations were nullities. Thus are they content to be no christians all this while, and profanely to usurp what did not belong to them, rather than we shall not be laymen.

Many of our best bishops are known to have no other baptism, than by such as we are; if it is null, what becomes of their ordinations? For either an ordination by one who is no visible christian, must be valid, or they who were ordained by them, are no presbyters; and so whatever they performed as presbyters, is null and insignificant. King Charles I. was baptised by a Scotch presbyter; must he be esteemed no christian when he died?

The reformed churches must be no churches of Christ, and have no more covenant-security for eternal life, than the Pagan world; and both their dead infants and ours must be out of the pale of the church, and damned, unless they are mortal, and died like beasts.

What confusions and tormenting scruples must all serious people come under, if they once believe this new contrivance? Every one must be put to enquire, Was he who baptised me, ordained by a diocesan bishop? and was that bishop baptised by a minister who was ordained by a diocesan bishop? And so forward.

Will they not next be put upon scrupling their baptism, from an uncertainty about the priest's intention?

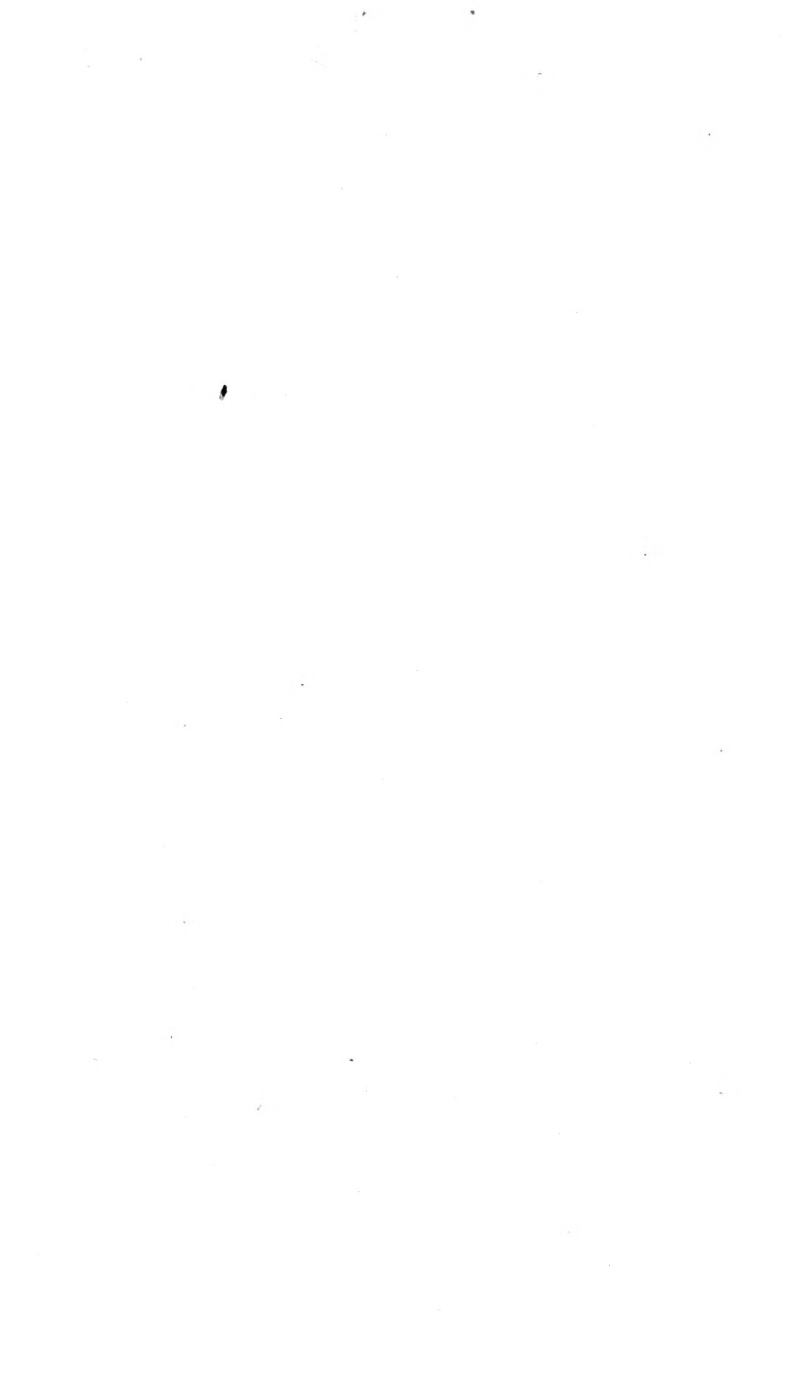
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*It were a happy matter, that all such who seem very charitable to the papal church, did no more consent with her in her proud usurpations, than they do in this one point of the validity of lay-baptism. But blessed be God who has given us a gospel that affords a firmer assurance for the safety and comfort of all sincere believers; and that, as yet, there are many of the reverend bishops and clergy, who have more charity and wisdom, than to comply with such an introduction, both to the ruin of vital substantial religion, and to the triumph of Papists, who will as boldly nullify those mens ordination by bishops, whom they account heretics, as they do ours for want of bishops. That God would increase gospel light, and christian love, is the earnest prayer of thy servant in our common Lord,*

Daniel Williams.

F I N I S.





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